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„No more exploding pens – the development of Q in
James Bond and how the character represents the
scientist of the time“

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Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Quartermaster	3
3. Representations of Q.....	5
3.1 Peter Burton	5
3.2 Desmond Llewelyn	7
3.2.1 1963-1969	7
3.2.2 1970-1979	21
3.2.3 1980-1989	28
3.2.4 1990-1999	35
3.3 John Cleese	41
3.3.1 2000-2009	41
3.4 Ben Wishaw	43
3.4.1 2010-present.....	43
4. Conclusion	63
5. Bibliography	65
5.1 Primary.....	65
5.2 Secondary.....	66
6. Appendix.....	69
6.1 Abstract English.....	69
5.2 Zusammenfassung Deutsch	69

1. Introduction

The character of Q has so far appeared in 21 out of the 24 James Bond movies by Eon Productions, released before the time of publication of this thesis in August 2021. and is set to be part of the newest instalment *No Time To Die*, which will be released in the second half of 2021. The name Q is short for quartermaster, the job description of Q. He is the head of the research division of the franchise's MI6's 00-programme.

This thesis will illustrate how the role of Q represents the development of science and especially surveillance and tracking technology within the James Bond franchise, as well as how it contextualises the advancement of modern technological innovation from the Cold War era until the present day.

It will be discussed how the character of Q serves multiple functions within the narrative structure of the franchise tied to the historical context of the respective movie's time period. It will be argued that the quartermaster in the Bond franchise serves various different purposes: not only does he lend tactical support to the main protagonist James Bond and later on also functions as comic relief, he is also a key character putting emphasis on certain plot points and therefore moving the narrative forward. Additionally, the relationship and the development thereof between 007 and Q in the movie series will be highlighted in detail.

Furthermore, this thesis will discuss how the character of the quartermaster embodies the development of science and technology. Throughout the franchise, he is the character both presenting the newest advancements in technology by developing the state-of-the-art spy gadgets for Bond, but also offering the viewer a glimpse into the past by referring back to previous inventions. Therefore, another important function of Q is to represent how the times are changing anchored by his role as the scientist.

Finally, this thesis will discuss how the existence of the quartermaster and his function in the franchise opens up a discussion about the ethics and morals of science in general, and specifically the use of surveillance technology, and how it affects society.

The single sections will focus on each actor, who have portrayed Q, respectively, closely analysing the movies they appeared in, their interpretation of the character, and how their portrayals reflect the notion of the scientist in the given time periods. The main focus will be on Desmond Llewelyn and Ben Whishaw, since they have portrayed (or are still currently portraying) Q for the longest period of time.

2. The Quartermaster

The role of the quartermaster has been a constant in the Eon Productions James Bond movies throughout the last five decades, with only missing an appearance in three movies, namely *Live And Let Die* (1973), *Casino Royale* (2006) and *Quantum of Solace* (2008). As mentioned in the introduction, the letter Q is short for quartermaster and hence refers to his job title, rather than to the actual given name of the current quartermaster. While the name Major Boothroyd is mentioned only twice, once in *Dr. No* in 1962 and in *The Spy Who Loved Me* in 1977 (a small number of mentions considering the character appeared in 21 movies), Q's name is never really brought up or focused on. The letter is simply a reference to his job and what it represents. This approach seems rather impersonal, which could be interpreted in a way that the science he represents is factual and impersonal, and that there should not necessarily be an emotional attachment to the character as a person. Not attaching a specific name to the character, but rather, calling them all Q could also be seen as a possibility to make it easier for different actors to take over the role. Not giving a character a name might help to have the viewer less attached and therefore be more accepting of change. The same argument can be applied to the character of M. The role has been portrayed by four actors to date, with the most recent M, played by British actor Ralph Fiennes, being the only one whose full name has been mentioned repeatedly, due to him already appearing in a different capacity in *Skyfall*, before taking on the position of the head of the intelligence service. However, in the case of Q, the viewers are mostly used to Desmond Llewelyn as Q, mostly due to the incredibly long period of time he portrayed the character, but also due to the fact that the prominence and screen time of the quartermaster was heavily increased during his tenure as Q.

Q, just like Bond and every other recurring character in the Bond movies, has been portrayed by different actors. Ben Whishaw, the actor currently playing Q in 2021, is the sixth actor to perform the role of the quartermaster. The change of actors who play Q is different from the changing images of Bond. While James Bond always stays the same character, no matter who portrays him, there are hints that Q is not supposed to be just one person. In the movie *Die Another Day*, in which the quartermaster is played by British actor John Cleese, the character is called R and even remarks on his predecessor. This is the only time an explicit reference to a former Q is made, highlighting that in this instance, the two actors do not portray the same character, with R already having been introduced in the prior movie.

3. Representations of Q

3.1 Peter Burton

In the first James Bond movie, *Dr. No*, released in 1962, Q's character only appears shortly at the beginning of the movie. He is introduced by M as 'the armourer' and is not yet referred to as Q, but Major Boothroyd. Instead of showing Bond various new gadgets he has developed for him, as he will typically do in further instalments of the series, he simply replaces 007's Beretta with a new handgun; a proper, up-to-date handgun seems to be all Bond needs to fulfil his new mission. There is no sign of the elaborate inventions that will help the spy escape precarious situations during the movie that Q is more closely associated with nowadays. This could, of course, also be attributed to *Dr. No* being the first film in the franchise. The characters, especially those who did not play significant roles in the novels, might have not been fully fleshed out yet. The franchise needed time to find itself and establish major narrative points over time. The support Bond needed in this first movie could apparently be provided by only upgrading the gun, thus not yet providing Major Boothroyd with the role he will take on later in the franchise as Q.

Despite not reappearing in the movie and being introduced under a different name, Peter Burton can still be considered to be the first Q. In his very short first appearance, he is not represented as a scientist but, as also mentioned by M, an armourer. What can be noticed is that it seems to be of great importance that he, too, has a military rank and that he is addressed properly. James Bond's military rank of commander, earned in the Royal Navy, is also often emphasised. The mention of Bond's military rank decreases throughout the franchise and is hardly ever mentioned in the more current movies starring Daniel Craig. As for Q's rank, it has been almost entirely omitted ever since Desmond Llewelyn took over the role in 1963, apart from

the character still being credited as Major Boothroyd in *From Russia With Love* (1963) and KGB agent Major Anya Amasova calling him by his name and rank in passing in *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977).

The focus on exchanging Bond's old Beretta against a new handgun hints that being equipped with the newest weapons is a very crucial scene in this first James Bond movie. It already portrays Bond as clinging to his old Beretta and only reluctantly letting M and Major Boothroyd exchange it for a newer gun model. This sets the mood for all the movies to come and how they show the development of technology, while additionally depicting the conflict of old vs. new, as well as yearning for simpler times. This theme is picked up repeatedly over the decades in instalments of the franchise, in some of which it is the general underlying theme for the whole movie. This will be discussed in detail in the respective paragraphs of this thesis.

In the scene where the two men are introduced to each other, upon examining Bond's gun, Major Boothroyd even mockingly states: "Nice and light in a lady's handbag. No stopping power." (*Dr. No* 1962) In the course of the series we find this situation repeated in various forms throughout later movies. The characters often have differing opinions on the gadgets presented. Q presents Bond with his newest gadgets and Bond, while being naturally able to use all of them, is usually rather wary of them at first. This situation reaches its peak in *Skyfall*, where Bond initially does not want to take the new Q seriously, mostly due to his age and perceived inexperience regarding traditional spy work. This special relationship will be further discussed in the Ben Whishaw section under 3.4.

Burton was originally meant to reprise his role in *From Russia with Love*, but unfortunately for him, scheduling conflicts made it impossible. The actor returned in a different role three years later, making an uncredited appearance as an officer in

Thunderball, where Q was already played by his successor, Desmond Llewelyn. Llewelyn went on to play the role of Major Boothroyd, and later Q, until his passing in a car accident in 1999, shortly after the release of *The World Is Not Enough*.

3.2 Desmond Llewelyn

3.2.1 1963-1969

Due to Peter Burton not being able to reprise his role in *From Russia With Love*, Desmond Llewelyn took over the role of the quartermaster for the following 17 Bond movies. Therefore, he is the actor who has portrayed Q the longest up until now. Even though he portrayed Q for four decades, technological change and advancement progressed much slower during these decades – especially if you compare the pace of these advancements during Llewelyn’s time as Q to the technological progress in the 2000s, which can be considered Ben Whishaw’s period as Q. Just like actor Sean Connery is considered by many to be the “definite Bond” (Cook & Hines 147), Llewelyn occupies that spot in the ever changing parade of Qs. This may, to some degree, also be caused by the simple fact that Llewelyn has portrayed the character for the longest period of time so far, making him the Q that most people recognise as ‘their’ Q. He has been a constant in the movies, even when the faces of Bond changed. In this respect, he can also be considered to be the main representative of technological changes throughout history out of all the Qs, because various stages of technological development were represented by the same character over four decades.

Although he is arguably most well-known for the role of the MI6’s tech-savvy quartermaster, Llewelyn himself stated on several occasions that he was actually rather a technophobe in real life. While not being well-versed in the technological

inventions of his time he was still very fascinated by the ideas that went into the gadgets for the movies.

What is so brilliant about the gadgets," Llewelyn once said, "is their simplicity. Take the car [Bond's Aston Martin from *Goldfinger*]. Knives coming out of the wheels were seen with *Boedcea* and *Ben Hur*; the ejector seat comes from airplanes; oil slicks were used in *G-Men* and so on. But the cleverness is putting all that into a new contest [sic], in one single vehicle. (Universalexports.net)

Desmond Llewelyn portrayed the quartermaster for every Bond except Daniel Craig, who only took on the role of James Bond in 2006, seven years after Llewelyn had passed.

When Llewelyn took over in *From Russia With Love* he was still credited as Major Boothroyd, although M directly refers to him as the "equipment officer" (*From Russia with Love* 1963) in the movie. Only from *Goldfinger* onwards was he referred to as Q, again with one exception in *The Spy Who Loved Me* where he is once again called Major Boothroyd by Major Amasova, as mentioned above. These inconsistencies regarding the quartermaster most likely stem from the Ian Fleming novels the movies are based on, wherein the character also changes attributes and is not necessarily referring to the same person. However, in the movies, Major Boothroyd and Q have been combined into one character over time.

Q is now a fixed and much more consistent part of the movies, which may be attributed to Desmond Llewelyn and the respective directors, for making the character of Q become widely popular and a recognised and beloved character for many. Throughout Llewelyn's run as Q, he appeared regularly in the movies and was given increasingly more screen time. His involvement in the plot also increased over time, as he is written to engage more in 007's mission in later instalments of the Bond movies. This increase of plot involvement can be seen as a parallel to the increasing importance of technological advancement in the 1960s. According to Paste Magazine

several new developments from the 1960s laid the basis for even more impressive technology that would be established in the future, especially the following selection:

One of the most important examples for these developments in technology is Telstar, the first commercial satellite that went into orbit in 1962, originating from a partnership between NASA, AT&T, the UK's General Post Office – who used to handle Britain's telecom services – and France Telecom. The Telstar satellite was the first device used by humanity to relay phone calls, fax images, and television pictures through space.

Another example would be the Dynamic Random Access Memory (DRAM) memory chip developed by Robert H. Denkart in 1968, which increased the memory capacity of computers at a much lower price-point than before. The development of DRAM laid the basis for the development of more consumer-based tech such as gaming consoles, phones, computers, digital cameras, etc. The chip also increased big companies' access to computing power, making their processes more efficient and effective. This technology lays the groundwork for major developments in the James Bond franchise. Q's increasing use and awareness of computer technology and the importance of it stems from Denkart's invention.

The same year, red and infrared LED lights were produced for the mass market, soon to be used in displays and handheld calculators and other commercial products. LED lights became more and more commercial over the next three decades, becoming a technology replacing incandescent forms of light in the late 1990s when white LEDs were introduced to the market. (Paste Tech ch. 1-5). Similar to how the introduction of LED lights illuminated the world, Q's role as a scientist can be seen as someone bringing enlightenment and support in the form of technological gadgets to Bond's missions.

