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**ABSTRACT**

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**ART WORLD IN THE STORIES OF  
S.MAUGHAM AND J.FOWLES**

Speciality: 5718.01 – World literature (English literature)

Field of science: Philology

Applicant: **Irada Kamal Alasgarova**

**Baku – 2021**

The work was performed at the Department of English Language and Literature of the Western Caspian University.

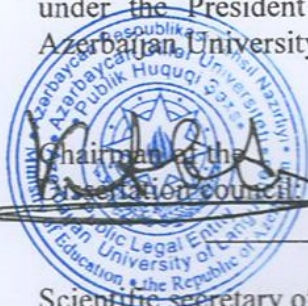
Scientific supervisor: Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor  
**Naida Jamal Mammadkhanova**

Official opponents: Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor  
**Naila Mahammadhuseyn Sadigova**

Doctor of Philological Sciences,  
Associate Professor  
**Nigar Valish Isgandarova**

Doctor of Philosophy on Philology,  
Associate Professor  
**Narmin Fuad Hasanova**

Dissertation council ED 2.12 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at Azerbaijan University of Languages.



~~Chairman of the  
Dissertation council:~~

Doctor of Philological Sciences,  
academic  
**Kamal Mehdi Abdullayev**

Scientific secretary of the  
Dissertation council:

Doctor of Philosophy on Philology,  
Associate Professor  
**Irada Nadir Sardarova**

Chairman of the  
scientific seminar:

Doctor of Philological Sciences,  
Professor  
**Gular Hasan Abdullabeyova**

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

**Actuality of the topic and the degree of research.** This dissertation is dedicated to the works of two famous writers of England S.Maugham and J.Fowles. In particular, the stories and short stories of writers were studied in a comparative perspective.

They came the history of national and world literature mainly as novelists, but they also contributed to the development of the “short story genre”. This layer is almost not studied in philological science. Despite the relative inattention of researchers to the short stories and novels of S.Maugham and J.Fowles, this part of their work seems important to us in the context of the writers' artistic achievements, striking in their depth and accuracy of perception.

Therefore, we consider the relevant topic to be a comparative analysis of their works (collections of short stories “Of Human Bondage”, “Trembling of the Leaf” and “Little Stories” by S.Maugham and the John Fowles’ cycle of short stories “The Ebony Tower”). Since it is due, we lack a systematic approach to the small prose of writers, and also make it possible to understand the movement vector of the 20th century English novelistic genre.

The work of Maugham and Fowles separately became the subject of special research in modern philological science. However, it should be openly acknowledged that the stories of Maugham and Fowles' novels from the specified collection are given only a modest place in the existing critical monographic literature. These works remained in the shadow of outstanding novels, and in a comparative perspective, the works of these writers were not considered at all.

We found some information about these works in the latest works of V.V.Ivasheva, D.V.Zatonsky, T.L.Motyleva and others. There is also European literature in the English language devoted to our chosen topic. For example, the works of F.Apostolou, Biles Jack, M.Bradbury, L.Cazamian, Y.Harrison, F.R.Karl, P.Kemp, F.Kermoud, Lewis John, I.Malin and some others. In 1998, A.A.Ismayilova defended her thesis on “The Poetics of John Fowles’

Novels” in Azerbaijan<sup>1</sup>. But this study is mainly devoted to the analysis of the story “The Ebony Tower”; the topic we are looking for is not mentioned in this dissertation.

In addition, such techniques as the paradox and subtext in the "small prose" of Maugham and Fowles have not been thoroughly studied. The methods of artistic mystification, as well as the entire plot-compositional structure of John Fowles short stories, are still not sufficiently analyzed. And this fact once again testifies to the importance and timeliness of this dissertation.

**The object and subject of the research.** The main object of research is literary methods, such as subtext, paradox, irony, and game components, which were used in the small prose of S.Maugham and J.Fowles. Despite the external thematic proximity of the story and novel genre, taking into consideration the chosen topic, there is shown a significant difference between them.

The main subject of research in the dissertation is the stories of S.Maugham from the series “Something Human”, “Trembling of the Leaf”, “Little Stories” and short stories by J.Fowles from the collection “The Ebony Tower”.

**The goal and objectives of the research work.** This research aims to analyze the poetics of the stories of S.Maugham and short stories by J.Fowles.

The main tasks revealing in this research due to its main purpose are follows:

- To establish the forms and methods of typing heroes in the works of Maugham and Fowles in the "small prose";
- Separate the concepts of mystical and genuine, real and unreal;
- Based on the available critical literature to determine the concepts of subtext and paradox;
- Indicate irony as a specific literary element in the short stories of Maugham and Fowles.

**The research methods.** In the present work, we relied on the method of comparison, comparative and typological analysis; a

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<sup>1</sup> Исмаилова, А.А. Поэтика романов Джона Фаулза: / автореферат дис. кандидата филологических наук/ – Баку, 1998. – 24 с.

philological commentary was also used, which contributes to a more accurate interpretation of additional information of various kinds.

