INTERACTIONS BETWEEN TEXTS, ILLUSTRATIONS, AND READERS: THE EMPIRICIST, IMPERIALIST NARRATIVES AND POLEMICS OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the University of North Texas in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Lesli J. Favor, B.A., M.A.

Denton, Texas
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Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, best known for his Sherlock Holmes detective fiction, participated as a writer and politician in major areas of Victorian and Edwardian life and literature. While literary critics heretofore have subordinated Conan Doyle to more "canonical" writers, I argue that his writings enrich our understanding of the ways in which Victorians and Edwardians constructed their identity as imperialists and that we therefore cannot afford to overlook Conan Doyle’s work.

Conan Doyle once said that “to get an idea to penetrate to the masses of the people, you must put fiction round it, like sugar round a pill.” In much the same way that novelists such as Conrad, artists such Sidney Paget, and even advertising media couch ideological messages within fictive packages, Conan Doyle often encodes imperial and empirical ideology within his detective fiction. I argue that culture, identity, and imperialism were a fused entity and that it is impossible to examine any aspect of England in this period—be it literature, history, science, philosophy, or psychology—as a unit separate unto itself and apart from the imperialism which permeated the nation and, indeed, the world. Conan Doyle’s writings are thus essential to understanding British imperialism, and, likewise, this imperialism contributes to a more thorough understanding of Conan Doyle’s body of work. The empirical and imperial issues that
the famous Sherlock Holmes stories raised in the Victorian and Edwardian eras remain open, and the empirical, imperial mind popularized in that time period endures in the detectives of late twentieth-century fiction.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: MYSTERY FICTION, IMPERIALISM, AND SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

The first doctoral dissertation taking Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s detective hero Sherlock Holmes as a primary subject of study was completed in 1973 by Ian Ousby at Harvard and entitled “Bloodhounds of Heaven: The Detective in English Fiction from Godwin to Doyle.” Ousby went on to publish his manuscript under the same title in 1976 through Harvard University Press, and the study now stands as one of a group of works published in the seventies that together established mystery and detective fiction as a viable field of literary study. In this period John G. Cawelti published Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture (1976), in which he examines literary formulas in order “to sketch out how the concept of formula analysis can be used in gaining artistic, cultural, and historical insights into a wide range of popular creations” (296). Cawelti argues that such a project benefits a number of other domains of study because “the method is . . . transferable to many different areas” such as anthropology, structuralism, semiology, media, and visual arts (296-97). In the following year, literary theorist Tzvetan Todorov included his own essay “The Typology of Detective Fiction” (originally published in 1966) in a larger work of criticism, The Poetics of Prose. A decade later David Lodge chose to include Todorov’s essay in Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader (1988) because the study “exemplifies the characteristic structuralist pursuit of explanatory models with which masses of literary
data may be classified and explained” (157). Just as the techniques of Cawelti’s analysis of mystery fiction are applicable to multiple fields of study, so Todorov’s examination of detective fiction contributes to an understanding of critical procedures concerning prose in multiple genres. Similarly, Jacques Lacan’s “Seminar on the Purloined Letter” (1972) has spawned a number of studies by literary theorists up through the current day. These studies address mystery fiction as well as other narrative genres, cultivating a more precise understanding of the strategies involved in theoretical approaches to narrative.

By the early eighties, literary analyses of mystery and detective fiction had established a firm foothold in academe. Book length studies appeared regularly beginning with Stephen Knight’s *Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction* (1980) and the collection of essays edited by Umberto Eco and Thomas A. Sebeok, *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce* (1983). As with the earlier studies of mystery and detective fiction, these volumes enriched the realm of literary analysis by offering methodologies and procedures of study that not only uncover literary structures, ideology, and cultural implications (among other things) within the primary subjects of analysis but also offer the same activities and results for use in other fields of study. Such multi-field and multi-genre approaches continue through the current day, as publications such as William D. Jenkins’s *The Adventures of the Detected Detective: Sherlock Holmes in James Joyce’s Finnegans Wake* (1994) testify.

As this brief review of the developmental stages of mystery fiction criticism shows, the scholarly work has evolved through at least three phases: the formative stage unfolding in the seventies, the concretization in the eighties of the methodologies
introduced the decade before, and the validation of this critical pursuit in the nineties through continued publication of this sort of study. Throughout these developmental decades, the goal of literary critics has not been to isolate the mystery fiction genre as a self-contained field of study. Instead, leading critics have proceeded with vigor to situate their work in the context of contemporary study ongoing in numerous academic fields.

During the time that theorists and critics were breaking ground in the field of mystery and detective fiction, Edward W. Said was breaking ground of his own regarding Western world views and their resulting repercussions in history, politics, and literature. Said labels one such Western world view “Orientalism,” and in his book of the same name (1978) he explains that “Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’” (2). He explains in more detail that “Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (3). Western preoccupation with the Orient, which is “the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other” (1), emerges in Western literature at its most basic levels of plot structure and character attributes and is related thematically to imperialism.

During the course of writing Orientalism Said “began to gather together some ideas about the general relationship between culture and empire” (Culture xi) that later
formed the nucleus of *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). In this later work Said again examines Western world views and their effects on culture, particularly in colonialism and postcolonialism, broadening the scope to include European views of non-Oriental peoples. Establishing the fact that imperialism means “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory” (9), Said proceeds with analyses of a range of literature, from Jane Austen to Camus to Yeats, exposing the network of imperialist and colonialist structures within the works.

Only recently have critics begun to address both mystery fiction and imperialism together with the purpose of revealing how the two intersect and interact. Previous approaches to the subject of Conan Doyle and imperialism have invariably been subordinated to a larger and more extensive study of another author, with Conan Doyle routinely mentioned in passing but not included as the focal point of key arguments regarding culture and imperialism. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said treats Conan Doyle but approaches him obliquely and briefly in the chapters on Conrad and Kipling. Notably, however, Said ranks Conan Doyle in his lists of significant imperialist writers, an act suggesting that in the belief of this leading scholar of imperialism, Conan Doyle holds potential for studies similar to those he makes of Conrad and Kipling (74, 78, 155), even if Said’s book does not take that step.

Previous approaches to the subject of Conan Doyle and imperialism have also mostly overlooked Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes fiction. Said categorizes Conan Doyle’s work in “the genre of adventure-imperialism” (155), including Conan Doyle’s historical romances and action-adventure stories but not his detective and mystery fiction.
Said's only analysis of Holmes is to link him to the cultural occurrence of the merging of power and knowledge. He writes:

It is especially interesting that he [Colonel Creighton of Kipling's *Kim*] is a colonial official and scholar. This union of power and knowledge is contemporary with Doyle's invention of Sherlock Holmes (whose faithful scribe, Dr. Watson, is a veteran of the Northwest Frontier), also a man whose approach to life includes a healthy respect for, and protection of, the law allied with a superior, specialized intellect inclining to science. In both instances, Kipling and Doyle represent for their readers men whose unorthodox style of operation is rationalized by new fields of experience turned into quasi-academic specialties. Colonial rule and crime detection almost gain the respectability and order of the classics or chemistry.

(*Culture* 152)

Said's examination of Conrad's fiction is extensive, some of it relating to Conan Doyle and his works. Said categorizes Conrad as "both anti-imperialist and imperialist," a state which he terms "Conrad's anti-imperialist irony" (xvii, xix). The coexistence of imperialist and anti-imperialist attitudes presents a seeming paradox. He explains that Conrad was "progressive when it came to rendering fearlessly and pessimistically the self-confirming, self-deluding corruption of overseas domination, deeply reactionary when it came to conceding that Africa or South America could ever have had an independent history or culture, which the imperialists violently disturbed but by which they were ultimately defeated" (xvii).
Similarly, Conan Doyle combined ardent imperialist views and practices with defenses of colonized people’s rights. For instance, his perceptions of the War in South Africa were so fervently imperialist in nature that he produced two accounts of Britain’s involvement there, *The Great Boer War* (1900), which became in England a standard history reference work, and the widely-translated pamphlet *The War in South Africa: Its Cause and Conduct* (1902) in which he sugar-coats such atrocities by British troops as concentration camps and the killing of women and children. Nevertheless, Conan Doyle was sufficiently outraged at Belgium’s imperialist practices in the Congo that he wrote *The Crime of the Congo: An Exposé of Belgian Abuses in Africa* (1909) condemning the actions of “King Leopold of Belgium and his followers” (iii). Conan Doyle introduces his “exposé” of their abuses by stating that

> There have been great expropriations like that of the Normans in England or of the English in Ireland. There have been massacres of populations like that of the South Americans by the Spaniards or of subject nations by the Turks. But never before has there been such a mixture of wholesale expropriation and wholesale massacre all done under an odious guise of philanthropy and with the lowest commercial motives as a reason. It is this sordid cause and the unctious (sic) hypocrisy which makes this crime unparalleled in its horror. (iii)

On the other hand, in Conan Doyle’s account of his own nation’s treatment of the Boers, he explains away British practices that were under criticism by countries such as “the United States, France, and Switzerland, where,” as Conan Doyle writes, “people . . . were
ignorant of the facts" (War in South Africa 63). He summarily redefines the concentration camps as “camps of refuge” that provide “cricket, tennis, and croquet” for the Boers, who are “jolly well treated” (War in South Africa 95, 103). Thus, Conan Doyle is able to defend passionately British treatment of the Boers carried out under the flag of imperialism and to attack as passionately the Belgian treatment of Africans executed under their flag of imperialism.

Another instance of Conan Doyle’s anti-imperialist irony is described by his biographer, John Dickson Carr:

In politics Conan Doyle was a Liberal-Unionist: that is, one of Mr. Gladstone’s ‘dissentient Liberals’ who disapproved of Home Rule for Ireland. Does it seem a paradox that this man, Irish on both sides, should have become a burly symbol of everything traditionally English? It was no paradox. He simply regarded Ireland as a part of England (or Britain, if you will) in the same sense that Scotland now was. (74)

Conan Doyle wrote candidly in one of his notebooks that “Ireland is a huge suppuration which will go on suppurating until it bursts” (qtd. in Carr 74).

In one of the few articles addressing Conan Doyle’s fiction and imperialism as a focal point rather than, as in Said’s work, subordinating it to study of another author, Kenneth Wilson engages a range of Conan Doyle’s fiction. However, he marginalizes the Holmes stories, choosing instead to focus on the historical romances, medieval romances,

1 Although Conan Doyle was born in Scotland, his parents were Irish.
science fiction, and adventure stories. Wilson’s study is nevertheless valuable because it elucidates the manner in which Conan Doyle’s imperialist views seep virtually unnoticed into his fiction. One such example that Wilson outlines is *The Lost World* (1912), in which British heroes seek a new frontier because “the big blank spaces on the map are all being filled in, and there’s no room for romance anywhere” (*LW* 9). Their new site of adventure “is the ‘lost world’ of dinosaurs deep in the South American jungle, in which our heroes can find the honour and adventure they are looking for” (Wilson 30).

Wilson’s article “Fiction and Empire: The Case of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle,” is one of the most valuable studies of Conan Doyle and imperialism available; nevertheless, despite punning on the formula of Holmes story titles in his own article title, Wilson leaves Holmes out of the study.

Conan Doyle was indeed an ardent imperialist, and although he was knighted for his political treatises on the Boer War, his greatest impact on Britain and abroad was in the Sherlock Holmes stories. It is through these stories that my study approaches Conan Doyle the imperialist. Conan Doyle was no less imperialist in writing the Holmes stories than he was in writing his frequent political pamphlets, magazine articles, books, and

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2 The appeal of *The Lost World* survives in film and fiction of the late twentieth-century. After the release of the film *Jurassic Park*, based on Michael Crichton’s novel of the same name, Doyle’s *Lost World* was republished with a new cover proclaiming that “Before JURASSIC PARK there was The Lost World.” The interesting twist is that, while in Doyle’s novel the adventurers go to South America to find dinosaurs and adventure and, meanwhile, prove their manhood, the situation in the late twentieth-century is such that in Crichton’s novel a “lost world” full of dinosaurs must first be constructed from scratch and then mapped and “colonised”—as an amusement park. Appropriately, perhaps, this world turns on its creators and banishes them back to their own world. In effect, it refuses colonization.
lectures. Responsible scholarship cannot overlook the imperialist ideologies inherent in
the Holmes fiction simply because some people believe the Holmes canon should serve
as “escape . . . from literature” (Nicolson 113) and thereby be reserved for “fun” and not
for “work” of an intellectual sort. Conan Doyle himself said that “to get an idea to
penetrate to the masses of the people, you must put fiction round it, like sugar round a
pill,” and one must “get his sugar right, [or] people will refuse his pill” (Barr 508). In the
Holmes canon, Conan Doyle has produced a very good pill, one that readers across the
British Empire and outside the empire took with pleasure as often as possible. Indeed,
readers a century later continue to clamor for Holmes “pills”—stories—to the extent that
current authors write additional Holmes adventures in careful imitation of Conan Doyle’s
narrative techniques. The insights into the national and personal construction of
ideology and identity that Conan Doyle’s mystery stories provide cannot be overlooked.

In the following chapters, I argue that Conan Doyle’s contributions to the
Victorian and Edwardian eras are invaluable in understanding such key concepts as
culture, personal identity, and imperialism as they took shape within that period in British
history. Beginning with Conan Doyle’s statement that if one wishes to convey an idea to
the common, everyday person, one must sugar-coat it with fiction to help it go down

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3 For true devotees of the Holmes stories, “canon” refers to all fifty-six stories
and four novellas featuring the detective.

4 Several of these authors are Tony Lumb (Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the
Featherstone Policeman); Carole Nelson Douglas (Good Night, Mr. Holmes and other
novels starring Irene Adler, the only person to outwit Holmes); and Stephen King (“The
Doctor’s Case”). In addition, Conan Doyle’s son, Adrian Conan Doyle, and Conan
Doyle’s biographer, John Dickson Carr, co-wrote a collection of twelve Holmes tales
collected as The Exploits of Sherlock Holmes.
more pleasantly, I situate Conan Doyle's ideologies and writings in the context of novelists such as Dickens, Stevenson, and Conrad; artists such as Boz, Sidney Paget, and Richard "Dicky" Doyle; and media and advertising including triple-decker novels, illustrated monthlies, and Pears Soap. I probe an intricate network of literature, culture, personal identity, politics, and history and thereby trouble political and ideological links between these defining aspects of the times. I argue that culture, imperialism, and personal identity were a fused entity and that it is impossible to examine any aspect of England in this period as a unit separate unto itself and apart from imperialism. Conan Doyle's fiction, empiricist and imperialist in nature, is essential to an understanding of British imperialism; likewise, British imperialism contributes to a more thorough understanding of Conan Doyle's fiction.
CHAPTER 2

SHERLOCK HOLMES, THE VICTORIAN PASSION FOR ILLUSTRATIONS, AND THE MAKING OF A HERO

From the early years of the nineteenth century in England, visual images were an integral part of narrative realities in poetry, novels, and short stories. From the colorfully and intricately illuminated poems of William Blake to the delightfully illustrated novels of Charles Dickens to the lavish paintings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, visual parallels to textual representations spoke deeply to artist and audience alike. Victorian England’s passion for fiction adorned generously with illustrations began in earnest with Dickens’s serialized *Pickwick Papers* in 1836-37 (Harvey 12). Dickens’s larger-than-life characters took on vivid reality in illustrations by Robert Seymour and Robert Buss, who rendered visual not only characters, but emotions and even personality traits. “Author and artist worked for a public which did not easily imagine what it read, and so found illustrations a valuable aid, and which was accustomed to ‘read’ its pictures—to pore over the prints . . . gradually working out a wealth of non-visual significances” (Harvey 3). The combination of fiction and illustration worked so well that Dickens decided to continue monthly- or weekly-part novels with illustrations, influencing Thackeray to do the same. Besides Thackeray, who drew his own illustrations, “other novelists were also drawn into illustrated monthly parts, so that it presently became an inescapable fact that monthly parts were a form of the novel, and that illustrations were a part of it” (Harvey 12).
With the monthly installments of *Pickwick*, illustrations helped to create a new novel genre, the monthly-part novel. As the century progressed, the monthly-part novel remained at the forefront of popularity with readers and did not begin to decline in marketability until the 1860s when shilling magazines containing multiple serialized stories edged ahead in readers’ preferences (Harvey 18). Throughout the whole of the nineteenth century, illustrations remained consistently in demand by authors, publishers, and readers. “The illustrations mattered so much partly because they were a good advertisement. The pictures were displayed in the shop-windows as each new episode appeared, and they could catch a reader or put him off’ (Harvey 8). The visual medium was magnetic. “No sooner was a new number published than needy admirers flattened their noses against the bookseller’s windows, eager to secure a good look at the etchings, and peruse every line of the letterpress that might be exposed to view, frequently reading it aloud to applauding bystanders” (Vizetelly 123). As production of illustrations became cheaper and consequently more prolific, novels in a single hard cover volume and magazines containing serialized stories became the new rage instead of the monthly-part novels (Cohen 229). Illustrations remained an important component of the successful magazine as well.
Into this visually-oriented context Conan Doyle introduced his newly-created consulting detective, Sherlock Holmes. *The Strand Magazine,* begun in 1891 by Sir George Newnes to fulfill his dream of “a magazine packed with stories and articles with a picture on every page,” began publishing the Holmes stories in July of 1891 (Pound 191). Staying true to Newnes’s dream for plenteous illustration, the *Strand* commissioned the young artist Sidney Edward Paget⁵ to supply drawings for the Holmes stories, and the publication of each short story carried an average of nine one-quarter to one-half page drawings with an occasional full-page drawing. These drawings established an image of Holmes that people a century later continue to retain: a tall, lanky man with a sharp nose and receding hairline who is often dressed in a checkered cap and overcoat and smoking a pipe or scrutinizing some piece of evidence, perhaps with a magnifying glass. Paget’s drawings for “Silver Blaze” and *The Hound of the*

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⁵ In a mix-up now famous with Holmes scholars the *Strand,* intending to commission the well-known Walter Paget to illustrate the stories, actually commissioned Walter’s brother Sidney instead (Weller and Roden 12-13). Sidney Paget’s work for the first set of stories succeeded, and his style of illustration became an integral part of the Holmes stories.
Baskervilles, shown in figures 1 and 2, are typical of the illustrations that produced this image.

