

**SHERLOCK HOLMES: FROM PAPER TO THE SCREEN – AN ANALYSIS OF
THE INTERSEMIOTIC TRANSLATION OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE’S
THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**

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Resumo

A adaptação relaciona-se com as produções cinematográficas e televisivas quase desde o princípio da história destes meios. Os primeiros filmes exibidos eram frequentemente baseados em obras literárias históricas ou ficcionais, sendo um importante factor na evolução e desenvolvimento da produção cinematográfica como a conhecemos.

Neste estudo, será analisada, segundo o ponto de vista dos estudos da tradução intersemiótica, a obra *The Hound of The Baskervilles*, de Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, sendo esta uma das obras mais populares do género literário criminal. Esta análise pretende servir de “ponte” para estabelecer a relação entre o processo de tradução e o da adaptação, comparando as suas semelhanças e diferenças, além de exemplificar um processo para a análise crítica de adaptações que não se baseie meramente na perspectiva dos estudos literários acerca deste tipo de trabalhos.

Palavras-chave: Tradução; Intersemiótica; Adaptação; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Abstract

Adaptation has been related to cinema and television productions almost from their very beginning. The first movies exhibited in these two mediums were frequently based on either historical or fictional literary works, being an important factor to the development and evolution of filmmaking as we know it, today.

In this study, the novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, is analysed from the point of view of intersemiotic translation studies, being one of the most popular works of the crime literary genre. This analysis serves as a means of establishing a relation between the process of adaptation and the process of translation, comparing similarities and differences between them, as well as exemplifying a process for the critical analysis of adaptations that is not based merely in a literary studies perspective of these types of works.

Key words: Translation; Intersemiotic Studies; Adaptation; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Introduction

Studies regarding literary adaptation to cinema or television have a great impact on the comprehension of the very evolution of these two means throughout history. From their very early beginnings, most of the work expressed in any kind of video format has frequently been based either in depictions of historical events or in literary novels.

However, most adaptation studies are based on principles and theories applicable mainly to literary sources and are carried out by researchers focused only in a literary perspective of what is being reproduced in television or cinema. This creates a very interesting paradox between the “narrative and novelistic techniques that could be considered ‘unfilmable’”¹ and the notion that adaptation “is a subject on which everyone feels able to have an opinion, and most opinions (...) still tend to foreground the criterion of fidelity”². In other words, despite being accepted that some literary aspects of a novel are impossible to be transposed to the screen, there is also a great expectation (mainly from those with some literary training) that the adaptation will remain ‘faithful’ to what is described in the book. The present work aims to analyse different adaptations (also referred to as intersemiotic translations) of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, produced between 1939 and 2012. To do so, four adaptations from different decades will be analysed, according to the theoretical

¹ WELSH, James M. “Introduction: Issues of Screen Adaptation: What Is Truth?” in *The Literature/Film Reader – Issues of Adaptation*. Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. XV.

² MCFARLANE, Brian. “It Wasn’t Like That in the Book...” in *The Literature/Film Reader – Issues of Adaptation*. Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 6.

principles inherent to this specific area of literary studies. These analyses intend to expose the inadequation of judging adaptations based solely on literary principles, by highlighting the main common aspects between film/television episode and book. It also aims to provide a possible basis for further adaptation studies, supported by the concepts of what should/can be adapted from a book to the screen, how important the key elements of the novel for its cinema/television counterpart are or how much is dictated by the concept of temporality in a particular adaptation.

This particular novel was chosen for its relevance on the author's literary career, as well as for being one of his most commonly adapted works to either television or cinema. My interest in the crime and mystery genre also weighted in my choice for the literary work to be analysed in this study, due to the complexity of elements like the description of a particular crime to be solved, and how these can be portrayed in film.

The first chapter focuses on the theory supporting intersemiotic translation and adaptation studies. It provides the background for supporting the different relevant aspects to look for in the analysis of any adaptation. It also introduces the problematic of where should the boundary between the literary 'expectations' for a film and the final result of such a film stand.

The following chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the four adaptations selected for this study. Focusing on the analysis of the plot, characters and the adaptation process itself, the main differences between them will be highlighted and compared.

The third chapter is centred on the analysis of the differences in each of the studied adaptations, in an attempt to explain the different strategies and approaches used in each movie to depict their perception of the novel. These include focusing on how the original characters were transposed or modified in these adaptations, what was omitted or condensed in their respective plots and how it was done in comparison to the original novel, and how different decades create different challenges for filmmakers to overcome.

Finally, the conclusion will focus on the issues found in the process of analysing each of these adaptations, as well as in the reasons behind their choice for being the target of this study. As mentioned before, the main purpose will be to provide a possible method for dealing with literary adaptations to film and this chapter will describe how this can or cannot be suitable for future use.

Theories of Adaptation: Adaptation as a Means of Translation

Filmmaking has always given great importance to transposing literary or theatre masterpieces to the screen. Even with all its great advancements – both technologically and stylistically –, literary and dramatic sources have always played an important role in providing the movie industry with content for filmmakers and screenwriters to transform into a final product for their audiences. As such, adaptation assumes a role of vital importance, being present almost from the very beginning of the history of television or cinema.

In its essence, adaptation is seen as a mere transposition of a written work (be it literary or dramatic in source) into a version to be exhibited on screen (in television or in cinemas). That is to say, adaptation is a form of intersemiotic translation, or, as Roman Jakobson put it (according to Julio Plaza), “(...) that type of translation which ‘consists in the interpreting of verbal signs by means of non-verbal systems’, or ‘of one sign system to another, for example, from the verbal art to music, dancing, cinema or painting’, or vice-versa, we might add”³.

As such, adaptation has its own set of problems of different natures, due to various factors, whose solution varies from novel to novel or filmmaker to filmmaker (according to the different tendencies from both director and screenwriter involved). One such issue is the so-called ‘fidelity’ to the original.

The concept of fidelity

Fidelity is seen as the major aspect for which an adaptation will be judged by the critics or, in some cases, the academic community studying it. However, such a view diminishes significantly the correct evaluation of an adaptation since, as suggested by Brian McFarlane, film has “a separate identity and separate aesthetic principles”⁴. This, in itself, brings further issues if we consider the general notion that “everything is adaptable, that whatever exists in one medium might be adapted or translated into

³ PLAZA, Julio. “Ao Leitor” in *Tradução Intersemiótica*. São Paulo: Editora Perspetiva, 2003, p. XI (own translation).

⁴ WELSH, James M. “Introduction”, p. XIV.

another”⁵, which is already a rather disputed notion.

While film as a medium has a number of limitations (for instance, the length a movie can have as opposed to the ‘limitless time’ available for reading a novel), the adaptability of some elements from paper to the screen may seem rather impossible to be achieved. The film’s own characteristics may hinder the possibility of perfectly ‘translating’ a character’s change in tone or in expression, for example, from the novel to the film; the lighting of a certain scene may make it impossible for the viewer to notice that shift in the character’s expression. That is to say, the full emotion described by the author may not be completely captured by the director in the filming process. In such cases, integral fidelity to the original is unattainable. As it happens in translation, the role of the director or screenwriter is of vital importance, as they have to modify what will be displayed on screen so as not to lose the significance of a certain aspect of the novel. They play the role of a translator, in a way, providing the viewer with their version of the original, but without altering its intended ‘message’.

Another issue originated by fidelity is the length of a film and how filmmakers deal with it while working on adaptations. In such cases, one of the best accepted ways of adapting a novel without the ‘loss’ of much of its content would be adapting the novel as a television miniseries. While a movie allows only for a time period of less than three hours, a television miniseries (while fragmenting the story in several episodes and not following a continuous time span) allows for more details to be captured and highlighted on screen. And, although not exempt from having to condense many elements of the novel, it allows the director and screenwriter to present a more ‘fluid’ adaptation than if it were made into a movie.

Also, the way the characters themselves are presented on screen will be an issue for the persistence of fidelity in adaptation. As André Bazin, one of the main representatives of the French New Wave states, “literal translations are not the faithful ones. A character on the screen and the same character as evoked by the novelist are not identical”⁶.

A necessarily different version of a character will change its own nature and, in the end, the meaning of the story itself. For a number of reasons, a character may not be presented to the viewer as it was to the reader – be it due to a limitation set by the film medium or as a way of ‘softening’ it for the target audience.

⁵ WELSH, James M. “Introduction”, p. XV.

⁶ Quoted by: WELSH, James M. “Introduction”, p. XXII.

An example of some of these problems of adaptation would be Roman Polanski's adaptation of *Oliver Twist* (2004), originally written by Charles Dickens. Despite being a renowned director, Polanski's adaptation was not very successful, even though it followed the success of *The Pianist* (2002) and much of his crew remained the same. While the adaptation was, in general, well directed and acted, Ronald Harwood (the screenwriter working with Polanski) admits to the condensation of some elements while adapting the novel, such as the "phenomenal variety of characters" and the "far-fetched complications of the subplots"⁷. While not altering the essence of the novel, Roman Polanski's movie simplified the plot to "a story of survival in a grim and uncaring world"⁸, which some purists might argue to not doing justice to Dicken's work.

Another interesting aspect to analyse from this particular example is the portrayal of the character Fagin (played by Sir Ben Kingsley). While certainly representing Charles Dicken's character perfectly, aesthetically speaking, it was clear that Polanski's version of Fagin was more humanized than its novel counterpart. As such, and as Todd McCarthy stated in his evaluation at the time for the *Variety* magazine, Sir Ben Kingsley's Fagin exuded "a certain feebleness and insecurity that makes him more pathetic than hateful"⁹.