**The main provisions for defense are:**

– Carrying out a comparative analysis of the study, we came to the conclusion that the work of S.Maugham and J.Fowles cannot be unambiguously attributed to one particular literary direction. The artistic method of writers is a peculiar eclecticism of realistic and modernist features of writing;

– The narrator is a special form of artistic reproduction of character in writers' prose. He is a kind of intermediary between the reader and what is depicted in the work. The functions of the author vary (writer, participant, viewer, third person, in remarks, etc.). But unlike the function of the author in the stories of Maugham, Fowles has no adventures or travels of heroes, the eventfulness of the moment is reduced;

– The game beginning, the dichotomy of the riddle, is an important element of the "small prose" of Maugham and Fowles. Both writers intended to revive the mystical adventure genre in twentieth-century English literature with a deep philosophical understanding of the acute and pressing problems in the modern short story. However, S.Maugham continued the traditions of D.Defoe and J.Swift, and J.Fowles did J.Joyce's and G.James' as well;

– The playful nature in the stories of both writers is closely related to the Hero's freedom of choice. But this freedom is not unlimited, and it is almost always accompanied by intense dramatic plot. The main ideological postulate of both writers is to achieve true freedom can be only by the liberation of consciousness. S.Maugham starts a game for dropping masks and exposing the negative seriousness of the hero. But it often takes the form of "play for the game" in the works of Fowles;

– Game techniques in the "small prose" of writers are directly related to the subtext, which becomes part of a riddle consciously set for the reader. In S.Maugham and J.Fowles works it is divided into two parts: explicit and hidden meaning. However, there is a difference in interpretation: it is important for Fowles to present his

philosophical judgments to the reader as cross-cutting. Maugham, on the other hand, did not seek philosophical help, and his subtext is connected with the manifestation of ordinary human feelings, which are temporarily veiled;

– The paradox of the plots in the "small prose" by S.Maugham and J. Fowles is so frequent that it should be considered an important part of the entire heritage. In Maugham, the paradox in stories is revealed most often in the confrontation between East and West, in the clash of eastern and western cultures. In his short stories, Fowles gave great importance to paradoxicality for appealing to mythological sources. Here they are transcoded, gain the meaning of secret, riddle;

– "Small Prose" of S.Maugham is narrative in nature. But J. Fowles' works are parable. However, their artistic perception of the world reflects such global problems as "personality and civilization" and "man and progress". They take away the line between fiction and reality, pushing together different cultural epochs and ways of seeing in stories in order to expose the complexity of human destinies, and to show the versatility of life.

**The scientific novelty of the research** lies on the fact that for the first time an attempt is made to conduct a special and holistic study in a comparative perspective of short stories by S.Maugham and J.Fowles. We can add that a number of literary scholars, philosophers, psychologists, historians have not paid enough attention to our chosen topic.

The concept of "subtext" has been undergone a substantial scientific reconstruction by us. It was emphasized that, until now, generally accepted signs of subtext have not been finally formed on this issue. In philological science, the role and significance of subtext in the semantic structures of a literary text are not indicated, there is no clear gradation of the condition of its formation and functioning. The discrepancy in terminology led us to the idea of clarifying this concept.

**Theoretical and practical significance of the research.** The scientific and theoretical significance of the dissertation lies in the fact that it supplements and expands the range of the problems

studied, devoted to the textual analysis of the short stories of S.Maughamm and J.Fowles.

Conclusions of the work will help to deepen knowledge in the further development of theoretical issues related to the problems of the "small prose", and may also be useful in the comprehensive study of novelistic creativity.

The practical significance of the work lies in the fact that the dissertation and its conclusions have certain scientific interest for literary scholars studying English literature; research materials can be used in university lecture courses, as well as in special seminars and special courses in English literature.

**Approbation and application.** The main arguments of the dissertation were reflected in 9 articles and theses published in scientific journals, both in Azerbaijan and in foreign countries (Poland, Ukraine), and also were made reports and speeches at various national and international scientific conferences.

**Name of the organization where the dissertation is performed.** The work was performed at Department of English Language and Literature at Western Caspian University.

**The structure of the dissertation with a sign including a separate volume of the structural units of the dissertation.** The research work consists of the introduction, two chapters, the summary and the list of applied literature. The dissertation Introduction – 6 pages, 8311 characters, Chapter I – 66 pages, 115206 characters, Chapter II – 55 pages, 94783 characters, the result – 5 pages, 7024 characters, and the total volume of the thesis consists of 225 324 characters.

## **BASIC CONTENTS OF THE WORK**

The **introduction** substantiates the relevance of the topic, defines the object and subject of the study, its purpose and objectives, methods, gives a description of the degree of knowledge of the topic, reveals the scientific novelty, theoretical and practical significances of the dissertation, the approbation of main themes.

**The I Chapter - “The image of the author and the character’s problem in the stories of Somerset Maugham and John Fowles”** consists of three sections. Section 1.1. entitled **“Stories of S.Maugham and the novels by J.Fowles in the synthesis of the ideas of realism and modernism”**. The “small prose” of writers is examined from the angle of synthesis of the ideas of realism and modernism. According to the authoritative researchers of the works of the 20th century English writers (V.Dneprov, GD Zhantieva, M. Zlobina and others), the main features of the “small prose” are listed, distinctive features and specific features are revealed that are most clearly manifested in stories and short stories of Maugham and Fowles.

