



Conflict between ambitions and real life of the hero in the novel” The Moon and Sixpence” by Somerset Maugham

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the adventurous life and bitter destiny of the main character of “The Moon and Sixpence”. The work reveals the complexity of the human nature and represent struggles in which a choice has to be made between reality and ideality. Clearly, the hero Strickland being a painter, faces a real hesitation between selecting his family or choosing his dream of painting. However, his dream becomes untouchable, and he is not able to find out the real meaning of art.

Keywords:

Adventurous life, complexity, reality, ideality, painter, art

Introduction. This work explores a famous artist Charles Strickland whose life is full of hesitation and misunderstandings and at the same time, the reader can clearly mention conflict in the mind of the hero which leads him to various kind of difficulties in life. It retells about Strickland’s formation as an artist, as well as about his events from his personal life, so the reader can find out what kind of person Strickland was. An interesting story about a strange genius. This is a work that the reader will delve into with one’s head, because the plot does not stand still - it is mobile and interesting, the imagination of Maugham will charm you, and the images created by the author will not leave you indifferent.

The main character of the book is a completely ambiguous figure. Having abandoned his family and children, his job, Strickland goes to Paris, lives in poverty, does not eat or drink, he lives only by his paintings and drawings. He has only one need - to draw, draw, draw. It doesn't matter where, it doesn't matter if he slept or not. For the first time one

can not realize either it is patriotism or just ego. The author by this hero gives a hint that reality is too cruel to realize all the dreams associated with an ideal and beautiful world. So, reality enters into a kind of conflict with the dream, which often turns out to be insoluble.

Literature review: Except being criticized by some authors the work gained his fame and became one of the favourite books of readers. In fact, some artists were inspired from the life of the main character and played a role in the theatres devoted to this work. For instance, the book was made into a stage play in 1925 at the New Theatre with Henry Ainley, Eileen Sharp, Albert Lewin and others.

Analysis. Strickland - the main character of this work is an artist - certainly a genius. A man who knew his destiny and knew how to bring it to life. He traveled, painted, lived by his own rules and instincts. But Strickland is a man - a strange and ambiguous figure. He was a rude man who didn't care about gratitude or

the rules of decency, he had no morals or any honor. Even as a child, Strickland dreamed of painting and even drew a little, but later the need to provide his family forced him to part with his illusions and desires. Later the reader mentions the conflict between ambition and real life. He becomes confused what way to choose while his ego overweight everything around him. A year before his escape, Strickland begins secretly taking drawing lessons, and then he finally decides to link his fate with painting. ., Charles Strickland leaves his job as a stockbroker, abandons his family to devote himself entirely to creativity, and goes to Tahiti. The desire to create becomes all-consuming for Strickland. The conventions of the world that surrounds him are alien to him. Strickland spends the last years of his life in Tahiti. But, as on the continent, on the island his paintings are just as incomprehensible to the people around him, he is an unrecognized genius. And only after the publication of the article in the magazine, when Strickland is no longer alive, there is a true interest in his work. Using facts from the biography of Paul Gauguin, Maugham explores the personality of the artist, presenting the reader with an ideal creator who is able to neglect material benefits for the sake of creativity, a sense of freedom of spirit. The hero managed to give up everything in order to find himself, to put his ideas into practice. He wants to show an ideal creator who feels Beauty and is eager to express it. He is indifferent to fame, he is not worried about the opinion of the crowd, his behavior sometimes strikes with its immorality, but Maugham is convinced that the artist's personality is revealed in art.

Only in a world far from civilization, Strickland finds complete freedom. On the island of Tahiti, his personality is fully revealed, it is there that he creates his best creations. Definitely I consider such art is like service, it requires complete dedication. Thus, Strickland's painting is an image of naturalness, purity, harmony, Beauty; the ability to capture something unusual in the familiar, filled with spirituality.

Discussion. "The moon and Sixpence" is a real astonishing work, which can be discussed in various points of perspectives. No one can deny that the writer through the main character shows a great sacrifice and hard struggle for art that resulted in Charles Strickland's biography. The central issue that strikes the reader is that Strickland frequently makes conflict with himself in his mind and no other people around him realize his feelings and inner world which can be called sake for art. From the beginning Strickland seems to be modest, dull man but with wonderful qualities, who loves his family. One of his best feature that astonished personally me, is that he is not the lover of fame. however , the reader finds him a real egoist after leaving his family for sake of painting forever. The novel differs from many works in that it does not contain the experiences, feelings, of the main character, it is presented through the memories and facts of one writer, on whose behalf the narration is conducted. Charles is an extraordinary, dark, gloomy personality. This is not the hero you empathize with. Indifference to others combined with complete detachment from life. He is not interested in anything except the desire to paint. The feelings of others, their opinions, as well as their own comfort are completely indifferent to the artist and do not play any role in perception. Therefore, the novel is precisely a third-party view of a particular person, where only facts are visible, not clothed in emotions and feelings.