These are only three major tech developments originating in the 1960s, but they are a good tool to firmly contextualise the role and significance of Q as a scientist within the progress of the franchise. He starts out with relatively little screen time and importance to the plot. As the 1960s go by, several big leaps in terms of science happen in the real world, which leads to increasing screen-time for Llewelyn as Q, who reflects this growth of importance of technology as a scientist within the framework of the Bond franchise.

However, in *From Russia With Love* he is still merely a side character, who appears only briefly at the beginning to supply Bond with his tools. He is introduced standing in Money Penny's office, patiently and a little shyly waiting to be called into M's office, after Bond has arrived. There does not seem to be any recognition on Bond's side, therefore missing a connection to Major Boothroyd from *Dr. No*. Although Q's appearance is rather short-lived, the scene already establishes repeating elements of future Bond films in which the quartermaster shows Bond the gadgets he has developed for him and demonstrates how to use them. He presents a seemingly average black leather case equipped with many different tools for Bond to use on his mission. Hidden in the case is a rifle, ammunition, a pop out knife, as well as a cartridge to quickly assemble a bomb. Q demonstrates all of these features and then hands over the case with a simple, "Now you try it." (*From Russia with Love* 1963). With this last remark he is off again, leaving a bit of a comedic effect behind and introducing the character to the audience in a very light-hearted manner. It is also noteworthy that Bond is obviously considered to be well-versed enough in all things technological that he is able to use Q's devices without problems after this brief introduction. As stated by Jim Leach in *'The world has changed': Bond in the 1990s – and beyond?*, "Bond's long association with gadgets continues in the latest films, all of which include the

obligatory sequence in which Q (Desmond Llewelyn) equips Bond for his mission.“ (254) Through his ability to use Q’s gadgets without troubles the figure of Bond becomes a strong representation of modernity by adaptability. The ability to adapt to new technology and circumstances was already very important back in the 1960s, due to a lot of innovations. This ability is arguably even more important today because, as mentioned above, technology progresses at a highly accelerated speed.

This scene in *From Russia With Love* already shows a crucial development from the first movie in terms of equipment. Bond is apparently no longer expected to master all obstacles using only a gun, novel as it may be. Instead, he now has the support of the Q branch’s newest technological developments. The importance and focus on these special tools increase over time, as well as functioning as foreshadowing for later events in the movie, which necessitate the use of the gadgets Q has provided Bond with. It has also become a recurring theme in other movies of the spy movie genre that followed these first Bond movies. In many contemporary famous action movies that revolve around some sort of espionage, similar scenes to the ones between Q and Bond can be found. Movies from franchises, like for example *Mission Impossible* or *The Bourne Identity* frequently feature scenes where a scientist or technician is introducing tools they have developed for the protagonist to aid him in his endeavours.

From Russia With Love was released in the midst of the Cold War. The Cold War started immediately after World War II in 1945 and only officially ended in 1992. It was a war fought between the two superpowers – The United States of America versus, what was then known as, the Soviet Union. The conflict was due to the conflicting economic systems the two countries applied. However, the Cold War was not a classic war fought out in the open on battlefields, but rather a situation in which

each side tried to gain the advantage over their opponent in various fields, such as weaponry, surveillance and space technology.

The development of Bond not just relying on his gun to get him through his missions can be seen as a reflection of this specific period of history where world governments were trying to collect as much intel as possible, made tactical pacts, and joined an international arm's race that led to an amassing of 80,000 nuclear weapons between opposing sides of the Cold War. (Conklin 4) .Q giving Bond the necessities to build a bomb out of a cartridge can be seen as a contextualisation of the ever-growing importance of having a broad arsenal of weapons – especially bombs – at your disposal in case your opponent launches an attack. Even though it is depicted as a light-hearted exchange in the movie, the knowledge of how to quickly build a bomb can be seen as a comment on the socio-political climate during the movie's production and release.

Thunderball was released in 1965 as the fourth adventure of the British agent on the big screen. In this movie the role and importance of Q is further increased. This time, Q leaves his laboratory in the United Kingdom for the first time in the franchise and joins Bond in the field. We see the quartermaster stepping out of the confined space of his laboratory into the field, representing open space. The argument can be made that this represents early stages of new science and technology being more widely available and used by the general public rather than a small elite.

Being out in the field together Bond and Q have their, by now, signature exchange of banter and are shown to be on more friendly terms, although Q mostly complains about Bond and pretends to be annoyed by him. Compared to previous instalments, Q is depicted in a far more comedic light. This is not only highlighted by his witty remarks and jabs at Bond, but even more so by his styling throughout the

movie – most famously his pineapple Hawaiian shirt. This is a stark difference to the previous film's familiar situation of Q introducing his new gadgets to Bond at the MI6 headquarters, where he is usually wearing a more formal attire and later a white lab coat, to highlight his role as a scientist. His attire only further suggests that they are not following protocol on this mission. Q himself mentions to find this situation highly irregular.

The gadgets that Bond uses in *Thunderball* have come a long way from the upgraded gun in *Dr. No*. Already at the beginning of the movie, Bond relies on Q branch's technology as he escapes a dangerous situation by flying away with a jetpack and then using the shield and built-in water thrower of his car. Later, when Q comes to support Bond in the field, he provides additional gadgets, namely a Geiger counter, which became an important tool at that time, considering that both sides of the Cold War were working relentlessly on developing stronger nuclear weapons. Additionally, Bond receives an underwater camera that can take pictures in the dark due to infrared technology, a pocket-sized 'breather' that allows Bond to breathe for a few minutes under water, a tracking pill that has to be swallowed in order to be able to locate Bond, if he was trapped somewhere and, finally, a radio to send a distress signal. After finishing his mission, these tracking devices are used to locate Bond, who had managed to escape the danger, but was trapped in the caves. Thanks to the tracker he can be found and rescued.

The introduction of tracking technology is not coincidental, as GPS tracking devices were originally developed for military and intelligence uses at the height of the Cold War in the 1960s (NASA 2012). By providing a tracking device to aid Bond in his mission, Q's gadgets and involvement in the plot once again represent the socio-political climate and advancement in technology of the time.

This use of technology is already very advanced for its time and the gadgets are made out to be very special, probably only able to be used in the context of espionage.

For the following movie *You Only Live Twice*, Sean Connery reprises his role as 007. He is once again joined by Desmond Llewelyn as Q.

This time, the narrative structure of the movie differs slightly from its predecessors. It does not start with the classic opening of Bond being briefed and equipped for his mission, but with the supposed death of the British spy at the hands of a Chinese assassin. This supposed death is, however, a ploy by the MI6 to make the whole world believe Bond is dead and no longer poses a threat for the villainous organisations he is trying to take down. His mission is to find out the details around the disappearance of an American spaceship. As mentioned above during the Cold War the United States and the Soviet Union competed in a race of arms, trying to outdo each other in the field of weapons. However, the competition between the two super powers also extended to developments in aircraft and conquering space, now known as the space race (Wood 2). A race which was lead by the Soviet Union early on when they launched the first artificial satellite Sputnik 1 into space in 1957, two years after the United States had announced their plans to do so. Furthermore, they also sent the first human to space only four years later. With the space race at its peak the topic of space travel also appears in the movies increasingly. Only two years after the release of *You Only Live Twice*, the United States caught up to the Soviet Union by sending their first man to the moon in 1969.

The space race being an ever-present topic in media and society at that time is also reflected in M reminding Bond of the urgency of his mission and what it could mean for their country and their allies. However, as far as Q is concerned, the

quartermaster also does not make an appearance at the beginning of the movie, since the focus is not on the MI6's inventions this time. Therefore, Bond is sent off on his mission without any gadgets to support him in his endeavour.

As soon as James Bond arrives in Japan, the viewer is presented with an increased usage of technology. The most prominent being the surveillance cameras following the spy around Tokyo. While nowadays this is of course commonplace all around the world, and especially in a modern city like Tokyo, that was not the case in 1967 when the movie was released. Surveillance technology was a major part of the Cold War. In order to get ahead of your adversary, it was necessary to be informed about their progress and their developments. A by now infamous anecdote of the early stages of surveillance between the United States and the Soviet Union occurred directly after World War II. According to an article by Tim Hartford for the BBC in 2019, members of the young pioneers of the Soviet Union gifted Averell Harriman, the US ambassador a "hand-carved ceremonial seal of the United States of America" in August 1945 after the end of WW II. The seal is now simply known as 'The Thing'. Naturally, it was checked for the known sort of wires and microphones before the ambassador put it up in a special place at his study. Over seven years later, US radio operators came about conversations transmitted from Harriman's office. It turned out that the Soviets had installed a completely revolutionary small device in the seal to spy on the ambassador. (Hartford 2019). This shows that even right at the start of the Cold War, surveillance was one of its main features and was therefore immensely developed during that time.

In the case of the movie, it turns out the Japanese secret service, with whom Bond tries to get in touch with, is the one to put surveillance on him, to make sure

everything is in order. Surveillance technology in various forms is a recurring feature in the movie and plays an essential role for the villain as well as the agent.

At a later point in the film, Bond tries to infiltrate the private company which the MI6 suspects, has something to do with the disappearance of the American rocket. He poses as a businessman and meets the head of the company. While Bond feigns interest in doing business, the chairman pretends to believe him, while secretly using X-ray technology installed in his desk to scan his opponent for weapons. The device is hidden in the desk in a very elaborate way, simply looking like a rather fancy design without betraying the real function behind it.

Bond works with the Japanese secret service for most of the movie, he even gets trained as a ninja and marries a Japanese agent to make himself blend in. However, he still relies on his MI6 allies and requests their help. He tells Tiger, the head of the Japanese intelligence office, to call M and request he send 'little Nelly', and her father. A few scenes later it turns out he was referring to Q, who came to Japan to bring Bond the requested equipment. Q, once again out in the field to assist Bond, is again casually dressed, since they meet outside of the conservative MI6 setting. James greets Q with an ironic "Hello, Dad" (*You Only Live Twice* 1969) when they meet. Q again is not amused by Bond's remark, calling them childish. He did bring little Nelly, which turns out to be a small helicopter that can be assembled on the spot. The Japanese secret service agents are not convinced the machine will carry a grown man, because it looks like it was made for children. Bond and Q, however, do not pay attention. Bond's request for Q to join him in the field once again shows that he puts his trust in the quartermaster's technological expertise. Despite the Japanese secret service being technologically equipped as well, the spy still rather relies on the inventions of the MI6's Q branch. Being distrustful of the technology provided by the

Japanese secret service and falling back on the inventions of his trusted quartermaster can be seen as a representation of Orientalism. The term, as defined by Edward Said in his 1978 published book of the same name means “the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, ‘mind’, destiny and so on.” (Said 12). By requesting Q to come to Japan and provide Bond with his equipment, rather than using what the Japanese partners can provide, Q and his technology represent the perceived Western superiority towards their Japanese counterpart.

The quartermaster explains the helicopter’s functions to Bond, having installed machine guns, flame throwers, as well as a rocket launcher to help the spy defend himself. Sending Bond off in Nelly is the last scene in which Q appears in *You Only Live Twice*. Bond uses all the extras Nelly has to offer on his trip where he is immediately attacked by enemies, fighting them off with Q’s special equipment.

In *On Her Majesty’s Secret Service*, which was released in 1969, Desmond Llewelyn once again took on the role of the quartermaster, this time alongside one-time Bond George Lazenby. The Australian actor followed Sean Connery in the iconic role of the British spy, but his run as 007 only lasted one movie.

On Her Majesty’s Secret Service is the only instalment of the series that opens with Q. The introductory scene shows Q and M in M’s office, with the quartermaster telling his superior that the technology they have been using until now is not going to be state-of-the-art for much longer. Once again, the quartermaster is a representation of how technology is changing. As mentioned before, the idea exploring space is not as novel and foreign to people as it used to be, due to the space race and the Soviet Union already having sent a human to space eight years earlier, followed by the United

States. Furthermore, the moon landing was imminent at the time this movie was shot, opening people's minds a bit more for what might be achievable.