Adaptation poses a considerable number of challenges for filmmakers to overcome when it comes to dealing with fidelity to the original work and will ultimately expose the limitations of film as a means of 'translating' a novel from paper to the screen. So, and again according to André Bazin, "more important than such faithfulness is knowing whether cinema can integrate the powers of the novel (let's be cautious: at least a novel of the classic kind), and whether it can, beyond the spectacle, interest us through the representation of events than through our comprehension of them"¹⁰.

That is not to say that faithfulness to the original novel should be disregarded to the point where the film offers a completely different story in itself. As we will see further ahead, even an adaptation inspired in the original work only to a certain extent needs to have a certain degree of fidelity to its original counterpart. Especially with literary works, it is also important to provide viewers with accurate historic

⁷ WELSH, James M. "Introduction", p. XVII.

⁸ WELSH, James M. "Introduction", p. XVIII.

⁹ Quoted by: WELSH, James M. "Introduction", p. XIX.

¹⁰ Quoted by: WELSH, James M. "Introduction", p. XXIII.

representations of those works, as most of them will be used for pedagogic purposes. Adaptations will probably not be used as a replacement for the studying of the original novel but will play a very important role as complements to that same studying process.

Furthermore, as in any intersemiotic translation process, there are some key elements to a novel that an adaptation cannot ignore. For example, a novel may present the reader with a very detailed description of a character's feelings and thoughts in a given situation. While the reader will understand what the writer is describing by simply reading it, the viewer will get a broader perception of what he is seeing on screen. That is, the movie will allow for a more personal understanding of what the viewer is seeing, depending on how he/she interprets it.

The different 'languages' in adaptation

In that sense, adaptation deals with two different 'languages': one which is read (based on words and grammatical constructions) and another which is viewed (based on images and visual compositions). Here, we begin a semiotic analysis of both these 'languages' and the way their inner elements relate amongst themselves.

In written works, the structure is based on the simple relation between a significant (the words) and a significance (their meaning), according to Ferdinand de Saussure's principle for semiology¹¹. By simply associating both concepts, the reader is involved in a continuous process of constructing the action and the 'world' of a novel.

In movies, the structure is similar, but the significant can be divided into three different components: images (in its theoretical sense), plastic signs and linguistic signs¹². Each of these elements relates to a particular aspect of the visual representation of the novel, but are not used independently in such representations.

The concept of image relates to symbology and the visual representations of objects, beings or other elements in their most common perception (for example, a table with four legs). The plastic signs relate to the characteristics of elements, such as the colour, texture or form (taking the previous example, a plastic sign would be the material of which the table is made – wood, stone, plastic – or its shape – round,

¹¹ JOLY, Martine. "Qu'est-ce qu'une image?" in *Introduction à l'analyse de l'image*. Paris: Éditions Nathan, 1993, p. 33 (own translation).

¹² JOLY, Martine. "Qu'est-ce qu'une image?", p. 42 (own translation).

squared). Finally, the linguistic signs, on screen, are depicted by the representation (verbally or otherwise) of verbal language.

The merging of these components in a scene provides the viewer with a pre-built conception of the action and the environment surrounding the story. Unlike the reader, the viewer's perception of what is represented on screen is based on an analysis of what he is seeing, by considering the three components previously mentioned and how they interact with each other.

In this process of adaptation, one can find a perfect example of Roman Jakobson's definition for intersemiotic translation, described as "the interpretation of verbal signs by means of non-verbal sign systems or from one sign system to another, for example, from verbal art to music, dancing, cinema or painting"¹³.

Thus, the viewer is allowed a much more analytic approach towards a movie than a reader towards a book. While the viewer will analyse a scene based on his own experiences and ideals, the reader will create (in his imagery) the 'scene' according to those same personal experiences and ideals. This creates two completely different perceptions of the (supposedly) same element provided by an adaptation.

Analysis of adaptations

Going back to the issues of adaptation, fidelity should not be the main focus while analysing the quality of an adaptation, given the very different mediums and target audiences involved. As we have seen, even a simple analysis of a character can be deemed irrelevant, given that the same character on screen will be different from its novel counterpart.

On this subject, we can take Brian McFarlane's view on the matter to describe the problem with how adaptations are evaluated by critics. In his own words,

The attitude of literary people to film adaptations of literary works is almost always to the detriment of the film, only grudgingly conceding what film may have achieved. (...) When viewing the film version of a novel or play they know, they want to find in the film what they valued in the literary work, without asking whether this is the sort of thing film can do. They are too often not interested in something new being made in the film but only in assessing how far their own conception of the novel has been transposed from one medium to another. (...)

¹³ PLAZA, Julio. "Ao leitor", p. XI (own translation).

My dissatisfaction with this approach does not stem from the idea of enjoying a particular novel more than its film version; it would be surprising if one had no preference. My dissatisfaction grows from a failure to distinguish between what one might reasonably expect to find transferable from one medium of display to another and what requires the invoking of the processes of what I call “adaptation proper”. Here, essentially, is where a literary training proves most inadequate.¹⁴

As we have seen, what critics should look for in an adaptation is subject to their own training, thus such a great focus on the issue of fidelity. However, fidelity represents a very abstract and, in some cases, very personal concept. What may be deemed ‘faithful’ to a person might not be so to another. Since the concept itself is based on one’s interpretation of a novel, what a person expects to see reproduced in the adaptation varies, necessarily, from one viewer to another.

Still a matter open to debate, adaptation analysis should take into account the fact that the original novel and the adaptation itself will forcibly be two different works, with their own peculiarities. Even though they are, in their essence, telling the same story to their respective audiences, they recur to very different media to do so.

Adaptation as a means of Translation

From this idea, one can also take a different approach on adaptation. Being a means of intersemiotic translation, adaptation can be subject to similar concepts based on translation studies, such as the translator’s invisibility (which will be exemplified later on) or its relation with temporality.

Before anything else, it is important to define who will play the role of the ‘translator’ in adaptation. Considering movies are created by crews of numerous professionals, the translator, in such cases, is a binomial unit comprised of the film director and the screenwriter. The role of the director in any adaptation (or in any movie, for that matter) is almost self-explanatory, since he/she is the person responsible for assembling all the different components of the movie. In the particular case of an adaptation, the screenwriter plays an even more important role than in a ‘normal’ movie. Having to start writing the plot from an already existing work demands a great deal of work. Unlike the original author, the screenwriter will be conditioned by all the

¹⁴ MCFARLANE, Brian. “It Wasn’t Like That in the Book...”, pp. 5-6.

limitations imposed by the film medium and, depending on his/her own creativity, by the expectations the viewers have for the movie. The way the plot is written determines how the story will be told, what elements should be omitted or compressed on screen and what perception should the viewers have of the various scenes.

Thus, regarding the concept of invisibility (and unlike a ‘regular’ translator), it is difficult not to allow the viewer to see characteristic aspects from a given director or screenwriter in the movie. Given the awareness towards the film medium and its traits, the concept of invisibility can be overlooked while analysing adaptations. It is unrealistic to expect filmmakers to fully represent a work of Shakespeare, for instance, in the same way he wrote his plays during his time (when audio technology did not exist, let alone video).

As such, we can say that the concept of temporality is related to that of invisibility. To explain the concept, we can take Julio Plaza’s view on the matter, where he states that:

In the way that creation looks at history as a language, in terms of translation, we can establish a parallel between the “past as an icon”, as a possibility, as the original to be translated, the “present as an index”, as a creative-translator tension, as an operational moment, and the “future as a symbol”, that is, the creation searching for a reader.¹⁵

Translation can be viewed as a relation between past, present and future. Transposing this view to adaptation, the three concepts remain the same, only regarding different ‘objects’.

The “past as an icon” represents the original novel to be adapted and its relation with the movies ‘present’, with all the indeterminate icons and their possibilities for the director to take into his/her own work. It constitutes the central idea of most adaptations – transposing a story from the past (whether based on facts or purely fictional) and transforming it into a version accessible to viewers from a ‘present’ time.

“Present as an index” refers to the way the adaptation will define the original work it is based on and what viewers should retain from it. In a way, what the filmmakers want the viewers to ‘see’ on screen will determine their perception not only of the movie but of the original novel as well. As we have seen before, adaptation provides viewers with pre-determined interpretations of the original work for them to

¹⁵ PLAZA, Julio. “Introdução: A Tradução Como Poética Sincrônica” in *Tradução Intersemiótica*. São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva, 2003, p.8 (own translation).

analyse and judge, based on their own experience (or lack thereof) with the original novel.

Finally, the concept of “future as a symbol” refers to the target audience the adaptation will invite into ‘consuming’ the final product. Here, many factors may weight in the outcome of that consumption, such as the starring actors or the director responsible for the movie. Whichever the case, the adaptation has to relate to the viewers in some manner as for them to watch it, regardless of having read the original work or not.

While not certainly the only factor, temporality is the determining aspect to consider when comparing different adaptations of a given literary work. Even when comparing adaptations released in a short time span, both will have their own differences from one another.

As we have seen, several factors weight in the process of analysing an adaptation. Be it related to the filming style, medium adapted to or depending on the traits of the novel itself – and like translation itself –, no two adaptations shall be exactly the same, regardless of their similarities.

On the next chapter, this will be exemplified for different adaptations of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, one of this author’s most well-known novels surrounding the famous fictional character, the private detective Sherlock Holmes.

The Adaptations of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*

The present chapter will focus on the analysis of different adaptations of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. By selecting four possible examples to be compared not only to the original novel, but also amongst themselves, it will be possible to highlight the aspects related to each of the different filmmaker’s perceptions of the original novel.

Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was a Scottish writer from Edinburgh, born on 22nd May 1859. Despite his family’s background in the artistic career, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle opted to follow a medical career, having completed his studies in that field at the University of Edinburgh. It was during that period that he started writing, with his first short story, “The Mystery of Sasassa Valley”, being accepted in the *Chamber’s Journal*,

the Edinburgh magazine also responsible for publishing Thomas Hardy's work. Conan Doyle's first work starring Sherlock Holmes (a character inspired by the author's own skills of observation, deduction, logic and diagnosis) and Dr. Watson was published in 1888, under the title *A Study in Scarlet*. The inspiration for writing *The Hound of the Baskervilles* would come years later, during a prolonged stay in Devonshire, while visiting the famous Dartmoor prison. The story was initially based on local folklore regarding an escaped convict from that prison, a phantasmagorical hound and an inhospitable manor. Conan Doyle was knighted in 1902 by King Edward VII. He died on 7th July 1930, leaving an extensive literary and theatrical work based not only in Sherlock Holmes, but also in Professor Challenger and Brigadier Gerard, two of his other most famous characters.

The first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was published in 1902, by George Newnes, and was a huge success. The story refers to the murder of Sir Henry Baskerville, a wealthy inhabitant of Devonshire whose family was said to be cursed by a phantasmagorical hound, also responsible for the death of Sir Hugo Baskerville (Sir Henry's ancestor), decades earlier. Concerned that the same fate would await Sir Henry's heir (Sir Charles Baskerville) should he move to his late uncle's residence, Dr. Mortimer, a long time friend of Sir Henry's, meets and urges Sherlock Holmes to try and solve this mystery, in London.

After a series of suspicious events taking place upon Sir Charles' arrival, Sherlock Holmes decides to send Dr. Watson to Devonshire, to serve as a 'shadow' of the newest member of the Baskerville family to occupy Baskerville Hall. Upon arriving, they are met with the news of an escaped convict from Dartmoor prison, still on the loose. Dr. Watson then proceeds to familiarize himself with the locals, ending up meeting other members of the community, such as Mr. Frankland and Mr. and Mrs. Stapleton, who are brother and sister.

As instructed by Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson sends frequent reports about the incidents taking place in Devonshire, keeping him up to date with what was happening. During one of their first nights at the estate, Dr. Watson and Sir Charles learn about a scheme taking place between Barrymore, Baskerville Hall's caretaker, and a man who would turn out to be Selden, the escaped convict from Dartmoor and brother to Barrymore's wife. In the meantime, Sir Charles would end up falling in love with Mrs. Stapleton (much to the disgust of her brother).

Initially suspecting the original murder of Sir Henry Baskerville to be the doing of Selden, Dr. Watson comes across a shade in the moor at night, leading him to believe that someone else was responsible for all the events taking place. Upon further investigation, after an interview with Mrs. Laura Lyons (Mr. Frankland's daughter and the last person to contact Sir Henry Baskerville), it is revealed that the shade seen by Dr. Watson was that of Sherlock Holmes, staying in Devonshire for several days up to that point while carrying out his own investigation.

Sherlock Holmes reveals to Dr. Watson his suspicions on who the murderer might be just before they come across the body of Selden (dressed in Sir Charles' clothes, which he had given to Barrymore) after hearing the howling of a hound. Shortly after, both Sherlock and Watson are confronted by Mr. Stapleton, who inquires them about what had happened. It is then that he is revealed to be the prime suspect in this crime.

Sherlock then devises a plan to catch Mr. Stapleton in the act, after discovering his intentions towards the Baskerville fortune and his true relationship with Mrs. Stapleton (who was, in fact, his wife), the only way possible for him to be brought to justice. After instructing Sir Charles to have dinner with the Barrymores at their home, Sherlock is joined by Dr. Watson and inspector Lestrade (who he had summoned by telegram from London) in their attempt to supervise and capture Mr. Stapleton. After finishing the dinner and while returning home, Sir Charles Baskerville is attacked by a greenish hound (later to be discovered to having been covered in phosphorous) and is saved at the last minute by Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. In the process, Mr. Stapleton escapes the scene, with Sherlock believing that he would have probably lost himself in the moor.

Several weeks later, and upon an inquiring by Dr. Watson, Sherlock Holmes explains to his faithful companion the origin of Stapleton's interest in murdering Sir Charles Baskerville, as he would be the heir of the Baskerville fortune since he was a distant relative to both Sir Henry and Sir Charles. He also explains how the farse was devised by the Stapletons and their past as school teachers, as well as their period spent in South America, when they came across the legend of the hound of the Baskervilles.

With adaptations dating from as early as 1914, the works selected for this comparison provide very different styles of adaptation, as well as target media for which the novel was adapted to. It also focuses on different 'eras' of the film industry, in which the popularity surrounding this novel also varied.

As such, we will analyse the cinematographic adaptation from 1939 (directed by Sidney Lanfield and written by Ernest Pascal), the 1968 adaptation for the *Sherlock Holmes* television series (started in 1964, with Graham Evans serving as director and Hugh Leonard as the responsible for dramatization), the 1988 television movie (created by John Hawkesworth, directed by Brian Mills and dramatized by Trevor R. Bowen) and the 2012 adaption for the *Sherlock* television series (started in 2010), entitled “The Hounds of Baskerville” (directed by Paul McGuigan and written by Mark Gatiss).

Analysis of 1939's The Hound of the Baskervilles

a) Introduction

Perhaps the first successful reproduction of the book on screen, “The Hound of the Baskervilles” from 1939, directed by Sidney Lanfield, written by Ernest Pascal and starring Basil Rathbone in the role of detective Sherlock Holmes (a character he would portray for about 15 years, between 1939 and 1954, and in several different instances, either in cinema or television), represents an interesting and elaborate example of how adaptation is, in itself, a process of translation, at a time where ‘black-and-white’ cinema was the only cinematographic reality known by the industry, with ‘coloured’ movies still being a sort of distant dream.

b) Plot analysis

The main adaptation features of the movie start at the very beginning of its story and in a number of ways. Unlike the novels written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, where Dr. Watson (in this movie, played by Nigel Bruce) undertakes the role of Holmes’ faithful companion in the solving of his cases, as well as that of the narrator and, in some cases, chronicler of their developments, such is not the case in this adaptation, where the narrator is absent and the plot starts with a reproduction of the murder of Sir Charles Baskerville (played by Ian MacLaren). There is also the introduction, in this initial scene, of a character later discovered to be Selden Barrymore (Nigel de Brulier), the escaped convict known in the novel as ‘the Notting Hill murderer’, and brother of Mrs. Barrymore (Eily Malyon). This very family name is another of the movie’s adaptation traits, as it is not used according to the original novel, but rather transformed

into Barryman. There is also a depiction of the inquiries carried out by the police, where those who turned out to be the characters present throughout the movie (with the exception of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson) are present: Mr. Frankland (Barlowe Borland), Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer (Lionel Atwill and Beryl Mercer), Beryl Stapleton (Wendy Barrie) and John Stapleton (Morton Lowry) – another obvious adaptation, as the original character is named Jack Stapleton.

This initial sequence of events serves as an introduction to where the plot of the novel actually starts: in Baker Street, focusing on the first contact between Dr. Mortimer and Sherlock Holmes, while the detective and Dr. Watson wait for the doctor to return and retrieve his walking stick. Considering the limited time made available to the director to tell the story, it served as a way of introducing the main plot and the main characters that would carry it out, providing the viewer with an introduction to the mystery at hand. Another interesting and rather off-character account depicted in the movie is Sherlock Holmes' deduction that the murder of Sir Henry Baskerville (played by Richard Greene) will take place only by reading the news of his arrival from Canada, whereas the original novel reflects a certain reluctance on the detective's part in accepting the legend of the Hound as being a true sign of danger at all, given its 'supernatural nature'. In the book, the description of the facts and clues related to Sir Charles Baskerville's murder is carried out by Dr. Mortimer while he requests Sherlock Holmes' help, after reading out the story behind the legend of the Hound of the Baskervilles – a depiction that would consume too much screen time and, thus, had to be condensed into a shorter, yet coherent, scene. This technique would be carried out several times throughout the movie and with relative success. Also in this scene, the visual depiction of the story of Sir Hugo Baskerville (played by Ralph Forbes) proves to be a more interesting approach towards captivating the viewer's attention, rather than filming a long scene focusing on Dr. Mortimer reading the story. Another interesting approach taken by the screenwriter in this scene is having Dr. Mortimer denying having a dog when confronted by Holmes over the bite markings on his walking stick, which proved to be of great importance later on for time-saving purposes; in the original novel, not only does the spaniel accompany Dr. Mortimer to Baker Street, but his death is only mentioned after Dr. Watson's first contact with the moors of Devonshire and the tragic ending met by the ponies of the region when venturing into their depths, much later in the story.

Following the same logic, the initial events that occur in London are condensed into two rather short scenes: one starting with the arrival of Sir Henry, and another with his and Dr. Mortimer's meeting with Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. While the first is carried out on screen more or less like in the original novel, the other has the introduction of the hansom driver (referred to as a cab in the original novel) as the main aspect of adaptation to retain; not only is he introduced during their meeting (alongside the episode relating to the disappearance of Sir Henry's old boot) but he is also represented differently from the original, with a much less confrontational attitude towards Holmes – similarly to Sir Henry's attitude towards the maiden responsible for the cleaning of his boots, an event in which he was originally described as completely losing his composure over the matter.

