

# UNITED BY THE OCEAN?

## The Romantic Conan Doyle and the Transatlantic Sherlock Holmes

### INTRODUCTION

In this article I will attempt an interpretation of an ‘oceanic’ Sherlock Holmes short story, ‘The Five Orange Pips’, from the 1892 collection *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. I will first place the story within two contexts: biographical and political. I will also examine its relation to some of the other Sherlock Holmes ‘adventures’ that depict the involvement of English citizens in affairs outside Great Britain. Finally, I will analyze the message that ‘The Five Orange Pips’ sent to its reading public and the role that the ocean, and more generally the element (and imagery) of water, plays in crafting this message.

*Jacek Mydla  
University of Silesia  
in Katowice  
Poland*

### CONAN DOYLE AND THE ROMANCE OF AMERICA

The United States of America not only played an important part in Arthur Conan Doyle’s life but seems to have had a warm place in his heart. Even before he visited the States, he was drawn to it in his imagination. Later, he viewed the country with more than a friendly eye, and the ‘romantic’ sentiments made him reflect reproachfully on the separation between the two great English speaking nations and indulge in visions of reunification. In the words of the editors’ of a valuable book that offers a reflection of Doyle’s life in his abundant correspondence, he ‘felt deeply about the relations between the two English-speaking nations’ (Doyle, 2008: 340). In his own words, the friendship between these nations was necessary and imminent; as he put it address-

ing an American audience: 'She [Britain] is an Empire, and you will soon be an Empire also, and only then will you understand each other, and you will realize that you have only one real friend in the world' (Doyle, 2008: 341).

Shortly after the success of the first collections of his Sherlock Holmes adventures, Doyle made a veritable conquest of the United States, visiting it as a celebrity author of popular fiction. His 1894 tour of the States is well documented;<sup>1</sup> in his *Welcome to America, Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Victorian America Meets Arthur Conan Doyle* (1987), Christopher Redmond has painstakingly detailed the itinerary.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, Doyle seems to have been emotionally conquered by the States and publically expressed his enchantment. To describe how he felt about the States, he used the word 'romance':

[...] I longed to travel in the United States. Since this was impossible, I contented myself with reading a good deal about them and building up an ideal United States in my own imagination. ...

I have heard even Americans say that life is too prosaic over here; that romance is wanting. I do not know what they mean. Romance is the very air they breathe. You are hedged in with romance on every side. [...]

If a man can look down from that point upon the noble bridge, upon the two noble rivers crowded with shipping, and upon the magnificent city [New York] with its thousand evidences of energy and prosperity, and can afterward find nothing better than a sneer to carry back with him across the ocean, he ought to consult a doctor. His heart must be too hard or his head too soft. [...]

These things are the romance of America, the romance of change, of contrast, of danger met and difficulty overcome, and let me say that we, your kinsmen, on the other side, exult in your success and in your prosperity, and it is those who know British feeling—true British feeling—best, who will best understand how true are my words. I hope you don't think I say this or that I express my admiration for your country merely because I am addressing an American audience.<sup>3</sup> (Doyle, 2008: 342–344)

Speeches such as these testify to Doyle's enchantment with the States; its reflection in the stories—examples to be examined

---

1 Doyle's tours of the States and Canada in the first decades of the twentieth century were dedicated to the spreading of the doctrine of spiritualism, of which Conan Doyle became an active devotee.

2 Like other popular English authors, e.g. Wilkie Collins, Doyle was aware and complained of the lack of copyright protection in the States. There is a study by Donald Redmond of this problem: *Sherlock Holmes among the Pirates. Copyright and Conan Doyle in America 1890–1930* (1990).

3 These are excerpts from a speech given in New York on November 18, 1894.

presently—have caused some readers to speculate on the possibility of Sherlock Holmes's American descent or citizenship.<sup>4</sup>

In a larger context, the 'romance' of the States has to do not only with progress but also with what we may call political values, those of democracy and liberty, which apparently were dear to Doyle, and which play an important role in his thinking about the public functions of his famous detective *and* his loyal companion. The canon of the 60 Sherlock Holmes stories leaves no doubt that Holmes is an officer in the service of justice and a spokesman who popularises values which Conan Doyle felt strongly about and which, he believed, would create an emotional bond between himself, his detective, and the readers.