Q is already turning his attention to what is to be the next big development in science. He is very insistent on computer analysis being the future. This was a very progressive way of thinking at the end of the 1960s, where the mainstream development in computer analysis and science was still in its infant stages, with the DRAM only having been publicly presented the year before, as mentioned above. Q also shows M an example in a small device, explaining that it can be used for location fixing, for example. We see Q in a more active role here, pushing for the use of newer technology and modernisation, rather than simply carrying out his assignment of inventing helpful tools for the MI6. M, however, does not seem too ecstatic at the technology and his quartermaster's passion for it. While M is usually the one ordering Q to equip Bond with the newest gadgets, he seems to be a bit wary of this new technology. This reaction to such ground-breaking new inventions does to some degree reflect the general public's reaction to a lot of new scientific developments at the time. The 1960s were a period of significant social change, accompanied by technological advancement. Social laws were liberalised, abortion laws changed, and women became more common in the workplace (British Council 2013). The social change was, of course, also fuelled by technological change. All these new developments naturally were not welcomed by everyone immediately. M and his reluctance to share his quartermaster's enthusiasm can be seen as a representation of conservative Britain at that time, while Q and his technology stand for the technological and social change in the 1960s.

The first time Bond returns to the MI6 headquarters in the movie, he has a disagreement with M and wants to resign thereafter. The audience gets to see Bond

in his own office, clearing out his desk and packing up his belongings. In this scene, a little Easter egg is hidden for Bond fans, since he nostalgically takes gadgets out of the drawer that have been shown in previous movies, for example the watch with the pull-out string for strangulation, which was actually used in *From Russia With Love* by the villain's henchman to try and strangle Bond, who then in turn killed the man with the device. Bond looks at it fondly and the same is probably intended for the avid Bond viewer, who remembers this tool, since the watch is one of the very classic spy gadgets. This again shows how fast technology was advancing for people at that time by making Bond, as well as the viewer a little bit nostalgic, probably longing for simpler times. Bond does not resign, of course, but takes a holiday, which leads him right back to working the case. Since he is not officially on a mission, however, the typical scene of Q equipping him with new tools is not included. Bond is left to his own devices in this case, without technical support provided by Q.

While Q's lab does not appear in this film, we do get to see another one at the villain's and head of Spectre, Blofeld, headquarters, where he has a great number of scientists working on the development of the virus he intends to spread around the world in exchange for ransom. This laboratory has a very different atmosphere from the one we usually see at the MI6. The lighting is dimmed and scientists in white coats pour shining liquids from one vial into another. Through the lightning and the colour scheme alone the viewer is immediately told that this laboratory is different from Q's, usually brightly lit, one. It conveys that the inventions made here are for a wrongful purpose. By depicting the villain's laboratory in such a distinct way the concept of Othering is very strongly applied. "Othering is a process in which a dominant group imposes a negatively valued identity on to a subordinate group, where the latter finds it difficult to resist that imposition." (Moodod 13). Throughout the films in the Bond

franchise the concept of Othering is used consistently to clearly show who the villain is. Usually up until this point it is used in terms of nationality. In this scene it is again used to demonstrate that Bond's adversary is evil. The 'good' science is represented by Q and his light and friendly lab, where nothing is hidden from the viewer as well as Bond. This dark and mysterious space we encounter here, on the other hand, represents the complete opposite and therefore suggests immediately that the scientific developments stemming from here are 'evil' or villainous. In the scene where the lab is stormed by Bond and the police, a scientist throws a glass with a dangerous looking liquid at Bond. It misses and hits a glass door instead, which immediately dissolves.

Another form of science that can be found in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* is hypnosis. While the virus has been chemically manufactured in the lab, hypnosis and brainwashing is used to manipulate a group of women to take the virus into their various home countries and distribute it. The women initially checked into the facility to get treatment for their allergies and therefore believe that all the treatments they receive are normal and will help cure them. This makes them an easy target to suggestion and hypnosis, as they do not question the methods being used, believing them to be very progressive and effective. We thus are presented with two very different types of science that are used together to fulfil Blofeld's master plan.

Although Blofeld has scientists doing the dirty work for him, he himself is clearly the evil mastermind behind it all, since it was him who orchestrated the plan to develop and spread the virus. He even takes manipulating chemical organisms as well as humans into account to achieve his goal.

While Bond manages to defeat Blofeld for now and finishes his mission without the usual support and tricks from Q, the quartermaster does appear again at the end of the movie, when Bond gets married.

At the wedding they have a friendly conversation, with Q calling Bond 'my boy' and telling him that, despite all their bickering, he is always there if Bond needs anything. "Thank you, Q, but this time I got the gadgets and I know how to use them," (*On Her Majesty's Secret Service*) Bond responds playfully, reverting right back to his womaniser image despite being at his own wedding. This exchange once again shows the connection and dynamic Bond and Q have with each other and which makes their relationship a defining part throughout the series.

3.2.2 1970-1979

The next Bond movie that starred Desmond Llewelyn as Q was *Diamonds Are Forever*, which was released in 1971. Sean Connery returned for one last appearance as the famous spy in the Eon Studio produced movies. He returned once more in 1983, in the non-Eon production *Never Say Never Again*, the title poking fun at Connery for allegedly stating he would never again play Bond after *Diamonds Are Forever*.

The story starts right away at the beginning of the movie, with Bond beating up person after person in his pursuit of Blofeld. He eventually finds him in a laboratory where he is preparing to operate on another man in order to make him look like Blofeld himself. Bond arrives just in time and a fight breaks out, in which Bond seemingly kills Blofeld and averts the worst. He then impersonates the smuggler Peter Franks to get information about Blofeld's plans. He meets another smuggler, Tiffany Case still pretending to be Franks. She offers him a drink, then takes away his glass to secretly

check if his fingerprints match who he says he is. Surprisingly, for the viewer, the prints match and she believes his story. After this encounter we see Bond in his hotel room talking to Q on the phone. He peels off a fake fingerprint while thanking the quartermaster for helping him out with this valuable little piece of equipment. Q then updates him on new information regarding Blofeld and the case, which leads Bond to just drop the phone while Q is still talking to him.

Bond proceeds with his mission to locate and is later again captured by Blofeld, whom he believes he killed at the beginning of the movie. But the villain had already succeeded in modelling another man after his own image and has therefore created decoys. This sort of perfect human copy is a scientific experiment Blofeld has been working on and which has finally succeeded. He even made a copy of his cat, as to make the doppelganger as realistic as possible. While telling Bond about his plans in great detail, in good Bond villain fashion, he also makes a phone call pretending to be someone else, altering his voice to sound perfectly like the person he is impersonating, with the help of a technical device. From here on out it is clear to Bond that phone calls cannot be trusted, because Blofeld can obviously imitate anyone perfectly. Bond, of course, escapes his capturer and is able to reunite with his MI6 companions. In order to carry on with the mission and to be one step ahead of Blofeld, they use the same technology and Q builds a voice box of his own, using it to make a fake phone call and derail Blofeld's plans. While altering one's voice is very common nowadays, this idea was a complete novelty in 1971. The tool used here is based on what we now know as a vocoder. According to Dave Gale from the magazine *Music Tech* a vocoder is often used in creative settings and music creation nowadays, the vocoder was first invented in 1920 by Homer Dudley to help make telephone conversations transmit over a longer distance by reducing bandwidth. However, the military quickly adapted

the technology and used an enhanced version for their purposes. One of the more notable applications of this technology is known to have happened during World War II, when it was utilised to encrypt transatlantic conversations between Churchill and Roosevelt (iZotope 2018).

Bond acknowledges the technical finesse of the tool by stating “You surprised yourself there, Q.” (*Diamonds Are forever* 1971). In their typical bickering fashion the quartermaster responds “Not at all, built one of these for the kids last Christmas.” – implying that building such a complex device is no difficult task for him.

Other than this device and the fake fingerprint he gives Bond at the beginning of the movie, Q has not prepared any of the typical gadgets for the spy this time. He seems to only have manufactured the things Bond needs for a specific purpose on demand.

However, later in the movie the quartermaster appears once again in the casino. He talks to Case, who asks him if he could put in a good word for her with Bond and Felix Leiter of the CIA, while Q walks from one slot machine to the next, winning on every single one of them. He shows Tiffany a little device on his finger called an electromagnetic RPM controller and tells her he has always wanted to try that out. While he is still explaining the technical details to her, she is already long gone, having spied Blofeld in the casino, leaving a startled Q behind. Once again, Q functions as some sort of comic relief in that scene, being very excited about putting his invention to the test.

The next movie released in the franchise was *Live And Let Die* in 1973, featuring Roger Moore as a brand new Bond. In this first adventure for the new Bond, the character of Q was not part of the story. At the time, Llewelyn was starring in the TV show *Follyfoot* and it is unclear whether scheduling conflicts were the reason for him

not to appear in the movie. There are various accounts on this decision, however the reason is subject to speculation. However, producers Saltzman and Broccoli decided not to include the quartermaster in this movie. It was supposed to be focused on drug lords, gangsters, and cartel wars instead of the 'classic' megalomaniac. There is also a big emphasis on Voodoo in the movie. Hence, Q's character was not included and science in general was not at all a focal point of this movie. This marks the first and only time until 2006 that Q was not included in a Bond movie in any form.

The next movie to feature Desmond Llewelyn as Q was *The Man With The Golden Gun*, released in 1974. In this instalment the plot reverts back to a more classic Bond, also involving the at this time very relevant topic of an energy crisis in the USA. The government were putting resources into developing solar energy by passing the Congress the Solar Energy Research, Development and Demonstration Act of 1974 (Chu 2019).

The movie picks up the topic of the energy crisis and solar panels, however the main focus is on a direct threat made to Bond. While Bond tries to face this threat he also tries to retrieve the solex agitator. The solex agitator is a small device developed by a British scientist called Gibson. He created it to harness solar energy and thereby hoped to provide a solution to the energy crisis. Q makes an appearance explaining to Bond what kind of special gun, the villain's, Francisco Scaramanga, is. Once again, Q leaves his lab at the MI6 headquarters and accompanies M in supporting Bond in the field.

Three years later, in 1977 another movie in the series called *The Spy Who Loved Me* was released. It features a very classic plot with an undercover KGB agent and Bond falling for each other and having to work together. As mentioned before, after

Dr. No in 1962 this movie marks the first time that Q is called by the name of Major Boothroyd by the KGB agent Anya Amasova.

The following movie, *Moonraker*, was taken into the different direction, since it was very heavily relying on the scientific aspects of the story. While *The Man With The Golden Gun* and *The Spy Who Loved Me* mostly relied on the familiar use of espionage gadgets, this movie, which was released in 1979, is often still considered to be the 'sci-if James Bond', since space travel is a major plot point in this movie. Only one decade prior to its release, the historic moon landing had taken place and space travel had been a major topic in film, literature, as well as general conversation. Therefore, the technology used in *Moonraker* was very interesting to the audience.

Roger Moore and Desmond Llewelyn are once again teamed up as the British spy and his quartermaster. The movie starts with the disappearance of the space shuttle called Moonraker. The space shuttle was built by Drax Industries, which leads the MI6 to suspect that the owner, Hugo Drax, might be involved in the disappearance of the aircraft. Bond is being briefed about the mission by M and Q, who shows him a video of Moonraker on a screen hidden behind a seemingly normal mirror in M's office. The Quartermaster knows all about the situation concerning Moonraker and fills Bond in. Before the spy is sent on his mission, Q equips him with his newest invention as usual; a wristband that releases darts through little impulses. Q tells him it is now standard issue, as are the ten darts that come with it and lead to death within 30 seconds. Bond appreciates his new tools and mockingly remarks: "Very novel, Q, you must get them in the stores for Christmas." (*Moonraker* 1979). As he walks away, the camera zooms in on Q's annoyed face. The scene ends with Q shaking his head. Bond is apparently not impressed at all with the quartermaster's newest invention and just moves on to the next topic of conversation. The question can be posed if this is

also a comment on society's view on these kinds of gadgets at the time. With the Moon landing having taken place already a decade before and technology evolving at an exceeding speed, it can be argued that people, including 007, could not be as easily impressed by the sort of gadgets presented by Q.