The portrait of the hero creates an ambiguous impression either to admire, or to hate- Or all at once. It describes a rather peculiar, unique life...amazing and colorful. The very character of the artist leaves much to be desired, he despises everyone around, takes good to himself for granted. It's an amazing thing that you can forgive for talent, for genius. After all, the author does not draw a good and nice person, on the contrary, Strickland is somehow deliberately described as a cruel and unscrupulous person, a real monster who caused pain and suffering to several people. But for his genius - everything is forgiven to him. But it's true, when you admire a painting

that talks to your soul, what difference does it make what kind of character the artist has.

This work looks imperfect at first, but if you look closely, it becomes clear that this is the way it should have been written. It happens that at a certain point in time we want to change our lives. It seems that we have everything, a good job, family, friends, home, but there comes a moment when we cross everything out and go nowhere. This is exactly what the hero of Maugham's book "The Moon and the Penny", Charles Strickland, did. He always dreamed of drawing, being an artist, and he succeeded. Yes, he lived very poorly, exchanged a successful life for poverty, but he was happy, happy in his own way. If painting is left an honorable, not a leading place in the novel, then life and relationships with others come to the first, where Strickland's unsociability and inability to get along in any society is fully revealed. Each of his rude words and actions push the reader away from him more and more, plunging the hero into the rejection. Only very brave people are capable of sympathy and empathy towards such a straightforward and selfish. But nevertheless, just as it is impossible to separate a painting from the biography of its creator, it is also impossible to turn away from it, even if the creator of the masterpiece causes you deep antipathy. In my opinion, such an image of the artist performed by Maugham is revolutionary, thanks to which the novel gained its fame and was positively received by the public. Readers are tired of positive and unhappy heroes, unfairly offended and humiliated, those who will be rewarded in full for their torment, who are waiting for an optimistic, albeit sad ending. Here, the most down-to-earth nature, the true spirit of life, impartial, but lively and sincere, not compromising, not content with small and perishable, but striving to realize his dreams, is exposed in all its glory. The spirit of Strickland is a spirit of contradiction, struggle, merciless and unprincipled, not knowing rest and inactivity. It can be equally unsightly and grandiose, but it cannot be denied that it is no less necessary than the spirit of mercy and reconciliation. After all, in comparison and

dispute, the truth is known. But most of all I was impressed by the second part of the book.

Where our genius finally found himself on the island Tahiti. The very description of the island, the description of the inhabitants, the description of the natives, the way of life—all this is impressive and paints in front of you with bright colors all the charm and beauty of this wild world. Sometimes I wanted so much to get on the book pages, intertwine with the lines and find myself in this beauty! I think Strickland has found himself after all. In a secluded place, in the heart of the island with all freedom of life.

In my opinion, "The Moon and Sixpence" is the best novel of the writer of the twentieth century. The novel is written in an easy, I would say, classical language, and translated into many languages with dignity. It does not overload either one's psyche or brain. And, at the same time, it will give pleasure to both the mind and the heart. It is worth paying attention to the title of the book – "The Moon and the Sixpence". The narrator was trying to explain exactly Strickland's act and aspiration by comparing him with the people around him. We are shown Strove, whose paintings were successful in terms of PENNIES, but their intent was hardly worth anything, and the MOON was generally far away. The desire of the artist himself, was one thing – to calm down his inner strength, which asked him to touch the MOON. The artist chose a difficult path – a life in poverty, constant part-time work and unrestrained creativity in his spare time. He lived on PENNIES, but he did not think so, in turn, reaching for the MOON.