The publication history of the Sherlock Holmes stories confirms Doyle's words about how he built an America in his imagination, albeit the representation of the States in these fictions is not exactly utopian. Already the first Sherlock Holmes narrative, the novella *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), testifies to Doyle's emotional and political investments in detective fiction. Symptomatically, already here Doyle takes his readers on a visit to the States. The extensive inset narrative about John Ferrier, his daughter, and Jefferson Hope (the avenger) is set in the state of Utah (with grim sarcasm called 'the Land of the Saints'). Doyle uses the Utah episode as an occasion to express his political sentiments, i.e. to say how strongly he felt about values that in his opinion would supply a foundation for an Anglo-American alliance. Hope's narrative concentrates on a struggle between forces of oppression (represented by the Mormon community of Utah)<sup>5</sup> and the ideals and dreams of freedom and liberation.<sup>6</sup>

4 See editor's note in Leslie Klinger's edition of the novels; Klinger refers to an essay by Christopher Morris, 'Was Sherlock Holmes an American', a contribution to the biography of Holmes as constructed on the basis of the stories (Doyle, 2006: 672, note 58).

5 This is how Doyle depicts the 'totalitarian' system: 'A secret word or a hasty act was followed by annihilation, and yet none knew what the nature might be of this terrible power which was suspended over them. No wonder that men went about in fear and trembling, and that even in the heart of the wilderness they dared not whisper the doubts which oppressed them' (Doyle, 2001: 89). Analogies with the system of terror and oppression operating among the mining community depicted in *The Valley of Fear* are striking and telling.

6 Doyle casts the uncompromising and free-thinking Ferrier in the role of a champion of liberty, ready to use his gun should his and his daughter's

Typically of Doyle, the treatment of women is a measure of the scope of liberty and thus of democracy. Thus, besides the motif of 'political romanticism' there is here also, woven tightly with it, a romantic motif in the pedestrian sense of the word. The way in which the protagonist, the symbolically named Jefferson Hope, is at once the culprit (though not technically a murderer, he is indirectly responsible for the deaths of two of the Mormons) and the champion of justice is worth stressing. At the end of the story, the readers are placed in a morally and emotionally awkward position, but Watson offers some assistance and guidance as to how we should feel about the crime with which the story opens: 'A higher Judge had taken the matter in hand, and Jefferson Hope had been summoned before a tribunal where strict justice would be meted out to him' (Doyle, 2001: 122). It is all very well, but the reader has at this point a fresh recollection of the unusual manner in which Hope went about the job of meting out justice to the two men guilty of the miseries and deaths of Ferrier and his daughter:

'Would you murder me?' he murmured.

'There is no murder', I answered. 'Who talks of murdering a mad dog? What mercy had you upon my poor darling, when you dragged her from her slaughtered father, and bore her away to your accursed and shameless harem?'

'It was not I who killed her father', he cried.

But it was you who broke her innocent heart', I shrieked, thrusting the box [with two pills] before him. 'Let the high God judge between us. Choose and eat. There is death in one and life in the other. I shall take what you leave. Let us see if there is justice upon earth, or if we are ruled by chance'. (Doyle, 2001: 119)

Yet this situation is not entirely unusual, and we shall see the intervention of a 'higher power' also in 'The Five Orange Pips'. In 'The Devil's Foot', to name a similar case, Holmes feels free to pass judgement, and Doyle puts the readers in the position of jurors expected to comply with his verdict. The plot line here

---

security be at stake: 'I'm a free-born American [...]' (Doyle, 2001: 92). The critical moment comes when his daughter is to be sacrificed to the system of polygamy; the word 'heifer', used by the community's 'Elders' in the sense of 'wife' in my opinion justifies the idea of sacrificial offering ('We Elders have many heifers [...]' (Doyle, 2001: 91).

bears a striking resemblance to *A Study in Scarlet*. There is another female victim, and there is another avenger, Leon Sterndale, a lion-hunter. Holmes and Watson find his decision to mete out justice defensible and set him free, thus allowing him to return to Africa rather than turning him into the hands of the police (once more leaving the meting out of justice in the hands of ... God?). Holmes goes so far as to identify with the culprit, thus romantically if tentatively as it were sympathising with his loss and indignation: 'I have never loved, Watson, but if I did and the woman I loved had met such an end, I might act even as our lawless lion-hunter has done'.<sup>7</sup>

Such resolutions of the investigative 'adventures' suggest of course that more in them is at stake than mere brainwork. Indeed, despite his 'bohemianism' and self-inflicted isolation, the detective is repeatedly placed in a position in which he has to decide another man's fate. That he seldom shirks this responsibility is evidence of how much of his own sentiment Doyle invested in this figure. It will be remembered that the knighting of Doyle was a reward for his personal involvement in the Boer War (1899–1902), both as an activist and medical doctor and as a writer.<sup>8</sup>