V.Dneprov<sup>2</sup> believes that the works of Maugham lay away from the main routes in the literature and art of his time. G.D.Zhantieva cautiously speaks out about realistic tendencies expressed in his “small prose”. She notes that in most of his stories S.Moem failed in rising to the *“shining heights of realism, which have reached his great contemporaries Bernard Shaw, John Galsworthy and Herbert Wells.”* Truly, she *“does not at all refuse his great talent, wit, and keen observation”*.<sup>3</sup>

M.Zlobina in her works brings us back to the “Golden Age” of European literature, when the principles of critical realism prevailed everywhere. But still, these and other critics still debate whether Maugham has sufficiently developed his own concept of character, *“has his original mind and unconventional views been fused into a convincing social, ideological and political commentary expressed in the most vivid artistic images?”*<sup>4</sup>

In parallel with Maugham, in the same historical period, some other English writers, representing different literary movements and directions, created their works in the "small genre". These are G.K.Chesterton, R.L.Stevenson, C.Mansfield, E.M.Forster,

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<sup>2</sup> Днепроv, В. Черты романа XX века. / В.Днепроv. – М.- Л.: Советский писатель, – 1965. – с. 215

<sup>3</sup> Жантйева, Д.Г. Эстетические взгляды и творческий путь Сомерсета Моэма // Иностранная литература, – 1960. № 2, – с. 55.

<sup>4</sup> Zlobina M. Surprizi Somerseta Moema // Noviy Mir, 1961, N 9, p. 70-76.



W. Woolf, J. Joyce, D.G. Lawrence, A. Conan-Doyle, R. Kipling and others. Some of the works of these writers were artistically unequal, but the scope of reality was so wide that a large and colorful picture was created from the life of different layers of English society.

Taking into consideration the last fact, in this section and in the dissertation, a comparative analysis is understood not only as a search for direct analogies in the “small genre” of Maugham and Fowles, but also as a reflection of the difference in views. For example, some critics came to the conclusion that Maugham tried to avoid reflecting social motives in his stories. There is a certain amount of truth in these words. The writer, indeed, sometimes said that he avoided socializing his heroes. We have shown that this confession carries both shortcomings and some kind of advantages. James Aldridge stated: *“His weakness is that he usually avoided the broad image of life and generalizations.”*<sup>5</sup>

An outstanding English writer, a paradoxist, like Somerset Maugham, John Fowles became famous for his novels. “Magician”, “Collector”, “Magus”, “French Lieutenant's Mistress” ... A skillfully twisted plot, a mysterious, magical or mystical atmosphere, penetration into the depths of the human psyche - this is what attracts in the creations of this artist, and now makes him popular in the West.

At the same time, he made a certain contribution to the “small genre”. In accordance with the goal, the novels (short stories), united in the cycle “The Ebony Tower”, were subjected to critical analysis. It turned out that they have a lot in common. Like S. Maugham, he writes that in the modern European society, the harmony of the inner world of people is broken. T. Krasavchenko stated: *“The work of John Fowles is adequate and understandable to the worldview of modern man. The writer, by no means adapting to the reader, sometimes revealing the unpleasant truth about a person, touches the living nerve of life, expands the idea of it and art”*.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Изаков, Б. Английские встречи // Знамя, – 1965. №2, – с. 162.

<sup>6</sup> Красавченко, Т. Коллекционеры и художники / Фаулз Дж. Коллекционер./ Т. Красавченко. – М.: Известия, – 1991. – с.6

Most scholars attributed Maugham to representatives of critical realism. He himself was inclined to such an assessment. In one of his articles, he emphasized: *"I am after all a realist, and in my works I always try to remain true to life. I carefully and resolutely avoid all what is fantastic and bizarre, as well as writer's arbitrariness."*<sup>7</sup> In his "small prose" often there were prototypes of brave and heroes-travelers, curious discoverers of the lands and founders of the British colonies. But, working in this direction, Maugham was able to change a novel story about the adventures of heroes in the remote eastern provinces of Great Britain into a parable of allegorical or dramatic content. Thus, the genre of the adventure novel was transformed into a short story, in which, as we shall see later, the spiritual development of the personality is described by the writer with the simple and very specific details. Of course, this is a realistic feature of his work, moreover, full of hidden and deep moral meaning. At the same time, travel stories contain a lot of abstraction and a little specificity, such as the heroes flee from real problems, existential withdrawal into loneliness. All these facts show us the different meaning of short stories and tales of S.Maugham.

The same internal contradictions are noticed in Fowles' novels chosen for analysis. We see realistic features in understanding the originality of contemporary art and literature. So, N.G.Vladimirova emphasizing realistic features of the writer noted: *"Fowles, considering the problem of the specificity of verbal forms, does not oppose art and science. In science and fiction, he sees two great ways to comprehend existence."*<sup>8</sup> At the same time, there is a lot of information in the Fowles novels showing the use of modernist techniques. Recreating the image of reality in consciousness is inseparable from speech and visual processes. Consequently, the conventions of literature and art should be considered, on one hand,

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<sup>7</sup> Моэм, С. Записная книжка писателя. Собрание сочинений: [в 9-ти томах]. / С.Моэм. – М.: Терра - «Книжный клуб», – Т. 9. – 2001. – с. 33.

<sup>8</sup> Владимирова, Н.Г. Интертекстуальность как предмет рефлексии метакритики. Условность, созидающая мир. / Н.Г.Владимирова. – Великий Новгород, – 2001. – с. 129.

as a problem of cognition of reality, on the other hand, as a question of language and image forms adopted in modernism.