The plot takes a more faithful approach towards the original when the action moves to Devonshire and Baskerville Hall. Even though the omission of some details of the story is necessarily present, one can see Dr. Watson reporting the details of his daily life alongside Sir Henry by letter, similarly to the novel. The action of the film appears to quicken its pace a little with the rapid introduction of Mr. Barryman's lurking in the middle of the night and the pursuit of the escaped convict exchanging light signals with him, still with his identity unknown to the viewer. However, it establishes a connection between the story at that point in time and the initial death of Sir Charles Baskerville, described (both in the novel and in the film) as being due to "a heart attack" but leaving the possibility of that character having some sort of influence on the initial death and the crime supposed to take place – which is not the case in the novel but serves as a strategy to keep the viewer interested in the story (apparently used for those that have not read the novel) or, at least, to maintain the mystery surrounding the plot.

Dr. Watson's reports, however, do not allow for a timeline between events to be established and, thus, one cannot determine how far apart the meeting of John and Beryl Stapleton by Dr. Watson and Sir Henry are, respectively. Once again, the necessary omission of details serves the purpose of introducing these characters in the story as the plot thickens with the introduction of Mr. Frankland at the Stapleton's dinner table, rather than in a visit by Dr. Watson to his house during a walk around the neighbourhood, as described in the book, for example. After the depiction of John Stapleton's interest in the case and first contact with Dr. Watson, and Beryl Stapleton and Sir Henry's first meeting, the plot leads us to another clear sign of adaptation, in the scene of the dinner at the Stapleton's house. Here, Mrs. Mortimer plays a more

important role than in the novel (where her character is completely irrelevant to the unfolding of the action), as she is described as dwelling with the matters of the occult, often accompanied by her husband, and offering herself to establish a connection between those present and Sir Charles' spirit. This scene serves as an introduction to the howling heard across Devonshire (attesting for the 'reality' of the legend, in the film) and as a way of further portraying the mystery to be solved as having deep connections with the supernatural.

Another sign of the process of adaptation ensues in the following scene, when the romance between Sir Henry and Beryl Stapleton is made clear, being interrupted by Dr. Watson (who, in the novel, has a spectator role only) and by a peddler in the moors (later revealed as being Sherlock Holmes himself). This scene, followed by that of the revelation of the identity of the peddler, provides the grounds for the unfolding of the case, as the engagement of Sir Henry and Beryl leads to yet another dinner at the Stapleton's house, where all the close relatives are invited. As in the novel, Sir Henry returns home alone, as per instructions of Sherlock Holmes, and is attacked by a hound, unleashed by John Stapleton, at this point clearly depicted as attempting on the life of Sir Henry. This revelation is made at the Baskerville Hall, in the presence of the intervenient characters rather than in a private conversation between Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, with the movie ending soon after.

c) Character analysis

The characters portrayed in the film stand as a rather faithful representation of those portrayed in the novel, with a few exceptions.

The representation of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson follows the general 'archetype' of the characters, a representation that would be carried in most adaptations to the screen, not shifting much from the traits presented to the reader in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novels. Astute, self-aware of his own mystery-solving abilities and observation skills, Sherlock is closely followed in his own detective footsteps by his protégé Dr. Watson, with both characters sharing a more equal role in the film than in the novel. Dr. Mortimer follows a similarly faithful characterization in the film, as do the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Barryman (Barrymore, in the novel), all with slight but irrelevant nuances in the roles they play in the film's story.

The first character to have a significant change in its portrayal is perhaps that of John (Jack) Stapleton, ultimately the villain behind the riddle of the story. A naturalist in the novel, with a seemingly odd behaviour towards some of the characters – namely, Dr. Watson and Sir Henry Baskerville –, he is portrayed as a gentleman and a man of science, without any particular traits in his behaviour that would induce the viewer into believing he was anything but an ordinary man. Also, his true role in the plot becomes clear much less subtly in the film than in the novel, as he is not portrayed as an unscrupulous and violent in nature villain as his novel counterpart (only enough so as to play out the intended role in the film).

The other Stapleton represented in the story is Beryl Stapleton, sister to John, and, perhaps, the character that was most transformed for this adaptation. Following the course of events of the film, Beryl is also portrayed as John's sister (as she is Jack's 'sister' in the novel) but at any time is she revealed to the viewer as being, in fact, John's wife or, for that matter, involved in – or, at least, aware of her so-called brother's doings in regards to Sir Charles' death and Sir Henry's attempted murder. Thus, Beryl Stapleton goes from being Jack's long-time wife and partner in crime – overtaken by guilt for the future awaiting Sir Henry since knowing the truth behind Sir Charles' death and brutalized (psychologically or otherwise) by her own husband for such feelings – to John's innocent and unknowing sister, soon to be bride to Sir Henry. This is a most significant change in character, removing the element of indecision and mixed feelings towards the character that the author left his readers, and replacing it by solidarity towards her situation of ignorance of the machinations surrounding her household.

Mr. Frankland's character was another portrayal that presents significant changes, though not as deep as Beryl's. Mr. Frankland appears in the novel as a bellicose man of law, ensuing in several actions in court against multiple individuals just for the sake of it – a trait somewhat described in the film itself, even if rather roughly. However, the character's role in the film is only that of a fellow neighbour, without any significant influence in the unfolding of events. Mr. Frankland merely establishes a connection between those involved in the solving of the Baskerville mystery and the locals, particularly when he is seen expressing his opinion, before the police, that Sir Charles' death was a result of foul play, contrary to Dr. Mortimer's statement of it being due to a heart attack. Also, Mr. Frankland is not portrayed as an active man pursuing his own investigation (where he was supposedly following the footsteps of Selden, the escaped convict from Princeton, and, almost by accident,

discovered the dwellings of Sherlock Holmes in Devonshire, without Dr. Watson's knowledge) and much less as a relevant character, as in the novel (if not for anything else, for his connection to Laura Lyons, the key element in Sherlock Holmes' unmasking of the story's villain).

d) Adaptation analysis

Considering the short duration of the movie, the adaptation of the novel played a major part in the unfolding of the plot and was certainly a difficult task to carry out; as such, a few differences are clear to the viewer and, in some manner, affect the perception of the whole story. For instance, the absence of Cartwright, the boy assisting the manager of the district messenger offices in London, who plays an important role in the novel in aiding Sherlock Holmes during his parallel investigation carried out in Devonshire, while keeping a close watch over Dr. Watson. Another character missing from the movie (although playing a minor role in the original story) is Lestrade, with whom Sherlock Holmes worked in the past and who assists him in the final stage of the plan to capture Jack Stapleton in the act of attempting on Sir Henry Baskerville's life.

While Cartwright's absence from the screen plot is understandable and, to some extent, acceptable (due to his rather ineffectual role in the outcome of the case), the same cannot be said about the character of Laura Lyons, Mr. Frankland's daughter and the first actual connection between Stapleton and the murder of Sir Charles Baskerville. While the character in itself would not be essential to the unfolding of the story on-screen, it would definitely assist in establishing such a connection, as well as allow for a more faithful depiction of the characters of John and Beryl Stapleton and their true relation to one another. As explained earlier, Beryl Stapleton is John's innocent and unknowingly sister, whilst, in the novel, she is his wife and partner in crime (to some extent). While not influencing the connection of John Stapleton with the attempted murder of Sir Henry Baskerville, the absence of Laura Lyons leaves his connection to the murder of Sir Charles Baskerville as being only related to the motive, not elaborating on the modus operandi used – which is also not depicted in the movie, probably due to the lack of technical means to do so and, thus, not developing the idea of an unnatural hound.

Given the state of the cinematic industry at the time, it was difficult to hope for a 'faithful' adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* to the screen. The idea that "when

viewing the film version of a novel or play they [literary people] know, they want to find in the film what they valued in the literary work, without asking whether this is the sort of thing film can do”¹⁶ should be considered an accurate description of the analysis of this film, when compared to its printed original. A film from the 30’s cannot be compared to one from the 00’s or even the 90’s, when the technology available could recreate certain aspects of the story (in this case, the portrayal of the Hound, with a more devilish look to it as to better describe the beast tormenting the Baskerville family) or when the movie culture allowed for films to be exhibited in theatres without compromising both the work of the agents and the profit of the companies investing in them. For instance, showing films with a longer duration allows for more screen time and more aspects of the original story to be depicted on-screen, thus reducing the resort to omission as a means to fit all the relevant twists and turns of the plot in a given interval of time.

As such, even though it may not be clear, the screenwriter (and the director, for that matter) assumes the role of a translator of sorts. Even though he is working with very different means of communication (and, thus, with very different limitations and possibilities), the task to be carried out is essentially the same: to transmit the original message from the ‘source language’ (the novel) to the ‘target language’ (the screen). This, as in any translation, comes with a number of problems associated that need to be solved.

In this sense, ethically speaking, for example, the adaptation process takes a different approach on some of the issues a regular translator would have to deal with. One of the most important issues would be, possibly, that of the translator’s invisibility. In Venuti’s words:

A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer’s personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text—the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the “original”.¹⁷

¹⁶ MCFARLANE, Brian. “Chapter 1 – It Wasn’t Like That in the Book...” in *The Literature/Film Reader – Issues of Adaptation*. Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 7.

¹⁷ VENUTI, Lawrence. *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995, p. 1.

The idea applied to written texts can also be applied to film adaptations of novels. Screenwriters need to take the written original into account in most aspects of the plot they will be writing and, in many cases (at least when a faithful adaptation is intended), their own perception of the novel and the unfolding of the story is that of a reader in itself – just like a translator’s perception of the original text, when preparing for its translation. In the screenwriter’s case, the style of the director he/she is working with also needs to be considered and, in many cases, poses more problems to the adaptation process and to the expected ‘invisibility’ of both director and screenwriter(s). The fluent transposition of the story from paper to the screen may not always be possible and, in such cases, omissions and twists to the plot will become more evident to the viewer.