Later during his mission, Bond is investigating at Drax's mansion in California, where he is training personnel for space missions. Bond is supposed to be a guest, but Drax immediately tells his henchman to eliminate Bond, seeing through his cover. The first attack happens in the form of a manipulated space ship simulator. However, Bond manages to stop the simulator by shooting a dart from the dart gun at his wrist at the controls. Dr. Goodhead, the lead scientist of the facility, cannot explain why the machine malfunctioned, but Bond already knows who the culprit is. He starts sneaking around in the study at night, trying to gather information. He gets help from Drax's personal pilot, Corinne Dufour, whom he seduces. Both of them break into Drax's office where they find a safe. Bond uses a little device that automatically opens it, finding blueprints inside. Corinne is very fascinated by this kind of technology and Bond gifts her the device as a thank you for helping him gather intel.

Bond follows the clues gathered from the blueprints and goes to Venice where he once again meets Dr. Goodhead, who seems to have more information than she lets on. Hoping to find out what Drax's plan is, Bond wants to meet her again while also satisfying the generic trope of the 'Bondgirl'. They decide to meet in the evening and Bond boards his personal Gondola, in which he had arrived. Another attempt on the spy's life is made, resulting in a chase sequence where it turns out that his Gondola can be turned into a speed boat with the mere press of a few buttons and has weapons and ammunition on board. He finally manages to escape his pursuers by turning his

Gondola into a vehicle which allows him to leave the water and drive around St. Mark's Square.

In the evening, he meets up with Dr. Goodhead in her hotel room. He immediately spots her own hidden gadgets, similar to the ones Q usually manufactures for him. He identifies a needle hidden in a pen, a notebook, as well as a highly flammable perfume. Bond does not fall for any of these gadgets but recognises them as CIA equipment, therefore exposing Dr. Goodhead as an undercover CIA agent.

Bond pursues his leads and later finds a secret lab where two scientists work on a liquid that Bond manages to steal after it accidentally kills the two men. He reports his findings to his superiors, but upon their return the lab is gone. Assuming that Bond made a mistake, M has no other choice than to pull Bond from the mission, though he still trusts 007 and allows him to continue in secret. Bond hands M the vial with the lethal liquid and asks him to give it to Q for analysis.

Next time Bond meets the quartermaster is in Rio, where M has set up a secret headquarters, including a lab for Q. One of the new gadgets are exploding balls, which Bond finds very funny, poking fun at the quartermaster with a "Balls, Q?", to which he only gets the stern reply "Balls, 007" (*Moonraker* 1979). Q then proceeds to tell Bond that the liquid Bond extracted is a newly developed lethal nerve gas. MI6 suspects that Drax wants to use it to blackmail the government. Bond needs to stop Drax, who is hiding in the Amazon jungle of Brazil. Luckily, Q once again provides the means of transportation, allowing Bond to travel on the river at full speed, "if 007 can be trusted to look after it" (*Moonraker* 1979)

Moonraker is a very science intensive movie containing a lot of sci-fi elements. And despite its scientific inaccuracies, a lot of attempts are made to explain the science behind it.

3.2.3 1980-1989

After the ventures into science fiction with *Moonraker*, the following movie, *For Your Eyes Only*, conveyed a much more traditional James Bond atmosphere. Once again, Moore and Llewelyn were the team portraying 007 and the quartermaster. The movie starts with Bond being picked up by a helicopter which turns out to be one of Blofeld's, who is on a rooftop remote-controlling it. It is shown once more that the villain also likes to use various gadgets, just like Bond does on the other side. However, this time Bond again manages to escape Blofeld's trap by manually flying the helicopter.

After that opening sequence, Bond returns to headquarters to receive his new mission. He is to retrieve the ATAC (Automatic Targeting Attack Communicator), which is usually used by the ministry of defence to coordinate their fleets. The ATAC is located in a submarine that was accidentally sunk and Bond needs to reach the wreckage to retrieve it before the Soviets can. This urgency for Bond to reach the wreckage first can again be directly linked to the space race during the Cold War, where it was very important for the Western forces to beat the Soviets to it. Bond represents the West, who achieves his mission by using Western technology, provided by Q.

Bond visits Q in his lab, where their familiar bickering immediately starts up again. While walking through the lab a lot of Q branch's newest inventions are shown in the background. This casual display of the MI6's new inventions can arguably be received as a certain subtle form of Western propaganda as well. Showing off the progress 'good, proper' Western science can make, while the technology and inventions of the opponent is often shown as a less polished version of what Q can develop. Nevertheless, it is of course also a scenic feature to add a comedic element to the

scene. What the viewer is shown, for example, are a fake arm cast that can smash through concrete and an umbrella that fires at your opponent. These gadgets are only mentioned in passing and are used only to show what sort of inventions are being made in the lab, while not focusing on anything in detail. The tools Bond usually receives are then presented separately, with close-ups and more focused lighting. In this case, however, Q does not give the spy any of these inventions for his latest mission. This time, he only shows Bond a machine for, as he calls it, a 3D visual. The quartermaster feeds the machine information about the suspect Bond saw in great detail and it then searches all databases for a match. This kind of technology shows a very early stage of facial recognition, which was a revolutionary idea at the time. Facial recognition plays a very significant role towards the idea of the 'transparent citizen'. This is true for society as a whole, but especially for espionage facial recognition was a real game changer. Due to more surveillance as well as tools to identify people via their faces caught on a camera it became a lot more difficult for agents to operate undercover and cover their tracks, since they were a lot easier to find because of the increased use of surveillance technology.

Throughout the rest of the movie, Bond mostly relies on his classic spy work and his fighting skills. As mentioned above, this time the focus is not on the scientific side anymore and therefore very few references to science or technology are made, apart from the explanation of what ATAC is used for. Therefore, Q's absence for the remainder of the film is unsurprising, only showing up once more when he attempts to call Bond via satellite and connect him to Margaret Thatcher. However, Bond gives the receiver to a parrot, walks off with the Bond girl and thus ends the movie on a comedic note.

In *Octopussy* (1983), Q once again leaves his lab to help Bond in the field. The dynamic between Bond and Q is a major entertainment factor throughout this movie. Q does not hesitate to let Bond know that he is not happy being sent out into the field, nevertheless he is very involved in the spy's mission. Not only does he bring Bond more gadgets to use for his mission, he also fulfills the role of a sidekick and helps Bond escape from dangerous situations by being his getaway driver. Further, he is also the lookout for Bond when the spy visits the title giving Octopussy on her island. However, Q's main task of providing Bond with technological tools remains. In this case, he brings Bond a fountain pen filled with ink that can dissolve every material in seconds. Additionally, he equips him with a listening device to plant on his enemies.

Octopussy was, up until then, arguably the movie in which Q was most involved in, no longer playing the passive role of observer ready to help out, but actively engaging in the action. Of course, we have seen him help out Bond in the field before, but not in this capacity and to this extent.

The following movie, *A View To Kill*, released in 1985 was the seventh and final film to star Roger Moore as James Bond. Once again, the viewer is thrown directly into the action as Bond is sent to Siberia to find agent 003. Unfortunately, he can only recover 003's body, securing a microchip the other agent was carrying. Escaping the enemies who are also trying to get a hold of the chip, Bond manages to safely return the chip to London and to MI6. There, Q makes his first appearance in M's office where Bond is greeted by a sort of remote-controlled car about the size of a small dog. Bond immediately starts their trademark way of conversation by asking the quartermaster if he has a new pet. Q only makes an off-handed comment about how Bond would know what it is if he ever bothered to read the memos coming from Q branch. He refers to the gadget as the prototype of a "highly sophisticated surveillance machine" (*A View*

To Kill 1985). Regular toy cars were very popular in the 80s and for the quartermaster to once again take a variation of an everyday product and convert it into a gadget which can be used by MI6 agents to carry out their missions is what makes his role in the movies even more intriguing.

Q is asked to examine the microchip Bond has recovered from 003's body and gives a brief overview on microchips in general, only to be cut short by M to remind him that they are all aware of the function of such a device. Q shows a comparison of an average microchip and the one Bond has brought back from Siberia. The new chip is a prototype for a chip that is immune to nuclear wave damage. This would mean that in case of a blast that could take out all of the UK's technology, the enemy, in this case as pointed out by M, the Russians, would be at an advantage. The manufacturer of the chip is Max Zorin, who is, according to the minister, anti-communist. Nevertheless, Bond and M suspect him of being involved and launch an investigation.

Q appears again in the following scene, when Bond takes him and M's assistant Money Penny to the horse race track, where Zorin is as well. While Money Penny and Q excitedly follow the race, Bond starts his surveillance on Zorin and his accomplices. Zorin's horse wins the race and Bond gets himself invited to an event at Zorin's mansion, trying to discover Zorin's plans. He sneaks into the house where Zorin is meeting with Stacey Sutton, presumably discussing matters regarding horse breeding. Bond gets a closer look by using another one of Q's gadgets, namely sunglasses with a zoom function.

When Bond is finally granted a meeting with Zorin posing as a horse breeder, advanced technology is what blows the agent's cover. Zorin himself is a technophile, and a very cautious one at that. He has cameras hidden behind all his mirrors that immediately scan Bond's face and run his information through the database. While

engaging in small talk, Zorin even states, “I find a computer indispensable” (*A View to Kill* 1985). This, of course, reflects the growing importance of computers and computer related products during that time. While computers are not yet as commonplace as in the following decade, they are increasingly relevant, even for mainstream purposes. Q himself has already talked about the importance of computers several times at this point, showing the evolution and modernisation of the quartermaster and Q branch as well.

The following movie, *The Living Daylights*, from 1987 introduces a new Bond, as Timothy Dalton takes on the role after Roger Moore. He plays 007 for only two movies, both alongside Desmond Llewelyn as Q.

The Living Daylights reverts back to the previous Bond movies, regarding technology. Neither the villain, nor Bond or the MI6 are as focused on computer science in this movie as in the previous one. Instead, it focuses more on classic spy work and tools associated with it. Therefore, Q only appears in briefly, trying to help Bond identify the female KGB assassin, whom he has prevented from killing an allied agent. He then leads Bond through his laboratory, demonstrating, in by now already well-known fashion, his newest inventions. First, he puts on a gas mask and hands one to Bond as well to protect both men while demonstrating the power of the newest gadget Q branch built for the spy: a little device that is activated by whistling to release stun gas, and explodes if a specific personalised whistle is used. Q, once again showing his sense of humour, tells Bond that for him it is activated by a wolf whistle, which he finds rather appropriate. Apart from this device he has also manufactured keys for Bond which open 90 % of the world’s locks, according to the quartermaster. This can be seen as an analogy to the advancement of computer science and the rise of technology – metaphorically opening more and more doors and tearing down

barriers. Q and his technology stand for all of that progress. He then proceeds to show Bond a demonstration of another device that is “something we are making for the Americans” (*The Living Daylights* 1987), namely a boom box rocket launcher which Q calls a “ghetto blaster” (*The Living Daylights* 1987). Both gadgets the quartermaster equips Bond with are very practical and are used by the spy during his mission. Apart from that, there is no focus on the technical side of things and Q makes no further appearance.

In 1989’s *License To Kill*, Timothy Dalton reprises his role as 007, once again alongside Desmond Llewelyn as Q. It marks the first time that the title of the movie is not the title of a novel by Ian Fleming, but rather a mix of various stories with influences from other writers as well.

This time the plot diverges from its usual formula of Bond getting an assignment by MI6 and then following it through (albeit sometimes with non-sanctioned methods). In *License To Kill*, however, we encounter a classic example of the ‘agent gone rogue’ trope, in which the protagonist goes against all protocols to fulfil a personal mission. The beginning of the movie suggests another classic James Bond story line. Bond works together with his friend Felix Leiter from the CIA to capture drug lord Sanchez. The two men manage to do so and are finished just in time to parachute from a helicopter directly to Felix’ wedding. All seems well until after the wedding, when Sanchez manages to escape. Upon returning to Leiter’s house, Bond finds Della Leiter brutally murdered and Felix having been tortured and partly fed to sharks. Naturally, Bond wants revenge for his friends and starts investigating on his own. After he finds the agent responsible for helping Sanchez, he also feeds him to the sharks. Bond later meets M, who tells him not to pursue this case and instead sends him off on an assignment to Istanbul. When Bond refuses to take the assignment, M revokes

his license to kill, suspending him and prohibiting him from going after Sanchez. Bond ignores this and goes rogue. Wanting to go after Sanchez by himself, seemingly without the assistance of the MI6 and therefore without his usual support system.