#### THE 'MARINE' MOTIFS IN THE 'ADVENTURES'

Before we turn to 'The Five Orange Pips', let us note in passing that oceans and voyaging feature also in a number of other stories in the Sherlock Holmes canon, all of them in different ways reflecting the international situation of Great Britain in a period marked by dynamic changes.<sup>9</sup> The inset narrative

7 One can think of serious objections to this verdict of not-guilty. The response of some readers shows that there are limitations (of which Doyle was perhaps unaware) to the degree to which the implied reader was expected to accept Holmes's position of arbitrator. In his edition of the stories, Leslie Klinger quotes the following example (a comment by Rex Stout): 'what of the moral issue? Is the lyncher to be excused if the lynchee had in fact offended?' (in Doyle, 2005: 1422, note 38).

8 On the war and Conan Doyle's involvement see editor's note in Doyle, 2005: 1507–1510.

9 The last of the Sherlock Holmes stories, 'His Last Bow' (1917), is set in the context of the First World War and addresses the issue of espionage (Holmes prevents a German spy from stealing British naval signalling system).

in 'The Gloria Scott' ('The Adventure of the "Gloria Scott"', from the 1894 collection *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*) is, as the title announces, a 'marine' story and depicts the transportation of convicts, a mutiny on board the convict ship, amassing of fortunes in Australia, and the main figures' return to England under changed names. 'The Adventure of the Dancing Men' (from *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, 1905), featuring encoded messages (the dancing man-like figures mentioned in the title), is also about an attempt—in this case an American woman's—to cut oneself away from a criminal past and start a new life in England. As in 'The Orange Pips', in this case Holmes has been unable to prevent the death of his client. 'The Adventure of Black Peter' (also in *The Return*) opens with a corpse—that of a former whaler nicknamed 'Black Peter'—found harpooned to the wall of a hut. The inset narrative, however, is much less uncommon and recounts a theft and, once more, a pursuit and an act of revenge.

A passage from the last Sherlock Holmes novella, *The Valley of Fear* (1914), whose plot movement is another example of the get-rich-overseas-and-take-shelter-in-England pattern, could with little alteration be inserted in other stories, including 'The Five Orange Pips', built after the same model:

He [here, the murdered man, Douglas] had emigrated to America when he was a very young man. He had prospered well, and Barker [the victim's friend] had first met him in California, where they had become partners in a successful mining claim at a place called Benito Canyon. They had done very well; but Douglas had suddenly sold out and started for England. He was a widower at that time. Barker had afterwards realized his money and come to live in London. Thus they had renewed their friendship.

Douglas had given him the impression that some danger was hanging over his head, and he had always looked upon his sudden departure from California, and also his renting a house in so quiet a place in England, as being connected with this peril. He imagined that some secret society, some implacable organization, was on Douglas's track, which would never rest until it killed him. Some remarks of his had given him this idea; though he had never told him what the society was, nor how he had come to offend it. He could only suppose that the legend upon the placard had some reference to this secret society. (Doyle, 2006: 686)

Evidently, when working out new cases for his detective, Doyle felt compelled to make his characters cross and re-cross oceans; many of them have emigrated in pursuit of fortune but also have voyaged in order to leave trouble behind and to find shelter on the British Isles. Repeatedly, however, these 'marine' stories show that, because even the greatest waters are navigable and because Great Britain is open on all sides also to uninvited visitors, dreams of Her shores being a sanctuary may be impossible.

PAPERS, PIPS, AND THE KKK

The opening of 'The Five Orange Pips' sets the tone for the entire story, as is common with Conan Doyle. In one of the first paragraphs we read:

It was in the latter days of September, and the equinoctial gales had set in with exceptional violence. All day the wind had screamed and the rain had beaten against the windows, so that even here in the heart of great, hand-made London we were forced to raise our minds for the instant from the routine of life and to recognise the presence of those great elemental forces which shriek at mankind through the bars of his civilisation, like untamed beasts in a cage. As evening drew in, the storm grew higher and louder, and the wind cried and sobbed like a child in the chimney. Sherlock Holmes sat moodily at one side of the fireplace cross-indexing his records of crime, while I at the other was deep in one of Clark Russell's fine sea-stories until the howl of the gale from without seemed to blend with the text, and the splash of the rain to lengthen out into the long swash of the sea waves. (Doyle, 1998: 103)<sup>10</sup>