Ironically, although Holmes is essentially a creation of Conan Doyle, Paget's illustrations have been a significant influence on readers' perceptions of the sleuth. Whether Conan Doyle intended it or not, his readers' visual perception of Holmes was and is largely derived from the illustrations accompanying the text. Paget’s drawings often dominate the page, sometimes in such a manner that the text seems to be fitted in around the drawing. For instance, figure 3 shows how a portion of the text of The Hound of the Baskervilles is set in varying line lengths so that it accommodates the irregular shape of the drawing. Conan Doyle’s stories combined almost magically with Paget’s illustrations to create what would become one of the most popular and physically recognizable fictional characters of Victorian and Edwardian England. The best-selling series soon was in demand across the ocean in America and then throughout the world.
While other illustrators tried their hands at depicting Holmes, they generally created only a variation of Paget's Holmes. The well-known American illustrator Frederic Dorr Steele provided a good number of Holmes drawings over the years but, as is apparent in figure 4, his rendition of the detective is strikingly similar to Paget's drawings, down to the requisite cap, pipe, and long overcoat. And while Conan Doyle's verbal constructs of Holmes include references to an occasional pipe and, in a few instances, a "convex lens," the signature deerstalker cap and long cloak are purely Paget's creations.

Paget was the premier illustrator, the artist who gave physical form to the world's first consulting detective, providing illustrations for the Holmes stories published in the
Strand from 1891 until his death in 1908. These drawings established a vivid representation of a great detective whose facial features and even bodily stature embodied the more abstract elements of Holmes's character. During these seventeen years Paget instituted an image of Holmes so distinctive that even now, a hundred years later, artists model their drawings and caricatures of Holmes after the original Paget drawings. Figures 5 and 6 show two charming drawings that clearly reflect Paget's influence. The double-visored cap and long cloak along with the pipe and magnifying glass have become so synonymous with Sherlock Holmes that the elements are now crucial in creating a recognizable caricature of the detective.

Cinematic renditions of Holmes have not escaped the visual influence of Paget's art either. Leading actors' portrayals of Holmes in film derive extensively from Paget's rendition of Holmes's appearance. Indeed, the casting of actors to portray Holmes
obviously hinges on the individual's physical resemblance to Paget's drawings of a tall, lean, sharp-featured man of middle age, dark hair and dark eyes.

One of the first actors to portray Holmes on screen was Arthur Wontner, and to resemble more closely Paget's Holmes he donned a toupee to cover his own bald spot and to duplicate the hairline of Holmes. Evident in figure 7, Wontner exhibits the brooding, intellectual image of Holmes portrayed by Paget in various drawings such as the one for "The Adventures of the Abbey Grange" shown in figure 8. Later Basil Rathbone emerged as the foremost Hollywood Holmes. In publicity stills such as the one in figure 9, he wore a costume of a double-visored deerstalker cap, long
cloak, and pipe to create an appearance similar to Paget’s Holmes. Actor Jeremy Brett emerged, too, as a popular Holmes in film, and like Wontner and Rathbone he posed in typically Holmesian clothes and positions. In figure 10 Brett reproduces almost exactly Paget’s illustration of Holmes for “The Red-Headed League” shown in figure 11.

Rathbone and Brett along with William Gillette (figure 12) and Peter Cushing (figure 13) have survived as notable actors in the Holmes role, and each man possesses certain inescapable physical resemblances to Paget’s Holmes. Indeed, the actors begin to resemble each other as much as Holmes, further highlighting the essential Holmesian visual qualities. Holmes scholar Philip Weller has noted that “more films have been made about Sherlock Holmes than about any other character in the literature of the whole world” (16).

The widespread and enthusiastic mimicry of Paget’s construction of Holmes’s physical appearance is undeniable, and this fixation on the detective’s appearance becomes a crucial aspect of the agent’s impact on fiction and readers. But what is the connection between the agent’s outward appearance and his inner character? Why would physical

Fig. 7. Wontner captures the brooding, intellectual image of Holmes (Weller and Roden 69). Fig. 8. Paget’s drawing of Holmes’s brooding, intellectual image.
appearance—reducible to a receding hairline, dark eyes, cap, cloak, and occasional pipe—have to do with the essence of the great detective, with the life force that flows from the written page to the minds and fantasies of readers to produce a seemingly dynamic, living agent? Further, what has the dynamism of a fictive agent got to do with the politics of an empire, the far-reaching British Empire of Victorian and Edwardian England?

The connection hinges on the very heroism of Holmes, carried out physically but motivated internally and carefully narrated by the faithful Dr. Watson for all of the British Empire and beyond. At his most basic, Holmes is a hero. As a hero, Holmes saves whole countries from ruin ("A Scandal in Bohemia"), rescues honest women from scheming, greedy stepfathers ("The Speckled Band"), and carries out his own brand of justice by letting particular murderers go free ("Boscombe Valley" and "Charles Augustus Milverton").

Fig. 9. Basil Rathbone closely resembles Paget's Holmes (Weller and Roden 34).
Moreover, Holmes is seemingly omniscient, or at the least has an encyclopedic knowledge. Watson tells us that the great detective meticulously maintains extensive card files on people and facts he encounters so that at all times he is within a finger’s reach of information that can make or break a case ("Scandal" 15-16). Holmes, a hero of justice, embodies not only intelligence and reliability but also athleticism, social power, and invincibility. At a time when the powerful and far-reaching British Empire was at its height and heroes—military, historical, and otherwise—were definitive cultural icons, Holmes enters center stage of the Empire, representing a new kind of

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6 In "Peirce, Holmes, Popper," Gian Paulo Caprettini addresses the issue of Holmes’s extensive knowledge. He says that "We can easily compare Sherlock Holmes’s inner space to an encyclopedia, not only for its variety and vastness of knowledge, but also for the impossibility of having them all under control to the same degree" (148).
scientific heroism while simultaneously portraying the most essential of imperialist character ideals. As a hero of fact-oriented, empirically-driven narratives, Holmes becomes also a hero of imperialism and its code of conduct.

A closer examination of Conan Doyle’s stories of this hero and Paget’s illustrations for the stories begins to disclose Holmes’s crucial position in the British Empire. And while Conan Doyle’s traiting of Holmes, which is carried out through Watson’s narration, descriptions, and explanations, is the primary source of readers’ comprehension of Holmes as a dynamic literary agent, the visual traiting of Holmes, which is accomplished through Paget’s drawings, contributes to the realism and

Fig. 12. William Gillette as Sherlock Holmes (Haining 40).

Fig. 13. Peter Cushing as Sherlock Holmes (Weller and Roden 90).
dynamism as well. Showing is another form of telling, another sign system that reinforces crucial concepts and contributes to the network of associations attendant upon a subject such as Holmes. The remainder of this chapter addresses Conan Doyle’s construction of Holmes’s identity by way of the narration by Watson, and the following chapter continues with a look at Paget’s art and its contribution to Holmes’s identity.

Conan Doyle’s stories of Holmes follow in the narrative tradition of novelists such as Dickens and Thackeray, who first published narratives in illustrated installments and only later as a single volume. And like novels written since Dickens’s illustrated monthly-part publication of *The Pickwick Papers*, the Holmes stories are generously supplemented with detailed drawings. Unlike other Victorian writers of continuing series, however, Conan Doyle crafted each Holmes installment to be self-contained in plot. Characters, settings, and themes continued from story to story, but plot developed anew in each publication. Readers could begin reading the Holmes stories at any point in the series and each separate story would make sense in and of itself, thereby enticing the readers back for more in future issues. No reader would give up on Holmes in frustration because he or she had missed previous installments of a plot line. Surprising as it may seem in retrospect, this tack had not been taken before. Conan Doyle himself claimed credit for this innovative idea. He said:

> Considering these various journals with their disconnected stories, it had struck me that a single character running through a series, if it only engaged the attention of the reader, would bind that reader to that
particular magazine, since, sooner or later, one missed a number and afterwards it had lost all interest. Clearly, the ideal compromise was a character which carried through, and yet instalments [sic] which were each complete in themselves, so that the purchaser was always sure that he could relish the whole contents of the magazine. I believe that I was the first to realize this and *The Strand Magazine* the first to put it into practice. (qtd. in H. Pearson 92)

This approach to the story series was so successful that “without exception, every other popular magazine adopted it” (Pound 46).

Throughout the series of Holmes stories, the detective receives character traits in two distinct ways. Primarily, direct verbal description and narration construct a linguistic image of Holmes. Watson’s first-person accounts of his adventures with Holmes and of his assistance to the sleuth in solving cases comprise this verbal traiting. In each narrative, Watson describes facets of Holmes’s personality and details of his physical appearance. For example, he says, “Nothing could exceed [Holmes’s] energy when the working fit was upon him” (*Study* 153) and elsewhere refers to “the fierce energy of his own keen nature” (“Scandal” 11), thus directly attributing energy to Holmes. Watson also narrates Holmes relaxing at a music concert, verbalizing an image of the sleuth at rest. “All the afternoon he sat in the stalls wrapped in the most perfect happiness, gently waving his long thin fingers in time to the music, while his gently smiling face and his languid dreamy eyes were as unlike those of Holmes the sleuth-hound; Holmes the
relentless, keen-witted, ready-handed criminal agent, as it was possible to conceive” ("Red-Headed” 35).

In addition to Watson’s verbal traiting of Holmes, the numerous illustrations by Paget visually represent his physical attributes, which in turn are metonymic of his personality traits. “It is true that illustrations to fiction are often accessories after the fact, and that though they may be good pictures, they do not belong to the novel in the sense that without them the novel would not be complete. But it is precisely in this respect that the serial novels [and stories like the Holmes series] are so unusual: they do show text and picture making a single art” (Harvey 2). The Holmes stories show a successful blending of text and image that draws attention to what is heroic in the literary and pictorial hero Sherlock Holmes. Paget’s contribution to the construction of Holmes is treated in more detail in chapter 3.

To explore the verbal constructs of Holmes we must examine the secondary character Dr. Watson, who merits attention because he is the one who narrates the detective and his adventures to us. Henry James would call this fictive agent the “center of consciousness,” a person “through whom everything could be seen and felt” by the reader (Booth 23-24). Watson is the center of consciousness in the Holmes adventures, and everything we know about Holmes we learn through Watson’s narration. The

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7 We must consider that we read Watson’s descriptions and accounts of Holmes, and that they are somewhat biased to Watson’s point of view. To examine Holmes more objectively by scrutinizing Watson and his effect on the narratives would become another study. For the purposes of this study, I will proceed in accepting Watson as a reliable center of consciousness.
effectiveness of Watson in the role of narrator was noted early on by critics. For instance, in 1901, Harry Thurston Peck applauded “how supremely clever a thing it was to make Watson the companion and chronicler and also the foil of Sherlock Holmes” (2759). He describes the effects of Watson’s narration on readers:

Watson, the matter-of-fact, sensible, and friendly surgeon, always planting both his broad feet squarely on the earth, is a typically British character, and his lack of insight makes Holmes’s wonderful intuition appear twice as wonderful by the force of contrast. Moreover, by making Watson the narrator of the stories, they are made to seem always plausible to the reader, because of their sober, unemotional manner. (2759)

Even though what we know of Holmes we learn through Watson, and Watson is therefore perpetually between ourselves as readers and our object of attention, Watson’s “characterisation enables the reader to see [Watson] as a little foolish, and so to by-pass him and construct the one-to-one relationship with Holmes that the underlying individualist epistemology requires” (Knight Form 84). Indeed, the very mundanity of the narrator-medium, Watson, facilitates readers’ achievement of this one-to-one relationship with Holmes; readers feel superior to Watson and consequently desire a closer contact with his superior, Holmes.

As centers of consciousness, narrators like Watson fill vital roles in their stories. Walker Gibson observes that it is the narrator of a story “who is ‘real’ in the sense most useful to the study of literature, for the speaker is made of language alone, and his entire
self lies on the page before us in evidence” (1). The same reasoning applies to the
character whom the narrator describes for us. This character, in our case Sherlock
Holmes, “lies on the page before us” in the language of Watson, that is, in Watson’s
verbal structures.

Watson’s linguistic constructs of Holmes take two forms: telling and showing. In
telling us about Holmes, he directly names or describes Holmes’s prominent attributes.
For example, Watson tells us straightforwardly that Holmes is “the most perfect
reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen” (“Scandal” 11). Additionally,
in showing us Holmes, he describes him in action in such a way that readers can draw
inferences about his character from what he does. For instance, Watson creates the idea
of Holmes’s powerful intellect at work when he presents the sleuth “pacing the room
swiftly, eagerly, with his head sunk upon his chest, and his hands clasped behind him”
(“Scandal” 11). We can examine many of Holmes’s character traits by studying
Watson’s narration in the first Holmes adventures. In these stories (as in all of the
stories), Watson takes great care in telling and showing his readers the multi-faceted
persona of Holmes.

During the first adventure, A Study in Scarlet, the narrated subject Holmes is
established as he is to be, for the most part, throughout the rest of his adventures. Watson
gives us a great deal of information regarding the detective’s mental and physical
attributes when he narrates meeting Holmes in a chemical laboratory, arranging to share
lodgings with him in Baker Street, and assisting him with an investigation into a murder.
Watson’s traiting of Holmes includes a chart listing the sleuth’s distinguishing qualities, and he labels the chart “Sherlock Holmes—his limits” (156). Among the listings are literature, philosophy, and astronomy; Watson describes Holmes’s knowledge of these as “Nil.” He adds later in the list that Holmes’s knowledge of “sensational literature” is “Immense. He appears to know every detail of every horror perpetrated in the century.” Holmes’s grasp of chemistry is “profound”; he “Plays the violin well” and “Is an expert singlestick player, boxer, and swordsman” (156).

Watson also tells us that Holmes is over six feet tall “and so excessively lean that he seemed to be considerably taller” (153). Holmes’s leanness suggests energy and activity, traits that in turn connote action and purpose. By reading further, one finds that the connotation is accurate; Holmes is lithe, quick, and sharp-witted, pursuing suspects across sea and land, on rooftops and in vaults below banks. Watson reveals a good deal about Holmes in a few telling details. Moreover, when Holmes’s height is drawn by Paget, the result is that Holmes is consistently the tallest person in a scene and therefore looks up to no one, literally or figuratively. In height as in intellect, Watson almost measures up to Holmes, but not quite.

Holmes is always observant, missing few, if any, details of a situation, causing Watson to observe that his “eyes were sharp and piercing” (153). Watson discovers Holmes’s unusual alertness to fine detail during his first meeting with the sleuth. The two are introduced by a mutual friend, and Holmes’s (now famous) first words to Watson are, “How are you? You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive” (150). Holmes’s ability
to draw immediate conclusions upon meeting a person becomes a classic Holmesian quality. And while Holmes neutralizes some of the mystery of this ability by explaining it rationally, the skill remains a fascinating and definitive part of his persona which he demonstrates with flair in every adventure.

When Holmes explains to Watson how he deduced the fact that the doctor had just come from Afghanistan, he reveals a bit about his characteristic method of thinking, which he calls “the science of deduction.” Watson recounts Holmes’s words:

I knew you came from Afghanistan. . . . The train of reasoning ran, “Here is a gentleman of a medical type, but with the air of a military man. Clearly an army doctor, then. He has just come from the tropics, for his face is dark, and that is not the natural tint of his skin, for his wrists are fair. He has undergone hardship and sickness, as his haggard face says clearly. His left arm has been injured. He holds it in a stiff and unnatural manner. Where in the tropics could an English army doctor have seen much hardship and got his arm wounded? Clearly in Afghanistan.” This whole train of thought did not last a second. (160, 162)

Holmes uses syllogistic reasoning and takes it to an intricate extreme. He reasons from the general to the particular, first picking out the apparent facts; in this case he comes up with quite a list: medical type, military man, tanned skin, haggard face, and stiff arm. As he assesses these facts he draws conclusions from them; for example, the “medical type” and the “military bearing” combine to produce the conclusion “military doctor.” The
“stiff arm” and “tanned skin” indicate an injury in the tropics. At last he draws a grand conclusion from these preliminary conclusions. A military doctor with an injury acquired in the tropics must have come from Afghanistan.

This form of deductive reasoning distinguishes Holmes and elicits admiration from Watson, Scotland Yard, and Watson’s reading public. The practice of deductive reasoning becomes almost synonymous with Sherlock Holmes because he operates on the premise daily, and it is an integral part of his personality. After more demonstrations of the same sort, Watson says, “My respect for his powers of analysis increased wondrously” (164).

Some of Watson’s observations of Holmes’s physical appearance are linked with his own comments regarding the significance of this or that physical attribute. He tells us that Holmes’s “thin, hawk-like nose gave his whole expression an air of alertness and decision. His chin, too, had the prominence and squareness which mark the man of determination” (153). In telling us these details, Watson has demonstrated Holmes as “alert,” “decisive,” and “determined,” qualities essential to effective investigating. That Holmes is alert we know from his initial, lightning-quick assessment of Watson’s recent arrival from Afghanistan. That he is decisive we see later when Watson shows Holmes in action.

And this brings us to the second method by which traits of narrative subjects are conveyed to readers. Conan Doyle shows readers the distinguishing traits of narrative subjects including Holmes and Watson through Watson’s narration of their adventurous
investigations. Watson illustrates Holmes's defining traits by narrating the sleuth in action, thereby creating an image of dynamics in readers' minds while concurrently leaving readers to develop their own conclusions regarding the significance of the demonstrated qualities. For instance, on the way to their first case together, Watson is full of speculations about how the murdered man came to be so. Holmes, however, "prattled away about Cremona fiddles, and the difference between a Stradivarius and an Amati" (Study 166). On being asked why he is not theorizing about the case, Holmes replies in full confidence, "It is a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence. It biases the judgment" (Study 166). Readers can conclude from Watson's account that Holmes purposefully delays his speculation about a case until he has collected all evidence possible, reinforcing the image of Holmes as an empirical, fact-driven scientist.