So the materials of section 1.1. showed that Maugham and Fowles cannot be unambiguously attributed to one particular artistic direction or narrative discourse, while mentioning their works in the "small genre" there are not only ready-made formulations for establishing traditional signs and criteria of realism, but also associations with modernism. Moreover, in the synthesis of various methods, many researchers find a connection with magic, science fiction, existence, neorealism, neo-romanticism, etc.

Section 1.2. entitled "***The image of the author and the character's problem in the stories of Somerset Maugham and John Fowles***". The image of the author in the "small prose" of Maugham and Fowles is connected with the problem of character. Graduation of the author's narration is carried out. At first, the author-narrator is the author himself (a real person). Reality is represented by his eyes. Moreover, the assessment of narrator varies. It can be objective and subjective, critical, or a quick, unpretentious sight. But there is also a storyteller - a special form of artistic reproduction of character. He is a kind of intermediary between the reader and the event depicted in this work. Sometimes the author acts as a witness, interpreter of facts and events.

Finally, the narrator is also presented in their short stories (third party, by whom the narration is also conducted). He may also be the author, but this is a personified narrator, speaking only from his own, from the first person, while the author-narrator is exclusively from the third. All these forms of author communications with the reader are shown on the example of some works of Maugham and Fowles. The degree and their objective participation is different, depending on the tasks that the author directly posed in his work.

For example, in Maugham's short story "Exactly a Dozen," the author puts his word in the narrative in such way that sometimes his presence is felt almost parallel to the reading of the story. A line of curiosity for all happenings is highlighted. The writer gazes intently

at each new face, carefully studies all the details of the clothes, and even follows the manner of behavior of people around him.

The author is here in everything: he is as if dissolved in the reader and in the main character. It is S. Maugham who is a member of the circle of "lovers of literature" and presents in discussions on the topics of modern European literature and art. He personally listens to the history of violent adventures of the "English Casanova", Mr. Mortimer Ellis, and throughout the story he gives an assessment of the hero's behavior, including his own thoughts and conclusions.

But the voice of the author can sound behind the scenes. For example, in the first story of "The Trembling of a Leaf", two main characters are: Macintosh and his boss, Walker, the administrator of the Samoa island. After the death of the administrator, it turned out that his assistant (Macintosh) had lost the meaning of existence. For several years, he lived with hate and acted by comparing himself to all the negativity of the administrator of the Samoa island in New Zealand – Walker. In conversations with him, he sometimes also notes his own shortcomings. With the death of the administrator of island, it turned out that now there is nothing to oppose. The soil has gone out under Macintosh's feet and it is not right to live with hate to ghosts. At the end of the story, motives of complete hopelessness dominate and Macintosh commits suicide.

The author's opinion in this story is indirect: even if you consider yourself right, you are opposed by a petty and envious person, can you only live with hate - as if the author asks a question. Throughout the course of the narrative, it becomes obvious that S. Maugham is convinced of the opposite. In his opinion, the Macintosh is "fatally doomed", and each new act, driven by revenge, ultimately leads to moral self-dissatisfaction, and then to death. This is the philosophy and credo of the author.

The author can be stated in the remarks. In the story "The Outstation," Mr. Warburton spoke through the lips of the author. Wounded in the fact that his assistant Cooper constantly and unreasonably calls him a snob, he defines this phenomenon. *"Snob is a man, who admires others, or despises them only because they occupy a higher position in society than he does. This is the most*

*vulgar feature of the modern English bourgeois.*”<sup>9</sup> The cited words look like a dictionary article than a replica of the character. Therefore, it is obvious that the author directly intervenes in the plot, who wants to protect his hero from vain attacks.

Under the indicated gradation (conditional triad: the author as a direct eyewitness or participant in the events; the author behind the scenes, behind the screen; the author in the comments, remarks, notes), this concept is also considered in Fowles’ short stories. It is shown that the author performs almost the same functions. But there are more specifics in Fowles’ short stories (this is noted by us in Section 1.1.). He is usually more rigid and categorical.

Unlike Maugham’s short stories, Fowles has no travels or adventures of heroes in his novels. He never meets the “unexpected and outlandish” people whom Maugham often encountered in his life. The distinction between plots is that the plot in the “Tower ...” is decreased in the moment of events. For example, in the fate of David Williams (1st story), the author focuses on inner state of his mind. The author in the first novel acts as a co-reporter. He informs the reader that David lives on the principle of “delayed life syndrome”, when for the great goals person refuses momentary joys. Later in a somewhat exaggerated form, the author reports that the real life of the protagonist stays aside, while he pursues his unreachable dream in art.

The author limits the plot to three days of David's life in the company of a famous artist and two girls. Mysticism is bizarrely mixed with reality and artistic fiction with documentary. It must be assumed that such an expanded introduction of the author in the form of a preface could help to European short stories in terms of bringing the “small form” closer to the novel. All of the mentioned above gave us reason to assert that Maugham and Fowles, in the modeling of characters, are genuine reformers in “small prose.”

