

**REPRESENTATION OF CONCEPTUAL BINARY OPPOSITIONS  
"WEST/EAST" AND "EAST/EAST" IN THE NOVEL BY  
S. MAUGHAM "THE PAINTED VEIL".**

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*The article analyzes examples of representation of the binary opposition "west/east", which act in contrast, emphasizing the author's modality. In the novel "The painted veil", concepts are presented in volume, the author introduces such segments into their semantic circle as the presence of special "Euro-Asian" characters, the city space, landscape, customs. S. Maugham makes the heroine Kitty an emotional "barometer" of the events taking place, thereby creating a certain emotionality, associativity of the concept.*

**Instroduction.** In the works of S. Maugham, the "oriental theme" is important in itself and as a contrasting theme that creates a "western space"; the mentality of a Western man, his difficult or comfortable stay in the east (the story "The Moon and Sixpence"). S. Maugham knew the countries of the East, spent a long time on the islands, therefore, in the novel "The Painted Veil" (1925), the space of the Chinese city of Mei-dan-fu during the cholera epidemic is recreated. It is worth emphasizing that the novel is, as it were, compositionally divided into three unequal parts: London-China (Hong Kong) - London, which also reflects the binary conceptual opposition in the spatial planes of "west / east". We believe that such an opposition runs through the "eastern series" of S. Maugham's stories, his novels, which is confirmed by self-analysis in the biographical book *«The Summing Up»* : « When I recovered from my illness the war was over I went to Chine. ... I kept my eyes open for character oddness and personality...» ( 6;134). The experience of staying in the East, the writer's admission that meetings with many people stimulated the creation of a conflict and even a plot, can be considered confirmation of the importance of

the above-mentioned binary opposition: "Cognitive science is based on the following fundamental idea: thinking is the manipulation of internal (mental) representations of the frame type... therefore, we think in concepts, scenarios, as global quanta of well-structured knowledge" (4;21). S. Maugham, judging by the novel "The Painted Veil", perceived the concept of "East" in a three-dimensional way, introducing into its semantic circle such segments as the presence of special "Euro-Asian" characters, the space of the city, landscape, customs, food, costumes. The above can be summarized by the definition of N. S. Bolotnova: "An artistic concept, verbalized in a text, appears as a multifaceted structure of various associative series, reflecting a certain direction of association, actualized in the text, recording the multi-aspect nature of the concept and its dynamic nature" (1;80). The significance of the artistic concept in S. Maugham's novel, its individual-authorial content is explained to some extent by the following statement of the writer: "You can't create a character in an airless space: as soon as you start thinking about him, imagining him in some situation, he does something" (6;8). Therefore, an important segment included in the conceptual field of the concept "East" is the "description" of the space, landscape or interior of a house in China, Hong Kong. In this novel, the conceptual opposition is enhanced, in our opinion, by the fact that S. Maugham makes the heroine Kitty an emotional "barometer" of the events taking place. Her "cool" relationship with her parents, pragmatism leave an imprint on the description of the "Western" space and an emotionally negative or enthusiastic one on the space of the East. We agree with the statement of T.I. Vasilyeva: "When studying an artistic concept, what is of interest is its value component, as well as the accompanying emotional complex that contributes to a certain contextual perception of artistic meaning" (2;53).

The living room in the Townsend house, that is, the representatives of the "rich East", seemed to Kitty "comfortable and homely style". The room for meetings with Charlie was described by S. Maugham with a clarification of the main vice of these places: "It was stuffy and there was an acrid smell of opium. She set down on a sandalwood chest" (6;50).

It should be noted that the interior of the English house is created negatively by the author, reinforcing the heroine's attitude towards it with epithets: "She went upstairs and into the large, cold and pretentious bedroom... those massive pieces of mahogany and the engraving after Marcus Stone which adorned the wall" (7;241). The intimate atmosphere, which should correspond to the coziness of the bedroom, is replaced by a cold formal room, in which there is not even room for flowers. As already noted, S. Maugham creates a contrasting description in colors, tempo, even smells. S. Maugham does not simply create

the space of the West and the East, but takes into account the social status of the character living in this space. The West is represented in the novel by London high society, famous streets..... The author populates the novel with many characters. Let us highlight two figures that contrast in all respects. For example, Katie's mother, Mrs. Garstin, had a real polish, as she was indispensable in society drawing rooms: "She was a useful guest among persons to whom small talk did not come easily, for she was never at a loss with a new topic and could be trusted immediately to break an awkward silence with a suitable observation" (7;19). In contrast to the typical Western lady, an image is created that personifies the East - the Manchu princess. S. Maugham emphasizes precisely those details of the portrait and interior that contain associations that provoke the perception of aristocracy and belonging to a noble family: "large eyes burned like liquid jet" or "lovely as those languid and elegant hands".

