

TRANSFORMING LIFE INTO LITERATURE

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Annotation. *This thesis explores the life and literary contributions of Arthur Conan Doyle, focusing particularly on his science fiction novel The Lost World. The research provides an overview of Conan Doyle’s early influences, including his mother’s storytelling and school experiences, which shaped his writing career. Special attention is given to the inspiration behind The Lost World, particularly the impact of Colonel Percy Fawcett’s expeditions to South America. The work examines the novel’s scientific elements, characters, and connections to real-life individuals known by Conan Doyle, such as Professor William Rutherford and Percy Fawcett. It also discusses thematic similarities between The Lost World and other science fiction novels, including works by Jules Verne, Vladimir Obruchev, and Michael Crichton. The thesis concludes that The Lost World stands as a significant literary achievement that blends imagination with scientific curiosity and continues to influence the science fiction genre.*

Key words: *The Lost World, Science fiction, Percy Fawcett, Professor Challenger, Edward Malone, literary inspiration, Victorian literature, South America expeditions, Strand Magazine, historical influences, real-life characters, dinosaurs in literature, scientific adventure, fictional geography.*

Introduction. Arthur Conan Doyle was from Scotland. His father was one of the successful artists. His mother was well educated too and she was perfect at telling stories to his son. During Conan Doyle’s school years, he used to write letters to his mother and it became a habit that helped him become one of the great writers. In his childhood, he was good at storytelling. His friends liked this habit very much. As the time went on, Conan Doyle’s number of fans increased. His first story was “Mystery of Sasassa Valley”. After that, his numerous stories came out one by one: “The American Tale”, “Captain of the Pole Star”. The author wrote novels too. His novel “A Study of Scarlet” made him renowned. He wrote religious as well as historical novels too, but he was prominent for detective works: “Adventures of Sherlock Holmes”, “The Sign of Four”, “Hound of Baskervilles”, “Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes”. Conan Doyle has left hundreds of marvelous works for his readers. He wrote a masterpiece in the science fiction genre – “The Lost World” which attracted many audiences.

Main part. It is assumed that Conan Doyle wrote “The lost world” influenced by his friend Colonel Percy Fawcett’s travels to South America. Percy Fawcett has made several expeditions to determine the borders between Bolivia and Brazil an area which has often been the subject of negotiations between these two countries. Conan Doyle attended Fawcett’s lecture at the Royal Geographical Society on February 13, and was deeply influenced by Fawcett’s stories about the province of Caupolican in Bolivia. P.Fawcett described this place

as very far, impenetrable forests and unknown dangerous paths. Fawcett wrote in his posthumous memoirs: “these monsters may have existed since the mankind appeared. When I showed these rocks and their pictures Conan Doyle was in this opinion too. He took information from me about this place to write a novel about South America. I told everything with pleasure. As a result from the year 1912 on, the parts of the novel “The Lost World” appeared in the magazine “Strand”. Later the book was published and achieved great fame” [3].

“The Lost World,” one of Arthur Conan Doyle’s renowned works, is a science fiction and novel published in 1912. Conan Doyle’s “The Lost World” follows an intrepid expedition into the Amazonian wilderness, where explorers discover that prehistoric creatures have persisted in isolation on a hidden plateau. Unlike typical jungle adventures, this tale blends scientific curiosity with the thrill of discovery and daring survival. Each chapter of the novel was published in the magazine “Strand”. In 1912 April and May months, New Zealand artist Harry Rountree edited pictures. The war between the local inhabitants and ape like humans was also described.

Existence of ancient animals was not the new idea even at those times, similar scenes were also described in Jules Verne’s “Journey to the center of the earth”. This work was published in 1864 and tells the story of creatures living underground. In 1915 Russian scholar Vladimir Obruchev wrote about the lost world in the novel “Plutonia”. He described dinosaurs and other Jurassic period creatures in this fiction novel. Michel Crichton has created “The Lost World” as the continuation of “Jurassic period park”. Later the film “The Lost World: Jurassic Park” was produced from these novels. There are similarities between A.C.Doyle and M.Crichton novels both in scenery and content. Two characters of Crichton novel resemble characters in Conan Doyle’s “The Lost World”. These characters are paleontologist John Roxton and Ed Malone [7].

Some writers don’t like to create novels based on facts, but Conan Doyle tried to write the plot events according to the knowledge of experts. The main heroes of this work can prove it. The hero professor George Edward Challenger is a scientist with an unusual nature, tall, bearded, sharp-eyed, hoarse-voiced and easily irritated when faced with difficulties. C.Doyle met the real Challenger at medical school; he was a famous physiologist, William Rutherford. C.Doyle has written about this scientist in his “Memories and adventures”: “he used to captivate and attract us” [2]. The hero against Challenger is professor Summerly, he is described as thin, tall, highly skeptical, and a researcher of theology. Conan Doyle created the hero professor Summerly while he was studying at Edinburgh university. The writer has been a witness to debates between two professors. The debate was not only about Darwin's theory, but also microbes and antibiotics which is a main topic of debate even today. This scene also described in the work “The lost world”. In the novel professors Summerly and Challenger often have debates, once they had such a debate in Olympic Hall and the students were amazed of it. The other two characters John Roxton and Ed Malone tried to calm down them. The character Roxton resembles two persons which Conan Doyle knew in real life. One of them is Roger Casement, ambassador of Ireland, served to fight against Belgians in the Congo. Conan Doyle has written about it in fictional novel “The Crime of the Congo” in 1906 [7]. Roxton

was also the symbol justice of his insulted nation. The second one is Percy Fawcett the officer of Britain army and brave traveler of South America. Conan Doyle has received many details to write “The lost world”. The next hero is Ned Malone, he works as the reporter of London newspaper and the narrator of work “The lost world”. Conan Doyle started to write this work in 1911 autumn and finished by December 3. There are some verses, but they not many.

Conclusion. The author felt the work would be successful and one of the best sellers. The chapters of the book were published starting in 1912 in “Strand” magazine. The editor of the magazine admitted the work is one of the best among the novels he had seen and emphasized that the pictures, maps, and plans especially attracted readers.

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