We see here the two companions huddled together, as it were, and vainly trying to keep their minds occupied in order to muffle the rather obtrusive and disconcerting presence of the elements, the wind and the rain, in the streets of London. The odd phrase used to describe the city as 'hand-made' suggests that Holmes and Watson are not at home, but on board a vessel, voyaging across stormy seas, and exposed to the untamed elements. Interpreted in political terms, the imagery underscores the open-

Jacek Mydla  
University of Silesia  
in Katowice  
Poland

10 The intertexts that Doyle thus engages are marine adventure fictions of Clark Russell (1844–1911) and 'his fine sea-stories'. As we learn from Klinger's side note (Doyle, 2005, 135, note 7), Russell was 'an American novelist, the writer of many nautical tales', e.g. *The Wreck of the Grosvenor* (1877).

ness (and thus the vulnerability) of Britain and Her civilized citizens to forces beyond control, as a consequence of the great, if burdensome and potentially disastrous, colonial enterprise.

'The Five Orange Pips' foregrounds transatlantic voyaging in a manner not unlike the other stories briefly introduced above. An Englishman, Elias Openshaw, went to live in the States to make a fortune, and then returned to England to spend the rest of his life in peaceful opulence. He is the main figure of an inset narrative which his nephew and inheritor, John Openshaw, recounts as Holmes's client. This narrative reveals the political views of Elias Openshaw, a matter that determines not only his future but also that of his brother and his nephew, the ill-fated inheritors:

'My uncle Elias emigrated to America when he was a young man and became a planter in Florida, where he was reported to have done very well. At the time of the war he fought in Jackson's army, and afterwards under Hood, where he rose to be a colonel. When Lee laid down his arms my uncle returned to his plantation, where he remained for three or four years. About 1869 or 1870 he came back to Europe and took a small estate in Sussex, near Horsham. He had made a very considerable fortune in the States, and his reason for leaving them was his aversion to the negroes, and his dislike of the Republican policy in extending the franchise to them'. (Doyle, 1998: 105)

In this manner, the uncle's economic enterprise and success have become twined with his active support of the Confederate side during the Civil War, i.e. the military career and—as we find out later – his involvement with the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>11</sup> His decision to re-cross the Atlantic was caused by the resolution of the conflict and the resultant democratization (the 'extending of franchise' to the black population).

---

11 Klinger explains: 'Openshaw was far from the only Englishman participating in the American Civil War. Of course, the vast majority of Americans at the time of the Civil War were of British descent, and many in England had family connections in America, on both sides of the war' (Doyle, 2005: 138, note 14). 'The original Ku Klux Klan was founded in Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1866 and grew to become the most prominent of various secret terrorist organisations [...] promoting white resistance to post-Civil War Reconstruction' (Doyle, 2005: 152, note 35).



Typically of such narratives, the past, here the 'career' of the uncle in the States, turns into a curse. On receiving the first warning in the manner of a letter containing five orange pips and bearing the inscription KKK, the horrified uncle exclaims: 'My God, my God, my sins have overtaken me' (Doyle, 1998: 106). What 'sins'?—we might ask. This we are left to guess, as Doyle is not clear on this head. One possibility is that among the papers that he brought with him from the States were documents that would incriminate politicians in America whose careers would suffer should their past involvement with the Ku Klux Klan come to light.<sup>12</sup> His decision to burn the papers and thus 'brazen it out' does not sound very logical. In any case, as a result the inheritors are cursed and doomed; they both pay dearly for those sins. Before his death in unexplained circumstances, Elias makes a will according to which his brother—and thus also his nephew—inherits both the estate and the thirty thousand pounds deposited in the bank. He is aware that his sinful past has blighted the fortune; he says to John: 'If you can enjoy it in peace, well and good! If you find you cannot, take my advice, my boy, and leave it to your deadliest enemy. I am sorry to give you such a two-edged thing, but I can't say what turn things are going to take' (107).

