

The role of the family in conan doyle's fiction



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Sherlock Holmes can be defined as a special character in all the aspect; he is loved by the readers due to the outstanding personal features and intelligence. The plots of the short stories about him can be defined as the extremely attractive due to the way how Doyle understood people and their relations. The role of the family cannot be determined as a central one in the short stories devoted to the detective activity of Sherlock Holmes in London. At the same time, it can provide a lot of additional information both about the personality of the main character and about the specificity of people of the particular epoch. Despite the fact that each story is individual in the aspect of characters, ties, and plot, it is possible to define the tendency in the way how the author introduced the family ties in his fiction. The way how Holmes perceived the notion of family might be contrasted with the common one, and this contrast was the other way to emphasize the uniqueness of this character.

A typical way of perceiving a family as the indispensable attribute of the happy life did not work for Sherlock Holmes, and it made him different even from his best friend. At the same time, the author did not detract the role and importance of the family in general, for instance, Watson was happy in his marriage. To begin with, it is necessary to take into consideration the particular role of family for the main character to understand the contrast. The readers do not have a lot of information regarding the parents of the great detective, and it is possible to define that the emotional attachment to the close relatives is extrinsic for Holmes. He did not have the wife and children; moreover, he insisted that he had not ever been in love. Even Irene Adler was not able to melt his heart enough to make the great detective

think about family life, there was a rather accurate observation of doctor Watson in the story “ I have seldom heard him mention her under any other name. In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex. It was not that he felt any emotion akin to love for Irene Adler. All emotions, and that one particularly, were abhorrent to his cold, precise but admirably balanced mind.” (Doyle). Lack of romantic ties and lack of desire to have a family can be regarded as the result of the special intellect of the great detective, the attitude to life and other people was based on the rational analytic approach, while the emotional attachment implied irrational background.

The great detective perceived the family ties apprehensively. The author demonstrates that they were not in priority for him, as the Sherlock Holmes substantially estimated his skills and abilities “” Love is an emotional thing, and whatever is emotional is opposed to that true cold reason which I place above all things. I should never marry myself, lest I bias my judgment.” (Doyle 173). Moreover, even the relations with the best friend and companion became worse because Watson was happy in his marriage. The men moved away from each other completely, and the author was able to emphasize their difference using this fact. In some sense, Holmes was the prisoner of his intelligence to admire the family life in the same way as Watson did. It is also possible to consider the other aspect of the issue, Holmes had a chance to investigate so many cases of the murders within a family that it might have destroyed his faith in it and might have provided him with the idea that even being tied by affinity people are able to betray each other.

To the contrast, the family ties for the minor characters were rather meaningful in the ambivalent sense of this word. From one point of view, as it had already been stated, relation to the same family did not prevent people from committing crimes against each other, like in the story “ A Case of Identity” (Doyle). From one point of view, the typical respectful Victorian attitude to the family and the parents is demonstrated in the story by the main character, Mary Sutherland. The young girl demonstrated the elevated attitude to the institution of marriage. From the other point of view, she was betrayed by her stepfather who did not estimate the family ties at all. The same can also be defined in the story “ The Adventure of the Speckled Band” (Doyle) in which the girl was killed by the stepfather. It is possible to find the stories that demonstrate the positive aspect of the family relations, the author did not concentrate exclusively on the dark side of them.

Conan Doyle probably understood the controversies of the human nature in an accurate way, and he was able to demonstrate that people are able to act against each other even being closely connected. He also defined that Sherlock Holmes understood that the presence of family and emotional attachment to it makes a person weak, and that is why the great detective preferred to avoid it. It made him different from the other people and it was the author's way to demonstrate his uniqueness.

Works Cited

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