Section 1.3 - ***“Game and freedom of choice in the art world of writers.”*** It completes the chapter. Game elements (not in the methodological, but in the literary and historical-philosophical

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<sup>9</sup> Моэм, С. Письма. Собрание сочинений: [в 9-ти томах] / С.Моэм. – М.: Терра - «Книжный клуб», – 2001. – с. 62.

aspect) of literary work are one of the popular varieties of modernism. The writer operates on subjectively defined categories, and the reader, in his turn, must find the answer to them. It is the dichotomy of the riddle. The "small prose" of Maugham and Fowles were affected by these elements as well.

For example, in the story "Rain" by Maugham, the game starts showing itself in depicting the collision of the world of owners and people with no rights. Fowles often has a conflict of two generations. There are simpler options. Fowles' short stories "Enigma" is an ordinary mystery in the detective genre. It is an open finale, when they flirt with the reader in terms of free choice of the position of the protagonist at the end. But in the process of comparative analysis of the works of Maugham and Fowles, it turned out that the game manifests itself in a bizarre eclecticism of chiaroscuro. But for both writers, this is not a "restoration" of the old, it is an attempt to revive the mystical-adventure, or detective genre in 20th century English literature with a deep philosophical understanding of urgent problems in contemporary short stories.

However, according to our observations, writers understand the game differently. S.Maugham seriously took up the further development of the adventure genre in English literature, which had a long tradition since the days of D. Defoe and J. Swift. Having squeezed the space and time so characteristic of the novel story he put the corresponding content into the framework of the story.

Game mysticism and magic are the favourite elements for Fowles. In the series of stories "Tower ..." he is trying to show that a person in the integrity of his nature is not accessible to ordinary rational understanding, in other words, he is an irrational being. Sometimes a person with an unstable psyche wants to feel the suffering of another, blood, destruction, perhaps all that the formulas of "morality" doomed him to.

In Maugham's stories, the game is used to maximize the tension of the plot. It is an extended climax in the stories. While reading his "Note", you think that the detective story is being developed for the purpose of keeping the reader in the grip of a riddle and there is no doubt about the protagonist's innocence. But this is

only a game with a reader. In reality, from the beginning till the end of the story, the young lady is deceiving her friends and the detective. The detective story plot's amusement is built on the basis of an unexpected ending revealed only in final sentences.

In "Mayhew" story, the reader follows with great tension when, finally, the hero's "dream book" will be published. But he suddenly dies, leaving behind a dubious inheritance. And all expectations are in vain. The initial sharpness of the plot ends with the drama of an unintentionally ruined life. The game is left behind, and author's thoughts on the transience of human existence come to the fore. The false trail in these stories is interrupted by the insight of others; the heroes, like the reader, did not expect a dramatic outcome.

J.Fowles operates in this category by other categories. Once he said: *"I think the mystical game is very significant thing in creating a novel. And it is important the writer must be able to fool readers. Laugh at them, put them on a false trail is a very important part of the novelist's art. All the major masters of detective and trillers are first-class players ... For me, teasing, puzzling the reader is a very important part of the novelist's work."*<sup>10</sup>

Freedom of choice for Maugham and Fowles is not unlimited, and it is always accompanied by a masterfully twisted dramatic plot. The main ideological postulate of writers was the belief that true freedom could be achieved only if the consciousness was liberated. Literary critics noticed this in Maugham's article "To Summarize" and in many public speeches of Fowles. But what is a game for that limits freedom of choice?

To answer this question, you need to re-read their short stories. In Maugham's story "The Creek," the main character, Lawson, pretends to be a respectable man, but the deputy chief Macintosh recognizes his "rotten manners". The author himself observes his "petty nature." It seems that trying to deceive others he puts on a game mask. Freedom of choice of ways to change personality is extremely limited, because under this mask most often hide sly and slippery personalities. It is like a shadow play.

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<sup>10</sup> Мозм, С. Нечто человеческое. / С.Мозм. – М.: Правда, – 1989. – с. 6.

But Fowles is starting another game with the reader. To be extremely precise, Maugham throws off masks in order to expose a negative entity and he tries to show a realistic character. But Fowles enjoys the game; it often takes the form of “a game for the sake of game”, which is absolutely unacceptable for the worldview of S. Maugham. Therefore, it is obvious that Maugham, on the basis of a certain gradation of the plot, opposed “art for art”, but Fowles not only accepted this formulation but also used it in his short stories. And playing with the reader by introducing him a hero with a dubious reputation most often took on his modernist outlines. The problem of freedom of choice has not substantially changed by this fact; regardless of the nature of the game, heroes who do not cause Fowles’ sympathy never win. It is best said by the writers in the subtext, exposing the unpredictability of behavior and the paradox of the actors that became the subject of the second chapter of our dissertation.

## **The II Chapter is “Features of Psychological Analysis in the "Small Prose" of S. Maugham and J.Fowles”.**

In Section 2.1. “*Artistic Techniques: Subtext and Irony in the Characterization of Heroes*”, artistic techniques as subtext and irony are analyzed by using examples. They serve to give additional characteristics of the heroes.

First of all, we can emphasize that the subtext, in contrast to irony, is a very complex and extraordinarily perceived category in modern criticism. The term “subtext” in dictionary entries, or monographs is interpreted differently. Until now there are no generally accepted signs, there is no clear distinction between the concept and individual phenomena by adjacency, a clear separation of content from the meaning of the text. Summing up the contradictory opinions of some theorist (E.Soloviev, L.Golyakova, V.Myrkin, V.Kukhareenko and others), we set our own view of the subtext that is in short stories of Maugham and Fowles.