The emotionality of the narrative, the romanticism of Waddington's love story (the author seems to enhance this by Kitty's ignorance of the Chinese language) imparts the mystery and incomprehensibility of the "East". The monochrome of the interior is emphasized by the exotic appearance of the Manchu princess: "... a large, bare room with a whitewashed wall on which hung scrolls in various calligraphies ... black wood and heavily carved" (7;171). The contrast method also works by comparing activities: if Mrs. Garstin is an expert in "society chatter", then the time spent by Waddington's beloved is typical and characteristic of the aristocracy of the East: "She paints a little and sometimes she writes a poem" (7;171).

It should be noted that conceptual opposition works in S. Maugham in direct dependence on the situation. Hong Kong for the sublimely in love Kitty is associated only with communication with Charlie. Walter's ultimatum and the forced trip to the cholera-stricken Mei-Dan-Fu allow the author to present several contrasting concepts of "space", that is, to "see" different perceptions of the sights of the city by Kitty. 1. The space of the cholera-stricken city is perceived by the heroine metaphorically: "... the great city lay in terror, and death, sudden and ruthless, hurried through its tortuous streets" (7;93). 2. It is noteworthy that the writer repeatedly emphasizes Kitty's sociability, her ability to have fun and chat easily about trifles. Charlie's betrayal and the deadly atmosphere of the city of the "dead" aggravate the heroine's spiritual crisis, which is why S. Maugham gives the perception of the temple in a situation of "silent contemplation", a philosophical understanding of the beauty of nature and the majestic gates in the city cemetery: "It was richly carved. Fantastic and ironical it stood like a landmark in the surrounding country" (7;106). 3. The author connects the entire temple complex, the ruins of the Buddhist monastery, in Kitty's



perception with the monastery in which the "Eurasian Frenchwomen" served, which testifies to the purification of the heroine. The concept of "space" in this context becomes more and more positive, even rich: "and did not return to the bungalow till the westering sun flooded the narrow river and its crowded junks with gold" (7;139).

4. The presence of a distant landscape, which Kitty accepts as a kind of marker of her own mental and spiritual change, S. Maugham connects with the concept of "spirit": "now we were so familiar with the fantastic, garish, beautiful and mysterious temple on its great bastion that it rested her spirit" (7;193).

Modern philological science identifies two important concepts that facilitate a deeper conceptual analysis of the text – linguistic personality (Y.N.Karaulov) and idiostyle. V.V.Ledeneva emphasizes that "idiostyle manifests itself as a result of text generation and aesthetic activity of the linguistic personality," and when "selecting means to express his idea, the author is guided by the subjective category of preference, and this is the individual character of the idiostyle" (3;39). As can be noted, S. Maugham's subjective preferences in the positive interpretation and palette of the artistic concept of the "East," even when comparing religious buildings. As noted above, the Buddhist temple and especially the modest building of the Catholic monastery in Mei-Dan-Fu are filled by the writer with special spiritual meaning, the true service of French nuns. Eastern sacred spaces are presented by S. Maugham less pompously, with more spirituality than Western ones. Thus, the West meets Kitty in the Marseille port with a huge golden statue of the Madonna, which is a symbol of protection for sailors; but the author emphasizes Kitty's contrasting associations with the French nuns who remained in China. It seems that in this way S. Maugham stimulated the heroine's return to the East.

Thus, in the novel "The Painted Veil" there are numerous cases of representations of the binary conceptual opposition "east/west" in the plane of space, the emotions of the characters, taking into account their social status. It has been proven that the conceptual opposition is strengthened by the fact that S. Maugham makes the heroine Kitty an emotional "barometer" of the events taking place.

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