Holmes's determination surfaces during the investigation when his "smallest actions were all directed towards some definite and practical end" (171). He collects a variety of seemingly insignificant facts which, when put together, form a profile of a suspect. After patiently examining the crime scene, sometimes on hands and knees—at one point "sniffing the dead man's lips" and examining the bottoms of his shoes (168)—he declares with detailed certainty:

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8 This is a favorite maxim of Holmes which he states again in a slightly different fashion in "A Scandal in Bohemia": "It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibility one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts" (13).
There has been murder done, and the murderer was a man. He was more than six feet high, was in the prime of life, had small feet for his height, wore coarse, square-toed boots and smoked a Trichinopoly cigar. He came here with his victim in a four-wheeled cab, which was drawn by a horse with three old shoes and one new one on his off fore-leg. In all probability the murderer had a florid face, and the finger-nails of his right hand were remarkably long. (172)

Holmes’s determination produced this profile; Gregson and Lestrade of Scotland Yard had the same crime scene to study—indeed, had been there since before Holmes arrived—but they were unable to reach the same conclusions as Holmes. Moreover, Holmes is not hesitant about his conclusions; rather, he makes decisions about the suspect using the information at hand and states these decisions in full confidence of being correct. Watson has presented rather than asserted Holmes’s determination and decisiveness.

Later, as the two men drive away from the scene on their way to investigate other leads, Holmes again exhibits his determination when he says about the murderer, “I shall have him, Doctor—I’ll lay you two to one that I have him” (177-78). And Holmes does, of course, get him, pursuing even the smallest clues, saying, “To a great mind, nothing is little” (187). After ingenious discovering of clues and laying of traps, he captures the murderer in his Baker Street apartment, hand-cuffing him to a large trunk. “‘Gentlemen,’ he cried, with flashing eyes, ‘let me introduce you to Mr Jefferson Hope, the murderer of
Enoch Drebber and of Joseph Strangerson” (195). Holmes’s best qualities have paid off; his controlled decisiveness and determination have won him the criminal and solved the crime. Watson has narrated a clear personality through telling and showing, and these traits simultaneously establish Holmes as a god-like intellect with powerful skills of observation and deduction.

Some of Holmes’s physical characteristics that Watson describes in passing also suggest aspects of the detective’s personality, a method of character traiting that combines showing and telling in that Watson gives a few details and a brief observation and leaves it at that. As with Watson showing Holmes in action, readers must attempt a bit of Holmesian deduction in order to draw full meaning from the details, and for an audience experiencing adventure vicariously through Holmes, successful emulation of his trademark skill can be rewarding. When Watson observes that Holmes’s “hands were invariably blotted with ink and stained with chemicals, yet he was possessed of extraordinary delicacy of touch,” he leaves it to the reader to assess the value of such an observation (Study 153). The remark may cause a reader to examine the stories for references to Holmes and ink, chemicals, or delicate objects and thereby gain insight into why Watson deemed the details worth mentioning.

In searching Watson’s other narrative accounts for these details, one would find that the ink stains on Holmes’s hands allude to his meticulous keeping of files of cards on people and facts he has encountered. In “A Scandal in Bohemia” Watson tells us that “for many years [Holmes] had adopted a system of docketing all paragraphs concerning
men and things, so that it was difficult to name a subject or a person on which he could not at once furnish information” (15-16). The ink stains are a visual representation of Holmes's meticulous thoroughness in seeking knowledge and solving mysteries. Telling and showing have merged in the production of character.

As for the chemical stains on his hands, Holmes is a chemist and experiments with chemicals often. Sometimes, during a snag in an investigation, he will clear his mind by working with his chemicals for an entire day. At other times he conducts experiments because his analytical, inquisitive mind draws him to the search for more knowledge. As with the ink blots, the chemical stains on his hands point to Holmes's personal habits, revealing his tendency to devote large amounts of time and energy to the gaining of new facts and to the use of facts previously learned.

Holmes's delicacy of touch is evident when he plays the violin. He is a skilled violinist, and he plays for enjoyment and to relax his mind from burdensome cases. For instance, in “The Five Orange Pips” Holmes rests his mind from the on-going murder investigation by playing his violin. He says to Watson, “There is nothing more to be said or to be done to-night, so hand me over my violin and let us forget for half an hour the miserable weather, and the still more miserable ways of our fellow men” (77).

Holmes's transference of his attention away from humanity (“our fellow men”) to art (“my violin”) as well as record-keeping (“docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things”) and chemical experiments signifies not only a withdrawal from humanity but also a conceptual move from us (as in “our fellow men”) to me (“my violin”). Holmes
shrinks away from community and the communion it involves and into himself and the relative safety of seclusion. He isolates himself using elements of everyday society—music, science, information—to do so. And while initially Holmes's employment of these familiar components of society would seem to increase or deepen his humanity, it in fact achieves the opposite effect. Holmes's physical and intellectual removal from humanity causes him to remain virtually character-less, a "reasoning and observing machine," to use Watson's well-turned phrase ("Scandal" 11; emphasis added). As a less complexly traited detective, then, Holmes allows for the sharper depiction of empirical and imperial desires with which readers in the Empire could more easily and directly identify.

Holmes's image as an empirical hero raises issues of its connection with the imperial occupation of control. Throughout the Holmes adventures, the detective focuses intently on the control of data and evidence as well as of the people involved and the outcomes of the investigations. Moreover, these empirical and imperial attributes are reflected in visual constructions of Holmes at work. This visualization of the detective hero is the subject of study in the following chapter.
Holmes's character is not only narrated verbally by Watson but is also constructed visually through Sidney Paget's drawings, as chapter 2 introduced in some detail. Conan Doyle himself was no stranger to the creative process of illustration. His grandfather, John Doyle, wrote and illustrated "pictorial political skits," or political caricatures, under the pseudonym "H. B." for over thirty years. The English government purchased several of these drawings, allowing them to go on display in the British Museum (How 4).

Conan Doyle's uncle, Richard "Dicky" Doyle, an artist as well, was taught informally by Richard's father John. Richard drew illustrations for Charles Dickens's Christmas books, providing more of these holiday illustrations than any other Dickens illustrator except John Leech (Cohen 152). Richard also designed the cover of the celebrated Punch magazine (How 4) and was the magazine's "leading artist" (Carr 6). Conan Doyle's own father, Charles Doyle, provided six illustrations for the second edition of the first Holmes novel, A Study in Scarlet (E. Pearson 33). Figure 14 shows one of these illustrations presenting a bearded Holmes. While this Holmes does not even remotely resemble Paget's Holmes, as yet uncreated, he does bear a close resemblance to Charles himself, as is evident in the portrait of Charles shown in figure 15.
Fig. 14. Conan Doyle's father Charles drew this bearded Holmes whose face resembles his own (Montgomery plate 3). 

Fig. 15. Charles Doyle's portrait (Baker xvi). 

Paget's drawings of Holmes strengthen the link between the detective's physical appearance and his character traits, thereby bringing the literary agent into sharper relief. For example, illustrations such as figures 16 and 17, which depict Holmes hard at work with chemicals or listening compassionately to a distraught client, "did much to create the incisive and consoling image of Holmes" (Knight Form 84). While demonstrations of Holmes's impressive intellectual powers serve to set him apart from the average person typified by Watson, Paget's drawings, such as the one here, show Holmes as nevertheless approachable and quite human in his capacity for providing reassurance in a tense or frightening situation. And while one may be tempted to say that it is typical in fiction to have a Damsel in Distress rescued by some version of Prince Charming, one must realize
that Holmes supplies reassurance and comfort to male clients as well as female. Paget’s
drawing in figure 18 for “The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet” shows Holmes calming a
gentleman who had just been “beat[ing] his head
against the wall” in “grief and despair” (152,

![Fig. 16. Holmes's incisive image.](image1)

![Fig. 17. Holmes's compassionate image.](image2)

![Fig. 18. Holmes calms a distraught client.](image3)

151).

In addition to the incisive and compassionate images of Holmes depicted in Paget’s drawings, much of his art portrays Holmes in a distinctive double-
visored or "deerstalker" cap with the ear flaps tied up on top as shown in the drawing for "The Adventure of Silver Blaze" in figure 19.

Fig. 19. Holmes's image as hunter is conveyed through the hunting cap.

With these illustrations Paget “provided the legendary deerstalker hat that naturalised Holmes’s hunter-protector element” (Knight Form 84). While Holmes never actually hunts deer in the stories, the hunting cap embodies his premier role as hunter of criminals; like a hunter of game who kills his prey, Holmes neutralizes the evil he has stalked so carefully. Thus, when Holmes sports the cap with a dress coat and bow tie in a pub, as shown in figure 20, the ensemble does not seem incongruous. Rather, by portraying Holmes in the deerstalker cap Paget sets the detective apart as unique from
other men in the drawing. At first glance the reader's eye singles out Holmes, and the unique image stays in the memory. In Paget's drawing for "The Adventure of Silver Blaze" shown in figure 21, Holmes's hunting cap is unmistakable among the top-hats. He wears the cap like a crown for his intellectual royalty.

The earliest drawings of Holmes are in distinct contrast to Paget's images. The first of all illustrations is D. H. Friston's drawing for the cover of Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887 which contained A Study in Scarlet. Friston's drawing is shown in figure 22, and in looking at it one understands why one critic remarked:

This first picture of Holmes would distress the devotees.

The caption for the image in figure 20 reads: "Holmes wearing the hunting cap with dress coat and bow tie ("Solitary Cyclist")."
neither handsome nor intellectual; he wears undertaker’s side-whiskers [long side-burns], an ulster with a cape, and a hat like nothing on sea or land—a sort of bastard child of a bowler out of a sombrero. With a magnifying glass as big as a sunflower, he is examining the word RACHE written in blood upon the wall. About him, in grotesque attitudes, stand Watson—with a walrus’s moustache—and the Scotland Yarders, Gregson and Lestrade. Mr. Friston seems to have thought that the scene was macabre, and that the characters should look like gargoyles. (E. Pearson 33)

Charles Doyle’s depictions of Holmes are no more harmonious with the detective-as-hero image Conan Doyle’s stories advance. One of these leprechaunish images of Holmes is shown above in figure 15 and another is shown here in figure 23. In it, Holmes looks little like a man of action or purpose as he reclines in a chair and gestures nonchalantly with his hand.

Paget’s illustrations convey Holmes in
both introspective and energetic moods, and visual showing combines with verbal telling when Watson articulates his interpretation of Holmes's dualistic nature:

The swing of his nature took him from extreme languor to devouring energy; and, as I knew well, he was never so truly formidable as when for days on end, he had been lounging in his armchair... Then it was that the lust of the chase would suddenly come upon him, and that his brilliant reasoning power would rise to the level of intuition. ("Red-Headed" 35)

Holmes's mood swings are a defining aspect of his character. In his introspective moods he amasses the mental determination and physical strength he will need to pursue and capture criminals, and in his energetic moods he puts his determination and strength to active use. For example, in "The Red-Headed League" Holmes curls up in his chair to smoke a pipe and ponder the case. He tells Watson, "It is quite a three pipe problem, and I beg that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes" (33). Paget supplies a drawing of...
Holmes deep in this introspective mood, shown above in figure 11. Later, Holmes captures the culprit, a bank robber, after a struggle in a vault below the bank, and Paget again renders the scene visual and displays Holmes capturing the criminal, shown in figure 24.

Watson says that people “who were unacquainted with [Holmes’s] methods would look askance at him as on a man whose knowledge was not that of mortals” (“Red-Headed” 35). The effect is ideal. The system of verbal and visual showing and telling by Doyle (via Watson) and Paget establishes Holmes as a hero who is both human in personality and a little beyond human in intellect. As a hero, Holmes serves several key functions in the narrative format.

Whether heroic agents in fiction are characterized verbally, visually, or in both manners, they serve several valuable functions within the stories. Three such functions are emphasizing certain themes or morals; helping establish a narrative form or framework, and contributing to the
development of the plot. The hero is thus integrally linked to every aspect of the narrative structurally and conceptually.

To begin with, a main character can emphasize the theme or moral of a story in numerous ways, the examination of which would encompass a study of its own. Aristotle sums up the general concept succinctly when he says: “Character is that which reveals moral purpose, showing what kind of things a man chooses or avoids” (28). And that is what a theme or moral comes down to: “what kind of thing a man chooses or avoids.” The choices of the hero, who is necessarily prominent in the story, draw attention to particular themes and morals.

Traditionally, the theme of detective fiction such as Conan Doyle’s is that of good versus evil, the law against law-breakers. The side of good—the police—gains victory over the side of evil—the criminal—after overcoming many obstacles. Sherlock Holmes, as an investigator of crime, is naturally on the side of good, and with his comments and actions he emphasizes the desirability of being on that side. He phrases his outlook wonderfully in *A Study in Scarlet*: “There's the scarlet thread of murder running through the colourless skein of life, and our duty is to unravel it, and isolate it, and expose every inch of it” (178). Holmes’s own words reveal his character and add depth to the story while building up the hero image.

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9 These functions are discussed by Prince, who applies them and other functions to the narratee in “Introduction to the Study of the Narratee.” I demonstrate here that these three functions apply equally well to the hero of a narrative.
Besides emphasizing good over evil, Holmes provides an interesting twist to the traditional moral of “crime must be punished.” He practices flexible justice: sometimes he lets a criminal go free because he sees this option as a more fitting justice for the individual in question. For example, in “The Boscombe Valley Mystery” Mr. Turner, an elderly man in weak health, kills the man who has been blackmailing him for many years for a crime long since done and repented of. The police invite Holmes to assist them in the murder investigation, and Holmes soon figures out the identity of the murderer. Away from law officials, he confronts Turner and draws him into confession. Turner freely admits that he “struck him down with no more compunction than if he had been some foul and venomous beast” and signs a statement that Holmes prepares (67). Turner then asks Holmes what he intends to do with the information, and Holmes replies, “In view of your health, nothing. You are yourself aware that you will soon have to answer for your deed at a higher Court than the assizes” (67). Turner dies seven months later.

And so, while Holmes does not condone murder, he sometimes alters his actions according to details which the police would not take into account. At least eleven stories\(^\text{10}\) exhibit Holmes’s own brand of justice.

Besides functioning as an emphizer of themes and morals, a hero such as Holmes helps to establish the structure of a narrative. In examining structure we must

first examine form, for the structure of a detective story is an extension of form. Edgar Allan Poe established the form of the detective story as we know it today with the publication of the three cases of C. Auguste Dupin, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841), “The Mystery of Marie Roget” (1842-43), and “The Purloined Letter” (1845).11 He crafted a narrative form that would make the investigation of a crime or mystery the central interest, and the prolonged investigation would create not only suspense but also ample opportunity to develop the main character, the detective. This character would be the focal point of the entire story. The detective’s actions within this standard form create the unique structure of a story, and structures of detective stories vary depending on the ways different sleuths solve the mysteries they encounter.

Many detective stories revolve around the sleuth and therefore (like Holmes stories) sell because of the name of the sleuth, not necessarily because of the structure, theme, plot, or even author. Readers grow attached to particular sleuths and seek out stories of their other adventures, certain of entertainment but even more interested in their favorite detective hero. In evidence of this tendency, the mystery sections of bookstores are now filled with books labeled as, for example, “A Hercule Poirot Murder Mystery” or “An Inspector Wexford...

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11 Murch discusses at length the development of detective fiction, devoting chapter 4 to Poe’s influence on the form of the short detective story.
Mystery." In Conan Doyle's day, the *Strand* headed the pages on which a Holmes story began with "Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" and then "Adventure I" or the appropriate number. Only after this information and the title of the story was the author's name given. As shown in figure 25, the cover of a *Strand* magazine enticed readers by not only advertising the new Holmes story contained inside but also including a picture of the detective hard at work. Incidentally, this drawing of Holmes represents the great detective most nearly like Conan Doyle himself envisioned him, or so reported the *Daily Express* of 14 December 1949: "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote on the back of this picture of Sherlock Holmes: 'This comes nearest to my conception of what Holmes really looks like.' The sketch, by artist Frank Wiles, was found last night in the files of the *Strand Magazine*" (qtd. in Haining 55).

A third function of the hero is contributing to the development of the story's plot. While the structure and form of the detective story depend on the sleuth himself, the plot, as part of that structure, is the character in action. In "The Art of Fiction" Henry James pointedly asks, "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character? What is . . . a novel that is not of character? What else do we seek in it and find in it?" (37). Advertising approaches like the *Strand*'s contribute to the understanding that readers do in fact seek character in their fiction, particularly in detective fiction. Within this genre the detective hero functions as a propellant of the plot. For example, Holmes is famous for his method of deductive reasoning. The plot is an extension of his use of deductive reasoning; therefore, the plot is a direct extension of Holmes, who employs this method of thought. Furthermore, Holmes's deductive
reasoning exists in heroic proportions, leading him to chide Watson gently for his acceptance of a lesser mental agility. He tells Watson, “You see, but you do not observe. The distinction is clear” (“Scandal” 12).

Other types of detectives—say, police detectives—cause plots to unfold differently. Twentieth-century writer Colin Dexter’s Detective Chief Inspector Morse of the Thames Valley Police proceeds with his investigations in the role of an official police investigator. Since he is in the Homicide Division, he has a right and a duty to be at crime scenes and does not wait for an invitation to come to him as Holmes usually does. Morse acquires his information and clues from examinations of crime scenes, from other officers who assist his investigation, and from persistent analysis of the mounds of paperwork that police investigations accrue. The plots of Inspector Morse mysteries are extensions of his police investigations, and even though they are police investigations they are unique because Morse decides what course of action or interrogation to take. The stories are therefore structured around Morse’s progress in solving the crime and around whatever danger he may be in from getting too close to the criminal’s secret.

Many detectives, including Holmes, remain essentially the same unchanging character throughout all of the stories featuring them, and this permanency of character contributes to a sense of familiarity felt by readers for the fictional agent. One nineteenth-century reader of Holmes commented that

Sherlock Holmes himself would interest us simply as a man. His curiously varied tastes, his fondness for good music and rare books, his disorderly rooms, his utter boredom when not absorbed in disentangling
mysteries, his prodigious consumption of shag tobacco when working out his problems, his addiction to the cocaine habit—a curious touch—all these things amuse or interest or pique us until we grow fond of him and get at last to know him almost as well as tho [sic] we, too, shared his rooms in Baker Street. (Peck 2759)

Familiar and reliable detectives like Holmes nevertheless supply dynamics to the plot at hand by means of their particular methods of solving mysteries (such as Holmes’s deductive reasoning)—methods they employ in response to whatever criminal elements may feature in the current narrative. Wallace Martin supports the validity of literary agents such as Holmes, observing that “it is often the very intricacy and inevitability of their connections with the reality they inhabit that makes them interesting” (118).