In the particularities mentioned before, relating to this particular adaptation of “The Hound of the Baskervilles”, it becomes clear that the main issue the production team had to deal with was the available screen time. The frequent use of omissions is not in itself an uncommon technique employed by filmmakers (rather showing an attempt at carefully and consciously using it, especially for that time) but the frequent ‘condensation’ of some elements of the story (the meeting of Sherlock Holmes with Sir Henry Baskerville to arrange for his journey to Devonshire, with the cab driver interrupting the meeting, for example), while providing a fluent depiction of the action, would, in the long-term, create a connection void between some elements of the story (the absence of Laura Lyons, for instance) that would change the way it is told and even how the characters are moulded in order to adapt to the story itself.

In this particular adaptation, the intervention of different ‘authors’ is well perceived and, to those knowledgeable of the original novel, it may well be regarded as a poor adaptation of the original story, even considering the limitations imposed to the production team.

In Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s novel, the mystery element is always present and sustained by the plot threads that establish a connection between the characters and the mystery surrounding the curse, using the supernatural element as an ‘igniting’ element for the plot’s unfolding. In Sidney Lanfield’s movie, the main element appears to be the supernatural itself (highlighted by the relevance given to the character of Mrs. Mortimer and her intervention as a medium, establishing a validating element for the existence of a Hound and, thus, of a curse surrounding the Baskervilles), serving as both initiator and main plot element behind the mystery to be solved, in what appeared to be an attempt to

take the film away from the traditional traits of the literary crime/mystery genre. Also, the plot presented in the film is of a far less violent and wicked nature as the one in the original novel, with the machinations behind the hideous crime and attempted murder being much less elaborate and brutal. The Stapletons are portrayed, in their own manner, as being much less unscrupulous than in the novel and the conclusion as to who is responsible for such twisted plot is given in a much more straightforward fashion in the film.

Analysis of 1968's The Hound of the Baskervilles – Parts One and Two

a) Introduction

The second adaptation to be analysed is that from 1968. Directed by Graham Evans, it was an adaptation made for the 1964 Sherlock Holmes television series. Besides the particularity of being divided into two parts (allowing it to have almost double the duration of the movie from 1939), the screenwriting credits go to both Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Hugh Leonard, with the latter being credited for the dramatization. Indeed, this adaptation is perhaps one of the most 'faithful' to the original novel ever made, demonstrating the advantages mentioned earlier of having adaptations made for television series rather than regular movies. Nevertheless, some differences are noted when comparing to the novel and to the 1939's movie.

b) Plot analysis

Once again, the action of the plot does not start at Baker Street, but rather with a narrated representation of the legend of Sir Hugo Baskerville (which is originally read by Dr. Mortimer to Sherlock Holmes, during their first meeting). The narrator, however, is not Dr. Watson (not until later in the movie, when he first writes his reports from Devonshire) and serves only the purpose of narrating the letter written by Sir Charles Baskerville (played by Ballard Berkeley).

After the representation of the legend, the movie takes us to the sequence of events immediately preceding Sir Charles' death. In Baskerville Hall, Sir Charles is accompanied by Dr. Mortimer (played by David Leland), Mr. Frankland (George Howe) and Jack Stapleton (Philip Bond), where he expresses his concerns about the

legend of the Hound and the fate of his ancestors. After all the visitors leave Baskerville Hall, we see the unfolding of some later events in the novel, namely Laura Lyons' letter to Sir Charles being thrown into the fireplace, before he leaves the house.

Moving on to the first meeting between Sherlock Holmes (played by Peter Cushing), Dr. Watson (Nigel Stock) and Dr. Mortimer, the reading of the Sir Charles' letter is omitted, as the initial scene rendered it irrelevant. Aside from some minor condensations and omissions during this stage of the plot (for example, the incident with the missing boot or the absence of the cab driver inquiry), the movie faithfully reproduces the action described in the novel.

It should also be noted that, unlike the movie from 1939, the names used for the characters are the same as in the novel, as seen by the first reference to Barrymore (played by Christopher Burgess), when attempting to uncover the identity of the bearded man following Sir Henry Baskerville (Gary Raymond) in London.

Finally, for part one of this adaptation, there is also the inclusion of a humorous incident when arriving at Devonshire, when Dr. Mortimer, Dr. Watson and Sir Henry are forced to push the wagon up the road. The episode ends with Dr. Watson following Barrymore during the night, in an attempt to discover what he was up to.

Part two starts with Dr. Watson reporting to Sir Henry the incident with Barrymore and, similarly to part one, provides a faithful adaptation of the original novel, without many *nuances*.

In this second part of the adaptation, only three main differences (from both the novel and the adaptation from 1939) are relevant to be mentioned. The first one refers to the incident where Jack Stapleton confronts Sir Henry for meeting and walking alongside Beryl Stapleton (played by Gabriella Licudi) on the hills of Devonshire. While the incident in itself is represented as closely as possible to what is described in the novel, the recreation of it on screen replaces the narration of the incidents by Dr. Watson in his reports. The second difference is regarding to the conclusions made by Sherlock Holmes on the absence of Beryl Stapleton at the dinner with Sir Henry, which are revealed after he meets with Laura Lyons (played by Susan Lefton) and not during surveillance in that evening. The last one is also related to Sherlock Holmes' conclusions, only this time focusing on the fate of Jack Stapleton after realising his plot against Sir Henry had failed (where he is shown drowning in the moor in an attempt to escape).

c) Character analysis

Unlike the 1939 movie, the characters from this adaptation are all faithful both to their novel counterparts and to their aforementioned expected ‘archetypes’ (in the particular cases of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson).

Being almost a direct dramatization of the novel (in terms of plot and characterization), it becomes more relevant to highlight the characters not included in this adaptation. In this case, the main focus goes to the absence of Cartwright and Lestrade.

As in the previous adaptation, Cartwright’s first intervention in the story is omitted, as well as his role in Devonshire, assisting Sherlock in his parallel investigation of the case. Again, just as in the movie, this character’s role in the action portrayed on screen would be irrelevant, with his absence not being a loss to the general representation of the novel.

Likewise, Lestrade’s absence is also of minor importance, especially given the modification to Sherlock Homes’ and Dr. Watson’s approach towards cornering Jack Stapleton in his attempt on Sir Henry Baskerville’s life. Unlike the novel, they do not approach the house and keep an eye out for Sir Henry until the fog covers the land, without any contact (or reference) being made to Lestrade assisting in this final phase of the investigation.

In general, the characters followed the same lines (in terms of personality and characterization) as those from the novel, without any relevant alterations worth mentioning, aside from the aforementioned absences.

d) Adaptation analysis

As expected, being divided into two parts allowed for this adaptation to highlight more aspects from the original novel, as well as for a different approach in terms of acting. One can see that the style of acting itself resembles that of a play, with great emphasis on the scenes involving dialogues between characters. It also allowed for a ‘cliff-hanger’ ending to the first part, a filming technique widely used in the contemporary film industry, especially when dealing with movies with sequels to follow.

In general, this adaptation is an example of what most readers of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* might expect from a ‘faithful’ adaptation of the novel, with very few

elements being left out and with a very fluid sequence of events. The main issue for the ‘literary people’ watching this film would probably be the premature unfolding of some aspects surrounding the case, namely the early depictions of Sherlock Holmes’ conclusions throughout the movie.

It also provides a good example of how a director and screenwriter can become ‘invisible’ in their roles as intersemiotic translators. Making such few alterations to the events described in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s novel shows that it is possible to adapt this literary work to the screen ‘by the book’.

When comparing to Sidney Lanfield’s adaptation of the novel, the differences between cinema and television adaptation become evident. It would be impossible (and unthinkable, even) to have a movie, at that time, divided into two parts – a tendency that, curiously enough, is becoming a very common practice with literary adaptations to cinema, as of late. The different approaches of each director also become clear in this comparison, with Lanfield opting for a more ‘liberal’ adaptation while Evans preferred a more novel-based approach.

Analysis of 1988’s Sherlock Homes

a) Introduction

This adaptation is from the period when Sherlock Holmes was most popular on television and cinema, with the main character being played by Jeremy Brett and Dr. Watson by Edward Hardwicke. This adaptation follows a similar line to that of the 1939’s adaption of the novel, while adopting a more faithful approach to the action sequence of the plot.

b) Plot analysis

Like the first adaptation analysed in this study, the movie starts with a depiction of the death of Sir Charles Baskerville (played by Raymond Adamson), to the point where he runs from the Hound. And, as in both previous adaptations, it also does not have Dr. Watson serving as a narrator for the story.

Shifting the action to Baker Street, after the initial analysis of Dr. Mortimer’s walking stick by Dr. Watson and Sherlock, the viewers are actually able to see the dog they theorised about accompanying the doctor (played by Alastair Duncan). In this

scene, it is perceivable a more faithful use of the dialogues from the novel than in the movie's 1939 counterpart. In Dr. Mortimer's meeting with Sherlock and Dr. Watson, instead of depicting the legend of the Hound of the Baskervilles, this scene focuses on Dr. Mortimer's report regarding Sir Charles Baskerville's death.

Still with the action taking place in London, the movie suggests that Sir Henry Baskerville (Kristoffer Tabori) is being followed even before meeting with Sherlock and Dr. Watson. The stalker also proceeds to following him in the hotel's dining room, where he is given chase by Sherlock and Dr. Watson, instead of in the streets, as in the original novel. The identity of the stalker is highlighted at the time of Sir Henry's arrival at Baskerville Hall, with the focusing of the camera on Barrymore (Ronald Pickup).