Due to the fact that playing techniques in the "small prose" of writers (the material of the first chapter) are often used, the subtext associated with them by target settings takes on a specific color. It becomes part of a riddle consciously given to readers for individual



revelation. The game component as part of the subtext is optional. The main thing is that this form can arouse some aesthetic feelings in the reader.

The subtext is a focused historical and literary category. We looked at style of storytelling chosen by the authors in the works of Maugham and Fowles. It is divided into two parts: clear meaning and hidden meaning. The clear meaning is primary information and the subtext expresses background (additional) meaning. As a key point of subtext is indicated the factor of extracting from the text more sense by the reader, or critic than the author originally intended to put in it. But there is a difference in interpretation. It is seen in the level of architectonics of short stories. In Fowles works all tricks are subordinated to a single idea: to present the reader his philosophical ideas as cross-cutting. Therefore, five short stories of the analyzed collection are combined into a cycle. According to the rules of cyclization, there are topics, persons, or motives moving from one story to another. Literally all "speaking names" have similar mythological sources. The key to the subtext is in mythology and it is a phenomenon that should be solved. In the stories of Maugham there are no epigraphs; but in Fowles, they are, firstly, used in all five short stories and secondly, they have a strictly defined role.

For the introduction of subtext into the plot, writers used various ideas. Maugham did not seek philosophical meaning and he associated this technique with the manifestation of ordinary human feelings, temporarily hidden or veiled. He explained his position in his article "To Summarize." The essence of the development of the idea in the subtext is that some people *"are inaccessible to flashes of joyful feelings when they meet new person, from whom they cover their eyes with a pink fog."*<sup>11</sup> The consequence of such a conviction of the writer was a specific interpretation of the character in the story.

The critic N.D.Tamarchenko believes that Maugham often begins the narrative as a "hidden author". He writes in text about what he witnessed. These are the stories "Backwater", "Exactly a

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<sup>11</sup> Моэм, С. Подводя итоги. / С.Моем. – М.: Художественная литература, – 1957. – 87 с.

Dozen”, “Mayhew” and some others. And the subtext indicates that the author does not intervene in the events, but “at the same time he is close to one hero in emotional, intellectual and so-called axiological reactions. According to Tamarchenko, this kind of subtext is mostly used in the stories “Rain” and “Red.”<sup>12</sup>

It is significant that the subtext does not always have a specific and direct nominative function. Ironical meaning can be expressed in it. It is noted that in Maugham, humor can be soft and evil, bordering on satire and even sarcasm. The analysis of some stories helped us to understand that Maugham had a subtle sense of humor, an understanding of historical being in the figurative-artistic fabric of the text, which found its reflection in individual materialized details.

Indeed, soft humor is reflected in the story “Rain”, in which the author exposes religious fanaticism with subtle irony. In the story of the same name, Macintosh with pleasure notices the shortcomings of the administrator Walker, who can not make competent reports. Mackintosh, a London official, feels a little squeamish because of this and calls Walker a "plebeian" considering him uneducated. Macintosh can not tolerate such a boss, who, in his opinion, does not deserve any position, or respect from the natives. Walker feels this attitude, because of his stubborn nature he cannot show that he sees his own flaw. Instead, he behaves abruptly in a conversation with Mackintosh, in response to the irony also makes fun of him, often raising his voice.

In Fowles’ short stories, subtext and irony also become important techniques. And this is not only about the epigraphs that were mentioned above. The author’s philosophy is relevant here. All five short stories of the analyzed collection have “speaking names”: “Tower ...”, “Enigma”, “Coco”, “Cloud”, “Elidyuk”. There is symbolism, and this is an integral part of the subtext. In addition, along with entertaining intrigue, there is an insight psychology as well.

In our opinion, the symbolism is original in the opening novel, which gave the name to the entire collection. “The Ivory Tower” is a symbol which gave the name to the posthumous essay collection of

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<sup>12</sup> Мозм, С. Нечто человеческое. / С.Моем. – М.: Правда, – 1989. – с. 11.

Anglo-American writer Henry James. The image of the Tower, having shown in the title, is repeated at the culmination of the short story, in a dispute between young and old artists. Young (David) is an art theorist and abstract artist, his whole life, canvases and articles are carefully verified by theory and therefore they don't have natural charm and genuine depth. There are many hypotheses in the subtext about improvement of contemporary art. Then the technique becomes the direct text. And this is the conviction of the elderly artist Henry and, of course, the author himself. In the end, David's theoretical views which do not allow him to create artistic values, lead him into a dead end. He is not able to evaluate realistic art.

Fowles masterly uses the irony. For example, like Maugham, he attaches great importance to the English ceremonies in various forms. But Maugham focused on making fun of amateur writers. A classic example of it is the subtext and irony in "The Source of Inspiration". Fowles in the novel "Coco" develops the theme of the English ceremonial, but his interests are different. The comprehension of the phenomenon of Englishness, assessed by the writer as "illiteracy", "incomprehensibility" of the Englishman occurs by decoding the associative series outlined by the title. The title, being associated with the epigraph, subconsciously orientates the reader to a parallel perception of this expression, leads to the search for associations with it, but it is only a starting point in the dialogue "Author - Reader". The connection between the epigraph and the title orientates the reader to an ironic perception of the visible activity of some heroes. Describing the language of English literature, Fowles expresses the idea that he always means more than he speaks - both emotionally and figuratively.