Martin’s explanation identifies one of the defining characteristics of detective fiction: the detective hero can be relied upon to be a generally consistent character who has his own distinctive and successful methods of solving crimes. Holmes, for instance, uses several techniques: sometimes he pursues the criminal himself, sometimes he has street urchins track down information for him, and sometimes he sets traps that bring the criminal directly to his Baker Street apartment where he secures him for the police. Holmes’s varying methods of investigation cause variations in plot structures. Likewise, Inspector Morse causes particular plot structures with his method of investigation based on police procedure. Other detectives may follow clues methodically to a solution, rely on help from an assistant, work undercover, struggle against incompetent police, or form
a solution intuitively and then search for supporting evidence. By proceeding in a particular manner, each detective hero causes distinctive types of plots to unfold.

Thus, Sherlock Holmes shows how a heroic agent in a narrative can serve several functions within it: he emphasizes certain themes and morals, he helps to establish narrative framework, and he contributes to or causes the development of the plot. The hero is an integral part of the whole story, and the defining characteristics of Holmes contribute to an ideal hero. As one critic aptly expressed it, "Holmes is a mythic figure, larger than life, unencumbered with the intellectual, moral, and emotional clutter that prevents lesser mortals from dealing with the world objectively and controlling their own destinies" (Wertheim 15).

In his role of hero in late Victorian and Edwardian times, Holmes's influence extended beyond the realm of literature and into the underlying culture and identity of English people and the British empire. The critic Catherine Belsey raises relevant issues of the role of literature in the construction of personal and cultural identity. She writes:

The argument is not only that literature represents the myths and imaginary versions of real social relationships which constitute ideology, but also that classic realist fiction, the dominant literary form of the nineteenth century and arguably of the twentieth, "interpellates" the reader, addresses itself to him or her directly, offering the reader as the position from which the text is most "obviously" intelligible, the position of the subject in (and of) ideology. (355)
How does Sherlock Holmes fit into this matrix of literature, culture, identity, and ideology? Moreover, how do readers of Holmes stories fit into this matrix and fill the "position from which the text is most 'obviously' intelligible"? The following chapter begins a closer examination of Holmes's situation relative to Britain's culture, ideology, and empire and also continues the study of imperialism begun in chapter 1. Out of this examination grows a more precise understanding of how the construction of fictional subjects contributes to the construction of actual subjects and, in turn, these subjects' involvement with empire and imperialism.
In late Victorian and Edwardian England, the link between culture and imperialism is forged in the daily lives of ordinary citizens. The average English man and woman did not go out daily, actively searching for the essence of imperialism and how to weave this essence into their private existences, or to expunge it. Instead, imperialism came to them, often covertly. It entered their houses in the pages of the latest illustrated magazine or adventure novel and from there took on life in their dreams of fantasy and adventure. It greeted them brightly in the latest advertisement for soap, assuring them that they were among the clean and cultured of the world. It subtly enmeshed itself in their social mores, combining smoothly with diverse touchstones of social life such as earnestness, manliness, sport, duty, and individual heroism. By the time of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in 1887, British culture and British imperialism did not exist apart from each other, identifiable as separate components of a national identity. Rather, culture and imperialism were a fused entity, inseparable by any force except the passage of time, which has allowed bits and pieces of culture to fade into shadows as new aspects of culture have developed to take their place in the light. It is impossible, then, to examine any aspect of Victorian and Edwardian England—be it history, literature, science, philosophy, or psychology—as a unit separate unto itself and
apart from the imperialism which permeated the nation and, indeed, the world.  

"Whether or not to look at the connections between cultural texts and imperialism,"

Edward Said writes, "is therefore to take a position in fact taken—either to study the connection in order to criticize it and think of alternatives for it, or not to study it in order to let it stand, unexamined and, presumably, unchanged" (Culture 68). The question, then, cannot be Is there an imperialist influence in this book or drawing or advertisement; the question is Where does the imperialist influence reveal itself?

As literary scholars such as Kenneth Wilson and Martin Green have argued, imperialism reveals itself in the particulars of England’s social fabric, including its popular culture. Wilson uses the term “popular imperialism” to include “a wide range of themes: of race and Social Darwinism, of history and England’s place in it, of manliness and character, and of war and adventure,” and he believes that popular imperialism “saturated British popular culture” (23). Similarly, Green addresses popular imperialism by focusing on the manner in which empire invades literature. “To celebrate adventure was to celebrate empire, and vice versa,” he writes. And while “not all writers could

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12 At the turn of the century, “the British Empire covered one-fourth of the earth’s land and included a quarter of its population. . . . includ[ing] India, Canada, New Zealand, and the states of Australia; Ashanti, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, British East Africa, Cape Province, Gambia, the Gold Coast, Natal, Nigeria, Nyasaland, Rhodesia, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, Uganda, and Zanzibar in Africa; Aden, Brunei, Ceylon, Hong Kong, Labuan, the Malay Federated States, North Borneo, Papua, Sarawak, and Singapore in Asia; the Bahamas, Barbados, British Guinea, British Honduras, the Virgin Islands, the Falkland Islands, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Newfoundland, Tobago, Trinidad, Turks and Caicos Islands, and the Windward Islands in America; the Channel Islands, Gibraltar, the Isle of Man, and Malta in Europe; and dozens of other islands scattered about the oceans of the world” (Mitchell and Startt 263-64).
sincerely adopt a celebratory attitude to empire. . . . All of them took the adventure
narrative to be the generic counterpart in literature to empire in politics” (37). In Green’s
view, adventure in literature and the nature of empire were inseparable. The ideology of
empire was woven into the fabric of the British imagination, an imagination woven, in
turn, from the fiction that was in abundant supply, whether it was the classic Victorian
monthly-part novels and three-volume (triple-decker) novels or in the boys’ and girls’
magazines and penny dreadfuls or in the illustrated monthly magazines that inundated the
nation in the last decades of the century. Living vicariously through narrative fiction was
a national pastime, and in 1904 one reviewer estimated from publishers’ statements of
number of novels sold that “from 80,000 to 150,000 copies of a novel . . . really reaches
[sic] the heart of the English people . . . and, allowing only ten readers for each copy, the
millions are plainly being influenced by our authors of genius” (Lang 158). While the
figure of ten readers per copy is generous, it nevertheless reflects the readership of large
families and lending libraries; thousands of copies of novels by multiple authors could
conceivably reach and influence millions of readers (or listeners in the case of novels read
aloud in family settings).

Literature, as a highly expressive and persuasive media of communication, is a
powerful transmitter of ideology, and the connection between a narrative's ideology and
its reader—an individual in society—becomes crucial in analyses of national ideology.
In a study of the constructions of subjectivity (identity) and personal ideology, Catherine
Belsey writes that “fiction . . . plays a part in the process of constructing subjectivity”
and, furthermore, that “the subject is constructed in language and in discourse and, since
the symbolic order in its discursive use is closely related to ideology, in ideology" (355, 359). Literature, then, as written language, discourse, and ideology, plays a crucial role in readers' construction of identity. Empire's presence in literature produced by its subjects was virtually unavoidable, and its presence created undercurrents of imperialist attitudes, assumptions, and opinions that reflected and influenced the personal identities of both writers and readers. "Some writers (like Defoe) understood the empire to be a place where adventures took place, and men became heroes. Some (like Swift) refused to understand empire in any such favorable terms. Some (most serious novelists) refused to understand it at all as a subject for fiction" (M. Green 37). Whether openly embracing the marriage of empire and fiction or steadfastly declining to involve it in their writing, writers had to grapple with the presence or with the absence of empire in their texts and subtexts. Indeed, a writer's intentional exclusion of empire from his work often served only to introduce empire through the back door; empire was all the more notable for its exclusion, resulting in a provocative presence of absence.

The integral role empire played in adventure fiction of the day becomes quickly evident in such facts as that in the half century beginning in 1860, there were at least six "story papers" in publication at one time or another aimed at young boys and titled with expressly imperial titles, among them Boys of the Empire and Young Men of Great Britain (Penny 15). The heroes in these and other works of fiction, whether for adults or children and whether coupled outright with imperialist issues or not, embodied the nation's preoccupation with individual heroism and adventure. Heroes performed actions
that readers performed in fantasy. The heroes of fiction were the nation’s ideology in action.

In the pages of McClure’s Magazine in 1894, Conan Doyle expressed an opinion regarding fiction and culture that was gaining widespread belief among authors and critics. He said:

I think the age of fiction is coming—the age when religious and social and political changes will all be effected by means of the novelist. . . .

Everybody is educated now, but comparatively few are very educated. To get an idea to penetrate to the masses of the people, you must put fiction around it, like sugar round a pill. . . . Still his [the author’s] first business will always be to interest. If he can’t get his sugar right, people will refuse his pill. (Barr 508)

Many critics agreed that authors of fiction held great sway over their readers’ perceptions of reality as it was and as it should be. In the Quarterly Review in 1904, reviewer Andrew Lang said of the “popular novelists of England and America”:

These men and women are our social, spiritual, religious, and political teachers. This is an important fact, for their readers take fiction seriously; their lives are being directed, their characters are being framed, by authors such as Mr Hall Caine, Miss Marie Corelli, Mr Anthony Hope, Mr Rudyard Kipling, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. (158)

The concept of fiction writers as teachers becomes crucial in understanding the links between literature, ideology, and imperialism.
A primary link between empire and literature is the hero in both of them. As early as 1841 and 1842, Thomas Carlyle carefully made clear to his lecture audiences and his reading public that real-life heroes and historical movements take shape in reference to and in response to each other. For instance, Carlyle explains that while Martin Luther did not single-handedly cause the Reformation to happen—“the Reformation simply could not help coming”—Luther labored at the forefront of the movement, shaping it and defining it by his actions (On Heroes 116). In the same way, authors of the heroes of fiction are like Luther in their shaping of national consciousness. Like religious and political heroes, heroes of fiction perform at the forefront of a nation’s history by embodying the nation’s desires, fears, and dreams.

Men of action perform the actions of empire and the adventures of narrative; often the actions of empire are adventures, and empire and heroic narrative begin to merge. To an empire’s citizens and a narrative’s readers, then, the hero is central to perceiving and understanding what is going on in either world, the real or the imaginary, for the hero is the originator of the heroic action in both of them. In this manner, heroes of empire and of narrative are the same heroes: heroes of the people. The empire becomes “a place where . . . men became heroes,” and through fiction “writers . . . prepared the young men of England to go out to the colonies, to rule, and their families to rejoice in their fates out there” (M. Green 37-38).

At the forefront of fiction writers who rode the crest of the wave of imperialism sweeping the world was Scottish-born and educated Arthur Conan Doyle. Conan Doyle earned a Bachelor of Medicine degree from Edinburgh University in 1881 and, after a
brief stint as junior associate to another doctor, set up his own practice in Southsea. In
1887, barely six years after receiving the medical degree, Conan Doyle published the first
Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*. Although he studied ophthalmology in Vienna and set
up practice as an oculist in London in 1891, he soon set aside his medical practice in
favor of full-time pursuit of his career as a writer.

Conan Doyle’s ability to present fiction as though it exists outside the narrator is
one of his greatest skills. When he was a boy, Conan Doyle read an account of a ship that
was found deserted at sea, but it had no signs of a battle or struggle of any sort; it was as
if the crew and passengers had simply vanished and left the ship floating by itself. Later
Conan Doyle created an explanation for this mysterious occurrence and published it in
*Cornhill Magazine* as “J. Habbakuk Jephson’s Statement.” He wrote the explanation as
though he were Jephson, a doctor and survivor of the mysterious event at sea. Soon after
the publication of Jephson’s “explanation,” a telegram “was printed in all the London
papers” which read: “Solly Flood, Her Majesty’s advocate-general at Gibraltar,
telegraphs that the statement of J. Habbakuk Jephson is nothing less than a fabrication”
(Barr 510). The telegram is testimony to the utter credibility and the formal realism
Conan Doyle’s fiction can produce, even when such fiction involves the seemingly
inexplicable.

In Holmes, Conan Doyle created a literary agent who assumed reality in readers’
minds, and readers responded to Holmes as though he were extra-literary. On the one
hand, Conan Doyle said, “the public would insist upon identifying me with my character,
and . . . from all quarters of the world, varying as widely as from San Francisco to
Moscow, I had private communications detailing family mysteries which I was at once to come and unravel” (“Dinner” 79). Other readers behaved as though Holmes were actually a living person and Conan Doyle had simply recounted his adventurous doings. The author remarked on several occasions that he often received mail addressed to Sherlock Holmes at 221B Baker Street which the post office had good naturedly delivered to him at his home in South Norwood. Conan Doyle admits to discarding dozens of these early requests to Holmes for advice and assistance in mysterious matters, missing persons, thefts, and the like. But some of the letters dated from the turn of the century and later survived. One gentleman, writing on letterhead that enumerates his various qualifications as an “Expert, Apiarist, and Lecturer to the British Bee-Keepers Association,” wrote to Holmes, “I see by some of the morning papers that you are about to retire and take up beekeeping. I know not if this be correct or otherwise, but if correct I shall be pleased to render you service by giving any advice you may require” (R. L. Green 72). An “M. Gunton” offered Holmes housekeeping services “for his country cottage at Xmas” (R. L. Green 153). Another gentleman mailed a neatly typed letter to Sherlock Holmes Esq. “asking for the favour of your autograph to add to my collection. I have derived very much pleasure from reading your Memoirs, and should very highly value the possession of your famous signature” (R. L. Green 118). Over the years, letters continued to pour in from such diverse locales as Russia, America, Denmark, the Gold Coast, Brazil, Japan, and Czechoslovakia, among many others.

Despite Holmes’s viability as a subject in fiction and as a hero who had caught the imagination of Britain and beyond, critics of literature have regularly dismissed the
Holmes stories as objects deserving of literary analysis. Chapter 1 of this study mentioned ways in which Holmes stories are overlooked in current literary criticism. The tendency to discount the detective stories as serious literature developed along with the genre itself. In 1904, Andrew Lang reviewed Conan Doyle’s novels for the Quarterly Review, lauding the influence of authors on the varied parts of readers’ lives, from religion to science to politics; nevertheless, Lang dismissed the Holmes stories saying, “The feats of Sherlock Holmes do not lend themselves as inspiring topics to criticism. If we are puzzled and amused we get as much as we want” (176). Lang is not alone in his opinion that the desired effect of detective stories is to puzzle, amuse, and entertain, not to provoke serious thought. Agatha Christie’s husband, Max Mallowan, has written in his evaluation of detection fiction and criticism that “Literary analysis can . . . ruin a book for the reader [by giving away the ending]. I have the feeling, unfair perhaps, that the analytic critic of detective fiction is either a knave or a fool” (206). Moreover, many detective fiction writers themselves agree with such sentiments. Robert Barnard, who has won the Anthony, Agatha, and Macavity awards for his works in the mystery genre, writes, “My prejudice in favor of detective stories as entertainment . . . is long-standing and deep-rooted, and I distrust people who try to take the detective story in other directions. . . . I do not want the genre to attain a borderline respectability” (7-8).
Perhaps most significant of all is that Conan Doyle himself grew impatient with writing the Holmes stories and considered them to be a hindrance to his pursuit of writing "better things." In a letter to his mother in November of 1891, Conan Doyle expresses satisfaction at having finished eleven of the first dozen Holmes stories contracted to the Strand, and he tells her that "I think of slaying Holmes in the sixth [of the second set of six] & winding him up for good and all. He takes my mind from better things" (Cox 122). Conan Doyle was at the time working on historical romances, the novels that

Fig. 26. Conan Doyle's sketch of himself as an old horse dragging along a lifetime's work. Sherlock Holmes is a small piece of the load (Haining 32).

would in 1904 be reviewed so favorably by Andrew Lang in the Quarterly Review. At the end of his life Conan Doyle persisted in ranking the Holmes fiction as only a small part of his life's achievement. He best expressed the sentiment visually in a drawing he
made of himself as a worn-out old horse pulling his life's work in a wagon while his “veterinarians” stood by. The drawing is shown here in figure 26 and depicts “Sherlock Holmes” as one among nearly three dozen other significant achievements.

In the face of all this insistence that detective fiction should be left in the realm of entertainment, and at the risk of being considered “a knave or a fool,” why should one persevere in the serious study of Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes stories? The answer lies in the connections between culture, ideology, empire, and their heroes. Carlyle wrote, “Show me the man you honour,” and “I know by that symptom . . . what kind of man you yourself are. For you show me there what your ideal of manhood is; what kind of man you long inexpressibly to be” (Pamphlets 255). Holmes was one of the most recognizable heroes in fiction at the turn of the century. In 1904 Haldane MacFall wrote “There is scarce a man, woman or child but knows whom you mean if you speak of Sherlock Holmes” (305). He was popular culture’s answer to hero worship, and in studying Holmes as a hero one can study not only the author Conan Doyle’s ideology but the ideology of a nation as well. In so doing one finds that Holmes is not just a hero of rationality, of scientific positivism, of the empirical method, but also that he is a hero of the empire, a hero of imperialism, and a manifestation of their underlying ideology. Conan Doyle’s sources of creative inspiration include both imperialist and empiricist heroes.

The creation of Holmes began with heroes. One of Conan Doyle’s own heroes was Napoleon, of whom he said, “He was a wonderful man—perhaps the most wonderful man who ever lived. . . . The secret of his success seems to me to have been his ability to
originate gigantic schemes that seemed fantastic and impossible, while his mastery of detail enabled him to bring his projects to completion where any other man would have failed" (Barr 511, 513). In Conan Doyle’s description of Napoleon’s mastery of detail and superior capabilities, one catches glimpses of Sherlock Holmes, whose affinity for detail is unsurpassed and whose success in solving cases that Scotland Yard cannot is legendary. In the first Holmes story published in the Strand, “A Scandal in Bohemia” (1891), Watson’s narration creates both of these Napoleonic qualities in Holmes. No factual detail escapes Holmes’s keen intellect because “for many years he had adopted a system of docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things, so that it was difficult to name a subject or a person on which he could not at once furnish information” (15-16). Before “Scandal,” in A Study in Scarlet, the Napoleonic attention to detail surfaces repeatedly as Holmes uncovers minute bits of evidence (cigar ash, for instance) because his “smallest actions were all directed towards some definite and practical end” (171). Moreover, Holmes draws attention to his successful use of detail when he says to the (unsuccessful) Scotland Yarder Gregson, “To a great mind, nothing is little” (187). As for the Napoleonic quality of “bring[ing] his projects to completion where any other man would have failed,” Holmes makes a point of “following out those clues, and clearing up those mysteries, which had been abandoned as hopeless by the official police” (“Scandal” 11). There are clearly definitive qualities of Conan Doyle’s empirical and imperial hero Napoleon in Sherlock Holmes.

