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## From Hamlet to Holmes: Literary Detective Tradition

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**Abstract**--Exposed to the mystery of his father's suspicious death, young Hamlet followed the riddle of solving it in the longest tragedy of Shakespeare. By suspension and the lengthy nature of detective works, Shakespeare seems to have initiated a new subgenre in drama which may have later on been converted into an independent subgenre in the novel by Edgar Allan Poe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Agatha Christie through their imaginative characters, Auguste Dupin, Sherlock Holmes and the pair of Hercules Poirot with Miss Marple respectively. Fyodor Dostoevsky may have also spread the net of Hamletian subtext in his *Crime and Punishment*. Plotting a perfect crime by the murderers and the public approval of the plan, on one hand, and the invincible mind of the hero which ultimately undo the seemingly unsolvable puzzle, on the other, construct the very core of all aforementioned works of Shakespeare, Poe, and Doyle. The unanticipated and unpredicted findings of either Holmes or Hamlet defeat the expectations of the audience and bring the runaway justice back to her groom. This paper intends to uncover the centuries-long interwoven relationship between Holmes and Hamlet by scrutinizing the textual and methodological resemblances between the classic and modern versions of fictitious detective characters.

**Keywords**--detective stories, Doyle, Hamlet, Shakespeare, Sherlock Holmes.

## Introduction

Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift of the early 1700s as the fathers of English novels gave a form and structure to the newly born genre which was then called 'comique epic in prose' in its early stages. Deservedly, the later female novelists confiscated the genre because Behn (1998), with her Oroonoko, was the legitimate mother of the genre who tried her hand in the novel much before the fathers. Behn, the first professional female novelist, earned her livelihood by writing half a century before the fathers of the novel were in their teens. Romantic novels of Austen's (1813), *Pride and Prejudice* and Shelley's (2018), *Frankenstein* gradually turned into a gothic novel by Brontë's (2001), *Jane Eyre* and her sister's *Wuthering Heights*, in the same year, paved the way for the first detective story, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* by Poe (2006), and, later one, matured in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* in 62 cases consisting of 4 novels and 58 short stories between the years from 1887 till 1927 together with Agatha Christie's *Hercules Poirot* and *Miss Marple* 1920-1975.

Dostoevsky (2017), in his *Crime and Punishment*, a decade before *Sherlock Holmes*, employed the very similar method of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, originated from his deep appreciation of Shakespeare, his detective namely Porfiry Petrovich to investigate the crime committed by Raskolnikov. Like *Hamlet*, the crime and criminal are exposed at the very beginning of the novel but it takes the whole work to move from suspicion to determination and finally to the confession of the murderer.

It seems that detective stories like gothic novels have their roots in the dark aspect of romanticism. The mysterious nature of both and the gradual solving of the mystery by an amateur or professional character in these two 'sister subgenres' leave the critics undetermined about which followed the other. However; the establishment of police forces in the 1820s could be marked as the transitional point from gothic novel to detective story in which the main character is not a curious courageous layman but a professional species of the ununiformed force who acted much like lawyers than the police (Pratt, 1981; Mann, 1983).

Despite its late emergence, compared to the other genres and subgenres of literature, detective stories soon established their rules and regulations due to its becoming the taste of the town and being read widely and eagerly. Generally, according to the tradition of detective stories, a crime scene is designed and the puzzle of seemingly unsolvable murder begins to find its solution through the unnoticed details.

