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As you said, “The three late Victorian texts—The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Dracula, and The Hound of the Baskervilles—draw heavily on the trappings of Gothic literature: the supernatural, entrapment, moonlight and fog (extreme weather, etc.), secrecy, solitude, containment, madness, “twin”-ing, abandonment (orphans, mansions, etc.), doors, and disguise. Yet each, so it could be said, configures the Gothic in its own way, for its own purpose.”

I choose the fog to be the feature that I wish to trace its path throughout the three works mentioned above. My immediate reaction to “the fog” is what the author might be trying to say about London during the turn of the 20th Century (1900-1999). My best guess is that reading a mysterious gothic mystery novel during this time was very entertaining because several big changes have been happening around this time.

Following the collapse of the [Western Roman Empire](#) in the fifth century, much of Aristotle's work was lost in the Latin West. The *Categories* and *On Interpretation* are the only significant logical works that were available in the early Middle Ages. These had been translated into [Latin](#) by [Boethius](#). The other logical works were not available in Western Christendom until [translated into Latin in the 12th century](#). However, the original Greek texts had been preserved in the Greek-speaking lands of the [Eastern Roman Empire](#) (aka [Byzantium](#)). In the mid-twelfth century, [James of Venice](#) translated into Latin the *Posterior Analytics* from Greek manuscripts found in Constantinople. -<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organon>

From [Mainz](#) the printing press spread within several decades to over two hundred cities in a dozen European countries.^[5] By 1500, printing presses in operation throughout [Western Europe](#) had already produced more than twenty million volumes.^[5] In the 16th century, with presses spreading further afield, their output rose tenfold to an estimated 150 to 200 million copies.^[5] The operation of a press became synonymous with the enterprise of printing, and lent its name to a new medium of expression and communication, “[the press](#)”.^[6] -https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Printing_press

I enjoy observing the changes in bandwidth, or the change in communication speed or transportation over time. Between 400b.c. and the fifth century, information transfer speed was about how fast a man could run. Sure you could make the case for using horses for faster transport, but in an enclosed area like Athen's, Greece, there would be little room for horses to run around. For example, you do not see horse ranches in Times Square in modern New York. So we have this collection of lecture notes Aristotle wrote for the Lyceum called "The Organon." The first Sherlock Holmes book was published in 1900. According to source [1], transportation during the 1900s was done with bicycles, horses, boats, cars, trams (inter-city buses), or railroads. Contrasting to ancient Greece in 400 b.c, the people of that era used their legs and boats. Transporting information by written scroll via boat was not reliable and could be the reason $\frac{2}{3}$ of all Aristotle's works were lost. There is also the danger of transporting information written in scrolls by foot outside a guarded city because the possibility of being 'robbed by barbarians,' as a Greek might say, might be very large.

You might ask, 'how does this relate to the Gothic features displayed in the novels The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Dracula, and The Hound of the Baskervilles?' Think about the emotions of your fellow people. Where in a few generations, civilization goes from little industrialism to a completely changed world, much like we see today with computers (some people are very tech savvy and basically live their lives through a screen vs. older people might have trouble turning on their computer or phone, not accounting for decaying health). I am willing to bet that the study of mass changes in civilization is the reason there is a whole course on Sherlock Holmes canon and its related novels because the change we see today is very synonymous with the change people were seeing 100 years ago at the time Sherlock Holmes was written. I'm not sure

we should underestimate the effect on one's mental health that a complete change in civilization could cause.

The only mass change in civilization that is of similar orders of magnitude to the modern technology age and the 20th century industrial age would be the 'hypothesis that Earth was struck by a meteorite or asteroid 12,800 years ago[2].' This hypothesis is theorized to have been referenced in the biblical stories, according to Graham Hancock, who said "It's perfectly legitimate to bring Noah's Ark into it (the explanation for how the flood occurred), because it's part of the global legacy of flood traditions" in response to the question "It (the records of the flood) must have then been what was incorporated into the Noah's Ark story[3]."

So the conclusion I am drawing here is that people felt like they were in a mysterious and different place than what their parents raised them in (imagine riding a horse for the first 30 years of your life then using trains after your 31st birthday, or seeing all of Australia destroyed by a single cosmic impact). This conclusion that people felt unprepared for the quickly changing world could also mean that people became more empathetic towards the eerie mysteriousness of these novels. Everyone is catching on to the idea of systematization - autonomous ways of living - using laws and reason, while simultaneously struggling with drug addictions (which had little information about in general during the time), which wraps all together into this character, Sherlock Holmes. Source [4] explores the actual text depictions of Sherlock's addiction where quotes from *A Study In Scarlet*, such as "For days on end he would lie upon the sofa in the sitting-room, hardly uttering a word or moving a muscle from morning to night" does indeed sound like the qualities of an addiction. What is more mysterious, gothic, and eerie than a rapidly changing environment and dealing daily with the inner struggles of good and bad habits? These works, in one point of view, could be saying "life is grim and mysterious because

everything is changing quickly but with automation, mind-altering substances, and sound logical-reasoning, maybe this generation can make a structure that constantly takes action to make life less-grim over time as if it was the concept of the infinitesimal from mathematics.

Watson's character reminds me of Aristotle and Plato. Plato is a wise man born in 428 b.c. who said a sequence of topics including Good or Justice are of the greatest pinnacles of study. Plato taught many people, including Aristotle, at The Academy. "While Plato preferred dialogue, his student of twenty years, Aristotle, preferred the lecture format and would later found his own school where he could, and would, lecture endlessly" is a particular example of a connection I am seeing between Sherlock and Watson.

Throughout the Sherlock Canon, I get the impression that Sherlock treats Watson as a lay person - one who follows orders well and speaks fluent in the tongue of the common people. By 'a common person,' I mean one who has little interest in the topics of academia (with exception to medicine in Watson's case). In the reading of the assigned stories, Sherlock seems to throw questions at Watson as if Watson is simply a representation of the common person, in that - if Watson does not clearly understand Sherlock's reasoning, then Sherlock's reasoning must be flawed. This is one of the character flaws I see in Sherlock - that he has devoted great effort in the automation of his thoughts, that he sometimes mistakes people for objects and might offend them or treat them unfairly.

In one perspective, Sherlock treating Watson like a layman is reasonable because treating one person as if they are less intelligible than they really are for the benefit of

society as a whole might have some degree of possessing the quality of being Good in nature. Sacrificing the individual (Watson) for one's personal intellectual gains, at the same time, does not seem to be of Good nature.

In the Sherlock stories, I remember Watson starting to question his teacher, Sherlock, who was way more skilled at detective work than Watson. This questioning of the teacher could be synonymous in some way to Aristotle's creation of a school based on lecture and not dialogue. The information transfer rate of lecture-based science compared to dialogue-based science, might have been, in Aristotle's opinion, large enough to warrant the creation of an entire new system of academia.

References

- [1] <https://transportandcommunication1900.weebly.com/>
- [2] <https://sacredgeometryinternational.com/new-research-supports-hypothesis-asteroid-contributed-mass-extinction/>
- [3] <https://www.authortalk.audio/1-hancock-transcript-part-1.html>
- [4] <https://www.conandoyleinfo.com/sherlock-holmes/sherlock-homes-and-cocaine/>
- [5] <https://platosacademy.org/a-short-history-of-platos-academy/>