Besides the influence of the hero Napoleon on the creation of Holmes, Conan Doyle’s former medical mentor, Dr. Joseph Bell, contributed extensive influence,
particularly regarding Holmes's famous "science of deduction." Dr. Bell had deeply impressed his pupil with his abilities of assembling extensive and accurate patient histories simply by observing a patient and his or her speech, mannerism, dress, and other outlets of personal expression. Conan Doyle refers to Bell as "the man who suggested Sherlock Holmes to me" and says with admiration, "His intuitive powers were simply marvelous" (How 7). Elsewhere he says, "Sherlock Holmes is the literary embodiment, if I may so express it, of my memory of a professor of medicine at Edinburgh University. . . . His great faculty of deduction was at times highly dramatic" (Blathwayt 50). Conan Doyle describes Bell's intuitive powers in action in his medical practice where Conan Doyle assisted:

Case No. 1 would step up.

"I see," said Mr. Bell, "you're suffering from drink. You even carry a flask in the inside breast pocket of your coat."

Another case would come forward.

"Cobbler, I see." Then he would turn to the students, and point out to them that the inside of the knee of the man's trousers was worn. That was where the man had rested the lapstone—a peculiarity only found in cobblers. (How 7)

Dr. Bell himself explained the value of these quick and accurate initial evaluations of people. "The patient . . . is likely to be impressed by your ability to cure him in the future if he sees you, at a glance, know much of his past" (How 9).
Just as Dr. Bell deduces factual data from a brief glance at an individual and therewith establishes credibility and an aspect of power in that subject’s eyes, so does Holmes. Story after story begins with a demonstration of his sure ability to solve the case. In “The Adventure of the Speckled Band” the client, Helen Stoner, has barely arrived when Holmes says, “You have come in by train this morning, I see.” When Stoner replies with surprise, “You know me, then?” Holmes explains and then demonstrates his powers further for good measure. “I observe the second half of a return ticket in the palm of your left glove. You must have started early, and yet you had a good drive in a dog-cart, along heavy roads, before you reached the station” (109). At this point “the lady gave a violent start, and stared in bewilderment,” and Holmes goes on with his demonstration of deductive prowess. “‘There is no mystery, my dear madam,’ said he, smiling. ‘The left arm of your jacket is spattered with mud in no less than seven places. The marks are perfectly fresh. There is no vehicle save a dog-cart which throws up mud in that way, and then only when you sit on the left hand side of the driver’” (109).

In these fundamental attributes of the hero, Conan Doyle establishes a link to the scientific ideology of the day. Positivism, or the philosophy of science based solely on fact and observable data, was a significant philosophy in the scientific community dating from Auguste Compte’s writings in the 1830s through the 1850s. Compte’s theories were promoted by John Stuart Mill in *Auguste Compte and Positivism* (1865) and reflected in the narrative fiction of authors such as George Eliot and Harriet Martineau (Nichols 620). Martineau also translated into English Compte’s writings on positivism, published as a two-volume set in 1853 as *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Compte,* it
was republished as a three-volume set in 1896. Holmes functions as a hero of science in his successful application of positivism to everyday occurrences and to people. He is “the most perfect observing and reasoning machine the world has seen,” and he operates only on fact and observable phenomena (“Scandal” 11). He has “a passion for definite and exact knowledge” (Study 149).

The ardent admiration, or hero worship of powerful and trustworthy agents like Holmes had become a distinctive part of Victorian culture well before the Holmes stories began to appear and attract a massive following.

One factor behind Victorian hero-worship was the Romantic rediscovery of enthusiasm. In the neoclassical period it had been applied as a term of ridicule to religious zealots who felt themselves literally... (en-theos), possessed by God or having God within them. Romantic theory and sensibility converted enthusiasm from an intellectually ludicrous delusion to a sign of emotional depth and power. The characteristic “romantic passions” thus came to include enthusiasm or unfettered admiration, which, according to Ruskin, meant “primarily all the forms of Hero Worship.” (Goldberg xxxiii-xxxiv; Ruskin 33: 292).

As a representative of heroes in fiction of the British Empire, Sherlock Holmes is valuable for several reasons. Mainly, he is the first fully developed sleuth and as such has influenced the development of many sleuths who have come after him, thus perpetuating the fascination with science and the earnest pursuit of knowledge that so characterized Victorian England. Thomas Carlyle had already declared that “the first and chief
characteristic of a Hero” is that “he is heartily in earnest” (On Heroes 159), and in Holmes’ single-minded pursuit of knowledge and justice he emerges as an earnest hero in each story.

Furthermore, although the Holmes stories “combine standard characters (stupid policemen, distressed heiresses) and incidents (the initiating step on the stair, a hansom ride through London streets) into a standard plot (with the victim’s explanation of the problem as a second segment, Holmes’s explanation of his deduction as a penultimate segment),” Holmes is far from being a standard character (Stibbs 81-82). He is the outstanding focal point of every investigation, of every story, and he rises heroically time and time again from the chaos caused by villains.

While some may complain that “the adventures of Sherlock are too brief to permit much study of character. The thing becomes a formula, and we can imagine little variation” (Lang 176), it is nevertheless significant that Holmes is consistent, reliable, and unfailingly successful. His very predictability in success fills a need in the people of the Empire for a hero—a hero they can rely on to recognize threats to the safety of the everyday citizen and to save the day with a flourish. Although these criminals are fictitious, “just as the detective’s aura embodies values that the audience holds to be important, so the crimes and criminals realise what the audience most fears” (Knight “Case” 176). Holmes emerges from the stories as a powerful hero who neutralizes and controls the fears and problems of Victorian England.

A hero-character such as Holmes differs from other characters in several ways, and these differences not only set him apart as crucial to the narrative but also establish
his validity as the focus of the narrative and of readers’ admiration or hero worship.

While Lestrade and Gregson of Scotland Yard attempt to imitate Holmes’s methods of investigating, they regularly fall short of his abilities to accomplish the intellectually difficult task of catching the wily criminal or solving the obscure mystery. “Gregson is the smartest of the Scotland Yarders,” Holmes says to Watson; “he and Lestrade are the pick of a bad lot. They are both quick and energetic, but conventional—shockingly so” (Study 165). Holmes’s own unconventionality in solving crimes and mysteries—whether it be disguising himself as a groomsman to acquire information about Irene Adler in “A Scandal in Bohemia” or witnessing the cold-blooded murder of a blackmailer and deciding not to reveal the killer’s identity to the police in “Charles Augustus Milverton”—becomes his own brand of conventionality; it is his custom to proceed with investigations in uncustomary manners and to apply his own version of justice to the results. Watson, ever the faithful assistant, admires and worships Holmes and records his cases diligently, directing his readers’ admiration in Holmes’s direction. Even when it appears that the villain Moriarty has gotten the best of Holmes in “The Final Problem,” it turns out in “The Adventure of the Empty House” that Holmes has outdone Moriarty as well.

As hero, Holmes is not only the focal point of each story but his first appearance in the narrative signals to the reader that “the game is afoot.” A typical Holmes story begins with a paragraph or so of introductory chit-chat by Watson, who lays a groundwork of suspense and anticipation which culminates with the appearance of Holmes on the scene. For instance, in beginning “The Five Orange Pips” Watson says,
“When I glance over my notes and records of the Sherlock Holmes cases between the years ‘82 and ‘90, I am faced by so many which present strange and interesting features, that it is no easy matter to know which to choose and which to leave” (69). He goes on to mention five specific cases before centering on the one which he will relate in this story, thereby bringing in the appearance of Holmes, and the story proper begins. Holmes proceeds to perform heroically.

Holmes sums up his own defining qualities when he describes himself to Watson:

I have a turn both for observation and for deduction. . . . I have a trade of my own. I suppose I am the only one in the world. I'm a consulting detective. . . . Here in London we have lots of Government detectives and lots of private ones. When these fellows are at fault, they come to me, and I manage to put them on the right scent. (Study 160)

Holmes is unique because he is the only sleuth of his sort in London or in the world, as he says. He solves mysteries that baffle other crime solvers. He is a valuable character because, except for Poe's character Dupin, he is the first sleuth to fill this role, and Dupin features in only three stories compared to Holmes's sixty.

Hero worship of Holmes and the popularization of the detective story developed simultaneously, each contributing to the other's rising eminence. In addition, the rise of detective fiction and the last of the real "glory days" of the British Empire coincided, and while the Empire has declined, the genre of detective fiction has only grown. Holmes appeared at the pivotal point at which he could freely embody the best of the Empire yet
avoid conveying the negative impressions of the political frustrations connected to the
decline of the Empire.

Holmes began his career the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1887. That year *A Study in Scarlet* appeared in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*. The story was not an immediate success, but the public responded favorably enough so that it was published as its own hard cover volume the following year. Conan Doyle, who had sold all rights to *Beeton's* for twenty-five pounds, did not profit financially from the publication of *A Study* in hard cover, but he did profit in that Holmes's reputation began to grow, albeit slowly. The next Holmes story appeared in *Lippincott's Magazine* in February of 1890 as *The Sign of the Four* and was successful enough to be published in book form later that year in both London and America. The foundation had been laid, and when "A Scandal in Bohemia" appeared in *The Strand Magazine* the following year, Holmes began a rapid rise to popularity in England and abroad. He would go on to become the cornerstone of detective fiction for then and for the ensuing century.

The publication of "A Scandal in Bohemia" in July of 1891 began the pattern of Holmes stories that would continue to appear in the magazine over the next several decades. As described in chapter 2, the structural technique of serialized stories whose plots were complete in each story but whose primary characters continued from story to story had not been done before, but the style caught on with the Holmes stories, which spanned four decades in the *Strand*. Because each short story was complete in one magazine issue, readers were not discouraged or inconvenienced if they missed one issue.
They could—and would—buy the next one and continue following the adventures of Holmes without confusion.

"A Scandal in Bohemia" also established Holmes's popularity with the people of Victorian Britain, and as the stories continued to run in the Strand, "the publishers knew they had something new, unique, and successful" (Cox 120). As each new adventure came out, Holmes grew more firmly entrenched in people's minds, in their perceptions of detective fiction, and even in their hearts. Readers grew attached to the hero as detective.

Because readers enjoyed the Holmes mysteries so much, the publishers of the Strand asked Conan Doyle for more stories of the detective. Reluctant to commit himself to writing more, Conan Doyle raised his price from thirty-five pounds a story to fifty, fully expecting the editors to refuse the rate and actually hoping that they would so he could have the time to write and market other types of fiction. But the editors immediately agreed, and Conan Doyle wrote six new stories. At the next request for more, he raised his price to about eighty-five pounds per story, more than double the original fee, and the editors again agreed (Cox 121). The willingness of these editors to pay these amounts of money demonstrates the widespread impact of Holmes in fiction and suggests that Holmes as hero had gone beyond an enjoyable read to something more serious. Holmes had begun to represent a touchstone of British life, and each time Holmes contained the threats of evil, readers exulted in the comfort of such security from attack.

Readers grew so attached to Sherlock Holmes that when "The Final Problem" came out in December of 1893, their reaction to the detective's "death" was
unprecedented. "More than 20,000 readers cancelled [sic] their subscriptions to the Strand; Conan Doyle received an avalanche of hate mail; and City businessmen went to their offices wearing black crepe around their top hats" (Grella and Dematteis 85). Holmes had become the representative hero of Victorian England, and people resented the loss of hope his death represented. People in the late twentieth-century would feel similarly outraged if, in the latest movies, Batman proved to be no match for the latest villain threatening Gotham City, or if Superman’s suit suddenly failed him and allowed a bullet to pass through and destroy him.

This public reaction to the death of a beloved hero in fiction was not a one-time incident, although it was the first involving a detective and is arguably the most dramatic. Nearly a century later the detective in many of Agatha Christie’s mysteries, Hercule Poirot, died by committing suicide after murdering a murderer in Curtain (1975). When the book came out, “newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic published obituaries. The August 6, 1975, edition of the New York Times gave Poirot a front-page obituary . . . an honour accorded very few ‘real’ people” (Sanders and Loyallo 348). These public responses to the deaths of detective heroes demonstrates the vital role this sort of hero plays in literature and in the culture that gives birth to such literature.

In 1894, when Conan Doyle’s friend and fellow mystery writer Robert Barr said to him, “By the way, is Sherlock Holmes really dead?” Conan Doyle replied quite strongly, “Yes; I shall never write another Holmes story” (Barr 511). When a fan wrote to him inquiring after Holmes, Conan Doyle assured her that the detective was quite dead but thanked her for her concern (Wertheim 19). But Holmes was such a powerful and
popular character that neither readers nor publishers could accept his demise easily.

Finally, eight years after Holmes’s “final problem,” Conan Doyle revived him temporarily by publishing a short novel set before the doomed plunge into Reichenbach Falls, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* serialized in the *Strand* in 1901-02. Critics excitedly predicted that “we are to have what will probably be the most remarkable story of them all” (Peck 2760). Ironically, Conan Doyle had begun the story as a simple ghost story, “but, needing a hero, [he] used Holmes, who fit the part admirably” (Cox 124).

The ghost mystery was an element new to the Holmes stories and the story served to establish Holmes further as a hero of the time as well as to broaden the sleuth’s range of adventures.

The pressure on Conan Doyle from readers and publishers to produce more Holmes stories continued. Readers missed their friends, Holmes and Watson, and publishers missed the income from marketing the stories. The editors of the American *Collier’s Weekly* offered Conan Doyle $5,000 per story if he would write more, and the editor of the *Strand* offered over half that amount for the English rights (Cox 126).

Finally, Conan Doyle consented to produce more stories. He wrote “The Empty House,” revealing that it had been Moriarty alone who plunged to his death over the Reichenbach Falls in “The Final Problem.” Holmes had escaped alive. “The Empty House” was an instant success, and “people lined up for blocks to buy the magazine containing the new story” (Cox 126).

What was it about this fictive agent, Holmes, that inspired such long-lasting devotion and affection from readers? The readers were not merely attracted to the plots
of the stories, for there were other detective stories by skillful writers being published as well. In part, they were drawn to the persona of Holmes and to his reliability as a hero. At a time when so much else in the world was in flux, Holmes could be relied upon to methodically solve any problem and assuage any fear. "To become a best-seller like that a writer of crime stories has to embody in the detective a set of values which the audience finds convincing, forces which they can believe will work to contain the disorder of crime" (Knight "Case" 175). We may add, too, that the best-selling detective controls or contains not only the disorders of crime but also the more potentially harmful political and ideological threats represented by the Other. Of importance, then, is the manner in which these disorders are constructed in the Holmes stories and the methods the detective employs to control and contain them. These questions are explored in the following chapter.

Holmes's reign as hero spanned the final years of Victoria's rule and survived throughout the reign of Edward VII and twenty years into the rule of George V. During these years of rapidly changing politics and mutable boundaries of Empire, Holmes remained a fixed point, existing not only as a hero of justice but also as a hero of science, a hero of the earnest pursuit of knowledge, a savior for the oppressed and fearful. Indeed, the collapse of Empire does not mean the collapse of the imperial mind, and in the midst

13 Numerous authors published mystery and detective fiction during the years the Holmes stories were coming out, although no character surpassed Holmes in popularity. Among the most recognizable authors now, a century later, are Charles Dickens (The Mystery of Edwin Drood); Wilkie Collins (The Woman in White, The Moonstone); G. K. Chesterton (The Innocence of Father Brown); and H. G. Wells ("The Thing in Number 7," "The Thumbmark").
of the disintegration of the Empire proper, detective fiction was vicariously substituted for imperialism in the everyday world. Empiricist and imperialist values remained central in the fiction, especially in the detective's assumption of the monarch's "divine right" in control of the world around him. Detectives such as Holmes function as literary monarchs, subjects in fiction but subjects to no one. Like Holmes, these detectives exercise the power of meting out justice, of deciding which crimes will go unpunished and which villains deserve the fate of death. In this manner, the detective hero's reign has never truly ended; it survives in the mystery and detective fiction of the past century.
CHAPTER 5
THE COLONIZED OTHER AS PARASITE AND MURDERER IN
CONAN DOYLE’S EMPIRICIST, IMPERIALIST FICTION

As we saw in chapters 3 and 4, the century spanning the period from the 1840s
when Thomas Carlyle published *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*
through approximately 1930 when Conan Doyle died, heroes and hero worship served a
number of valuable functions within British culture. During this time when heroes, real
and fictive, were so important in English life and literature, Conan Doyle created a few
heroes of his own, constructing them in the context of imperialism. In the closing of the
Victorian era and afterwards in the Edwardian era, Conan Doyle was an active proponent
of British imperialism, contributing to the cause in the capacities of doctor, politician, and
writer. He served as a volunteer doctor to British troops in South Africa, and his first-
hand account of the struggles there, entitled *The Great Boer War* (1900), was for years
England’s standard account of that stage of British history. In 1902, Conan Doyle was
knighted by King Edward VII for his services to England, particularly for his widely
translated treatise *The War in South Africa: Its Cause and Conduct* (1902), which
defended the actions of British soldiers in the Boer War.¹⁴

¹⁴ Using funds (around £5,000) donated by English citizens from all walks of life,
Doyle distributed this pamphlet in Britain, Canada, and America; he also commissioned
translated editions to be given away and sold in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany,
Austria, Russia, Holland, Norway, Scandinavia, Hungary, Sweden, Portugal, Spain, Italy,
and Wales. There were also editions in the Tamil and Kanarese languages. In “An
Incursion into Diplomacy” published in 1906 in Cornhill Magazine, Doyle wrote an
explanation of the entire process as a report “to a number of my countrymen who once
Just as Conan Doyle supported British Imperialism through personal service and political polemics, he included his imperialist views in his narrative fiction, albeit in a more subtle manner. An examination of *The Parasite* (1894), a novella about a mesmerist who spiritually attaches herself to her subjects like a parasite, and "The Speckled Band" (1892), a story about a murderer "who had had an Eastern training," reveals a representative sampling of Conan Doyle’s imperialist views and illustrates how heroes of the Empire and heroes of fiction are often one and the same. In *The Parasite*, the tension between the story’s main characters, Austin Gilroy and Helen Penclosa, symbolizes the tension between England and her colonized countries. In a nation occupied with maintaining its control over its colonized subjects even as it loses world power to larger industrialized nations, Conan Doyle explores the frightening possibility of the Other—the colonized subject—gaining control over and displacing the Familiar—the English subject. In "The Speckled Band," Conan Doyle constructs the murderer’s character with trappings of the far East, creating a villain from afar who preys on England’s innocent citizens, including the villain’s own two stepdaughters. In the former story Gilroy emerges heroic, being the only person who recognizes the threat Penclosa poses to the community. In the latter story Holmes emerges victorious, having deduced the meaning of the mysterious clanging and whistles in the night. In both stories, the villains’ outcome is death.

trusted me unreservedly with a considerable sum of their money, as to how this money was spent” (744).
Part of the appeal of heroes, whether living and fictive, is that they enable their followers and readers to experience heroism vicariously and thus to feel more heroic themselves. Michael K. Goldberg writes in his introduction to Carlyle’s *On Heroes* that “to shudder at the hell of Dante is to become a poet; we are all poets when we read a poem well, all heroes when we recognize heroism” (Ix). Herein lies the appeal of heroes, and herein lies the appeal of subjects in fiction such as Austin Gilroy and Sherlock Holmes. Gilroy is an ordinary person, going about his professional occupation with a desire to perform well and planning his marriage to his fiancée, Agatha. Gilroy is heroic in that, as an ordinary citizen with simple human powers, he battles an outside evil attacking his relatively safe, typically English society. Gilroy is an everyman, representing the ordinary, typical human being.