## Literature Review

Establishing a relationship between the past and present has been an attempt among literary critics. The present is an awareness of the past as T S Eliot summed up all these attempts of the critics. "Present is directed by the past as the past is altered by the present". Regardless of the chronicle challenges between poetry and drama in their first existence, tragedy and epic have much in common as epic and novel. Timothy Steel tried to investigate this issue in 'The Structure of the Detective Story: Classical or Modern?': "Maugham is hardly the only writer to

have suggested similarities between certain features of the detective story and properties Aristotle ascribes to classical tragedy, and many commentators have noted in particular the relevance to the detective story of Aristotle's emphasis on plot." (Steele, 1981), He, then, concludes that detective story is undeniably Aristotelian in a variety of ways. If such certainty is allowed, thus, such a comparison can also be made between Hamlet and Holmes in many other ways which this paper is intended to. The evidence for such a claim is that Doyle was very much aware of Shakespeare in general and his Hamlet in particular. Doyle in Shakespeare's *Expostulation* very vividly confesses his legitimate right to use the best of literary treasure and 'suck the honey that they stored':

*Whence did they suck  
This honey that they stored? Can you recite  
The Vantages which each of these has had  
And I had not?*

Romanticism as the greatest and the vastest school of thought both in its scope and realm, at the turn of the nineteenth century, did not leave a single stone unturned in the 1800s. Art, in all its forms, from music, painting, and poetry to architecture and sculpture underwent major changes, and the process of the changes prolonged and continued almost for a century. The emphasis from the logic of classicism shifted to emotions and feelings. 'I think therefore I am' of Descartes was substituted by Rousseau's 'For us, existence is feeling'. The gap between thinking and feeling became unbridgeable during the early years of romanticism. Wordsworth and Coleridge, the forerunners of the school, divorced their works totally from logic and reason and loaded them with unlimited emotion in poetry and prose. Sense and Sensibility of Austen gave priority to sense and sensibility as the title indicates.

In later years, the elements of fear and horror together with the antiquity of classic works were added to the emotions in the works of art which brought about the subgenre of Gothic. In the second half of the century, Gothic novels were well received by the public readers and there was a great tendency to Frankenstein of Mary Shelly and *The Wuthering Heights* of Emile Bronte. The accustomed setting of the late classicism, used by Anne Radcliff in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, half a century before romanticism, was again incorporated in the romantic novels to produce a gothic impact on the readers. The experience was a successful one, the mixture of the past setting and present feelings and horror.

Novelists, having been encouraged by the gothic success and having been inspired by policing experiences, tried their hands at a newer genre by bringing back another element of classicism in their romantic genre - thinking. Reason and logic which were put aside by the emergence of feeling and emotion were supposed to be added to the archaic setting of the Gothic and produce detective stories. Therefore, the once departed notions of 'reason' of Descartes and 'feeling' of Rousseau were reconciled in the thoughtful clever characters of Dupin of Poe and Holmes of Doyle (Doyle & Hultenberg, 1960; Doyle, 1992). Holmes is now a conscious investigator who relies much on his reasoning faculty than his trained skills. In *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches*, the weight is given to logic rather than instinct: "Crime is common. Logic is rare. Therefore, it is upon the logic rather than upon the crime that you should dwell."

From the chronicle inspection of the formation and transition mentioned above, it can be summed up as: once, at its early stages, when there was not a fixed name for the new genre, it was called after its ancestor for its length as 'Comic Epic in Prose'. Later on, this genre could not find a fixed name for itself. It was just called the new genre, the novel. The gothic novel, developed from the darker aspect of romanticism, was mainly impacted by 'the reign of horror' during which the number of enemies of the kingdom was decreased by the increase of 'guillotines' on the corner of every district. The formation of police department accomplished the mission as Samson Lim states in 'Detective fiction, the police, and secrecy in the early twentieth century "...these new types of stories emerged in parallel with the development of an organized detective unit within the country's police force..." (Lim, 2012).

### **Detective stories**

Looking for the evidence to prove the seemingly innocent figure through the already overlooked and downplayed pieces of documents by the ordinary police amateur forces is almost the central issue of the detective stories of the past and present. The very simple definition of the subgenre of detective narration given by Alan H Goldman in 'The Appeal of the Mystery' is very comprehensive "... a detective, often retired or on vacation, is hired to look into some problem such as a missing person or blackmail; a murder ensues that initially either seems unsolvable or points to an obvious culprit; further events and more murders refute the initial hypothesis; an insight based on some previously overlooked fact occurs to the detective, who does not yet reveal his suspicion; the full solution is revealed and fully explained."