However, soon after Bond's and M's altercation, Q decides to secretly help the spy on his revenge mission. As opposed to the previous times when Q came to help out in the field, it is clear from the beginning that this time the situation is different. While Q is never tired of mentioning that he was sent out to help Bond and did not appreciate it, he is there out of his own volition this time. Not only not being sent by M but going strictly against MI6 orders. While the relationship between the two characters has grown throughout the decades, this gesture of the quartermaster coming voluntarily to help Bond on his vendetta shows how much the character of Q has developed since the beginning of the franchise.

Immediately, the appearance of the quartermaster makes for some comedic scenes as Bond introduces him as his uncle to Pam Bouvier, the former Army pilot who supports Bond, when Q shows up in Bond's hotel room. They immediately fall into their old habit of bickering, but in a very friendly way. Ending the scene with Bond saying "I hope you don't snore" (*License To Kill* 1989), before they go to their room and turn in for the night.

Despite this being an unsanctioned mission, Q still provides Bond with several gadgets. Among his new inventions is the iconic cyanide toothpaste, a Polaroid camera that shoots lasers, as well as an exploding alarm clock. Furthermore, he gives Bond a new gun coded to only work with the agent's fingerprints. This gun is later revived in *Skyfall*, where it is the first thing an unimpressed Bond receives from his new quartermaster. The tools Q provides in this movie are not as far-fetched as

previous ones, or some of which that are still to come. They were only slightly advanced ideas of what was already possible at that time.

Bond again has use for all of his gadgets throughout his mission to avenge his friends. However, Q does not only help to lighten the mood and provide Bond with the necessary hardware, he is also actively helping Bond in the field once again. It is worth noting that this time he helps Bond out of his own volition, not because he was sent to do so by his superiors. He is rather doing the opposite by working against direct orders and helping a rogue agent. His support seems to be greatly appreciated by Bond, who even praises his fieldwork towards the end of the movie.

3.2.4 1990-1999

Golden Eye, which was released in 1995, marks Pierce Brosnan's first appearance as the famous British agent with Desmond Llewelyn once again in the role of Q.

[W]hen Pierce Brosnan took over as Bond, a publicity release for *Golden Eye* [...] had already raised the question of whether the series could maintain its appeal at a time when 'the world has changed'. [...] This specific world-changing event [...] was the dismantling of the Berlin Wall which, as seen on television, became a powerful visual emblem marking the end of the Cold War. (Leach 249).

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, naturally, had an effect on the characterisation of future portrayals of Bond. As pointed out by Bennet and Woollacott (22) the so-called SMERSH formula, which includes Bond facing off against a villain connected to the Soviet Union in some way was already mostly abandoned by Fleming himself in the novels, beginning with *Thunderball* and had shifted to the Spectre formula. SMERSH is an acronym which translates to English as 'Death to Spies'. It was an actual organisation consisting of counter-intelligence agencies in the Red Army. However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall this detachment of Bond from the ideology of the Cold War became even more pronounced. There is a clear shift

towards a more action driven-movie and Brosnan's Bond shows a very distinct interpretation compared to his predecessors. While he is still a very masculine action hero, he also presents the most technologically well-versed Bond up until then.

Central to Bond's power is his ability to master technology. However fantastic this expert knowledge appears, its importance to Brosnan's Bond cannot be underestimated. With the 1990s increasingly dominated by the superiority of technology Bond needed to respond to this cultural phenomenon. (Willis 153)

As always, the movie operates under the assumption that Bond is still the same person, despite being portrayed by a new actor. This is already apparent in the first scene in which Q and Bond meet in Q's laboratory. Bond is greeted by Q in an electric wheelchair, his leg in a huge cast. Bond casually flips his newspaper against it, asking the quartermaster if he went on a ski trip. Q immediately shows what his cast can do, namely fire out of the bottom at any target. While Q leaves the wheelchair and the two men walk around the lab, a variety of other gadgets can be seen tested out in the background. Q shows Bond the newest car he has designed for the spy. It is a BMW equipped with hidden features. There is a parachute that can be activated at the back of the car, as well as a self-destruct system. Q further tells Bond about missiles hidden behind the headlights, a design which he is very proud of. 007 acknowledges all of the information with a flippant comment rather than being impressed by the quartermaster's modifications to the car. Since it has become a kind of running gag throughout the movies that Bond never returns the cars Q provides in one piece, Q remarks "May I remind you 007, you have the license to kill, not to break the traffic laws."(*Golden Eye* 1995). A remark that is rather amusing, considering the collateral damage Bond usually causes during his missions and which is hardly ever addressed by anyone other than the quartermaster. But even more so "[i]mplicit in this neatly delivered punch-line is an acknowledgement of Bond's use of technology to transcend

(or at the very least disavow) the rules of society. Technology, as Q points out, appears to place Bond above the law.” (Willis 154).

While the car, to which Q’s comment about the traffic laws is referring to, is by far the biggest and most obvious tool, Bond is also equipped with other gadgets. Q presents the agent with a seemingly average leather belt, however there is a wire hidden in the belt buckle that can carry the weight of one person. The final piece of equipment Q has prepared is a grenade pen; a normal looking pen that can be turned into an explosive. It is activated by clicking it three times, and deactivated by clicking a fourth. As soon as Bond is handed the device he clicks it three times just to amuse himself by distressing Q, who only grumbles at the agent to grow up, taking the pen back and demonstrating its force on a dummy. The exploding pen is a revival of a similar device used in the non-Eon production *Never Say Never Again* from 1983, in which Bond uses a fountain pen that shoots a blast at his opponent to save himself. The exploding pen is also later referenced in *Skyfall*, when Q asks Bond if he had expected an exploding pen, after being handed his new fingerprint gun. During the whole exchange there are other members of Q branch testing out inventions in the background. Random little explosions as well as the final scene in which an airbag traps a worker in a phone booth happen while the two men walk by, usually never so much as interrupting their conversation. Having these actions unfold in the background signals to the viewer that the inventions shown there are not of importance to the rest of the movie and the agent’s mission. It also helps in highlighting the actual gadgets Q has developed for Bond. Every time Q presents one of the more important tools, they stop walking and focus on the subject at hand. Usually, the importance is further highlighted by a close-up shot of the camera.

Already from the beginning it is clear that Brosnan introduces a different version of 007, especially when it comes to modern technology and the computer age.

The new Bond was to be technological rather than physical, an expert rather than the muscular vigilante played by Timothy Dalton. Pierce Brosnan returned the character, in part, to the James Bond of Sean Connery's heyday in the 1960s. Connery's [early] Bond [...] was cool in his use of violence, serious about his use of technological gadgetry, and able to combine the physical, mental and technological to great effect. (Willis 151)

Bond's development of technological skills and understanding also influences the role of Q respectively. The quartermaster is still the expert to develop the gadgets and weapons, but Bond does not appear to be as dependent on Q's explanations of how they work. This is later especially highlighted in Q's first scene in *Tomorrow Never Dies*, which will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

The 1997 movie *Tomorrow never dies* is the first instalment that is not based on a novel or short story by Ian Fleming. The screenwriters have written an independent screenplay, relying on features from the previous novels. The only elements that tie it to its predecessors are the characters and, to some extent, the cast of the film. It is the second run of the duo of Pierce Brosnan's James Bond and Desmond Llewelyn's Q.

This time Bond faces the megalomaniac media mogul Elliot Carver, who is trying to manipulate China and the United Kingdom into starting a war. He does so by redirecting missiles and staging attacks. Bond is sent to investigate Carver after MI6 realises that Carver already had news articles about the attacks in place, long before the government became aware of the attacks.

Q makes only a brief appearance in this movie when he welcomes Bond at the airport in Hamburg. He also does not have his usual array of newly developed gadgets for the spy, instead presenting a single one, namely a remote controlled car. Not a

little toy car, but a BMW. This scene is very remarkable in the sense that it demonstrates once again how well-versed Bond seems to be when it comes to technology. While Q has always provided him with the necessary tools, the spy has always given the impression that he has no trouble comprehending and using them. This impression is further enforced in this particular scene as Q seems to struggle with the handling of the car while Bond immediately knows how to use it without a problem.

Q's clumsy attempts to move the car result in failure, despite the fact that he, ostensibly, is the designer of the technology that permits remote control. Bond, having never before used such a device, throws the car through a series of complex manoeuvres, bringing it to a sharp halt only inches from himself and Q. Bond's immediate mastery of the technology, especially by humorous comparison with Q as the baffled boffin, serves to place the audience at ease. (Willis 153)

Bond's ability to seamlessly use the car as opposed to its creator also evokes a shift in how Q is perceived. While he has been used as a comedic character before, this is the first time he does not seem to be the all-knowing, completely capable scientist the audience has come to know. Bond's competence in handling this kind of technology, to some extent, threatens Q's status as the key figure concerning technology and science. Willis points out the following with regards to this shift:

Q – like his successor R who debuts in *Tomorrow Never Dies* – continually seeks to categorise Bond not as the professional but as the layman, the foil to his status as scientist. In each of the Q scenes, therefore, Bond is a chameleon figure who moves indiscriminately from amateur to expert to hubristic scientist. [...] Q's intimate knowledge of Bond's technological expertise seems to be sidelined [sic] in favour of a hierarchical approach to scientific power. Without scientific credentials Bond can only be treated as distinctly inferior by Q, who becomes schoolmasterly and patronising in the explanation of his technological inventions. (Willis 154-155)

Q's attempts to put Bond in his place when it comes to science and technology are usually conveyed through subtle remarks, making fun of the agent, when explaining the simplest things to him, hence masking the intent behind humour.

Desmond Llewelyn's appearance in *The World Is Not Enough* in 1999 was his last in the franchise before his death in a car accident. Retirement plans of Q are mentioned occasionally during the movie, which does, of course not stop the quartermaster from presenting Bond with his newest inventions. The scene varies from previous movies, because Q introduces Bond to the man he is grooming to be his successor. John Cleese is introduced as R, who did take over from Desmond Llewelyn for the following movie. Bond is presented with the newest car, equipped with the most modern features. However, since he is given a new vehicle in almost every film, Bond is not really impressed anymore. The second gadget the scientists show him is a coat. Q has R demonstrate to the spy how it works, activating it and having a laugh at the new colleague's expense when he is enveloped in a giant protective lair. With Bond asking Q if he is actually thinking about retirement, the friendship between the two men is evident. It is also apparent how much Bond does rely on his expertise. Ironically, Q's last scene in the movie provided a perfect goodbye for the character, telling Bond to always have an escape plan and then disappearing by lowering himself through the floor with a technical device. While nobody could have known that this would be Llewelyn's last appearance as Q, it is nevertheless a very telling goodbye to Q in the movie. Bond's fear of his quartermaster retiring and therefore losing what is familiar to him. Since the movie was released in 1999, this can also be seen as a reflection of society's fear of the turn of the millennium. People were expecting computer crashes and a lot of different apocalyptic scenarios. Q's departure through the floor conveys the feeling of a changing of the guard, of technology either crashing or evolving at such an accelerated speed that humans cannot keep up and wish for the familiar status quo to persist.

3.3 John Cleese

3.3.1 2000-2009

John Cleese took on the, by then, famous role of the beloved quartermaster, after Desmond Llewelyn's passing in 1999. Cleese had already been an established actor at that point and therefore a familiar face to the viewer, mostly due to his work on Monty Python. He portrayed Q in his own unique way and with a very comedic angle.

Q was played by John Cleese for only one movie, *Die Another Day* in 2002, with Pierce Brosnan as James Bond. However, it was not his first appearance in a James Bond movie. His character was already introduced in *The World Is Not Enough*, the previous movie in the franchise, as Q's assistant. Bond referred to him as R, asking the quartermaster "If you're Q, does that make him R?" (*The World Is Not Enough* 1999). He was therefore already familiar to the audience as a character, but only took on the role of the leading scientist in *Die Another Day*. It was Q's last appearance for a decade, before the franchise was once again revived with Daniel Craig as the new James Bond and Q's reintroduction in *Skyfall*.