But the thing is that not everyone is destined to find the "moon", and in this case the life of such a person is "a penny", despite material wealth. Happiness, as well as a "penny", everyone has their own. I treated the artist with great interest and understanding. And until the writer parted with him forever, I faithfully read about all the twists of the fates of the actors. The book evokes a lot of feelings and emotions, it is full of very deep thoughts about a person and feelings, however, like any of Maugham's creations there is no perfect hero, there is no perfect life, there is no happy

ending. But there is a desire to follow your dream. The novel "The Moon and the Sixpence" is another attempt to comprehend the nature of genius. Maugham discusses the issues that haunt writers and philosophers of all times and peoples – whether genius can reveal itself in conditions of satiety and comfort, whether it is permissible to evaluate the personality of a genius based on generally accepted criteria of morality, what is genius – a gift or a curse, and whether genius is normal from the point of view of our idea of mental normality. The prototype of the main character is Paul Gauguin, who runs away from a prosperous life, leaving his wife and five children, travels to exotic countries, marries a young Tahitian woman, suffers from various diseases, including leprosy, suffers from bouts of insanity and depression, but most importantly – creates the most beautiful of his works. The parallels with the central figure of the novel – Charles Strickland – are obvious. But the question of whether the unseemly acts of a genius can be justified by the fact that he creates priceless works of art, and how to evaluate these actions, remains open. Only one thing is clear – he is genius. My attitude towards the main character is very ambiguous.

On the one hand, one cannot but admire his obsession and desire to devote himself completely to art. On the other hand, genius and villain are closely intertwined in it. Moreover, the villainies of genius are understandable and even natural. He is so immersed in himself, his creativity, that he does not have enough time, desire, or strength for other people. His main feature is indifference. After many years of a completely successful life, he leaves his wife and children without means of livelihood, their fate is indifferent to him, he will never return to them again. For five years he has been painting in extreme poverty, the only one who managed to see a genius in him and began to take care of him was the mediocre artist Dirk Stroeve, who received only insults from him. When Strickland became seriously ill, Stroeve, despite his wife's objections, moved him to his home. The genius thanked him by seducing Strev's wife, who told her husband that she was

leaving him and would go anywhere with Strickland. It all ended in tragedy, having painted a portrait of Blanche Stroeve in the nude, he immediately left her, followed with her her suicide. Strickland didn't even pay attention to this, no remorse or regret. Moreover, he does not paint pictures for money or fame, not even for the sake of a vocation or people. He, as the author rightly notes, is obsessed. Here on the face of the idea of absolute freedom, independence from society. What happens if the craving for creativity turns out to be stronger than everything else in this world. It was very interesting for me, an ordinary person, to read about the life of a genius, a great artist who destroyed everything he had to serve art. It is an unacceptable luxury to do as you want, and not as your family, society, and friends demand of you. We are all tied hand and foot, sometimes without even noticing it, we owe someone something all the time. Or maybe we only owe ourselves? It is difficult for us mere mortals to understand how a quiet life in prosperity can be exchanged for life in a dirty shack on an island among the natives in Polynesia. Few people have the courage and boldness – the most important character traits – to overcome themselves. To cross out the past for the sake of your dreams or the "moon", if one like is a thankless task at first glance, but the only true one for those who are haunted by an inner, possibly demonic, force. And this power will lead everyone who succumbs to it to the most wonderful places, giving peace. And the truth embedded in the novel, as always, is obvious and the patient and persistent get the best, despite the losses that wait them on the path of life, despite the fact that society is against. People who really have a goal have never cared about this society at all times

Conclusion. "The Moon and Sixpence" is a kind of provocation novel. He encourages me to ask myself: "Could I also give up a socially acceptable lifestyle, from the comfort and confidence in the future for the sake of a true vocation, for the sake of a childhood dream?" It was interesting to read, although at the beginning of the story I got involved, trying to

figure out what the story was about. Maugham quickly and briefly told about Mr. Strickland, indicating the beginning, the narrative and the end. It would seem to be a fairly simple story, what else to go on about, but it was only the middle of the book. The author of the story heard most of it from other people, but it's amazing that fate constantly confronted him with a man, and in different parts of the world. It's amazing how a person can go to his dream, how even after living for half his life he is ready to realize everything he wanted in his youth or childhood. The fire of desire has not died out in his chest, it's wonderful. But, unfortunately, he does not take into account anyone's opinion and gives himself entirely to his dream, while hurting other people. Perhaps his wife was even happy with this turn of events, but she lived part of her life with a genius, even if he was recognized only after death and such a turn of fate pushed her to certain changes. Even though I did not sympathize with Strickland during the reading, at the end of the book I still felt sorry for him, he even to some extent caused admiration by deciding on such a desperate step, and the reading was also interesting.

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