Generally defined as "...a story is written in prose that begins with a crime, usually a murder, or some other puzzling occurrence that is solved..." (Lim, 2012), detective stories, with a short history of an age, have been categorized in different dichotomies according to their characters, context, plot, and length. They are mainly known as hardboiled, historical, police procedural, inverted, courtroom, serial killer, a locked room, and supernatural or occult mystery detective stories with a good many confusing discoveries deserve praising the reasoning faculty of the detectives. Howard Haycraft in his book entitled, *Murder for Pleasure; The life and Times of Detective Story*, quotes Philip Guedalla: "The detective story is the normal creation of the noble mind."

In addition to the traditional hardboiled detective story which is the most accustomed single plot narration of the complication of the events, in an inverted detective story, more emphasis is put on the characters and the plot consists of following the events which lead to the crime. The manner of committing the crime is first described and the person who has committed the crime is also introduced. Then, gradually, during the story, the author tries to reveal him/them and prove their criminality. Hamlet depicts a good example of an inverted detective story. The ghost reveals the whole crime to young Hamlet and in the course of the tragedy, the disclosed event finds strong ground (Setlur & Paul, 2021; Lavin, 1998). This is also known as 'howcatchem'. The police procedural detective story narration technique is quite opposite of the inverted one. The procedure of the events much resembles the real-life situation in which the chain of events leads to

the identity of the criminal. The protagonist follows the hints to discover the antagonist. Very similarly, the identity of the murderer is concealed till the end of the story in historical mystery not at present, as in police procedural, but at the past in a historical context. A modern title of 'whodunit' is also coined for this subgenre of a detective story. Once the context is shifted from a vast serious setting of embellished castles to a friendly small community investigated by an amateur detective, like Hamlet, the subgenre is categorized as a cozy mystery. By enlarging the small family community to the scale of society and when many deaths and killings take place by a single killer, as the name indicates, a serial killer detective story emerges. In legal/courtroom detective stories, the detectives are more professional. They are mostly assisted by or become assistants to a criminal lawyer who tries to provide evidence to the justice and judiciary system. The types seem endless as the genre flourished and filled the bookshelves and libraries. Any single change in characters, setting, context, or narration techniques led to a different subgenre of crime detective stories. For example, the impossibility of entering or exiting the locked crime scene was named as a locked-room detective story (Giles, 2012; Ginsburg, 1997).

From the formation of the police force in 1822 which coincides with the early life of detective stories, prevention of crime, maintenance of civil order, protecting civilians, and ensuring safety were the main duties assigned for the police forces. These refer to the affairs which are done before the crime. The activities which fall under the job description of the police detectives were those which should be performed mainly after the crime. From the early nineteenth century onward, police departments gradually emerged in the body of administrative structure of the society, and simultaneously novelists made the best of their imaginative faculties of deploying their agents to pursue the criminals in their stories side by side the real uniformed ones on the streets and the crime scenes (Clipper-Sethi, 1983; Maddalena, 2009).

If a story is a voyage from ignorance to knowledge, in a detective story this voyage is an adventurous one in which the reader takes a very active and challenging role. It equates to an intellectual riddle-like game that much resembles a maze. According to Douglas Thomson detective story is a feather to tickle the intellect' or 'mental gymnastics'. The narration in a detective story is a delicate movement of the author neck to neck with the reader on the verge of discovering as the author and reader are sitting behind a chessboard and enjoying the masterful handling of the chessmen till the criminals are checkmated. Through this analogy, Saussure's analogy of language and chess can be extended to literature and chess.