Moving on to Dr. Watson's wandering over the region of Devonshire, and upon meeting Jack Stapleton (James Faulkner), there is a reference to the poney incident in the moor, unlike the previous adaptations. It is also suggested the presence of a man surveying Dr. Watson's movements and being given his mailed reports to Sherlock Holmes, which indicates that this mystery man (depicted in close filming plans of a hand wearing a black leather glove) is none other than the master detective himself.

Regarding the scene in which Sir Henry and Dr. Watson go after Selden into the night, this actually precedes their discovery of Barrymore making light signs to someone in the moor. Instead, they only confront him when they return to Baskerville Hall and in the presence of Mrs. Barrymore (played by Rosemary McHale), learning about the true identity of Selden (William Ilkley).

After these events, Dr. Watson is invited by Mr. Frankland (Bernard Horsfall) to join him at his house, during one of his visits to town. It is here that he is told about the story of Laura Lyons (Elizabeth Spender) and her relation to Mr. Frankland. During this scene, there is also the depiction of Cartwright (Philip Dettmer) wandering the hills and carrying some sort of load, as if he was searching for something. Sherlock Holmes is also seen travelling in a train back to London, further suggesting his presence in Devonshire and his identity as the mystery man following Watson.

When Watson decides to search the hills for the man he believes is following him, he comes across Dr. Mortimer and his dog, Spot, in one of his field practices. They both ensue in the search for the whereabouts of this man, only to discover him to be none other than Sherlock Holmes. Both Dr. Watson and Dr. Mortimer are then informed

of Holmes' actions and plans for this investigation, before Dr. Mortimer leaving the detective and Dr. Watson.

After this reunion, and upon hearing the screams of someone in the hills, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson discover the inanimate body of Selden, dressed in Sir Henry's clothes (earlier mentioned by Watson in his reports and depicted in the movie as having been given away to Barrymore). They both deduce that Selden's death was the Hound's doing, but Jack Stapleton does not meet them at this time, to inquire about what had transpired there and to see if his plot against Sir Henry's life had been successful.

Moving on to the scene where Laura Lyons is confronted about her relation to Sir Charles Baskerville and to Jack Stapleton by Sherlock and Dr. Watson, the movie already suggests Stapleton to be behind the attempt on Sir Henry's life. After informing Sir Henry about his plan to catch Jack Stapleton in the act, Sherlock Holmes goes with Dr. Watson to the train station, only to fake their boarding and secretly going to Stapleton's house. Along the way, they come across Dr. Mortimer, who assists them on this matter.

After Sir Henry leaves the house and returns home, there is a depiction of a dog with a green ghostly-like tone (later revealed, by Dr. Mortimer, to be phosphorous) wandering the moor and closing in on Sir Henry. After dealing with the dog and saving Sir Henry, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson return to Stapleton's house to find Beryl Stapleton (Fiona Gillies) trapped in a room in the upper floor. During this time, Jack Stapleton is seen escaping into the moor and, like in the 1968 adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for television, he is seen drowning.

The movie ends back in Baker Street, with Dr. Watson asking Sherlock Holmes about his theories behind the plot of Jack Stapleton against Sir Henry Baskerville.

c) Character analysis

Like the previous cases studied, the characters in this adaptation follow the original novel very closely. The nuances seen in some characters are due to the rather faithful way the novel was adapted in this movie. There is a great work done in the omission and condensing of some elements of the story, such as Dr. Mortimer's assistance during the final stages of the investigation. Therefore, a minor character such as inspector Lestrade is not included in this story, which, at the same time, allows for a

larger distancing between this adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and previous stories of Sherlock Holmes, where he was assisted by the inspector.

Selden is one of the characters whose representation suffers several variances in the movie. The stitches in his forehead suggest some kind of intervention and the reason for his uncertain and childish-like behaviour during the movie. This fact also serves as a way of 'softening' his role as a convicted murderer.

The character that presents the most changes in this adaptation is Dr. Mortimer. Although faithful to the original character in aesthetic terms and in his general role in the story, he plays a more important role in assisting Sherlock Holmes and, especially, Dr. Watson throughout this case. In (yet) another adaptation that does not include the presence of inspector Lestrade to assist Sherlock and Dr. Watson, it is Dr. Mortimer that steps in that role in the final attempt to catch Jack Stapleton in the act.

It should also be noted the appearance of Cartwright (the boy running errands at the district messenger offices in London) in this movie, even if briefly and with no particular relevance for the story in itself.

d) Adaptation analysis

In general, this is a faithful adaptation of the original novel, with the plot twists being used to integrate the different roles of the characters in the story. The sequence of events depicted is also faithful to the original novel, despite some minor changes to them.

One major aspect found in this adaptation is the use of some traits characteristic of the criminal genre, as highlighted, for example, by the chasing of the stalker in the hotel in London. We can see the characters sharing the same place and, once the stalker is discovered, they ensue in a chase down the stairs of the hotel until reaching the streets, where the stalker is seen escaping almost just barely.

Another example of the influence of the genre in this adaptation is the filming plans of the stalker in London and Sherlock Holmes's hand in Devonshire. Those close plans without fully revealing the character depicted on screen give a more mysterious 'aura' to the story, as well as leaving viewers guessing as to who is being represented and what his/her intentions are.

The fact that this is a television movie allows for an interesting example of an adaption of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. A lot of the techniques used in filming that are most commonly seen in cinema are present here, as there is a longer timeslot

available. This allows for a more relevant focus on the story components. This movie has a longer duration than the 1939's adaptation of the novel, being almost as long as the full 1968 double-episode adaptation for the television series.

Analysis of 2012's The Hounds of Baskerville

a) Introduction

This is probably the most difficult adaptation to analyse, as it refers to a contemporary adaptation of the story, part of the *Sherlock* television series. The series in itself focuses on modern day versions of Sherlock Holmes (played by Benedict Cumberbatch) and Dr. Watson (played by Martin Freeman), with a clear intention of reaching audiences based on the actors' success on cinema.

Directed by Paul McGuigan, it presents a very unique view on the work of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, by transposing the action and the characters to modern times. While keeping some similarities with the original novel, it brings an 'aura' of novelty to an already existing story, which serves as a way of captivating viewers who may be otherwise disencouraged with the idea of merely seeing another adaptation of a literary classic.

b) Plot analysis

The action starts with a little boy running away from what seems to be a dog attacking someone in a forest. This serves as an introduction to the episode and is similar to the depiction made by other adaptations of Sir Henry Baskerville being chased by something, before his death. After an initial sequence with Sherlock, Dr. Watson and Mrs. Hudson (played by Una Stubbs), Sherlock Holmes' house maiden in the television series, they take on the case of Henry Knight (Russel Tovey), unveiled to be the little boy running from the dog in the forest. He is involved in a controversy with a biological weapon research centre, Dartmoor, in charge of the 'Baskerville experiments', where the incident happened. After presenting the case to Sherlock, with references to the footprints of a hound near the place of the incident (much like Dr. Mortimer in the original novel), both Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson head out to Devon to investigate it.

Henry is then seen in a session with his therapist, Dr. Mortimer (played by Sasha Behar), before focusing on Dr. Watson's mingling with the locals at the hotel in an attempt to discover what is happening in the region. He and Sherlock later find out, by inquiring a local guide, the existence of the supposed hound tormenting those parts, as well as the military experiments made on dogs, genetically altering them.

Sherlock and Dr. Watson later visit the military base, to which they gain access by using Sherlock's brother's, Mycroft Holmes (Mark Gatiss), governmental identification card, and by posing as inspectors. Here, they are led to the presence of Major Barrymore (Simon Paisley Day), responsible for the military researches and experiments carried out at Baskerville. On their way to meeting the Major, they come across Dr. Frankland (Clive Mantle), responsible for the section of animal testing, and Dr. Stapleton (Amelia Bullmore), to whom Sherlock had been related to a certain extent through her daughter, Kristy Stapleton.

Their breach is later discovered, forcing them to leave the base, where they are confronted by Major Barrymore on the way out, after an alert is issued. Here, Dr. Frankland assists them on their escape by confirming Holmes' identity as being Mycroft, as he seems interested in Henry Knight's case.

Dr. Watson and Sherlock then proceed to meeting Henry at his home, where Sherlock suggests that Henry should visit the moor at night, to see if he is attacked, serving as the equivalent for Sherlock Holmes' plan for catching Mr. Stapleton, in the novel. During their wandering in the night, Dr. Watson perceives someone sending Morse code signs with a flashlight from across the moor, to which he answers, in an attempt to decipher the message being sent. However, unlike the original literary work, they are in no way related to Barrymore's actions towards the escaped Dartmoor convict. Meanwhile, Henry takes Sherlock to the place where he claims his father was attacked. Here, Sherlock feels a presence, though he cannot make out what it is, at the time.

Later, at the hotel, Sherlock Holmes admits to having seen a gigantic hound in a conversation with Dr. Watson, feeling shaken by the idea of believing in the irrational as a valid explanation for the case. After an argument over his condition, Dr. Watson goes outside for some fresh air and sees the light signs across the hills once more. He later discovers the lights' origin as being from people parked in that remote location and inadvertently turning on the lights.

In the meantime, Henry is seen at his house, unable to sleep, and being tormented by the sudden turning on of his garden's lights. He also believes to be seeing the shade of a hound crossing the garden.

Back at the hotel, Dr. Watson interviews Dr. Mortimer about Henry, by indication of Sherlock Holmes, who had informed Dr. Watson of her presence there. They are later interrupted by Dr. Frankland, where he reveals the true identity of Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes, as well as their true intentions.