Sherlock Holmes, on the other hand, is not an everyman but is god-like in intelligence and intuition. Watson observes that people “who were unacquainted with his methods would look askance at him as on a man whose knowledge was not that of other mortals” (“Red-Headed” 35). Holmes’s companion, Dr. Watson, fills the role of everyman, and Watson says of himself:

I trust that I am not more dense than my neighbors, but I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes. Here I had heard what he had heard, I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he saw clearly not only what had happened, but what was about to happen, while to me the whole business was still confused. (“Red-Headed” 35)
While readers may empathize with Watson because they too have difficulty solving the mysteries before Holmes does, they can also become with Watson a bit more heroic themselves in their recognition of heroism in Holmes. “Show me the man you honour,” Carlyle writes, and “I know by that symptom . . . what kind of man you yourself are. For you show me there what your ideal of manhood is; what kind of man you long inexpressibly to be” (Pamphlets 255).

Let us look first at the hero who is everyman, Austin Gilroy. The Parasite is the story of Gilroy, who is a young science professor, and a crippled woman with “strange little eyes” from Trinidad in the West Indies who claims to be a mesmerist. Throughout the narrative, Conan Doyle traits Gilroy as scrupulously rational and familiarly English while Penclosa, the outsider, is a dark and alien “Other,” a foreign source of evil and power that intrudes on the domestic security of Gilroy and his fiancée, Agatha. Gilroy is a physiology professor who, in seeking scientific evidence of the process and effects of mesmerism, submits to hypnotism by Penclosa. At first, Gilroy is impressed by her abilities and records in his journal, “My horizon of scientific possibilities has suddenly been enormously extended” (63). He also expresses a typically imperialist sentiment towards his “research” with Penclosa: “Who would not work hard who had a vast virgin field ready to his hand?” (63). Edward Said refers to land in a similar way when he describes the imperialist enterprise. “At some very basic level,” he writes, “imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others” (Culture 7).
Gilroy sees an opportunity to study and intellectually control “land” that he does not possess, i.e., Penclosa, the “vast virgin field.”

Soon, however, Gilroy realizes that Penclosa “has conceived a passion for me” and worse, that she “has a parasite soul” (70, 72). He realizes too that “she rouses something in me—something evil—something I had rather not think of. She paralyzes my better nature, too, at the moment when she stimulates my worse” (70).

Uncontrollably, however, Gilroy is continually drawn to Penclosa until the moment of her death. At several points he attempts to break off contact with her; he relies on his empiricist training saying, “I must pit my intellect against her powers” (72). Penclosa vengefully counters by causing him to perform embarrassing and harmful actions while under hypnosis; Gilroy delivers absurd lectures and loses his professorship, he attempts to rob a branch of the Bank of England, and he beats up a fellow professor. Gilroy’s final action under Penclosa’s power is curtailed by the woman’s death, at the moment of which Gilroy awakens from a trance to find himself in Agatha’s boudoir preparing to throw acid on her.

In creating a protagonist such as Gilroy, Conan Doyle accomplishes at least two things. He is writing the story just one year after the supposed death of Sherlock Holmes, the author’s most popular character, in “The Adventure of the Final Problem” (1893). While “killing” Holmes was Conan Doyle’s own idea, his reading public was so dissatisfied and angry that Conan Doyle, in creating Professor Gilroy, may have been attempting to pacify readers with a Holmes substitute complete with rational, empirically-driven motivations and desires.
But Conan Doyle is doing much more with *The Parasite* than simply responding to his readers’ desire for a Holmesian hero. Critics such as Stephen Knight have argued that a nation’s fears and desires often surface in its popular culture (“Case” 185). In popular fiction like Conan Doyle’s, heroes like Austin Gilroy and Sherlock Holmes function as a means of controlling those fears, and they do so through empiricism—the logical, fact-based pursuit of knowledge from observable data. In writing a story in which the hero is rational, logical, and scientific, and the villain is emotion-driven (that is, irrational) and non-scientific, Conan Doyle is expressing, consciously or not, personifications of his own familiar nation, England, and the less familiar colonized nations.\(^{15}\)

\(^{15}\) In like manner, many of Conan Doyle’s Holmes stories suggest parallels between women and the colonized Other, the parallelism being evident in the traiting of female subjects and in the placement of these subjects in plot positions. Two articles addressing the idea of woman as colonized Other are Rosemary Hennessy and Rajeswari Mohan’s “The Construction of Women in Three Popular Texts of Empire” and Catherine Belsey’s “Constructing the Subject: Deconstructing the Text.” The former study engages the construction of woman as Other by examining the Holmes story “The Adventure of the Speckled Band” alongside Flora Annie Steel’s “Mussumat Kirpo’s Doll” and a cartoon from *Punch* entitled “A divided duty.” Belsey performs a similar study using the Holmes story “Charles Augustus Milverton,” a story depending for its plot construction upon three women who, despite their essentiality to the narrative as a whole, are nevertheless silent and, except for one scene in which one of them makes an appearance, physically absent from the story.

Women are also clearly traited as a potentially harmful or destructive Other in “A Scandal in Bohemia.” Holmes unrelentingly refuses to become seriously involved, romantically or otherwise, with any woman because, as Watson explains, “for the trained reasoner to admit such intrusions into his own delicate and finely adjusted temperament was to introduce a distracting factor which might throw a doubt upon all his mental results” (11). Further study in the area of woman as Other is needed.
The West Indies, home to the parasitic Helen Penclosa, was a source of great political turmoil within the British empire in the second half of the nineteenth century. Earlier in the century the islands had undergone a transition from slavery to freedom when the British Parliament abolished slavery throughout the empire in 1833. The islands did not adjust well to the new system. Problems with bankruptcies of former plantation owners, falling production of sugar crops, and resistance to new democratic forms of government involved not only unrest but riots, including the Indian Mutiny of 1857. In short, "during the Victorian years the British West Indies were swimming against the tide of English historical development" (Blouet 856). Writing The Parasite for publication in 1894, Conan Doyle had sixty years' worth of West Indian difficulties, both economic and political, as a backdrop for the West Indian subject Penclosa.

An examination of this struggle between Gilroy as the Familiar and Penclosa as the Other contributes to an understanding of the postcolonial condition in that the story gives shape to British fears of an alien power that needs controlling by a hero. In the character of Gilroy, specifically in his scientific rationality, the story presents a "force which [readers] can believe will work to contain" the threat of the Other (Knight "Case" 175). The distinguishing characteristic of this controlling, containing force is the hero's rationality—his logic, his empiricist manner of tackling problems. Gilroy is a professor "devoted to exact science," and his "brain is soaked with exact knowledge"; he has "trained [him]self to deal only with fact and with proof" (55). Gilroy asserts that "A departure from pure reason affects me like an evil smell or a musical discord" (55). Like
Holmes, Gilroy relies on scientific data to form conclusions about the dangers he faces, and science serves him well.

By 1894 when Conan Doyle published The Parasite, Carlyle’s lectures and writings on heroes, hero worship, and history had contributed to the creation of a “market” for heroes in fiction, specifically for intelligent heroes who used their analytical and reasoning skills to see through appearances and identify the reality of a person or situation. Carlyle wrote that “it is the property of every Hero, in every time, in every place and situation, that he come back to reality; that he stand upon things, and not shows of things. According as he loves, and venerates . . . the awful realities of things, so will the hollow shows of things, however regular, [and] decorous . . . be intolerable and detestable to him” (On Heroes 105). In fact, heroes and heroism had become “a major Victorian preoccupation” (Goldberg xxxiii). From the vantage point of 1918, Edmund Gosse observed that Victorians “turned admiration ‘from a virtue into a religion, and called it Hero Worship’” (Gosse 295).

During the course of The Parasite, Gilroy battles to maintain control of himself against the parasitic clutch of Penclosa, who seeks to “possess” him by gaining control of his unconscious impulses. Gilroy feels her alien presence—something not of himself—within his own consciousness, and he attempts to describe the feeling in his journal. He writes, “A peculiar double consciousness possessed me. There was the predominant alien will which was bent upon drawing me to the side of its owner, and there was the feeble protesting personality, which I recognized as being myself” (76; emphasis added).

Elsewhere Gilroy calls Penclosa a “devil woman” (77). By representing Penclosa, the
Other, in this devouring, demonizing way, Conan Doyle reveals his own cultural and racial prejudices and stereotypical conceptions of foreigners and in this case West Indian natives in particular. In addition, he reasserts the primacy of the familiar and rational over the suspect nature of the alien and irrational.

The traditional English notion of the physical appearance of the Other is turned on its ear in *The Parasite*. Gilroy, not Penclosa, has “black hair,” “dark eyes,” and a “thin olive face” that is elsewhere described as a “clear-cut Spanish face” (55, 75). Penclosa, on the other hand, has a “pale peaky face, and hair of a very light shade of chestnut,” and her eyes are “gray in color—gray with a shade of green” (57). Gilroy observes that “Anyone less like my idea of a West Indian could not be imagined” (57).

Conan Doyle may be playing with the idea of a disguise or mask in Penclosa’s seemingly English appearance. While the Other may look familiar, there lies the possibility of threat just below the surface. Beneath the disguise of appearance is the intellect, and the intellect, not appearance, matters more in a struggle for power. Indeed, the struggle between Gilroy and Penclosa boils down to a struggle for power over Gilroy’s actions and affections. The physical appearances of the two are at best a secondary issue in the conflict.

Although Penclosa’s complexion and coloring are not exotically alien, other aspects of her physical appearance serve to intensify her Otherness. When she first enters the narrative, she appears in striking contrast to Agatha, who is wearing pink and white and is the epitome of the stereotypical innocent, middle-to-upper class English woman. Penclosa, on the other hand, has “strange little eyes,” is crippled and walks with a crutch,
and is generally nondescript in appearance. Gilroy remarks that “her presence [is] insignificant and her manner retiring. In any group of ten women she would have been the last woman whom one would have picked out” (57). Penclosa’s mental abilities and not her physical appearance characterize her as a threat.

The conflict between Gilroy and Penclosa being a power struggle, and Conan Doyle exercising an “Orientalist” imagination, it is not surprise that Penclosa’s power should be represented in predator imagery. Penclosa brings out a “brutal primitive instinct” in Gilroy (69), and he refers to her regularly as “the creature.” She is characterized three times as a tiger and twice as a snake; moreover, just as Penclosa originates in a British colony, these dangerous animals are native to various colonies in the Empire. When Gilroy makes an effort to resist Penclosa’s will and power mentally, he nevertheless feels pulled to her like prey in the grasp of a predator. After Penclosa, from across town, uses her hypnotic hold on Gilroy’s mind to induce him to come to her, Gilroy writes in his journal, “Suddenly I was gripped—gripped and dragged from the couch. It is only thus that I can describe the overpowering nature of the force which pounced upon me” (76; emphasis added).

Conan Doyle’s technique of characterizing the Other as an animal or in predator imagery reflected typical English views of the Other. One writer of the time, taking on a pompous tone in an article about Conan Doyle’s fiction, digresses into his own sermon about the survival of the fittest. He first flaunts his opinion of “the negro.” “If strength of body made the overlords of the world, then the lion and the tiger would have been overlord to man, and the negro would have overborne the white man” (MacFall 306).
The writer goes on to argue that the white man's brains, weapons, and science will overcome the bestial threat of the black man:

But man's brain wrought the knit brotherhood of the clan, and weapons and wondrous defence [sic], and the science of war; so that the brute force of the lion and the tiger went down before the lesser brute force that was guided by higher cunning than theirs; and the brain's strength came to be above the body's strength; so that the fierce courage of Mahomet's black legions that charge out of the desert withers and they are mown down like grass before the level fire and the ordered volleys of the white troops.

(306)

It is evident from this writer's prose that Conan Doyle was not alone in equating the Other with beasts.

In addition to using predator imagery to illustrate the threat of the Other, Conan Doyle expresses the power struggles between Gilroy and Penclosa in war imagery that can suggest Britain's battles to acquire colonies and thereby strengthen the undertones of imperialism present in the story. For example, Conan Doyle writes that Penclosa directs the destructive activities of her hypnotized subjects much as "an engineer on the shore might guide a Brennan torpedo" (62). Also, when Gilroy stands up to Penclosa, he "won his way to the front by his hard reasoning power and by his devotion to fact" (65; emphasis added). While Gilroy had at first attempted to explain Penclosa's attraction to him as being "perhaps only her ardent West Indian manner" (68), he has come to realize the threat is real. Actual physical harm can result from Penclosa's parasitic aggressions.
The professor’s empirically-trained mind withstands the attack of Penclosa’s power, at least for a time, and then further developments in the power struggle unfold in terms of captivity, an extension of the war motif. Gilroy vows that he “must at all costs break this chain which holds me” (73), and during a trance he realizes that he is “her slave, body and soul” (77).

Gilroy’s experiences in resisting Penclosa’s power give form to a new sort of threat from the colonized Other—the threat of power from afar. That is, a citizen of England cannot be sure of insulation from the colonized subjects even though there is a great distance between them. Like Penclosa, the Other may exercise its will across distances, dragging its prey to destruction. What, then, is to serve as protection against the Other? Gilroy’s final, desperately formed solution is to kill Penclosa, which may cause modern readers to recall, in Heart of Darkness, Kurtz’s unsettling postscript to his report on the Congo: “Exterminate all the brutes!” (Conrad 51). Written just five years apart, Conrad’s Heart of Darkness (1899) and Conan Doyle’s The Parasite contain the same troubling suggestion (not explicitly supported by either author) regarding colonized Others—get rid of them.

The Other emerges as a clear source of evil in this power struggle between the familiar and the alien. In the struggle the Other is at fault for war and its consequences, whether that war be a figurative/intellectual war or a literal/physical war. While Gilroy knows that he himself has performed embarrassing and harmful actions, he concludes that Penclosa is to blame; she is the source of this evil. Gilroy writes with relief in his journal, “There is some consolation in the thought, then, that these odious impulses for
which I have blamed myself do not really come from me at all. They are all transferred from her. . . . I feel cleaner and lighter for the thought” (72).

Disturbingly, Conan Doyle does not resolve the tension resulting from a parasitic Other maintaining control over a resistant English victim. Gilroy is ultimately unable to break free of Penclosa’s power, and he is on his way to kill her when he learns that she has just died of an illness. Conan Doyle does not lead readers to perceive Penclosa’s death as unfortunate or even sad but, on the contrary, as occurring in the nick of time. The death of the Other allows the Familiar to live on in safety.

In Gilroy’s anguish over the problems with Penclosa, he describes himself as occupying a state that encapsulates the empiricist, imperialist position. He says:

Here I sit in a commonplace English bow window looking out upon a commonplace English street, with its garish ‘buses and its lounging policemen, and behind me there hangs a shadow which is out of all keeping with the age and place. In the home of knowledge I am weighed down and tortured by a power of which science knows nothing. (83-84; emphasis added)

When Gilroy finally decided that he had to kill Penclosa to escape her power, he focused on her animal nature. “Murder!” he wrote in his journal. “It has an ugly sound. But you don’t talk of murdering a snake or of murdering a tiger” (88). Gilroy has reduced the Other to an animal state, a condition that he feels comfortable attacking, even killing. He is no longer dealing with a person but with a bestial threat to the domestic safety of himself and the other members of his collegiate English community. In this fictive
character Gilroy, Conan Doyle has created not only an empiricist hero of science and rationalism but also an imperialist hero of the British Empire.

While Gilroy represents the everyday person as hero of the empire, Sherlock Holmes occupies a higher position, linked to the common person through the trusty Dr. Watson. In “The Speckled Band,” Holmes assists a terrified woman, Helen Stoner, who is sure her life is in danger because certain recent events duplicate the events that led to her twin sister’s death two years earlier. Holmes decides on two suspects, each characterized in the story as both foreign and threatening. The first is a band of gypsies living on the property of Stoner’s family manor where she lives with her stepfather, Dr. Grimesby Roylott. Roylott himself is Holmes’s other suspect, and the evil in him may be traced to his connection with the East. He lived for some time in Calcutta; he keeps dangerous Indian animals as free-roaming pets; he uses a murder weapon that originates in India; and he is wearing Turkish slippers when he attempts the murder of Helen and afterwards dies.

These details of “The Speckled Band,” Conan Doyle’s own favorite Holmes story (Hodgson “Favorite” 435), combine to form a framework of imperialist ideas and assumptions. These views infiltrate the construction of Holmes as hero and Roylott as villain. And while Conan Doyle and readers favor this “grim snake story,” to use the author’s own phrase (Hodgson “Favorite” 435), they are at the same time availing themselves, probably unconsciously, of the author’s imperialist views. That is to say, readers did not and do not read the story and attend to subtextual discourse on the nature of the empire and its enemies. Such an approach is not the motivating factor of readers’
choice of fiction. Rather, people read about Holmes the hero because he is fascinating and the plots are stimulating. If, along the way, they should pick up impressions regarding the nature of the empire’s enemies, it is unlikely they will realize this transaction. Nevertheless, Holmes is the hero and Roylott is the villain, and Holmes is pure English and Roylott is a “clever and ruthless man” with a shady past in the East.