The possible confusion and the bewilderment of the reader among the complexity of the hints and clues should be prevented with the timely revealing of the path to solve the riddle on the part of the reader. Any tactless narration would ultimately lead towards frustration, wearisome and puzzlement or underestimation, toy kit, and oversimplification. In any detective story, the structure of the plot should be mathematically calculated and the procedure and the chain of the events should be meticulously designed so that the rope-dancer would not lose balance in passing over the incidents by each step and stage of the disclosure of the mysteries. The intentional complication of philosophical thoughts and smart

sayings is imposed on the plot if it moves smoothly to engage the reader in the story intellectually (Dundar, 2013; Saydazimova, 2021).

Having discussed the historical background of detective story which has the elements of gothic setting, romantic passion and diction, classic ration, police force formation, world wars, and the tradition of pursuing criminals both in religion and ancient literary texts, the researcher intends to investigate the very core of the underlying relationship between Hamlet and Sherlock Holmes by, not comparing, but putting the authors of these literary works of the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries with an interval of three centuries beside one another to detect the critical points like a critical detective (Qi, 2021; Zuber, 1980).

### **Doyle and Shakespeare**

Born in 1859 and died in 1930 in his 70s, Irish Conan Doyle created a character in 1890 when he was in his 30s in his first work *A Study in Scarlet* who became more famous than the author himself. This is the topmost achievement of an artist to create a work the fame and name of which could surpass his own. Art conceals the artist. It is an extraordinary situation that man can bring something into a life that can stand by itself, independent from its creator, or in some other cases, greater than the creator himself. Mona Lisa Smile, *Jecond Smile*, has stood by itself for centuries, without depending on the giant of science, Leonardo da Vinci. Lemuel Gulliver's verisimilitude overshadows Johnathan Swift. Gulliver is known more than Dr. Swift. Mainly considered as the titular characters, authors have managed to enliven characters in their imaginative works who have been taken as the living ones like Oroonoko of Aphra Behn, Robison Crusoe and Moll Flanders of Danial Defoe, Harry Potter of J. K. Rowling, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland of Lewis Carroll, Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer of Mark Twain and very related to this paper *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* of Doyle. That is the supreme art that rare poets and artists could achieve. Hamlet, Macbeth, Romeo, Juliet, Othello, and King Lear have formed the army of fictitious characters who parade behind their sole commander, the Bard of Avon.

Conan Doyle was aware of almost all his literary predecessors. He was aware of the mainstream of literature. He mentions Milton, Shelley, and Shakespeare in his article, *The New Revelation*. Even though he was a spiritual figure, as his *New Revelation*, a name chosen similar to the Gospel of the Bible, his detective works dealt not with spirituality but with crimes and criminality. "I was sufficiently interested to continue to read such literature as came in my way". In the mainstream of literature, as his humble confession reveals, Shakespeare had a special position for him on such an intention he wrote an apology and defense, in Shakespeare's *Expostulation* when the credit of his work was given to Francis Bacon. Doyle pleads on Shakespeare's behalf not to do injustice to whom has been put to rest on the shore of Stratford upon Avon,

*Master, I sleep not quiet in my grave,  
There where they laid me, by the Avon shore,  
In that some crazy wights have set it forth  
By arguments most false and fanciful.  
Analogy and far-drawn inference,  
That Francis Bacon, Earl of Verulam*



*(A man whom I remember in old days,  
A learned judge with sly adhesive palms,  
To which the suitor's gold was wont to stick)-  
That this same Verulam had writ the plays  
Which were the fancies of my frolic brain.*

The possession of that which belongs to Shakespeare was given to the poet of his predecessor. It was unbearable for a conscious conscientious of different ages and Doyle decided to defend it in Shakespeare's Expostulation where he deliberately and delicately outlined his strategy as well. "But still let he be his and mine be mine". Arthur Conan Doyle seems to be answering his future prejudice critics to let Shakespeare have his own Hamlet and Doyle his Holmes (Shakespeare, 2008).