In the morning, after visiting Henry at his home, Sherlock meets Dr. Watson in a graveyard to discuss the events of the previous evening. After complimenting Dr. Watson on his role as a "conductor of light" despite not being "luminous" (in a clear reference to the original novel's dialogue at Baker Street), Sherlock suggests that the 'hound' they are investigating may actually be an anagram instead of an animal. Upon returning to the hotel, they meet Inspector Greg Lestrade (played by Rupert Graves), who is there to figure out what Sherlock is investigating (and was not summoned by Sherlock to assist in the case, unlike in the novel). They later discover that the hound wandering the hills around the hotel was property of the hotel manager, who would release it during the night to support the theory of a monstrous hound tormenting the locals, regardless of having no relation to the tormenting of Henry Knight.

Sherlock and Dr. Watson then proceed to meet Major Barrymore, informing him of their investigation of the military centre, as well as of the experimental activities that take place there. Dr. Watson later discovers a room where animals are kept for the experiments, with one of them having broken out of his cage. He traps himself in an empty cage as to escape the animal, now trapped inside the room with him. At first, he cannot determine what type of animal it is, although growls are heard. Upon finding Dr. Watson, Sherlock tells him about the possibility that what they believe to be an animal is actually a drug that makes those subject to it have hallucinations. They both meet Dr. Stapleton at her laboratory to verify the truth behind this theory. Believing that the sugar at Henry's house might be drugged, Sherlock discovers that this theory is not true and attempts to find another possible explanation for those hallucinations.

At Henry's house, he is seen wielding a gun and shooting at a mirror, with Dr. Mortimer cowering in a corner as Henry flees. Back at the laboratory, Sherlock suggests the existence of a project named H.O.U.N.D., discovering Major Barrymore's access code in order to access the project's files. He then discovers the purpose of such project, as well as those involved in it.

After discovering the effects of the drug developed at the laboratory, Sherlock and Dr. Watson meet Henry at his father's death place, only to stop him from committing suicide. After explaining what was really happening, Henry manages to remember his father being attacked by a man rather than an animal, a man wearing a gas mask and a H.O.U.N.D. t-shirt, leading him to believe it to be a dog. They are later met by inspector Lestrade, before having the hallucination of seeing a dog. During this scene, Sherlock is seen as having a vision of his archnemesis, Jim Moriarty (played by Andrew Scott), only to discover him as being Dr. Frankland and the fog as being responsible for the spreading of the drug.

After Dr. Frankland is discovered to be the murderer of Henry's father, he attempts to escape towards the research centre, before stepping on a landmine in the fields surrounding it. The following morning, Sherlock and Dr. Watson review the events from the previous day, only for Dr. Watson to discover that Sherlock was the one who created the impression of him being locked up in a room with a hound on the loose back at the laboratory. The episode ends with the release of Jim Moriarty from his imprisonment in a room with a mirror, where the word 'Sherlock' is carved into the glass.

c) Character analysis

Being part of an ongoing series, the characters in this adaptation follow their own characterization from the rest of the *Sherlock* television series, as the episodes are not isolated from one another. As such, even with clear inspiration in the characters created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, there are some clear differences from the 'archetypes' for characters such as Sherlock or Dr. Watson.

Starting with Sherlock Holmes, he is depicted as a genius yet arrogant detective, with a clear lack of social skills. Obsessed with constantly challenging himself with mysteries and cases to solve, he is very cynical when dealing with erroneous conclusions made by others and refuses to accept any implausible explanation for solving his cases.

As for Dr. Watson, he is Sherlock Holmes' *protégé*, although keeping a more distant relationship with the detective, due to his 'peculiar' nature. Not depicted as being as eager as his earlier representations in following Sherlock's investigative methods, he still portrays himself as a decent detective, treating clients and facts in a

respectful manner. He also serves as a sort of ‘balancing’ element in Sherlock Holmes’ relation with the outside world, by keeping him in check if it needs to be.

In this particular adaptation, many of the characters were greatly altered to fit not only the story of this episode but the whole context of the series as well.

Henry Knight is the counterpart of Sir Henry Baskerville. He is the only living witness of his father’s death in the forest near the moor and, because of the trauma, he is tormented by the belief of having a monstrous hound stalking him. He plays a central role in this story, with a much different behaviour than that of Sir Henry. Insecure and frightened about all these events, he somehow manages to convince Sherlock into taking his case, while having to deal with the constant images and hallucinations from his past. Although coming from a rich family, his social status is in no way related to the myth of the Hound.

Dr. Mortimer plays a rather minor role in this story. Depicted as the female therapist of Henry Knight, she is basically characterized as Henry’s main ‘support’ throughout the event surrounding the case but nothing more.

Major Barrymore is the military responsible for overseeing the research centre and is in no way related to the original Barrymore from the novel, except in name and appearance. He is later found to be aware of the military project causing all the events surrounding the death of Henry’s father, although it is unclear how far his involvement in such events goes.

As for Dr. Frankland, he is a central figure in this adaptation, unlike its original inspirational character, Mr. Frankland. Despite relating to the novel’s character in name and also in appearance, he plays more the role of a Jack Stapleton (who does not exist in this story) in the unfolding of this mystery. Showing an early interest in the presence of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson to solve the case, he is later revealed to be the one responsible for killing Henry’s father and attempting on Henry’s own life by leading him to a state of madness.

Moving on to Dr. Stapleton, she is the modern representation of Mrs. Stapleton. Depicted as one of the scientists involved in the research projects at Baskerville, her role is somewhat similar to the original character’s. She knows of the experiments being carried out and is directly involved in some of them, although unaware of the H.O.U.N.D. project and its influence in the events unfolding. Once she discovers about it, she regrets being in any way involved and somewhat attempts to redeem herself.

Another character with a more prominent role in this story than in the original novel is inspector Lestrade. Although he plays an almost identical role as his novel's counterpart, he enters this story due to his presence in other episodes of the series, not so much for his actual influence in the solving of this particular case.

Apart from these, there are two more characters worth mentioning, not for their roles in this particular adaptation but for their role in its relation with the rest of the television series as a whole. In that sense, Mycroft Holmes and Jim Moriarty, while not directly involved in this story, serve as linking elements between this story and previous episodes. While Mycroft serves as the 'key' for Sherlock Holmes to enter the military base, Moriarty represents the detective's greatest obsession and paranoia, particularly when Sherlock is exposed to the drug in the mist. Both representations suggest the existence of an important connection between them and Sherlock, not necessarily in this particular episode, but in the unfolding of the general story of the television series.

d) Adaptation analysis

Being part of a contemporary 'reincarnation' of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's work, it was expected that this adaptation would be much different from the previous ones that were analysed. It was even expected to be a whole new story entirely, with only a few connection points serving as links between the original work and this adaptation.

To fully analyse this particular work of intersemiotic translation, it is necessary to start by analysing the television series as a whole.

Starting by the main characters (Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson), it seems clear that the creators of the series wanted to make the most of the actors' success in the film industry, and particularly in Hollywood. Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman are two of Britain's most successful contemporary actors, as proven by their roles in movies such as 2013 Academy Award winner *12 Years a Slave* (in the case of Cumberbatch) or *The Hobbit* trilogy (starring both). This served as a pivotal point of interest in the series.

Moving on to the adaptation itself, the director appears to aim at a more genre-based adaptation of the original. While being one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most successful works, Paul McGuigan attempts a less 'forced' adaptation, trying to avoid the idea of simply adapting it to the series because of its importance in the literary resume of the author. Also, he appears to attempt to distance himself from an existing genre *cliché*, in the form of the classic mystery cases regarding paranormal forces (in

this case, a spectral hound) being responsible for seemingly inexplicable crimes. As such, the contextualization given to the story, by focusing the main plot around a scientific military research centre, works perfectly in suggesting a deeper explanation for this whole mystery.

The difference in the roles played by each character, in this particular adaptation, is also an interesting point to focus upon. Shifting from the original roles played by the secondary characters in the novel, the episode coherently and successfully contextualizes their presence and actions in the plot. For new followers of the Sherlock Holmes universe, it gives them an intriguing plot, while keeping common elements from other criminal television series present. For those familiar with the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the episode provides them with a seemingly new case to be solved, working with their own imagination as to how these new characterizations ‘work’ within the story as a whole. In either case, viewers are met with a story exceptionally supported in the elements of intrigue and mystery, allowing for a new fanbase of Sherlock Holmes to emerge.

In general, it is a very interesting adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Given the context in which it is inserted (that is, the general plot of the *Sherlock* television series), it was a difficult one to make, like any modern day adaptation of a classic literary work. Although it could probably be more ‘faithfully’ adapted to modern times, the twist in the story gives this episode a more unique element to it, while keeping a subtle, yet perceivable, link to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s novel. In comparative terms, it also distances itself as an adaptation from the others previously analysed in this study, as we will see further.

A Comparative Analysis of *The Hound[s] of the Baskervilles*

The present chapter will focus on the comparison of the four adaptations previously analysed in this study.

Perhaps the most evident concept to base the analysis of these adaptations is temporality. As seen previously, intersemiotic translation (as any means of translation) establishes a three-way relation between past (“past as an icon”), present (“present as an index”) and future (“future as a symbol”), which can further be described as a relation between novel, film or episode and viewer.