Cleese's portrayal of the character is a very traditional one. He is the classic head of the Q branch, wearing a white lab coat, who develops innovative and useful gadgets for Bond to aid him on his mission, as his predecessor have done. This is different to the later interpretation of the character by Ben Whishaw, who relies a lot less on gadgets and is also more involved in the field. This development will be detailed in the respective section.

In *Die Another Day*, the highlight of Q's inventions is a car that can be turned invisible. In the scene where he introduces Bond to his newest invention he even mentions his predecessor, stating "As I learned from my predecessor, I never joke about my work" (*Die Another Day* 2002); a nod to Desmond Llewelyn. Other than that,

the change in quartermasters is not acknowledged by any party. However, through the introduction of the R character earlier, it is not odd to the viewer that Bond and the scientist are already familiar with one another. It also marks the only time throughout the movies where it is acknowledged that Q is not always just one person, but more rather a job title that is passed on.

As is common in the franchise, there is a focus on the technological advancements at the beginning when Bond visits Q. The quartermaster is testing out VR glasses that can substitute the traditional shooting range, allowing the person who wears it to practice in various scenarios. After finishing his test with the VR glasses Bond mentions that he prefers the old shooting range over this sort of technology anytime, to which Q replies that he should get used to it because it is called the future. What is interesting here, is that, as discussed previously, while Brosnan's Bond is considered to be the technological Bond, he still seems to feel nostalgic towards the old days. The conversation between the two men takes place in between a lot of Q's old inventions that have been discarded, with Bond commenting on this with "So this is where they keep the relics" (*Die Another Day* 2002). After the introductory small talk and bickering, as the viewer is accustomed to from the predecessor, the quartermaster shows Bond his newest invention, a car that can turn invisible. What is remarkable in this particular scene is that the invisible car seems to genuinely fascinate Bond. While he does not usually show a lot of reaction to the newest gadgets the quartermaster presents him with, he is rather surprised by the car. This represents the state of scientific advancement at the time of the movie, because while an invisible car is something out of the norm, it is not so far-fetched as to be impossible. Bond is once again strictly warned by a disgruntled Q to take good care of his new car, since it is only a prototype and very valuable. This repeated warning by the quartermaster has

been established during Llewelyn's time portraying Q and has become a recurring part of their conversation.

3.4 Ben Whishaw

3.4.1 2010-present

British actor Ben Whishaw is the current and, up until now, the youngest actor who has ever portrayed Q in the James Bond franchise. He was only 31 years old when it was announced, that he was cast for the role, which is quite the difference to his predecessors, who were 40 years (Peter Burton), 49 years (Desmond Llewelyn) and 63 (John Cleese) respectively. Just like there are always a lot of different opinions on the casting of a new Bond, there was also a lot of discussion about the casting of Whishaw as the new Q in *Skyfall*. There was no Q in *Casino Royale* (2006) or *Quantum of Solace* (2008), therefore Whishaw is the first Q to Daniel Craig's Bond, taking over the role from John Cleese, who was the last person to play Q in *Die Another Day* in 2002.

Although Ben Whishaw was already an established actor at the time, many critics could not imagine how such a young Q could follow in the footsteps of his famous predecessors. One aspect of the movies that would definitely change because of the actor's age was the relationship Q and Bond had in previous instalments, especially the movies starring Pierce Brosnan. In these films, the relationship between the two had been leaning more towards Q being a fatherly figure for Bond. At the 2012 World Premier of *Skyfall* in London, Ben Whishaw commented on what it was like to take over such an iconic role and the changing dynamic between Bond and Q. He stated that he had worked with Daniel Craig before, for the first time when he, Whishaw, was only seventeen. So by being younger than his co-star, and Daniel Craig

also taking on a sort of paternal role on set by looking after him, the relationship that had been established in the prior movies, naturally switched. Regarding living up to the Qs that came before him, Whishaw mentions that his Q is a reimagined version of the quartermaster. After the interviewer asked him with what sort of gadgets he “got to play with” on set he admits that there are actually no gadgets for Q this time, which is also touched upon in the film. He further states that in a time where everyone is constantly using the most elaborate gadgets in everyday life, it is important to have that reflected in Q’s character. (Absolute Radio 2012)

The first meeting between Bond and his new quartermaster takes place at the National Gallery in London. After being reinstated by M and given his mission to find out who was behind the attack on the MI6, Bond is told to come to the museum at a certain time to receive his equipment and meet his new quartermaster. When a young man sits down next to him, Bond does not even seem to notice him, never imagining that this could be Q. However, when the young man starts to talk and the situation dawns on Bond, his expression is one of disbelief. Already in the first scene that introduces Q to the audience in *Skyfall*, the new quartermaster’s age is a topic of conversation between him and Bond, who also does not take his new Q seriously. The introduction scene of the two sets the tone for their relationship throughout the following movies. When they first meet at the National Gallery, Bond looks at J.M.W. Turner’s painting *The Fighting Temeraire* until Q joins him. Q’s first remark: “It always makes me a little melancholy, a grand old warship being hauled away ignominiously for scrap.” can be seen as a teasing reference to Bond’s methods being rather old-fashioned and Q subtly telling Bond that it might be time for him to retire. There is no real bite behind those remarks for the audience, it rather introduces the way how these two characters are going to be interacting in the future – teasing, but ultimately being

absolutely loyal to one another in every situation. Since Bond had presumably died at the beginning of the movie and struggled to pass the MI6's tests to be reinstated as an agent (failing the necessary tests but having the results altered by M as is revealed later in the movie), the question of whether Bond is still up for the mission ahead of him, Q's inquiry after retirement is actually not as far-fetched. While this is the most obvious interpretation of Q's remarks regarding the painting, they can arguably also be applied to the character of Q himself. The grand old warship could also stand for his predecessors, who are considered to be old-fashioned and are now being replaced by this new Q, who introduces a new era for the Q branch. Either way, the viewer keeps being confronted with the topic of age and the notion of change.

When Q finally introduces himself as Bond's new quartermaster, Bond does not take him seriously at all, asking him if this is a joke. He does not seem to be under the impression that such a young person would be up to the task of being his quartermaster. Their exchange is a very obvious representation of discussions in science and technology.

Q: 007. I'm your new Quartermaster.

Bond: You must be joking.

Q: Why, because I'm not wearing a lab coat?

Bond: Because you still have spots.

Q: My complexion is hardly relevant.

Bond: Your competence is.

Q: Age is no guarantee of efficiency.

Bond: And youth is no guarantee of innovation.

Q: Well, I'll hazard I can do more damage on my laptop sitting in my pyjamas before my first cup of Earl Grey than you can do in a year in the field.

Bond: Oh, so why do you need me?

Q: Every now and then a trigger has to be pulled.

Bond: Or not pulled. It's hard to know which in your pyjamas. Q.

Q: 007. (*Skyfall* 2012)

In this exchange the juxtaposition between old Q versus new Q is strongly emphasised. By Q claiming that age is no guarantee of efficiency and Bond responding that youth is no guarantee of innovation, it is conveyed that neither Bond, nor the viewer, know what to expect from this new Q. Up until that point there was never any doubt about what role Q was going to play in the movies. Even when John Cleese took over, it was clear that he was going to be the scientist who develops fantastic gadgets for Bond. With this introduction of Ben Whishaw's Q and his opening remarks, an uncertainty to some degree arises as to how this is going to play out. Another important sentence in this conversation that needs to be pointed out is Q's remark as to how much more damage he can cause in his pyjamas with his laptop than Bond can do out in the field. This sentence essentially epitomises the change that the character of Q has undergone since his introduction at the very beginning of the franchise in 1962. Not only does this statement sum up what to expect from the new Q on the level of professional expertise and support, but the imagery with which he describes what he is capable of is very descriptive and witty, therefore making the character immediately likable – not only for the viewer, but also for Bond. By introducing Q with this humorous line and having him engage in some sort of banter with Bond straight away, the shift to the new Q and his acceptance is smoothed over. While the two men seem to be wary of one another, both are confident in their field of expertise and their way of getting things done. Nevertheless, with the final proper introduction, a degree of acceptance is established.

Apart from his lack of confidence in the new quartermaster's skills due to his age, Bond is also rather disappointed with the gadgets Q has prepared for his mission. The pattern of Bond meeting up with Q to receive his newest weapons and tools is being revived. Q hands the spy a gun, which is coded to Bond's fingerprints and can

therefore only be used by him. As mentioned previously, this sort of gun has already made an appearance in the franchise before, namely in *License To Kill* from 1989. Over twenty years have passed in between the two movies. Naturally, in these two decades technology has evolved immensely, which is very decidedly shown by Bond's different reactions to the gun in both movies. While Timothy Dalton's Bond in *License to Kill* was fascinated by the fingerprint recognition technology Q had added to the gun, Daniel Craig's Bond in *Skyfall* seems rather disappointed, having expected more from his new quartermaster. In addition to the gun, Q also hands Bond a small radio, allowing the agent to send a distress signal to broadcast his location if activated. Bond does not seem at all impressed with the gadgets his new quartermaster has prepared for him. He simply states disappointedly "A gun and a radio. It's not exactly Christmas." Q simply responds by saying "Were you expecting an exploding pen? We don't really go in for that anymore." (*Skyfall* 2012). This exchange very clearly indicates how the perception of technology has changed in the last two decades. Bond considers this equipment to be underwhelming and more of a standard set, rather than some new and exciting invention designed to help him in the field. Q's response is a nod to the representations of his character in previous instalments, in one of which, namely Pierce Brosnan's first movie as James Bond, *Golden Eye* in 1995, an exploding pen was indeed a tool Q developed for Bond. By mentioning that they do not really go for this sort of gadgets anymore, he strongly suggests that they are rather old-fashioned and thereby sets the tone for his different run as Q. The exploding pen belongs to the most widely recognised gadgets Q has developed for 007 throughout the years, therefore the connection to the earlier movies could also be picked up by viewers who may have not been all that familiar with the details of the previous Bond films.

Right from the beginning, the juxtaposition between new and old, progressive and old-fashioned, is introduced very strongly via the relationship of the two characters. It is apparent from the start that Whishaw's Q sets himself apart from his predecessors, not only due to his age, but also due to the kind of support he is going to provide for the spy. As noted before, the role of Q takes on different variations throughout the various instalments of the franchise. He develops from a mere provider of a weapon to a scientist who comes up some of the most futuristic technological gadgets seen in movies at their respective time.

Since the character of Q is used to contextualise certain aspects of the movies and the time period they were made in, his role is very versatile. It caters to the need of the current narrative. In an interview prior to the release of *Spectre* in October of 2015 with Gerard Gilbert for *The Independent*, Whishaw commented the following, regarding his approach to playing Q:

Q is there to perform a certain function in the film that has been very well established the in the last 50 years. In a way that was more important, getting that right, understanding what people expect from Q. (Gilbert 2015)

He also stated that while he has of course seen the Bond movies and Desmond Llewelyn as Q, he purposefully did not do any further research in the portrayal of the quartermaster. He did not want to try and recreate the versions of Q that already existed but rather reinvent the character to fit the current time and narrative regarding technology. With the introduction of this new, young hacker Q that Whishaw represents, it is made very clear right from the beginning that the afore-mentioned aspects of old versus new and the importance of computer science is going to be a main part of the storyline in *Skyfall*.

At the beginning of the movie, Bond supposedly dies in pursuit of a hard drive that contains names and information on all undercover agents employed by the MI6.

The release of that information would, of course, cause massive damage to the agency's operations. However, Bond does not manage to retrieve the drive or learn who has orchestrated the theft of the information. He uses his presumed death to go off the grid for three months. In the meantime, there is an investigation into M's capability of leading the agency, due to her handling of the situation of the stolen drive being questioned. While M is not ready to give up without a fight, the MI6 servers are hacked and she receives a message mocking her. Immediately afterwards, an explosion takes place at the MI6 building. Bond returns upon hearing of the attack and is subsequently reinstated as a field agent, receiving the mission to find out who is behind the attack. After meeting Q and receiving his gun and his radio he sets out to fulfil his mission.