### **Holmes and Hamlet**

Even if the characters of detective stories are stereotype and are forgotten soon after, as T S Eliot's analogy of "simple currents soon lost in the sand", Hamlet and Holmes share considerable longevity compared to their counterparts in other detective works. These characters walk out of the text and become as real as all other legends of mankind. The multidimensional characterization of the hero is the very similarities between these two characters. Young Hamlet of the monarchical dynasty is much famous for his philosophical soliloquy in Act III scene I 'to be or not to be' than to his detection of the criminal act of his uncle to Holmes who is more a man of Genuity than detectivity. Alan H Goldman describes Holmes in 'The Appeal of the Mystery': "We remember him more for his habits, his obsessions, and his skewed but immense body of knowledge than for his feats of detection. And just as Holmes is far more than a thinking machine, so the American archetype...". The complication of the crime, which is the key to the success of the detective story, becomes more complex by the philosophical attitudes of the detectives added to the riddle of the plot. Sometimes the process of decoding the intellectual wordings of the character proves to be more difficult than disclosing the facts and evidence (Goldman, 2011).

Hamlet's self-chosen madness enabled him to move on the verge of intellectuality; the pretense of wit and the disguise of madness. His trespassing through the realms of doubt and certainty confuses the readers of his real state of mind. Having a considerable amount of knowledge and schooling proper for his age and royal status, Hamlet enjoys an academic background to sharpen his wit and fall to the category of educated prince and courtier. Hamlet came back to Denmark from school in Wittenberg to mourn the death of his father as his uncle mentions:

*For your intent  
In going back to school in Wittehbort,  
It is most retrograde to our desire:  
And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.*

Holmes is also famous for his 'savage genius' as Ana Neil dubs him in her article 'The Savage Genius of Sherlock Holmes': "Doyle's 'realist' stories intrude the figure of primitive into the activity of what Victorians perceived as the most evolutionarily advanced nervous and social networks - into mental genius and

civilized modernity. They do so not only by extending scientific investigation into the realm of the supernatural but also by recognizing how mystical states of mind enhance empirical observation and rational deduction.”

Even if Holmes is not a prince but he comes from a well-to-do family which can be taken equivalent to a royal family of the then society due to his strict observance of manners. Holmes’ educational background is not directly mentioned as of Hamlet, Wittenberg school. He might have had private classes at home but in *A Study of Scarlet*, his educational background is referred to as: “I believe he is well up in anatomy, and he is a first-class chemist; but, as far as I know, he has never taken any systematic medical classes. His studies are very desultory and eccentric, but he has amassed a lot of out-of-the-way knowledge which would astonish his professors”

Hamlet might be known for the long speeches of the young character; however, his emphasis on silence is more effective than his words. While he calls the speech “... windy suspiration of forced breath”, for hiding the deep-buried truth “But I have that within which passeth show;” Hamlet was informed by the ghost of his father about the treason of his uncle and disloyalty of his mother but he prefers to keep silent and not to speak a word about the gravity of the crime till he provides the necessary proofs and collects the needed ground for his claim. It is a self-imposed silence “And still your finger on your lips, I pray.” Being patient together with the notion of secrecy in detective stories, strictly observed by Hamlet and Holmes alike, has played a vital role in trapping the guilty and disguised suspects. John Russel Brown ([Brown, 1963](#)), in his article *Shakespeare’s Subtext* elaborated on the unspoken intentions and summarized it as: “... Hamlet had consciously determined not to speak at all of his new task” and his intentional silence policy ‘I must hold my tongue’ frustrates his mother:

*“This is mere madness:  
And thus awhile the fit will work on him  
Anon, as patient as the female dove,  
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,  
His silence will sit drooping”*

Silence for Holmes is also a merit. Not only he prefers not to speak, but he also encourages Watson to do so: “You have a grand gift for silence, Watson. It makes you quite invaluable as a companion”