The final section 2.2. *"The paradox of the plots and images in the stories of Maugham and Fowles"* is devoted to the issue of the paradoxical nature of the plots and images in short stories of Maugham and Fowles. Unexpected plot twists, conflicting twists and turns of fate, non-standard decisions, unexpected circumstances, unpredictable behavior – these are specific features in the stories of two writers which belong to some heroes and they indicate the paradoxical nature of "small prose."

In the analyzed short stories of writers, it was indicated that the essence of the literary paradox lies in the statement of two semantic nuances. On one hand, this is the launch of a certain negative program in which one phenomenon denies the other or contradicts itself. On the other hand, the paradox possesses an amazing ability to reflect the most unexpected moments in a person's life with artistic colors. Those are aspects that are accurate when viewed by their author from two opposite positions. The paradox of the plots in the "small prose" of Maugham and Fowles is such a frequent occurrence that it should be considered the cornerstone of the whole heritage with a positive dominant.

As evidence, we turned to characteristic examples. In one of Maugham's stories, a very colorful portrait of a preacher Davidson is given. And inexplicable opposites collide in this portrait: *"His appearance makes a strange impression. He was very tall and skinny, with long, as if unfastened legs and arms, cheeks sunken with cheekbones sticking out. With thinness, his full and sensual lips in particular seemed unexpected."*<sup>13</sup> This irregularity of features in the portrait characteristic is not accidental. Maugham encounters two attributes that are logically incompatible. The "closed" and "gloominess" of a person always shows his roughness. Meanwhile, Davidson has such a feature as "sensual lips". The neighborhood of these features is unnatural, and therefore paradoxical. The reader immediately gets the impression that the person chose the area of application of his forces incorrectly. According to the author he was conceived as a person who "consciously assumed the duty of an honest Christian", however, there is no Christian humility in Davidson. It is confirmed in the text: *"There was something formidable and dimly disturbing in him."*<sup>14</sup> It is a portrait of an incorruptible judge but not a modest and patient missionary.

The world of the collision of logic with anti-logic is discovered while developing the topic of the crossroads of cultures and civilizations. In the story "Honolulu", Maugham gives a characteristic of the southern islands as: *"... an unusual meeting*

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<sup>13</sup> Моэм, С. Нечто человеческое. / С.Моэм. – М.: Правда, – 1989. – с. 14.

<sup>14</sup> Моэм, С. Нечто человеческое. / С.Моэм. – М.: Правда, – 1989. – с. 15.

*place between West and East, when unusual novelty and incredible antiquity come in contact. And without even discovering the expected romance, you will still touch something paradoxical and mysterious. These strange people are Europeans and islanders. They live with each other, but think differently, believe in various idols and gods, and have different ideas about good and evil. Only two passions shared by them – hunger and love.”<sup>15</sup>*

The life of people on the island viewed through the prism of two different civilizations also worried Fowles. But he looked at this confrontation from a paradoxical-semiotic (symbolic) point of view. The writer having the ability to turn everything into an island, to remove everything from himself, perceives many of his works as something isolated and separated as an island from the mainland. The island character of this novel is expressed in the alternation of *“rather boring and slowed-down passages, consistent “personnel changes”, in the island quality of key events, in their inner vision and understanding of them as “islands in a sea of real history or fiction”<sup>16</sup>.*

Maugham does not individualize each representative of the islanders. He does not have such goal because for him the most important thing in the stories was to reveal the paradoxicality of the confrontation between East and West. In his stories East is one of the most paradoxical regions on the planet. On one hand, it is a mirror for Western culture and the population in which it sees itself. On the other hand, the East, according to Maugham, is striving, but it still cannot realize what their own negative features are. And therefore, the heroes of some stories in which the main conflict erupts in the South Islands, paradoxically live there by inertia and their general instability is noticeable. But the motivating reasons behind which the “sleepy eastern kingdom” will explode are not yet clear. In the story

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<sup>15</sup> Моэм, С. Нечто человеческое. / С.Моэм. – М.: Правда, – 1989. – с. 8

<sup>16</sup> Фаулз, Дж. Башня из Черного Дерева. / Дж.Фаулз. – М.: Эксмо, – 1974. – с. 251

“Honolulu” we read: “*So you expect that something is about to happen, but what you don’t know it.*”<sup>17</sup>

Maugham did not try to reveal the theme of the “dying God” in his stories, as Fowles did it in his “games” with Him. However, he closely linked the lack of love, harmony and mutual understanding with the oblivion of national traditions. So, Lawson and Ethel - representatives of different civilizations, unable to honor their own, not showing tolerance for a different culture, speak each other in different languages. This is the root cause of the quarrel.

The paradoxical nature of images or situations can be found in Fowles’ short stories as well. So in the opening short story “The Tower” ... we find numerous references to paintings and artists, and the main goal of the work is to oppose young and old artists, both personally and creatively.