The strongest evidence of Conan Doyle’s imperialist views that, like faint fingerprints, lie latent in the text of “The Speckled Band” is his characterization of Roylott. While certain elements of Grimesby are classically villainesque, such as the quick, hot temper and the brutal strength, other elements are clearly Eastern, and while these Eastern elements are not inherently evil, they take on an aura of evil when combined with Roylott’s temper and violence. Further evidence more directly links Roylott’s evil with the East. Holmes states that “the idea of using a form of poison which could not possibly be discovered by any chemical test was just such a one as would occur to a clever and ruthless man who had had an Eastern training” (123). In addition, Roylott’s murder weapon can only be found in India; it is an Indian swamp adder, “the deadliest snake in India” (122). Besides his choice of murder weapon, such details as Roylott’s preference in slippers (“red heelless Turkish” ones), his preference in pets (“He

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16 When the Holmes novel The Hound of the Baskervilles was published serially in The Strand in 1901-02, readers and editors of magazines like Bookman regularly speculated in print on plot developments and outcomes as well as characters’ motivations.  
17 John A. Hodgson troubles the issue of the Indian swamp adder, pointing out that no such animal exists and charging that the story therefore “criminally violat[es] the laws of its genre . . . [and] of realism itself” (“Recoil” 337). Cait Murphy provides additional information on the “nonexistent” swamp adder and its impossible capabilities (among them living in an airtight safe).
has a passion also for Indian animals... and he has at this moment a cheetah and a baboon”), his preference in cigars (“strong Indian” ones), and his preference in company (“the wandering gipsies”), all work together to establish him as distinctively foreign in character, habit, and action (121, 111, 111, 110). While these attributes lend an air of the exotic to Roylott, they also reinforce Holmes’s “ol’ chap” image. Roylott is alien and dangerous; Holmes is English and trustworthy.

“The Speckled Band” was first published in 1892, and Conan Doyle’s choice of India as the probable source of the evil in Roylott relates to politics of the 1890’s. “By the end of the [nineteenth] century India was the centerpiece of the British Empire, both a symbol and the linchpin of Britain’s enormous imperial wealth and international influence” (Zastoupil 388). India was foremost among Britain’s colonized countries and consequently foremost in its embodiment of the image of the Other, the non-European. Roylott as a clever man with a shady past in India made a convincing villain whom readers could readily believe to be capable of crimes against the Familiar.

Just as one of the threats represented by Helen Penclosa in The Parasite is the threat of the Other being disguised by appearing English in face and form, so Roylott represents a threat of the Other actually being an Englishman who has been irreparably altered by the Other. Roylott is an Englishman whose “family was at one time among the richest in England” with extensive land holdings (110). Over the last century the family estate was wasted and the plantation fell to ruin so that Roylott was forced to earn a living for himself. He took a medical degree and went to Calcutta to practice medicine. While in India he married Helen Stoner’s mother, who soon died. During this stay in India, as
Helen explains to Holmes, Roylott’s “hereditary” “violence of temper approaching to mania . . . [was] intensified by his long residence in the tropics” (110). In a fit of temper over some household thefts, Roylott “beat his native butler to death” and, after imprisonment in India, “returned to England a morose and disappointed man” (110). In effect, India brought out the worst in Roylott and propelled him back to England to wreak havoc there. Helen narrates that back in England after “a series of disgraceful brawls took place, two of which ended in the police-court . . . [Roylott] became the terror of the village, and the folks would fly at his approach” (110). His only friends are “the wandering gipsies” (110).

While Roylott’s Indian connections are implicitly the source of his evil power, they are also the cause of his own death. The smell of his strong Indian cigar wafting through the ventilator into Helen’s bedroom alerts Holmes to the connecting air shaft (119). Holmes then arranges with Helen to slip secretly into her room after dark and wait for Roylott to make his move. When Roylott does so by sending his swamp adder through the air shaft and down the fake bell pull in Helen’s room, Holmes is waiting; he strikes at the snake with a cane. The frenzied snake shoots back through the vent and bites Roylott instead, killing him with his own murder weapon.

In both of these stories, death is the solution to the threat of the Other. Like Austin Gilroy, who is not sorry to see the parasitic Helen Penclosa die, Holmes is not sorry to see Roylott die. His own involvement in the death he simply shrugs off. As he and Watson travel home to Baker Street the day after Roylott’s death, Holmes tells Watson, “I am no doubt indirectly responsible for Dr. Grimesby Roylott’s death, and I
cannot say that it is likely to weigh very heavily upon my conscience” (123). In Holmes’s eyes, Roylott deserved his fate of death.

As heroes, Gilroy and Holmes each represent the Familiar—that which was to Conan Doyle’s audiences familiarly English and relatively safe. Gilroy and Holmes each engage in a battle of wits and wits against an antagonist, the Other, one who is treated as non-European; in both stories the Other is exotically foreign in nature as well as deceitful and murderous in action. While the protagonists become heroes of rationalism and honor, the antagonists become enemies of the Familiar and, in the eyes of the heroes, earn the fate of death. The heroes emerge not only as heroes of empiricism—rationality and reason—but also as heroes of the British Empire; conversely, the villains emerge as adversaries of the Empire, proponents of the irrational.

Gilroy and Holmes are heroes of their age. The “evil out there” at the time was the Other, and the scientist and the detective triumphed over it. While the accounts are fictitious, they gain significance in their connection to politics of the era and the current views of what made a man heroic in such a time. But heroes are more than a manifestation of an era’s fantasy of its savior; they function as role models, as leaders. They also “provide a dramatic impetus to events. . . . Others feel more dimly what they perceive most sharply. Their effect upon others is like that of a catalyst” (Goldberg lviii). Heroes like Gilroy and Holmes blaze a trail through the darkness of declining empire using tools of science and reason. “The hero is . . . time-bound and culture-bound, but hears more clearly than others the promptings of the age and directs its struggles. It is
this ability to recognize reality in the midst of convention and falsehood that raises the hero to the heroic level” (Goldberg lix).

Carlyle spoke for everyman when he said that “from Norse Odin to English Samuel Johnson, from the divine Founder of Christianity to the withered Pontiff of Encyclopedism, in all times and places, the Hero has been worshipped. It will ever be so. We all love great men” (On Heroes 14). He seemed to peer ahead into the decline of imperialism, lauding heroes and hero worship as the light remaining in a fading empire:

In times of unbelief, which soon have to become times of revolution, much down-rushing, sorrowful decay and ruin is visible to everybody. For myself in these days, I seem to see in this indestructibility of Hero-worship the everlasting adamant lower than which the confused wreck of revolutionary things cannot fall. . . . That man, in some sense or other, worships Heroes; that we all of us reverence and must ever reverence Great Men: this is, to me, the living rock amid all rushings down whatsoever;—the one fixed point in modern revolutionary history. (On Heroes 14-15)

Carlyle’s vision of hero worship and worthy heroes is comforting, but he seems to assume that everyone agrees who is the hero and who is not. For example, setting up historical leaders as heroes because, as Martin Luther in the Reformation, they define and direct a historical movement can create problems. Conan Doyle held up the British soldiers of the Boer War as heroes, but what of the details such as the soldiers’ construction of concentration camps? Are these soldiers still heroes, or is it a matter of
perspective? And if so, whose perspective counts? Slippages in evaluation such as this one occurred throughout the Empire, extending stereotypes and creating the worlds from which people would labor to escape in a trek towards the often equally troubled postcolonial condition. Stops along the way included stories of heroes incorporating imperialist assumptions and stereotypes, visual media, and even advertisements. These issues come to the forefront in the following chapters, which address culture, the sense of place, and imperialism as they pertain to the construction of personal identity in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: CULTURE, PLACE, AND IMPERIALISM AND THEIR
INFLUENCE ON CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

Edward Said has written that "culture is a sort of theater where various political
and ideological causes engage one another" (Culture xiii). It is this cultural site of
political and ideological interplay with which this chapter concerns itself. As we have
seen, elements of popular culture such as Conan Doyle's mystery fiction influenced
British culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and this aspect of
popular culture was linked to other components of culture including science and politics.

This chapter extends the study of connections between culture and imperialism by
examining their effects on the construction of personal identity within this culture. In this
approach, I use the term culture to mean not only the defining customs and ideologies of
British subjects but also to mean, in the biological sense, a culture being a mass of
microorganisms with nutrient material that supports their growth. In this sense, culture
supports the growth of the British subjects, whether they be in England or abroad in
colonized nations. Culture is not simply the societal surroundings and productions of a
people but is literally what the people feed off of in order to create these surroundings and
conditions and to produce cultural artifacts of art or science or identity. Culture, like
ideology, cannot be separated from its own production. Culture is not a product of a
people but a process of a people.
For Conan Doyle, culture was of the utmost importance. He judged the power of nations not only by their military strength but also by their culture. Chief on his list of concerns was writing, whether it be histories, essays, or literature. He used his own writing to place himself as an author among writers of the past and present whom he admired and to connect his ideas and theories (political and otherwise) to those held by nations which he respected. His favorite novelist was Sir Walter Scott, and Conan Doyle favored his fiction because of the history woven into it ("Dinner" 79). When Conan Doyle wrote *The White Company*, a historical romance set in the fourteenth century, he chose the time period because, as he said, "I had to do it. Scott always avoided it" (Blathwayt 50). Scott notwithstanding, Conan Doyle also believed fourteenth-century England "was the most glorious epoch in English history. The English alone were never so strong as just then" (Blathwayt 51).

As for history and politics of his own time, Conan Doyle was no less enthusiastic. He focused his attention on America and Americans as a great power source that could complement Britain's political agenda. Americans, he said,

are the coming Power. The centre of gravity of the whole race has shifted to the West, and I believe in time that every Saxon will be united under one form of government. Home Rule, with a centre of authority, and the Anglo-Saxon will swing the sword of justice over the whole world. We will not permit then the horrors of Siberia or the like. America and England, joined in their common Anglo-Saxonhood, with their common
blood, will rule the world. We shall be united. And the sooner that day comes the better. (Blathwayt 51)

Conan Doyle’s attitude regarding non-Anglo-Saxons is typically imperialist. He assumes that people not of Anglo-Saxon origin necessarily require “the sword of justice” to be “swung” over them; they cannot effect justice, or at least an adequate justice, in their countries autonomously. In short, “‘they’ [are] not like ‘us,’ and for that reason deserve to be ruled” (Said xi). At its most basic level, the cultural transaction is “We are okay; they are not okay,” in which “we” is the imperial We and “they” is the Other, the non-European. Psychiatrists such as Eric Berne and Thomas A. Harris use the phrase “I’m okay, you’re not-okay” to express social transactions such as this one, in which one subject perceives the other as unacceptable and himself as acceptable.

Herein lies a major link between culture and imperialism. The Eurocentric, imperialist outlook on the world expressed by Conan Doyle pervaded British culture, from political writings to literature to advertisements. And in varying degrees, all of these media conveyed the idea that “We are okay; they are not okay.” While this outlook emerged subtly in literature such as the Sherlock Holmes stories and other mystery and adventure fiction, the imperialist mindset asserted itself more boldly in the medium of advertisement. A striking example of an advertisement conveying a clear picture of the familiar English as civilized, intelligent, and clean and the Colonized Other as illiterate, uncivilized, and dirty is an ad for Pears’ Soap, included below as figure 27. In it, a group of dark-skinned men, clearly not English in dress and adornment, stand in attitudes of puzzlement, fascination, and worship before large white markings on a rock’s surface.
The markings are English letters which read “PEARS SOAP IS THE BEST.” The caption above the advertisement declares “THE FORMULA OF BRITISH CONQUEST,” and is highly suggestive of the English opinion of what colonized natives are in need of—English culture and a good washing. More disturbing is the caption Pears’ Soap included below the drawing: “Even if our invasion of the Soudan has done nothing else it has at any rate left the Arab something to puzzle his fuzzy head over, for the legend PEARS’ SOAP IS THE BEST, inscribed in huge white characters on the rock which marks the farthest point of our advance towards Berber, will tax all the wits of the Dervishes of the Desert to translate” (Hobsbawm plate 21). While possibly intended as innocently humorous, the caption nevertheless expresses—and sells—the opinion that the Sudanese cannot comprehend the most basic of cultural necessities, English writing and hygiene, and that they are by implication inferior to the English. Phrases like “fuzzy heads” do not help matters; animals are fuzzy, people are not. Like Conan Doyle’s imperialist hero Gilroy, who reconstructed a threatening Other into an animal he could feel justified in killing, so has Pears’ Soap reconstructed the Sudanese as animals to be chuckled at in their primitive simplicity.
PEARS' SOAP IN THE SOUDAN.

"Even if our invasion of the Soudan has done nothing else it has at any rate left the Arab something to puzzle his fuzzy head over, for the legend

PEARS' SOAP IS THE BEST,

instructed in huge white characters on the rock which marks the farthest point of our advance towards Berber, will tax all the wits of the Debubian of the Desert to translate."—Phil Robinson, War Correspondent (in the Soudan) of the Daily Telegraph in London, 1896.

Fig. 27. Imperialist advertisement for Pears' Soap (Hobsbawn plate 21).
This perception of “I’m okay, you’re not-okay” is indicative of a common English view of colonized peoples that emerges in the heroes of Conan Doyle’s fiction. The reverse position is one in which one subject perceives the other subject as acceptable but perceives himself as unacceptable, a point of view expressed by the phrase “You’re okay, I’m not-okay.” As discussed below, Blake’s “The Little Black Boy” illuminates this expression. Both of these transactions are two-party transactions, while the Pears’ Soap advertisement represents a three-party transaction, “I’m okay, you’re okay, they’re not-okay,” in which “I” is the Pears’ Soap company, “you” is the English subject, and “they” is the colonized subject. Berne notes that “In child language, this [three-party social transaction] translates as ‘We’re going to play house, but you can’t play with us,’ which in its most extreme form and with more sophisticated equipment can be parlayed in later years into an extermination camp” (85).

As Said argues in Culture and Imperialism, “The ideological concern over identity is understandably entangled with the interests and agendas of various groups—not all of them oppressed minorities—that wish to set priorities reflecting these interests” (xxv). During the later nineteenth century, there seems to have been a craving for visual representations of the world, of events, and of the great and famous, which a large number of agencies and commercial companies sought to satisfy in the period from the 1870s to the First World War. New advertising techniques were central to all this activity, and companies creating and supplying the new tastes were
concerned to sell not just their own product, but also the world system which produced it.” (MacKenzie Propaganda 16; emphasis added)

For instance, see figure 28, a poster urging English citizens to “Buy Empire Goods from Home and Overseas.” The poster was published by the Empire Marketing Board, and its map was used to teach geography to children in schools (MacKenzie Imperialism 194-95).

Fig. 28. Imperialist poster showing "highways" of the empire.

Another soap company, Gossages', expressed an attitude toward the dark-skinned in keeping with Pears' attitude: these people need to lighten their skin to look more like us. Accordingly, Gossages' published a picture postcard advertising “Gossages’ Magical
Soap.” As shown in figure 29, their “magical soap” logo is set across the top of the card above the head of a black man whose face, divided symmetrically down the middle as though by paint, is half dark and half light. Below the face is Gossages’ promise: “Makes Black White.” Reading between the lines is not difficult, especially for a person already bombarded with “evidence” of his inferiority. One such reading could easily produce the conclusion “White skin is desirable; black is not; England is full of light-skinned (i.e., ‘white’) people; a majority of colonized nations are not. England and her white people are therefore superior to her dark-skinned colonized peoples and their nations.” England’s attitude proclaims itself clearly: they need to be more like us. We can make them more like us if we sell our British culture to them, and they will be grateful to us for our doing so.

It may be argued that similar advertising campaigns are carried on in our current day by companies such as Estee Lauder, Coppertone, Hawaiian Tropic, and the like, which sell creams that make light skin dark—a chemically-created suntan. The difference is that self-tanning creams are not aggressively racially oriented; a suntan is generally viewed as a beauty asset that one dons much as one does clothes and jewelry. The intent is not to make oneself look as though one belonged to a different race but simply to look like a “sun-kissed” version of oneself. Moreover, the self-tanning advertisements are marketed from within the country and are aimed at subjects in the

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18 Chapter one of MacKenzie’s Propaganda and Empire provides details of the “power of the postcard” in British culture, which involved collecting and trading as well as mass marketing of products, fund-raising, and propaganda (22).
same country. The implication is not that users will become more like a ruling nation that manufactures the product and has the power of distributing it to or withholding it from a ruled nation's people. In contrast, the Gossages' Magical Soap advertisement is more seditious, choosing for its subject a face that is obviously of a non-European race. The visual image is a drawing, and in it not only the subject's skin (including ears) is lightened by the soap but the lips and hair are lightened as well. The subject is smiling broadly, as though ecstatically happy about the results.

By means of advertising campaigns by British companies such as Pears' and Gossages', British culture was marketed to natives of colonized nations as superior to their own cultures. However, as Said has pointed out, while a ruling culture projects its attitudes and expectations onto its ruled cultures, the reverse transaction is also true and is as powerful. "Imperialism is a system," Said writes. "Life in one subordinate realm of experience is imprinted by the fictions and follies of the dominant realm. But the reverse is true, too, as
experience in the dominant society comes to depend uncritically on natives and their
territories perceived as in need of "la mission civilisatrice" (xix). As John M. MacKenzie,
a foremost scholar of popular culture and imperialism, writes:

The most aggressive and innovative advertisers of the day were companies
dependent on the imperial economic nexus, in tea, chocolate, soaps and
oils, tobacco, meat extracts, shipping, and later rubber. They set out not
only to illustrate a romantic view of imperial origins, a pride in national
possession of what Joseph Chamberlain called the imperial 'estates,' but
also to identify themselves with royal and military events, and to score
from the contemporary cult of personality. (Propaganda and Empire 16)

Just as tea and spice companies depended on non-European countries as sources of their
products which were then marketed in England, soap companies like Pears' and
Gossages' depended on foreign peoples as markets for their products.