As such, each adaptation establishes its own relation to the original novel. Storywise, the adaptations from 1939 and 1988 have a very similar approach in the way they perceive and depict the action of the literary work, not fully committing to the fidelity to the novel (which, in the case of the 1939's adaptation, could be considered as strange, due to the early period at which it was made). In the television adaptation from 1969, we see a more theatrical representation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, following the events and characterizations of the novel much more closely than the previous two. As for the 2012's adaptation, it is completely different from the aforementioned works in almost every aspect of the story, except for a few slight common plot points. By itself, the simple fact that the characters involved are adapted to modern times creates a totally different version of them. Moreover, all their traits are adapted to our time, such as their social role and their intervention in a much more technologically complex mystery.

The key element explaining this difference in approach is the 'present' element of the temporality concept. Each adaptation attempts to create a particular relation with the public's expectations at the time. Take the adaptations of 1939 and 1969 as examples: they can explain an approach focused on fidelity to the original work. Despite a difference of nearly thirty years between the two, the film industry had not evolved much in terms of its relation with the audiences – and neither had cinematography studies, for that matter. However, focusing on the television adaptation from 1988, despite its also considerable 'faithfulness' to the original story, the focus turns much more to the main actors than to the story in itself, suggesting a work more directed to the whims of the masses and what attracts them to 'consume' the final product. As it is, this shifts the final product's purpose (or its 'future' condition, if you will) away from the work itself and more to the viewers' own tendencies and preferences towards that genre, at that time. In that same line of thought, but to a much more exponential degree, the adaptation for the 2010's *Sherlock* television series completely changes the view on the original story, providing the viewers with some indefiniteness as to what they are about to see on screen. The 'product' viewers might be expecting to 'consume' becomes almost a complete novelty when compared to the original novel (or even with the other adaptations), rendering the concept of fidelity, in modern times, rather obsolete, when it comes to adaptation studies. It can still be used as a reference (and the 2010's adaptation still uses it as such), but it no longer bears the importance it once had when analysing this type of work.

Therefore, it can be concluded that, although these adaptations aim to bring a classic novel to their respective times, there is a clear focus on the expectations of audiences in each case, with these varying according to the decade in which they are released.

Relating to this factor, the medium to which they are adapted to also needs to be taken into account, since television and cinema, despite their similarities, are two entirely different mediums of diffusion in terms of potential and limitations.

As such, the earlier adaptations show considerable differences towards the most recent ones, even though they, by themselves, are quite different from one another. The 1939's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, being a cinema adaptation of the novel almost at the beginning of cinema itself, appears to be the result of a work with difficulty to adjust to a short duration of screen time (with little more than an hour of total film time). This causes for several modifications to the story 'told' by the film, when compared to the one from the novel. The 1968's television episodes, however, allow for a more versatile film work to be carried out, with a greater fidelity to the original being clear, based on the available screen time alone (almost double the time for the 1939's movie). This makes for a much 'richer' story and characterization of the novel on screen, with the transpiring events being much more similar to those described in the literary work, and the characters' traits and personalities being better reproduced on screen. In the 1988's adaptation, we see a mixing of elements from both mediums (cinema and television), although, at the time, the so-called 'television movies' were a popular trend and did not differ that much from those made for cinema. As for the 2012's television adaptation, it is noted a certain 'franchising' of the literary work, with its peculiarities being 'restrained' to the screen by the characteristics and general plot of the television series the adaptation is part of.

Allied to these factors, there is also the director's/screenwriter's influence on the adaptation process. Depending on the person directing or writing a television or cinema adaptation, different styles of screenplay can be perceived in their work, which also explains some of the most obvious differences found in these adaptations.

This brings us to the relevance of the viewers' opinion on the adaptation, in the final assessment of the filmmaker's work. If we take the example of Roman Polanski's version of *Oliver Twist* (mentioned earlier in this study), despite his undeniable reputation and talent as a director, the opinion of the general public may disregard the technical aspects of the film, based on their view on the novel.

As such, adaptations started focusing more on factors (such as screen time and even performance elements, like pauses and silences) that, while different from the original novel, would allow filmmakers to establish a much closer relation between film and book.

In that sense, the adaptations from 1968 and 2012 stand out. Whereas the works of 1938 and 1988 follow similar screenplay 'patterns' and traits, the 1968 television series adaptation, while divided into two episodes, brings a much more theatrical representation of the novel, as if the producers simply limited themselves to film a play on stage. The very style of action resembles that of theatre itself, without much emphasis given to the action taking place off-screen.

Also in a different 'category' is the television adaption from 2012. Bringing a completely new style of screen work (in terms of visual effects and filming techniques, such as the 360° rotation around a character or the visual representation of thoughts), this adaptation had to cope with a previous but indirectly related background to the story. The inclusion of characters based on original intervenients in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'universe', but external to this particular story (such as Mycroft Holmes or Moriarty), suggests a sense of continuity between this particular episode and the rest of the series. Even if it is possible to isolate this particular story and look at it as a complete work by itself, some elements suggest the existence of something significant prior to this episode and of something else to come after the story's conclusion (for example, with the final scene of the episode where Moriarty is released from custody).

The main purpose of this modern approach is to be able to create new material for the 'final consumer' (the viewer), even if based on a pre-existing work, but also without disregarding its key elements – and, in that sense, the more 'classic' target audience, ever faithful to the original. While probably not being that particular audience's preferable result for an adaptation, it allows for them to feel, to some extent, 'represented' in modern television's programming; it also serves as proof of the evolution of Sherlock Holme's fanbase (in this particular case).

All these elements explain the many differences between adaptations, but should not be separated from each other when trying to understand why these works were made as they were.

Conclusion

The present study aims at presenting a critical analysis of several adaptations of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's main literary works and a defining novel for the criminal genre.

The purpose of such an analysis is to highlight the main aspects to an intersemiotic approach which should focus on and establish a 'common ground' for the evaluation of literary adaptations to television or cinema based on those aspects. These include the issue regarding how 'faithful' should the film/television episode be when compared to its literary counterpart, or the available techniques for dealing with these issues. As a means to provide a better understanding of the whole process of adaptation, this study is based upon similar principles as those used in translation studies, since adaptation presents itself as nothing more than a type of intersemiotic translation. However, the rules and theories supporting these studies need to be 'adapted' when referring to cinematographic works based on novels or other literary sources, due to their very particular specificities.

Taking this into consideration, the adaptations selected revolved, above all else, around two main traits: their 'relation' with the original novel and the time period in which they were produced. This becomes particularly relevant when carrying out a comparative analysis between adaptations, as it allows us to highlight the main differences found in each and to explain why such differences exist.

Using these two aspects as bases for such a comparison, it is then possible to move on to other defining characteristics (such as the medium to which the novel will be adapted – television film, cinema, television series – or the target audience), to further support one's analysis.

In that sense, two possible adaptations were left out of this study, for very similar reasons: the 2012 *Elementary* television series and the soon-to-be trilogy of *Sherlock Holmes* movies (as of today, comprised of the 2009 *Sherlock Holmes* and the 2011 *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* movies, directed by Guy Ritchie and starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law). In both cases, the main reason for those not being subjects of this study was the fact that no relevant common aspects with the *The Hound of the Baskervilles* novel were found.

In the case of *Elementary*, being an ongoing television series, it is possible that some work based on this novel is underway or, at least, planned for the future.

However, the main story and characters are very different from the ones found in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's work, with the action taking place in the modern days (much like the 2010 *Sherlock* television series) but in a completely different setting, as Sherlock (played by Jonny Lee Miller) is a British detective in New York City, assisted by a 'female version' of Dr. Watson (played by Lucy Liu). While these major differences were not determinant in the exclusion of the series for this study, the cases presented in these episodes simply did not have any direct (or indirect, for that matter) relation to the original novel, thus being rendered irrelevant.

As for the 2009 and 2011 *Sherlock Holmes* movies, while being based on the characters and the society depicted in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's work, both stories explore new plots not represented in the author's work, despite being based on his creations. The main purpose of the movies appears to be the promotion of Sherlock Holmes as a 'consumable' character for the Hollywood industry to exploit. While some aspects of the literary works are well represented and 'visible' (such as Professor James Moriarty's portrayal as an equally ingenious yet villainous counterpart of Sherlock Holmes, and their final confrontation resembling that of the novels), the stories were not linked to any particular novel or story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The depiction of elements described in the novels did leave an opening for a possible adaptative analysis but, upon further exploring these movies, they both proved to be irrelevant examples for this particular analysis (despite their great success at the eyes of audiences and critics alike).

Regarding the adaptations that served as subjects of this study, they all provided different examples of how much could (or should) be adapted from a novel. In some cases, following the original 'to the letter' is possible, but it might not be suitable for a given audience at another given time period other than that in which the adaptation is produced – such as the 1968's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* television adaptation, which would most likely not have much success. In this case, due to its very 'theatrical' approach, the adaptation would most likely attract a very specific audience interested in this type of performances, and not the 'movie-consuming' audiences capable of turning a movie into a 'blockbuster'.

The main conclusion one can take from this study is that there is no one 'correct' way of adapting a novel to the screen. The number of elements involved in any adaptation is simply too high and too specific to have all of them serving as general rules for any adaptation process. They serve more as guidelines that should be taken

into account if the filmmakers feel it will help them achieve the type of form they want their final work to have.

Also, and for that reason, the general claim that movies based on novels should faithfully reflect the original elements from the author's work is rather unrealistic. Any adaptation will be based on the director's/screenwriter's perception of the original novel, just like any other reader would have of a novel. Demanding that an adaptation should follow certain concepts and aspects found in the novel may not be coherent with the filmmakers' own interpretation of the written work. It may also be limitative and 'restraining' towards a particular view of understanding of that same book. As such, the adaptation work serves as an 'original' work as well (although based on something already written) that leaves the possibility for viewer's to interpret in their own way, take their own conclusions and make their own judgements on it – just like any written novel.

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