In the “**Conclusion**” the results of the study are summarized, the main provisions of the thesis are summarized:

– Maugham in his stories cautioned against interpreting the narrator as a figure completely free from the real artist. He believed that the “I-narrator” was also invented by the author, as well as other characters with whom the narrator has a relationship. In some of the stories in the cycle, the writer does not hide his opinion, he openly voices it. This conclusion is based on a comparison of the writer’s fiction and epistolary prose.

– Maugham believed that the success of the stories entirely depends on the degree of the author’s presence, on the imprint of his personality, on his choice of character type and plot. At the same time, he paid special attention to the characteristic “individualization of characters”, the need to peer closely at the human nature, to look at the character from the inside, because the quick look from the outside will not make the reader believe in the reality of the character. In the 21st century, Maugham’s wishes may seem too simple, but this is the position of the writer that he followed.

– Speaking about the similar functions of literature and art, Fowles considered it necessary to correct the flaws and shortcomings

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<sup>17</sup> Моэм, С. Письма. Собрание сочинений: [в 9-ти томах]. / С.Моэм. – М.: Терра - «Книжный клуб», – Т. 9., – 2001. – с. 94

of society in his short stories of the collection “The Ebony Tower.” Fowles sees the artist’s goals in describing the outside world, expressing his opinion about this world and his own feelings about himself. Contrasting art-creating personalities, Fowles defines them as a genius and artisan.

– In Fowles’ novels, great importance was attached to subtext and paradoxicality as part of the appeal to mythological sources. The inner meaning of the national myth, according to the writer, is the metamorphosis of retreat and flight, in which the English artist gains both a "hidden refuge" and a "fortified redoubt." This is the vector of Englishness itself, which is felt at the level of poetics.

– It is obvious that the English indicator worried both writers. Maugham laid the main emphasis on the description of national rituals and ceremonies; Fowles did it on understanding the specifics of the verbal image and text. Therefore, in the stories of Maugham, the subtext, paradox and irony are revealed mainly at the level of the portrait characteristics of the characters.

– These works of Maugham and Fowles primarily reflect such global problems as “Personality and Civilization” and “Man and Progress”. And all their works were directed toward clarifying more particular questions of these epochal problems.

– Encountering various cultural eras and ways of seeing in short stories, the authors construct situations in such a way that they become ambiguous. The writers reveal the complexities of human nature and their destinies. Light and darkness, the diversity of personality, the combination of low and high in the soul – these are the basic instances that help the writers to discover the beauty and multidimensionality of life.

– Maugham and Fowles deliberately remove, blur the line between fiction and reality. It was shown that they create with symbols, hints, signs, enjoying how the writers found the successful detail. They awake thought processes in the mind of the reader, intriguing him with regular, attractive scenes, without leaving him indifferent to the narrative.

The main provisions of the dissertation are reflected in the following articles and theses of the author:

1. Elements of the game in the prose of S.Maugham and J.Fowles // – Bakı, Azərbaycan Dillər Universitetinin “Elmi xəbərləri”, – 2017, Vol 8 №2, – c.176-181.
2. The image of the author and the problem of character in the stories of Somerset Maugham and John Fowles // –Bakı, BSU, “Tağıyev Oxuları, Elmi məqalələrin məcmuəsi”, – 2017. №1, – c.230-236.
3. Stories of S. Maugham and J. Fowles in the light of the synthesis of the ideas of realism and modernism // – Bakı, BSU, Humanitar Elmlərin öyrənilməsinin aktual problemləri, – 2017. №2, – c.172-176
4. The ideas of realism and modernism in the stories of S.Maugham and J.Fowles // Bakı, Qərbi Kəspı Universiteti, Elmi Xəbərlər, – 2017. №4, c.41-48.
5. Game and freedom of choice in the artistic world of S.Maugham and J.Fowles // “Heydər Əliyev və milli-mənəvi dəyərlərimiz” mövzusunda Respublika elmi konfransının materialları, – 6 May, – 2017, – c. 225-231
6. Artistic techniques in characterizing the characters in the small prose of S.Maugham and J.Fowles // International conference RS Global, World Science. – Warsaw, Poland, – February, – 2018, vol.5, № 2 (30), – c.19-26.
7. A comparative analysis of the small prose of S. Maugham and J. Fowles // – Днепропетровск, Вісник Університету імені Альфреда Нобеля, Серія «Філологічні науки»,– 2018. №1(15), – c. 44-50.
8. Somerset Maugham’s “Small Prose” poetics // Bakı: Elm və təhsil, AMEA-nın Əlyazmalar İnstitutu, Filologiya məsələləri, – 2019. №5, – c. 130-142.
9. Art world in the “Small Prose” of John Fowles” // “Azərbaycanşünaslığın aktual problemləri” mövzusunda beynəlxalq konfransın materialları, Bakı, – May, – 2020. – c34-37.



The defense will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> of Oct 2021 at 13<sup>00</sup> at the meeting of the Dissertation council ED 2.12 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Address: AZ 1014, Baku, Rashid Behbudov Street, 134.

Dissertation is accessible at the Azerbaijan University of Languages Library.

Electronic versions of dissertation and its abstract are available on the official website of the Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Abstract was sent to the required addresses on 20<sup>th</sup> of Sept 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Seif' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Signed for print:17.09.2021.

Paper format: 60x84 1/16

Volume: 37340 characters

Number of hard copies: 20