Despite Q only providing him with two gadgets, both of them help 007 in the field and finally allow him to accomplish his mission. He finds out that former MI6-agent Raoul Silva is responsible for the attacks on the MI6. His motivation is personal revenge on M, after she had abandoned him on a mission, leaving him to be tortured by the enemy. While the motive of revenge is not new for a villain in the James Bond franchise, Silva nevertheless presents a new sort of villain, a so-called cyberterrorist. The Oxford English Dictionary defines cyberterrorism as follows: "Cyberterrorism n. the politically motivated use of computers to cause severe disruption or widespread fear." (OED 356). Silva uses hacker attacks to achieve his goals, rather than the classic forms of terrorism Bond has encountered before. This new kind of villain perfectly matches with the new kind of Q. The quartermaster also specialises in computer technology and therefore is exactly the support Bond needs going up against Silva.

After Silva is captured and brought back to London, Q welcomes Bond in the new underground facilities. It can be seen as a revised version of Bond's visits to Q's lab, which have been part of the previous movies. Again, Q's space is very brightly lit, however the familiar scene of presenting various gadgets is omitted. Instead, the quartermaster's lab consists of a giant set up of computers and servers. In an attempt to decipher Silva's laptop, Q accidentally gives Silva access to the MI6's server. Again, there is a daunting message left behind, this time directly for Q. "Not such a clever boy" flashes at the quartermaster from all screens, while the door to Silva's cell is unlocked, allowing him to walk out easily. The message mocking Q also indicates that Silva knows exactly who is in charge of the Q branch supporting Bond, although the two have not met in the movie. The deliberate use of the word 'boy' once again reinforces how young this new iteration of Q is compared to its predecessors. By mocking him in such a manner, it can also be argued that Silva, just like Bond at the beginning, does not consider Q a threat due to his young age. Furthermore, we see for the first time, that the villain is directly communicating with Q, letting him know, that he knows who the quartermaster is.

Arguably, Q's role is once again slightly altered to fit the narrative of the movie. While he was previously presented as a computer expert, he now makes the very basic mistake of plugging an external device into the computer that is connected to the MI6 network, apparently without taking any precautions to ward off malware. This is necessary in order for the plot to proceed and letting Silva escape, however it takes away from Q's expertise in his field, because it does not appear to be a mistake the person who is in charge for computer technology of a national security agency would make.

Q is quick to realise that it was Silva's plan all along to be captured and hack into the MI6 system once again. Since he used to be an MI6 agent himself, he is well aware of how the agency operates and therefore could have evaded being captured easily if he had wanted to. While Q is trying to regain access to his servers Bond is already in pursuit of Silva, who is headed to Parliament, where a M is attending an inquiry about her future with the MI6. Q having regained control over the system guides 007 through the London Underground to catch up with Silva. He pulls up a map of the underground structures and instructs Bond where to go until he reaches Temple station. From then on Q can monitor everything via tapping the city's CCTV footage. CCTV surveillance is very widely spread in the United Kingdom, with London being one of the most intensely monitored cities in Europe in that respect. In an article by Paul Lewis, published online for *The Guardian* in 2011, one year before the theatrical release of *Skyfall*, it is stated that there are 1.85m CCTV cameras all over the UK. This means there is one camera for every 32 people in the UK. The article further claims that according to research the London tube network is covered by 11000 cameras (Lewis 2011). Q has access to all the surveillance footage and thereby helps Bond to locate Silva, who is now disguised as a police officer and swallowed by the crowd on the tube during rush hour.

Meanwhile M's hearing in Parliament is already in session. The Home Secretary scolds her for her actions claiming that she still acts like "we live in the golden age of espionage, where human intelligence is the only resource available." (*Skyfall* 2012). Here again, the topic of how relevant agents like Bond and the 00-programme still are comes up. The passing of time and the discussion of age have been recurring themes in the movie. While at the beginning it was mostly tied to the figure of Bond himself, with his struggles to meet the required results on the test to be

reinstated by the MI6 and Q's remarks regarding retirement, it is now implied that the whole system and the way M leads her agency is rather obsolete in this day and age. The question of how necessary it is to have someone in the field while artificial intelligence and computer technology has come so far in aiding with these missions is the underlying tone of the movie. This idea will be further explored in the next movie *Spectre*, where the 007 programme is once again in danger of being expended. In response to the MP's remarks regarding her traditional views on espionage and how the MI6 operates under M's leadership, she responds:

I suppose I see a different world than you do, and the truth is that what I see frightens me. I'm frightened because our enemies are no longer known to us. They don't exist on a map, they're not nations. They're individuals. Look around you. Who do you fear? Can you see a face? A uniform? A flag? No. Our world is not more transparent now, it's more opaque. (*Skyfall* 2012)

In her speech, M tries to convey what it means to work in the field of modern-day espionage. While the single person can be more easily tracked due to technology, it has also become easier for cyberterrorists like Silva to completely hide in the shadows. Her point is being enforced when Silva crashes the hearing and starts shooting in an attempt to kill M. Naturally, this incident works in favour of keeping the 00-programme as it is, since this turns into a classic shoot out, which needs human intelligence to solve it. Bond manages to get M to safety, leaving London behind. He asks Q to leave an electronic trail leading to Bond's childhood home estate **Sky**fall for Silva to pick up on.

Bond has chosen the estate as the place for the final showdown, not only because it is his home turf and therefore puts him at an advantage, but also because Silva will not be able to use his computer knowledge to defeat Bond and M. Bond does not have any elaborate gadgets provided by Q with him, but relies on guns and booby traps to defend himself. This final battle draws an arc from the start of the movie, where

everything relies on technology and computers – the villain as well as the MI6 – to a more traditional fight that is taking place between people face to face. By implementing this last element the big discussion on whether or not agents like Bond and the rest of the 00-programme is still relevant is settled for the time being. Nevertheless, the death of M at the end signifies the end of an era for the MI6. With her being a strong advocate of the 00-programme and fighting to keep it going, her death can arguably be seen as a metaphor for the end of what the Home Secretary had called earlier the golden age of espionage.

In the follow-up movie *Spectre*, released in 2015, the abolishment of the 00-programme is again discussed. The head of a joint secret intelligence service of MI5 and MI6, that is privately backed, Max Denbigh lobbies for the abolishment of the programme. After a surge in terrorist attacks worldwide, he wants to convince Britain to join the surveillance intelligence system called Nine Eyes, instead of relying on the, in his opinion, outdated model of sending 00-agents out into the field on missions. Surveillance comes up repeatedly in the franchise ever since the late 1960s. As discussed previously, surveillance technology was already heavily featured in *You Only Live Twice*, which was released in 1969, since its development was rapidly sped up during the Cold War. While the technology used was still a novelty in the earlier movies, it is not even mentioned how incredible it is in *Skyfall*, when Q was able to access the CCTV footage to track Bond and Silva through the city. Surveillance has become a part of everyday life and the political discussions surrounding the moral behind it are increasingly involving the general public. In *Spectre*, surveillance and especially government surveillance is the main topic, relating to current discussions of that time. To provide some context as to what Nine Eyes is, the following paragraph

will give an insight into the history of technical governmental surveillance according to an article published in the journal *Comparative Strategy* by Corey Pfluke in 2019.

The Nine Eyes initiative is based on a real intelligence alliance, the Five Eye (FVEY) of which the United Kingdom has been part of since World War II. Originally, it was an alliance between the UK, the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, agreeing to cooperate on their intelligence, primarily to prevent the rise of the Soviet Union. As mentioned, the Cold War was a major factor in the development of surveillance technology and so, as it progressed, the agreement, then called ECHELON, was further developed and used to track Soviet communications. However, its use was soon no longer limited to benefit the West in the Cold War, but to monitor communications all over the world. The existence of this intelligence network has been known to the public since the 1990s and, especially with the rise of the internet, discussions on how to regulate it have risen. However, it is still active – even more so ever since the terror attacks of 9/11, after which the limits have been pushed relentlessly, all in the name of the war on terrorism. The most well-known controversy regarding ECHELON involves famous whistle blower Edward Snowden. The former NSA employee leaked documents in 2013 stating that the alliance was still used to have the intelligence services monitor communications of other countries and then sharing this information, thereby circumventing laws to prohibit the government from spying on their own citizens. The history of the Five Eyes as well as the controversy surrounding it is very layered and still very obscure. Snowden's statements have also repeatedly been discussed and questioned. Since it concerns governmental secret intelligence services it is understandably rather challenging for non-professionals to grasp the scope of it. Furthermore, a Nine Eyes alliance also actually exists, which consists of Five Eyes and additionally Norway, Denmark,

France, and the Netherlands. However, in *Spectre*, these are not the states that participate in the initiative. (Pfluke 302-315)

With Denbigh, dubbed C by Bond, trying to convince Britain to join this alliance and undermining the proven methods of the MI6, Mallory, has a rather trying time in his new role as M. Meanwhile, the deceased M, played by Judi Dench, sends a message to Bond with an unsanctioned mission. On her orders, Bond travels to Mexico City to find the person M sends him after, Sciarra. He tries to capture him, however during the chase Bond kills Sciarra and retrieves his ring. During the pursuit however, he causes a huge amount of collateral damage. While this is usually the case, especially during the more recent movies, due to the fact that modern action movies rely heavily on these sort of effects, Bond does not get a pass this time. After returning to London from his unsanctioned mission, Mallory pulls him from field work and suspends him. Furthermore, he has Q inject him with what the quartermaster calls 'nanoblood', a tracking chip directly injected into Bond's bloodstream. While Q goes forward with the procedure he tells Bond that this is a sort of insurance after what happened in Mexico and that this way he, and therefore also M, can track where Bond is at all times. While Bond has been equipped with tracking devices in various forms in prior movies, this is the first time Bond cannot actively choose to (de-)activate the tracking. Especially regarding Q's comment about how this is necessary after the Mexico incident, it is rather obvious that the device is supposed to help the MI6 to keep track of Bond and assure that he is not going rogue, rather than making sure he can be tracked if he needs to be rescued from a dangerous situation. Furthermore, the injection of the tracker into his bloodstream, especially without properly informing 007 that this is what is going to happen, makes this one of the most invasive devices Q has ever developed for Bond. A comparable tracking device has been featured in

Thunderball in 1965, where Q has developed a tracking pill. However, this pill was devised to be able to rescue Bond from dangerous situations, rather than keeping track of him at all times. Furthermore, in *Thunderball*, Bond could actively choose to swallow the pill and thereby help the MI6 locate him. This is not the case with the nanoblood.

Q does not seem to have any moral concerns about the procedure. While Bond does not explicitly refuse to be injected with the tracking device, he does also not consent to it, especially since he does not exactly know beforehand what Q is injecting him with. This shows that the agent has come to trust his quartermaster without question, however, it does evoke certain questions regarding Q's character. He seems to simply be following his orders, injecting the nanoblood as if he would hand Bond any other gadget. The viewer does not learn for how long the tracking will be valid, nor if there are any other factors that might be important for Bond. Whether he will now be able to track bond for as long as the chip is in his bloodstream, or if there is an expiration date is not further discussed and not mentioned throughout the rest of the movie. It can be argued that applying such an invasive procedure without second-guessing it adds a morally grey layer to Q's character. Of course, his actions can also be interpreted as him wanting to ensure the safety of Bond, and trying to achieve that by any means necessary. The hypothesis of this thesis, that Q represents the scientific and technological development of the time period of the respective movie, can be applied even further here. His lack of moral qualms about what he is doing to Bond by injecting him with the nanoblood brings up questions regarding the morality of science. Do the ends justify the means in the name of science, no matter the consequences for the individual? This question has been repeatedly posed throughout history in relation to scientific and technological progress. This ongoing debate is very clearly picked up

in the character of Q, especially in *Spectre*. When discussing Q's moral state it also important to consider his aforementioned anonymity. It is not established whether Ben Whishaw's Q does still have a connection to the character of Major Boothroyd, or if he is completely detached from it. Hence, the viewers do neither learn his real name, nor are they given a lot of other information about his life outside of the surroundings of the MI6 and his role therein. The only private information that can be gained about Q actually comes from a statement he makes himself in *Spectre*, when he mentions that he cannot afford to put his job on the line for Bond, because he has a mortgage to pay and two cats to feed. In summary, the only information that could be gathered about him during the two movies in which he appeared are that he enjoys Earl Grey, cares for two cats and has a mortgage to pay. Considering that he is one of the main supporting characters of the franchise, this lack of information about him as a person adds to the presentation of Q with an air of anonymity – a facet which is also usually attributed to science and technology. They are considered to be detached and objective, not relying on human emotion.