These soap companies blatantly sold the idea that skin color is an indication of
cleanliness and, by extension, of proper culture. Soap, which is made expressly to wash
off dirt, impurities, and germs, was touted as a concoction to wash off of the natives what
was deemed unacceptable by British culture. By implication, the natives of Sudan are
dirty, impure, and infectious. Further, the Sudanese have no hope of cleansing
themselves of these abhorrent qualities because they do not have British culture. They
cannot read English; therefore, they cannot read English advertisements for soap. They
do not have English soap; therefore, they are unclean and are more like animals than
civilized humans. One critic of product marketing has remarked that the purpose of
advertising is to rob subjects of dignity and then to show them how to regain their dignity by buying a particular product (Berger 142). Pears’ Soap and Gossages’ Soap used their advertisements to rob natives of dignity that they had no intention of restoring. The cultural transaction is clearly “We (the soap company) are okay; you (the literate, white English) are okay; they (the foreign natives) are not-okay.

The British production of media that sells the cultural transaction “We’re okay, they’re not-okay” was concretized in British culture long before imperialism reached its height in the late Victorian era. More than a century before, for example, Daniel Defoe and William Blake authored influential works that culturally validated Britons’ position of being “okay” and non-Europeans’ position of being “not-okay.” Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe (1719) is generally regarded by literary critics as the first imperialist novel, and its plot centers on a European man’s creation of his own empire on a non-European island. In Said’s work on imperialism, colonialism, and fiction, Culture and Imperialism, he characterizes Defoe’s ideology as the “ideology of overseas expansion” (70).

Seventy years after Defoe’s publication of Robinson Crusoe, William Blake contributed to discourse on imperialism with his poem “The Little Black Boy” (1789). With the poem, which is about a dark-skinned child whose self identity hinges on the color of his skin, Blake invites readers to recognize how imperialism can influence natives of a nation colonized by the English. The closing lines of the poem express the boy’s conviction that in order to be acceptable to the English boy he must become like the English boy:
And thus I say to little English boy:

When I from black and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our father's knee
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me. (emphasis added)

Because his skin is dark and the English boy's skin is light, the boy has internalized an understanding that “He’s okay, I’m not-okay.” It is significant that the little black boy acquires his understanding of his relationship to the English boy through his own mother. He says “My mother bore me in the southern wild” and “My mother taught me underneath a tree.” Berne posits that among the social transactions which take place between individuals, “the simplest positions are two-handed, You and I, and come from the convictions which have been fed to the child with his mother’s milk” (85-86).

Drawing conclusions from his mother’s teachings, the dark-skinned subject places himself in subservience and in subjection to the light-skinned subject. He believes it is he himself who needs changing, not the white subject; moreover, in his view of heaven, a place where “I from black and he from white cloud free,” it is still the black boy who “stands and strokes” the “silver hair” of the English boy and becomes “like him,” not the other way around. The possibility of a compromise or of a medium solution is precluded.
The construction of self-identity performed by Blake’s little black boy is so thoroughly achieved and so permanently etched that it extends into his conception of blissful infinity, heaven. Berne maintains that it is dichotomies like this one, which reduce social transactions to an invariable and unchangeable construction, that are most harmful to the subjects involved. “The simplest positions, the most difficult to deal with, and the most dangerous for society, are those which are based on a single pair of O.K.—not-O.K. adjectives: Black-White, Rich-Poor, Christian-Pagan, Bright-Stupid, Jew-Aryan, Honest-Crooked” (91). For British imperialism, the primary pair of OK—not-OK adjectives are European—not-European. This dichotomy plays out endlessly in soap advertisements (British-Sudanese, White-Black, Literate—Non-Literate) and in fiction (Anglo Saxon descent-African descent, White-Black, Civilized-Savage).

Berne explains that once an individual adopts a life-pattern such as the little black boy’s “You’re okay—I’m not-okay” outlook, he or she seeks to fit his or her life into this pattern, to find a plot with the proper ending, and answer to the question: “What happens to someone like me?” . . . Sooner or later he hears a story about ‘someone like me,’ and that tells him what he is headed for. It may be a fairy tale read to him by his mother, an African Nancy story told to him by his grandmother, or a street-gang legend he hears on the corner. But wherever he hears it, when he hears it he knows it, and he says: “That’s me!” That story will then be his script and he will spend the rest of his life trying to make it come to pass. (95)
The story that the little black boy’s mother tells him is:

And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love,
And these black bodies and this sun-burnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

For when our souls have learn’d the heat to bear,
The cloud will vanish; we shall hear his voice,
Saying: ‘Come out from the grove, my love & care,
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.’

And thus, as Blake has demonstrated, the English attitude of “I’m okay-You’re not-okay” has trickled down to the small child in a colonized nation, instilling in him the belief that he is inferior to the English. He can become a hero only by patiently enduring the suffering inherent in his lesser position. The child’s belief in his own inferiority is so entrenched that it influences his idea of Heaven as well.

As psychologists show, a subject’s conception of place is no light matter.

“Places, both real and imagined, serve to symbolize, express, or organize both personal identity (in the Eriksonian sense) and particular situated identities (in the social psychological sense)” (Lavin and Agatstein 51). Heaven is an imagined place. A subject’s homeland is a real place. A subject’s perception of both gives form to his understanding of his own identity with regard to what he rightfully deserves from these places.
The colonizing culture of Britain intruded into these real and imagined places. When Said writes of “culture as a sort of theater” he speaks of a place. When all of England cultishly followed the adventures of Sherlock Holmes, they visited an imaginary place, a place that affected their construction and perceptions of personal identities. Indeed, “the place which shapes a person’s behavior or supports his identity may not be the place in which the person is located but rather some place which is vividly imagined” (Lavin and Agatstein 53). Said noted that in the narrative fiction of writers living in the age of empire, place plays a crucial role. He writes that “when we come to Kipling, Conrad, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rider Haggard, R. L. Stevenson, George Orwell, Joyce Cary, E. M. Forster, and T. E. Lawrence, the empire is everywhere a crucial setting” (Culture 63).

The importance of place to the construction of personal identity and to cultural assimilation is as strong in the late twentieth-century as it was in the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Psychologists Lavin and Agatstein have argued that “place serves an instrumental function, as a means for repeated contact with desirable groups or preferred activities” (53). Moreover, as mentioned above, the concept of place includes both real and imagined locales. Thus, while Victorians turned to publications like the Strand to experience imaginary places and in the process absorbed ideology regarding peoples of colonized nations, individuals of the twentieth century turn to television for escape into imaginary worlds. Experiencing the same imaginary worlds as others in one’s society helps to bond individuals as a cultural unit and, for good or bad, to distribute similar cultural mores throughout the general population, much like the effects of novels, stories,
and illustrated monthlies of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Now,

television is a virtual town hall. It’s comforting to know that you are watching a popular
show at the same time one fourth or one third of the country is doing the same thing. It’s
comforting to know people are going to be talking about it tomorrow. We use the
technology to come together, to feel a connection,” says media analyst Betsy Frank (qtd.
in Kellogg 30).

A nation’s subjects use their culture’s popular media to acquire a sense of
connection with that shared culture, and some psychologists suggest that such a
connection with one’s environment is crucial to a healthy existence in that culture. “The
recent work of the environmental psychologist Proshansky (1978) suggests that a sense
of belongingness in a physical context is crucial for stable self-identity. . . . A familiar
place provides a reference point from which to view one’s social world and assess one’s
place in it” (Lavin and Agatstein 54). Said’s studies of culture and imperialism produce
similar findings regarding the impact of imaginary places in fiction on society. He writes
that “the appropriation of history, the historicization of the past, the narrativization of
society, all of which give the novel its force, include the accumulation and differentiation
of social space, space to be used for social purposes” (Said Culture 78).

The literary and cultural theorist Catherine Belsey would agree with
psychologists’ observations that a subject’s environment, in effect, constructs personal
identity for that subject unless he or she takes specific and purposeful actions to combat

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cultural injunctions. Belsey holds among her chief concerns the “cultural construction of subjectivity” (355), and with the Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser, she claims that the society in which one lives—including its language, education system, economics, and politics—works on individuals in such a way that the subject within the system believes that he or she is making choices about personal identity when in fact the society has already made these choices for him or her by preconditioning the subject to make appropriate choices. The uninformed subject goes on believing that he or she has made choices independently; the reality is that the subject, as an individual, is subject to the machinations of his or her culture and society, and to resist its subtle directions and manipulation the subject must consciously and purposefully take action to break out of the roles, beliefs, and assumptions to which he has become subject simply by living in the society.

At the base of individual subjectivity lies language, whether this be oral communication like the teachings of the little black boy’s mother or written language such as Conan Doyle’s Holmes stories. In conjunction with the above visually expressed perceptions of the Familiar and the Other in English advertising, these verbally expressed perceptions of the Familiar and the Other participate culturally in subjects’ construction of self identity. Belsey and Said as well as Conan Doyle contribute to an understanding of how fiction functions in this process. Like Belsey, who posits that “the subject is constructed in language and in discourse and, since the symbolic order in its discursive use is closely related to ideology, in ideology” (358), Said focuses on language as a chief source of identity, especially in the identitics assigned to “the Other” in discursive
communication. For example, he notes that in fiction, “Europe’s special ways of representing the Caribbean islands, Ireland, and the Far East” reveal Europeans’ everyday attitudes and assumptions about these peoples (Culture xi). “What are striking in these discourses,” Said points out, “are the rhetorical figures one keeps encountering in their descriptions of ‘the mysterious East,’ as well as the stereotypes about ‘the African (or Indian or Irish or Jamaican or Chinese) mind,’” (Culture xi).

Conan Doyle’s fiction is one source of this sort of conventionalized idea of the Other. As we saw in chapter 5, Conan Doyle reveals his own stereotypical outlooks in The Parasite when he has Gilroy speak of Penclosa’s “ardent West Indian manner” (68) and in “The Speckled Band” when he establishes the “mysterious East” as the source of Roylott’s evil nature and even more evil impulses. Further, in The Sign of Four, Conan Doyle’s assumptions and stereotypes about the Andamese people lead him to write inaccurate information about them as part of Holmes’s investigative speculations and proofs. These images were so far off track that in 1904, fourteen years after The Sign of Four was published, a reviewer of Conan Doyle’s novels wrote that in this novella “the Andamanese are cruelly libelled [sic], and have neither the malignant qualities, nor the heads like mops, nor the weapons, nor the customs, with which they are credited by Sherlock. He has detected the wrong savage, and injured the character of an amiable people” (Lang 178). Ironically, the reviewer goes on to suggest an alternate “savage” for the story, “a Fuegian who had lived a good deal on the Amazon” (178).

While Conan Doyle’s fiction reveals his own imperialist viewpoints, it also mirrors the imperialist attitudes and assumptions held by the culture in which he lived
and helps to construct continued imperialism in readers’ political convictions and in their everyday outlook on reality. The Holmes story “The Adventure of the Yellow Face” reveals something of the public opinion regarding racial identity and the ramifications of entering into an interracial marriage and of having (or being) a biracial child in late nineteenth-century Britain. In the story a distraught husband, Grant Munroe, comes to Holmes certain that his wife of three years is hiding a terrible secret from him. Effie, the wife, was a widow when Munroe met her, and she had lived in America in Atlanta until her husband and child died there of yellow fever. In recent days, Effie has begun behaving secretively, asking Munroe for money but declining to tell him why she needs it, and sneaking out in the middle of the night and pretending she has just been to the door to get fresh air. Munroe suspects that the key to Effie’s secret lies in a small cottage behind their own property, and on several occasions he has seen “a face... watching [him] out of one of the upper windows” (217). He tells Holmes and Watson that the face “seemed to send a chill right down my back... there was something unnatural and inhuman about that face... its colour was what had impressed me most. It was of a livid, dead yellow, and with something set and rigid about it, which was shockingly unnatural” (217).

At this point in the story, characterization of the Other has begun, despite the fact that neither Holmes nor the reader knows yet what or whose the face in the window is. We know the face is “unnatural and inhuman,” and its color is “a livid, dead yellow,” and overall the face is “shockingly unnatural.” No matter what or who the face turns out to
be, the stigma of these early speculations will remain, if only to reinforce the idea of what sort of disguise a particular sort of subject requires.

Holmes and Watson accompany Munroe to the mysterious little cottage determined to discover the secret of the face in the window. Munroe forces his way inside despite protests from Effie and an older woman residing there. Munroe, with the others behind him, finds upstairs “what appeared to be a little girl” with a yellow, rigid, expressionless face (223). Munroe reacts in shock, but “Holmes, with a laugh, passed his hand behind the child’s ear, a mask peeled off from her countenance, and there was a little coal-black negress with all her white teeth flashing in amusement at our amazed faces” (223). While the Other has been unveiled, and the child reacts to her own unveiling with amusement at the adults’ amazement, questions remain to be answered. The Other is not like “us”—the Other is “coal-black.”

The child is Effie’s daughter, who had not really died in Atlanta. Effie opens a locket and reveals a picture of her late husband—“a portrait . . . of a man, strikingly handsome and intelligent, but bearing unmistakable signs upon his features of his African descent” (223; emphasis added). Here the story acquires a second Other, and this Other is significant because he is adult and male and has been married to “one of us,” an Englishwoman. English cultural mores regarding the marriage of an Englishwoman and a man of African descent are revealed in Effie’s explanation of her predicament. She defends her hesitancy at bringing the child over to England with her, especially after she had married Munroe.
I cut myself off from my race in order to wed him; but never once while he lived did I for one instant regret it. It 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 far than ever her father was. . . . I feared to tell you about my child. God forgive me, I feared that I should lose you.

(223; emphases added)

Despite the emphasis on the undesirability of marrying a man of African descent and the emphasis placed on the child’s biraciality, the story ends on a positive note regarding the dilemma. “It was a long two minutes before Grant Munroe 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” (224). Munroe accepts Effie’s past decisions regarding marriage, and he accepts her child. As with the quick-fix problems of modern day sitcoms, the racial issue in this story is resolved deceptively quickly and easily. Nevertheless, although Munroe accepts Effie, her past, and her child, Effie’s fears reveal the mindset most members of her British society would take towards the situation: We must not get too close to the Other. And it is in this latter sentiment that the story actually achieves lack of closure: societal mores and values remain as they were before Munroe picks up his step-child with acceptance. The original points made by the story remain unresolved, open-ended. The Other is not welcome in English society at large and poses a threat to the happiness and security of the English man or woman who becomes
involved with the Other. No practical solution for the harmonious merging of the two
groups is presented.

Consequential also is the fact that these representations of black subjects—the
visual soap advertisements, the verbal poem, and the verbal and visual story—are created
by white subjects. Said approaches this issue in *Culture and Imperialism* in his study of
Conrad's *Nostromo* (1904). He writes:

> For if it is true that Conrad ironically sees the imperialism of the San
Tome silver mine's British and American owners as doomed by its own
pretentious and impossible ambition, it is also true that he writes as a man
whose Western view of the non-Western world is so ingrained as to blind
him to other histories, other cultures, other aspirations. All Conrad can see
is a world totally dominated by the Atlantic West, in which every
opposition to the West only confirms the West's wicked power. (xviii)

Like Conrad, writers such as Conan Doyle, artists such as Paget, and companies such as
Pears and Gossages' reflect in their cultural products the imperialist ideology of the era,
often purposefully and overtly but sometimes automatically and matter-of-factly. Like
Conrad, they are too often "blind to other histories, other cultures, other aspirations."

Because Conan Doyle's work in particular encompasses texts in multiple genres
as well as illustrations by various artists for many of his works, and because Conan
Doyle's work is directly linked to British culture and imperialism and thus to history,
politics, psychology and philosophy, the Conan Doyle archive provides a rich source of
study for scholars in multiple disciplines. The empiricist and imperialist concerns raised
in my study remain crucial to future studies, particularly because Sherlock Holmes, the embodiment of empiricism and imperialism, continues to live through a plentiful supply of reprinted editions of Conan Doyle’s works as well as in new series of Holmes stories written by contemporary authors. The British Tony Lumb, for instance, writes new adventures for Sherlock Holmes set in England in the 1890s, and the American Carole Nelson Douglas writes novels set in America and centered on Irene Adler, the woman who outwitted Holmes in “A Scandal in Bohemia.” Adler has acquired her own “Watson,” Penelope Huxleigh, who assists her in much the same fashion that Watson assists Holmes. Other authors who are known primarily for work in genres other than mystery and detective fiction have tried their hands at writing Holmes tales as well. Stephen King, master of horror fiction, has written a story in faithful imitation of Conan Doyle’s classic Victorian style, “The Doctor’s Case,” in which Holmes and Watson solve a locked-room mystery.

Moreover, children of the last quarter of the twentieth-century have grown up watching television cartoons that draw creative inspiration from Holmes. The Great Mouse Detective features mice-versions of Holmes and Watson, and Scooby Doo features a group of teenage sleuths who pursue clues and solve mysteries in the classic tradition of Holmesian methods. Comic book series have featured Holmes as well. Classics Illustrated featured Holmes in both English and Greek editions in the 1940s, and in a DC Comics comic book, Holmes pursues The Joker of the Batman stories (Weller and Roden 54).
Besides Holmes’s continued presence in stories, novels, television cartoons, and comic books, Holmes films continue to be produced for television, and the construction of detectives in current fiction and film uphold and continue the detective’s empirical, imperial mind in current society. In addition, Holmes as the symbol of empirical knowledge and unquestionable judgment has been used in printed advertisements to sell products in Britain ranging from Lloyds Bank Travellers’ Cheques to Crawford’s Cream Crackers, from Mann’s Brown ale to Grand Cut tobacco (Haining 119, 75, 89, 91). Holmes’s continued viability as the symbol of all that is rational, logical, credible, and safe illustrates the fact that people need—indeed, demand—this fictive agent, and are willing to create versions of this agent to fill particular societal needs for rationality (empiricism) and control (imperialism).²⁰ I argue, then, that the issues the Holmes stories raised in Victorian and Edwardian times remain open today, and the imperial mind continues in the detective fiction being produced in the late twentieth century. The detective as “monarch” with divine rights remains a crucial element in the successful detective narrative. Further study into particular novelists and their works is now needed to elucidate and elaborate upon these theories. Just as Said’s work *Culture and Imperialism* mentions Conan Doyle’s work, suggesting its rich potential for further examination in the context of culture and imperialism, so my study serves to emphasize

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²⁰ While I by no means argue that imperialism is reducable to the term “control,” I do, with Edward Said, hold that imperialism hinges upon the concept of control. Said writes that “Imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess” and elsewhere writes that “‘Imperialism’ means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating [i.e., controlling] metropolitan center ruling [again, controlling] a distant territory” (*Culture* 7, 9; emphases added).
the need for more scholarship that approaches the cultural building blocks of empiricism and imperialism through studies of detective fiction, including but not limited to Conan Doyle's.
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