These are ominous words, but again the meaning is far from clear, given the context. As we have suggested, there may be little logic in the uncle's decision to destroy the documents; the fact that the brother and then the nephew fail to produce them (to 'Put the papers on the sun-dial') is responsible for their subsequent deaths. John realises the connection: 'but the papers must be those that are destroyed', he says to his father upon receiving another orange-pips-and-KKK letter (Doyle, 1998: 109). After the death of his father, John for some time entertains

---

<sup>12</sup> The papers, possibly incriminating the members of the KKK, have been kept in the attic: 'a single room, a lumber room up among the attics, which was invariably locked, and which he would never permit me or anyone to enter'. This place with its content is clearly a symbol of an attempt to cut oneself off from the past; and yet the man feels compelled to keep the 'papers'. On the plausibility of the plot see the side-notes in Klinger's edition, especially note 36 on page 153.

hopes that 'this curse had passed away from the family, and that it had ended with the last generation' (111), but—in a truly Gothic fashion<sup>13</sup>—he soon finds that he is being hounded by ancestral sins. We cannot thus be sure what it is that eventually brings about the death of the young Openshaw. To be sure, the KKK operatives 'get him' for not handing over the 'papers'; yet in having destroyed them the 'sinful' uncle has had a hand in the murder as well. The will and the transference of the sin-tainted property that this will has effected has the symbolic meaning of perpetuating the criminality of the uncle's involvement in the affairs of the States on what we should perceive as the politically incorrect side of the conflict.

Let us make clearer the direction of our interpretation. What Doyle seems to be after is not so much a logically tight and impeccable mystery story. Rather, we detect readiness and even determination to use the genre as vehicle for a political message. This explains the ambiguities that pervade 'The Five Orange Pips' as a *detective story*; political concerns override the rules of the genre, defined by Holmes himself as pure brainwork or affectless puzzle solving. To put this differently, Holmes may be a cool reasoner, a cold-blooded mathematician, but the author is far from that. Doyle is deeply concerned about the political significance of the cases and their solutions. What makes this story unusual is that, famously, upon the death of his client, Holmes loses his wonted *sangfroid*:<sup>14</sup> 'That [John Opneshaw's death] hurts my pride, Watson. [...] It becomes a personal matter with me now, and, if God sends me health, I shall set my hand upon this gang' (Doyle, 1998: 119). This reaction may be read as purely intellectual frustration; yet the reader cannot miss or ignore the fact that Holmes has been hurt here not as a thinking machine but as a human being; yes, the alter

Oceans Apart:  
In Search of New Wor(l)ds

RIAS VOL. 7, SPRING-SUMMER N<sup>o</sup> 1/2014

<sup>13</sup> It is worth recalling here that, in the preface to the first edition of *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), Horace Walpole described the moral of his 'Gothic' story by borrowing from the Bible the image of 'sins of the fathers' 'visited' on the offspring.

<sup>14</sup> In *The Sign of Four* Watson bursts out: 'You really are an automaton—a calculating-machine. [...] There is something positively inhuman in you at times' (Doyle, 2006: 235).

ego of Doyle. This brings us, finally, to the role that the oceans, and the element of water generally, play in the story.

#### WATER EVERYWHERE

In this, final section of the article I turn to the role of the oceans—and even more generally, of water—in ‘The Five Orange Pips’. As we shall see, there is a degree of ambivalence in the manner in which this element is represented. The oceans and voyaging play at last a double role in the story, and that besides the motif of emigration and return, which we have already looked at in the previous section. The story involving the two generations of the Openshaws and the three murders has to do with the bizarre manner in which the KKK operatives communicate with the men they persecute; the deaths in mysterious circumstances are all preceded by letters. As much as in their content, Holmes is interested in the dates and places of dispatch. This information allows him to conclude that the culprits are constantly on the move. In the words of Holmes:

There is at least a presumption that the vessel in which the man or men are is a sailing-ship. It looks as if they always send their singular warning or token before them when starting upon their mission. You see how quickly the deed followed the sign when it came from Dundee. If they had come from Pondicherry in a steamer they would have arrived almost as soon as their letter. But, as a matter of fact, seven weeks elapsed. I think that those seven weeks represented the difference between the mail-boat which brought the letter and the sailing vessel which brought the writer. (Doyle, 1998: 116)

Moreover, water seems to be an instrument of crime, some sort of silent accomplice in the commission of near-perfect murders. Elias Openshaw is found ‘face downwards in a little green-scummed pool, which lay at the foot of the garden. There was no sign of any violence, and the water was but two feet deep, so that the jury [...] brought in a verdict of suicide’ (Doyle, 1998: 108). In the case of John Openshaw, the Thames ‘assists’ the assassins; a newspaper report of the ‘tragedy near Waterloo Bridge’ reads as follows:

Between nine and ten last night Police Constable Cook [...] heard a cry for help and a splash in the water. The night, however, was extremely

dark and stormy, so that, in spite of the help of several passers-by, it was quite impossible to effect a rescue. The alarm, however, was given, and, by the aid of the water-police, the body was eventually recovered. [...] It is conjectured that he may have been hurrying down to catch the last train from Waterloo Station, and that in his haste and the extreme darkness he missed his path and walked over the edge of one of the small landing-places for river steamboats. The body exhibited no traces of violence, and there can be no doubt that the deceased had been the victim of an unfortunate accident, which should have the effect of calling the attention of the authorities to the condition of the riverside landing-stages. (Doyle, 1998: 119)

As we remember, the opening of the story stresses the savagery of water, which oddly corresponds to that of the narrative that John Openshaw brings to 221B Baker Street: 'This strange, wild story seemed to have come to us from amid the mad elements—blown in upon us like a sheet seaweed in a gale and now to have been re-absorbed by them once more'. 'The Five Orange Pips' envisions a situation in which the law and the legal systems of both the US and Britain have failed to contain crime, to penalise operations of individuals who act outside the law and the established political systems. Doyle may have been a romantic and an optimist, even something of a visionary as concerns Anglo-American friendship, but the story depicts serious crisis, a situation when the ocean metes out its wild justice (to use Francis Bacon's definition of revenge) when the two countries have failed to suppress racism and prevent acts of terrorism.

Upon finding out about the death of John Openshaw, Holmes decides *to be law*. He symptomatically cries out: 'I shall be my own police' (Doyle, 1998: 120), having before the occurrence of the tragedy accused the official police of 'incredible imbecility' (111). However, before Holmes himself becomes a 'lawless' avenger, like Sterndale the lion-hunter, Doyle intervenes and leaves this task to the wild elements. And so, finally the ocean brings the assassins to justice:

There is ever a flaw, however, in the best laid of human plans, and the murderers of John Openshaw were never to receive the orange pips which would show them that another, as cunning and as resolute as themselves, was upon their track. Very long and very severe were the equinoctial gales that year. We waited long for news of the *Lone*

*Star of Savannah*, but none ever reached us. We did at last hear that somewhere far out in the Atlantic a shattered stern-post of a boat was seen swinging in the trough of a wave, with the letters 'L. S'. carved upon it, and that is all which we shall ever know of the fate of the *Lone Star*. (122)

EPILOGUE: A FACE OF DEMOCRACY

There is in the Sherlock Holmes canon one more transatlantic story which I have deliberately decided not to mention earlier: 'The Yellow Face' (in *The Memoirs* collection). It is too a story of the detective's failure, without however the grim consequences recounted in 'The Five Orange Pips'. More importantly, 'The Yellow Face' also addresses racial prejudice, an issue Doyle evidently regarded as one that would determine the future of the two 'great nations'. Holmes has not been able to 'solve' the case that involves an Englishwoman who, after emigrating to the States, married a black man and who after his death and her return to England has decided to conceal the black face of their child under the eponymous mask, 'the yellow face'. According to the theory constructed by Holmes, the 'yellow face' is not a mask but a real face, one that signifies disease and possibly hints at blackmail. The truth that comes out at the end of the story is for Holmes (and his readers, of course) a lesson of humility. What the mask conceals—and what Doyle reveals—is the truth about racism. In the version of the story published in England, it takes the woman's second husband 'two long minutes' to reconcile himself to the facts; in the American version 'ten long minutes'.

Unification of the English-speaking world is thus represented as a matter of time. Crossing and re-crossing the Atlantic clearly meant and perhaps still means travelling in time, moving backwards and forwards. Conan Doyle may have been incurably utopian and incorrigibly romantic, yet the crossings depicted in the canon have the virtue of mental exercise that ought not to be abandoned. This imaginary voyaging is travel in pursuit of freedom, and this makes the Great Water a unifying rather than a dividing element.

Jacek Mydla  
University of Silesia  
in Katowice  
Poland

WORKS CITED

- Doyle, A. C. (1998) 'The Five Orange Pips', in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- (2001) *A Study in Scarlet*. London and New York: Penguin.
- (2005) *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*. Volume II. L. S. Klinger (ed). New York and London: Norton.
- (2006) *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes. The Novels*. L. S. Klinger (ed). New York and London: Norton.
- (2008) *A Life in Letters*. J. Lellenberg, D. Stashower, and C. Foley (eds). London and New York: Harper Perennial.
- Redmond, C. (1987) *Welcome to America, Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Victorian America Meets Arthur Conan Doyle*. Toronto: Simon and Pierre.
- Redmond, D. (1990) *Sherlock Holmes among the Pirates Copyright and Conan Doyle in America 1890-1930*. New York and London: Greenwood Press.