### **Watson and Horatio**

Horatio for Hamlet is what Watson to Holmes. The tradition of assigning an assistant to the detectives has been well established in both literary detective writers. Horatio, like Watson, had a military background. Watson has recently returned from Afghanistan and Horatio was a real military name holder when Shakespeare was busy writing *Hamlet*. Shakespeare at the 1st scene of the 1st act introduces Horatio as a man of knowledge when then ghost enters: “Marcellus: Thou are a scholar; speak to it, Horatio” Horatio when encountered Hamlet for the first time introduces himself as: “The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.” Their friendship continued amid all the serious events till the end when Hamlet falls bleeding and takes his last breath. “O good Horatio, what a



wounded name, Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!", and continues by giving his a greater responsibility that Watson has in Sherlock Holmes to narrate their story, "If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart/ Absent thee from felicity awhile,/And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain, To tell my story". In a larger picture, Shakespeare himself must have taken the responsibility that Hamlet asked his friend Horatio to shoulder. Or Shakespeare becomes Hamlet's best friend who narrates *The Tragedy of Hamlet*. In the same manner, Dr. Watson is the third-person narrator of Sherlock Holmes's story. Conan Doyle speaks through Dr. Watson in telling the story of Sherlock Holmes to the world as Hamlet asked Horatio to do so.

The concept of friendship in that era should be understood differently from the notion used in the present time. Friendship should have been taken as assistance and sometimes as an alliance. Robert C Evans in 'Friendship in Hamlet' states: "Today the word mainly refers to an inherently personal relation. In Shakespeare's time, however, it often carried associations of political or social allegiance (Evans, 1999). If a person was politically important, his friends were often his allies or followers, his dependents or entourage, his royal citizens."

### **Supernatural and improbable**

Enlightened by the soul of his deceased father at the very beginning of the play, Hamlet initiates his thorough investigation of the murder case of his father. The prime hints of being murdered by his brother and betrayed by his wife were provided through an unnatural source without which his suspicion could not have gained solid ground. In *The New Revelation*, Canon Doyle elaborates, in detail, on his interest in spirituality, supernatural and spiritual knowledge when he joined the Academy of Psychology. Even though he resigned from it soon, but it had a long-lasting impact on him and resultantly on Sherlock Holmes as well.

"When I regarded Spiritualism as a vulgar delusion of the uneducated, I could not afford to look down upon it; but when it was endorsed by men like Crookes whom I knew to be the most rising British chemist, by Wallace who the rival of Darwin, by Flammarion, the best known of astronomers, I could not afford to dismiss it." Despite being severely a rationalist, Sherlock Holmes is often aided, not by his trustworthy Watson, but by some supernatural inspiration. Supernatural is given a new name by Holmes as 'improbable' which will gain validation in the course of the events. Doyle seems to be utilizing the Aristotelian approach: "Poet should prefer probable impossibilities to improbable possibilities." In *The Sign of the Four*, Sherlock Holmes unveils his detective strategy by giving weight to seemingly supernatural and improbabilities: "Eliminate all the other factors, and the one which remains must be the truth... How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth." This can serve as the cornerstone for all mystery adventures detective stories. The irrationality, improbability or, better to say, supernaturality of the first scene of Hamlet, encountering the ghost, is well-argued in Doyle's *New Revelation*: "...the clear revelation of spirit communication... a breaking down of the walls between two worlds, a direct undeniable message from beyond, a call of hope and of guidance of the human race at the time of its deepest affliction."

### On life and skull

Life has been examined from the bird's-eye view both by Hamlet and Holmes. Hamlet's view on living and life, uttered classically, much resembles Holmes's attitude conveyed in romantic 'real language of the man'. Hamlet believes that life is something different from what the ordinary man could conceive:

*When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause: there's the respect  
Than makes calamity of so long life;  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,*

Similarly, Holmes in a very cozy atmosphere regards life from an odd and unusual perspective in *A Study in Scarlet* of 1886, the beginning of the appearance of Holmes as an amateur detective. "My dear fellow," said Sherlock Holmes as he sat on either side of the fire in his lodgings at Baker Street, "life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent. We would not dare to conceive the things which are mere commonplaces of existence..." Besides, the skull is a common motif in Hamlet and Holmes' professional and personal conduct. The skulls of these two detectives may stand for silent listeners, a reminder of old friendship and majestic excellence and an intention of investigation. The skull scene is of great importance in Hamlet. He holds it in his hand and talks to it as if it were alive:

*That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once:  
how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were  
Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It  
might be the pate of a politician, which this ass  
now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God,  
might it not?*

Most importantly the skull provides Hamlet with an opportunity to become Shakespeare's mouthpiece to pass on his views on philosophical issues on life and death in which he belittles the seemingly great issues of the state mockingly and contemptuously.