After the injection of the nanoblood the viewer is presented with a more familiar scene from past movies. Q leads Bond and Bill Tanner, the chief of staff of the MI6, through his underground lab. After the attack on the MI6 building by Silva in *Skyfall*, it has not been rebuilt and is actually scheduled for demolition. Therefore, the underground facilities from which the MI6 operates present a different atmosphere, since there are brick walls and rather dim light, as opposed to the classic brightly lit white lab we have encountered before. The three men walk past the wreck of Bond's car, from which, as Q informs him only the wheel was still intact. He jokingly adds that he did tell the agent to bring it back in one piece and not bring back one piece. This again is a reference to the running gag established by Desmond Llewelyn's Q of

repeatedly telling Bond to return the car intact and 007 never managing to do so. This time around, Q seems to approach the situation more humorously compared to his predecessors. As opposed to *Skyfall*, the character of Q does revert back to a more familiar role in *Spectre*. While his computer skills are still the main part of his expertise, classic elements are reinstated, one of which being the presentation of the new car. As mentioned above the men walk past Bond's demolished car towards another completely new one. Q explains some of the features of this new prototype and the viewer expects him to give the car to Bond. However, there is a twist to the scene. Since Bond is side-lined and not allowed to be active in the field, Q informs him that the car has been reassigned to another agent, 009. By taking these reference points that are familiar to the viewer, and then twisting them into another direction, the movie manages to highlight the connection to the prior movies and arguably also evoking a feeling of nostalgia to some degree, but nevertheless developing the character and the franchise in general further.

Although Bond does not officially have an assignment at this moment and was ordered to rest and stay out of action, Q still provides him with one more gadget, a watch. It is not at first apparent to Bond what use the watch has and to his question "Does it do anything?", Q only responds with "It tells the time." (*Spectre* 2015). Of course, that is not all the watch is capable of, but Q is very aware of Tanner still accompanying them and therefore keeps his statements very vague. As if only just remembering it, he adds that the alarm is rather loud, making sure Bond understands what he means by that, namely that the watch is actually an explosive. When Tanner is out of earshot for a second, Bond asks Q for help to make him disappear for a while, despite having the tracking device in his blood. Q reluctantly agrees, making sure to inform Bond loud and clear, for everyone else to hear, that the nanoblood is still a

prototype and therefore likely to encounter problems with the reception within the first 48 hours after the injection. Despite their reservations towards each other in the first movie, it is now made obvious that two men are already a unit, with Q supporting Bond, even if it is against the orders of his superiors. In this case, Q's attachment to the previous M, who has entrusted Bond with this secret mission, might also play a role in the quartermaster's readiness to assist 007 in this endeavour, although it is unsanctioned. Q being willing to go against protocols and support Bond by strictly acting against the orders of his superiors contradicts his earlier actions of applying the nanoblood on Bond without hesitation or questioning the morality of his actions. Here we see him acting out of his emotions and his attachment to 007. It also contradicts his repeated complaints that he is not willing to risk his job for Bond.

Having been given 48 hours without tracking by Q, Bond flies to Rome to attend Sciarra's funeral, hoping to gather further information on his ring and the organisation he was involved with. After seducing Sciarra's widow in typical James Bond fashion, he learns that the organisation consists of powerful businessmen with connections to the criminal underworld as well as major terrorist organisations. Using Sciarra's ring, Bond manages to gain access to a secret meeting that is taking place. Bond listens in and learns that the leader of the organisation is giving the mission to assassinate a person he calls the Pale King. 007 manages to catch a glimpse of the leader, before being discovered and having to flee. He believes the person to be Franz Oberhauser, a man who played an important role in Bond's past. After his parents' death Oberhauser's father had taken a young James in and became his guardian. However, Franz and his father supposedly died in an avalanche 20 years earlier. Bond asks Money Penny to do research on Oberhauser as well as the Pale King. She finds out that the Pale King means Mr. White, a former member of the organisation who is now

living in Austria, where Bond finally locates him. Meanwhile Q, as well as Moneypenny, are trying to cover for Bond in front of M, who demands to know where the agent is. Q does actually lie to M, pretending that 007 is still in London.

In 21 movies, Q has only been out in the field a handful of times. As discussed previously, he usually stays confined to his lab at the MI6 headquarters. However, this time he once again ventures out into the field, flying to Austria to look for Bond. He actively put his position and his job on the line by covering for the spy and after being informed by Moneypenny what he is up to, wants to convince him to come home. Bond, however, insists that he has seen Oberhauser and that he needs to follow the lead to Mr. White's daughter and try to find out who is behind all of this. As stated previously, when Q followed Bond into the field on a mission, the character is used as comic relief, as well as the technical support. While he is not convinced that Bond is right regarding Oberhauser, he still complies with Bond's request to examine the ring with the engraved octopus, which Bond has retrieved from Sciarra and that gave him access to the meeting of the organisation headed by Oberhauser. Q begrudgingly takes the ring for further examination and leaves Bond with a farewell of "I really really hate you right now" (*Spectre* 2015). Again, the words do not come out in a harsh manner, but rather fondly. While Bond is then off to save Mr. White's daughter, Dr. Swann, from being kidnapped, Q gets to work right away, starting his analysis already in the ski gondola on his way down from the mountain. It is notable that while Desmond Llewelyn's Q brought out many different gadgets when he visited Bond in the field, this time all Q has with him is a laptop with some extra appliances. He puts the ring on a little scanner to analyse it further on his computer. The scene in the gondola, to some extent similar to the scene in *Skyfall* in which he plugged Silva's laptop into the system without checking for malware, depicts Q as acting rather illogically to forward the plot.

He starts the examination right away, in public, with another passenger sitting right across from him on the gondola. For the viewer it is clear right away that the other passenger is one of the villains. While it can be argued that Q does not notice the man staring at him right away because he is so immersed in his task and his findings, it seems quite unlikely for an employee of the MI6 to conduct such an analysis this publicly, even if it is not related to an officially sanctioned mission. Q finally realises that something is amiss, especially when there is a second man waiting for him when he tries to get off the lift. He manages to thwart both men, using a group of skiers to hide behind and then run. This is a very different situation from what we usually see the quartermaster in. He is usually removed from the action, only guiding Bond remotely or ensuring that he has all the tools he needs to escape from dangerous situations. The only other instance in which Q was included in the action to some extent was when he helped Bond in *Octopussy*. Q, however, does not get into physical fights. He manages to hide and then meet Bond and Dr. Swann at his hotel. He tells Bond what he has learned about the ring, namely that all the villains from his previous missions were connected to Franz Oberhauser and his organisation. Through Dr. Swann they learn that it is called Spectre, thereby introducing the iconic organisation in the James Bond universe for the first time in the Daniel Craig Bond films. At that moment the news show another terrorist attack, this time in South Africa, another country that is supposed to agree to the Nine Eyes initiative. Bond sends Q back to London, to support M in preventing Britain to join Nine Eyes, while he and Dr. Swann try to find Oberhauser.

After finding Oberhauser, who now goes by Ernst Stavros Blofeld, Bond and Swann are captured and Bond is being tortured while Blofeld tells him how he faked his death and killed his father, because he was jealous of the affection his father

showed towards Bond and not towards him. Bond learns that Blofeld is also ultimately responsible for the deaths of M and also Vesper Lynd, Bond's girlfriend in *Casino Royale*, since he was the one who sent Le Chiffre and also Silva on their missions. He further reveals that C is actually working with Spectre. The organisation staged various terrorist attacks for him, so that he had a reason to convince the states to take Nine Eyes online and start with the surveillance of every citizen. In return, Spectre would gain access to all the gathered intelligence, thereby being able continue carrying out their missions without being discovered. Bond and Swann manage to escape Blofeld's base by using the watch Q gave him back in London and triggering an explosion.

After their return to London they fill M, Tanner, Money Penny and Q in on what they have learned and plan to arrest C. However due to some interference, Bond and Swann are once again kidnapped and therefore it is up to the rest of them to stop C from taking Nine Eyes online. While their car is being chased and they are being shot at, Q tries to stop C with his laptop from the backseat. Ultimately, they manage to confront C directly and Q can stop him from carrying out the last steps to activate the programme. Before C can harm Q, he is shot by M who manages to arrive just in time to save Q. *Spectre* is arguably the most action-packed movie for Q up until now, since he was never this actively involved in a mission out in the field and brought into such immediate danger.

4. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to interpret the character of Q in the James Bond franchise and his importance in representing and contextualising the scientific and technological status quo, as well as the developments in those fields at the respective time of the movie release.

By analysing each actor's interpretation of the character, as well as focusing on the presentation of technology and technological advancement in the respective movie it has been shown how the character plays a key role in representing historical developments, not only in technology, but also in politics as well as society of the time.

Furthermore, it was argued that the increasing involvement of the character of Q in the plot illustrates the rising importance of technology and science in the last five decades. A special focus lay on the representation and development of surveillance and tracking technology and how it has impacted society from its beginnings in the Cold War up until the present day.

It has also been shown that Q plays a main role in depicting the relationship between science and morality. While science and technology in general is supposed to be apolitical and objective, it is repeatedly presented in the movie how Q's inventions, which he develops in the safe space of his lab, represent the 'good' side of it and how Q therefore is depicted as the 'good scientist'. Meanwhile the villains, who use the same or even more elaborate technology to reach their goals are very clearly depicted as 'evil' or 'other', and therefore their technology is also considered to represent 'evil science'. This thesis also argues that when Q uses a gadget, the purpose of which could be considered morally ambiguous, it is usually justified, because he belongs to the 'good side' and is therefore never questioned on it. As

discussed, this is especially true regarding the use of surveillance and modern invasive tracking technology as depicted in *Spectre*.

Finally, it was clearly shown that the character of Q fulfils various functions in the movies. Not only does his character provide technical support for 007, the depiction of his relationship with Bond also functions as a tool to make the viewer relate to Bond more on an emotional level. Q is also used to contextualise plot points in the movies with regard to the development of science, as well as to move the narrative along. By essentially using Q as a plot device, the character's expertise is undermined in exchange for better narrative flow, especially as far as Ben Whishaw's representation of Q is concerned.

It will be interesting to see how the character develops further in the next instalments of the Bond franchise, since the major current technological developments are taking place in computer science, which was introduced into the movies very strongly with Ben Whishaw's Q. *Spectre* saw a slight return to a more classical representation of Q, providing a car as well as gadgets. In how far this development will continue in future movies remains to be seen, and will be compelling to analyse upon the release of further films in the franchise.

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6. Appendix

6.1 Abstract English

The character of Q has played a key figure in the movies of the James Bond franchise for over 5 decades. Q, short for quartermaster is the head of the research division of the franchise's MI6's 00-programme. This thesis illustrates the development of the character, as well its reinterpretation through the 4 actors, who have portrayed the quartermaster in the 21 movies, released by Eon Productions until August 2021. Further, it is shown, that the character serves multiple functions and is utilised to contextualise the technological advancement as well as the socio-political environment of the time period in which the respective movies were released. It is also shown that the increasing plot involvement of the character relates to the increasing importance of technology and science in society.

5.2 Zusammenfassung Deutsch

Die Figur des Q spielte über die letzten 5 Jahrzehnte hinweg eine tragende Rolle für die James Bond Reihe. Q, die Kurzform von quartermaster, ist der Leiter der Forschungsabteilung des 00-Programms beim MI6. Diese Master-Arbeit zeigt die Entwicklung des Charakters, wie auch seine Interpretation durch die 4 Schauspieler, die die Rolle bis zum August 2021 in den Eon Productions Filmen verkörpert haben. Weiters wurde beleuchtet, dass der Charakter mehrere wichtige Funktionen in den Filmen übernimmt. Er wird eingesetzt um den technologischen Fortschritt, sowie auch die aktuelle sozio-politische Lage zu kontextualisieren. Des weiteren wird argumentiert dass die steigende Involviertheit des Charakters in die Geschichte mit der ansteigenden Wichtigkeit von Technologie und Wissenschaft korreliert.