*There's another: why may not that be the skull of a  
lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quilllets,  
his cases, his tenures, and his ticks? why does he  
suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the  
sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell his of  
his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be  
in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes,  
his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers,  
his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and  
the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine  
pate full of fine dirt?*

Similarly, Doyle has his spiritual attitudes which were given voice in his *New Revelation* and he advocates spirituality in its strongest outspoken possible form. For Doyle death is unavoidable and life should continue side by side with the thought of death which is reminded by the skull. "Right and wrong I saw also as great obvious facts which needed to divine revelation. But when it came to a question of our little personalities surviving death, it seemed to me that the whole

analogy of Nature was against it. When a candle burns out the light disappears. When the electric cell is shattered the current stops. When the body dissolves there is an end of the matter... It seemed to be a delusion, and I was convinced that death did indeed end all, though I saw no reason why that should affect our duty towards humanity during our transitory existence." Furthermore, in most of Doyle's Holmes, the skull can be detected either as a companion or a silent listener.

## **Conclusion**

The initial for Sherlock Holmes may remind one of Shakespeare and Hamlet if Doyle's defense of Shakespeare in Shakespeare's Expostulation is included in critics' presumption. The abundance of similarities from the intellectual faculty of Holmes and Hamlet, deductive method, inverted narrative technique, preference of silence, view on life, young age of both and the name of the latter which entails the other, to their way of treating the skull and the reliable company they kept, Horatio and Watson respectively, may seem to support the hidden and underlying similarities even at very surface level in the names of the heroes of these two.

There are many other cases and common issues to be discussed such as gender treatment in both works of Shakespeare and Doyle. However, the limitation of this paper would not allow the research work to shed light on every element of literary detective tradition between these two. It is generally believed that women as in most of the literary or religious texts are either the main part of the crime by their temptations, in one extreme, or the victims as in the other end of the extreme. Johnna M Smith in the article 'Hard-Boiled Detective Fiction: Gendering the Canon' reminds us of the role of women in detective stories who fall victim to the crime: "Most of Doyle's women are either victims ("The Adventure of the Speckled Band," "The Adventure of the Dancing Men") or perfectly competent but unable to stir without Holmes's aid ("The Adventure of the Copper Beeches," "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist") (Smith, 1991). Ophelia in Hamlet, a noblewoman, could have married Hamlet if the tragic nature of the play would have permitted, but she ends up in madness and drowning. Gender in Hamlet and Holmes, by itself, can be a topic for a separate article or the treatment of the crime in the works of the male authors are different from the female authors. But this paper should find its end and suffice to the textual and methodological commonality in the fictitious detective character of Hamlet and Holmes.

Detective stories honeymoon is believed to be between two world wars and the search to the beginning of the subgenre of the novel leads to the names of Agatha Christie, Edgar Allan Poe, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Arthur Conan Doyle in the mid-nineteenth century while the tradition of suspicious crime, investigating crime, construction of crime scene, false suspects and identifying the murder has a long history far back in the early ages of story-telling even in ancient literature and religious texts. The credit of detective story should not be limited to the few modern names and this article has tried to research one of the greatest texts of the detective story in English literature to The Tragedy of Hamlet in which the young prince of Denmark, embarks on his inverted investigation inspired by the supernatural source of his father's soul, collects legal proofs and sets the crime scene to prove his claim. Later authors, namely Doyle, inspired by Hamlet sketch

his Holmes equipped with the same tactics and techniques in a modern context, method, and character.

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