



AUTHOR'S IMAGE AND ITS REFLECTION IN THE STORY "RED" BY SOMERSET MAUGHAM

Ziyayeva Shirin Shoyoqub qizi

Teacher of English Philology Faculty, UzSWLU

Department of "Applied aspects of English Language"

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Abstract

The article is devoted to the analysis of author's image in literary text in the example of Somerset Maugham's story "Red". The questions such as what an author's image is, how it is revealed in the literary text and how this notion is accomplished in the story "Red" by S. Maugham are answered in the article.

Introduction

Author's image refers to the image drawn by a work and established by the stylistic, ideological and aesthetic specificities for which demonstrative signs can be found in the text. It is revealed by a number of signals in the literary material such as title, stylistically marked units and their convergence, poetic details based on descriptive context, represented speech, and eventually symbols used in the work.

The short story "Red" is a piece of fiction to broaden, deepen and sharpen our awareness of life. It is a story about the irony of human life, which is a theme the author explores in many of his works. The irony of "Red" centers on a character's desire to love another character; but he loves hopelessly. He is the same character telling the story of another love affair to the man in the work who throws the love aside. With this context in mind, Maugham introduces two characters, Sally and Red. They do not notice each other after so many years passed. This is ironic, because they were heavily in love before. The fact that they do not recognize each other initially only makes Neilson, another character depressed. He experiences despair because he was emotionally overpowered by the heavenly notion of love, reflected between Sally and Red. Neilson's attempt to live within this atmosphere

fails and he experiences loss. By the end of “Red”, the man Neilson envies, is now repellent and coarse. He is not the same man that Neilson once admired.

In accordance with the theory, the analysis of author’s image will be accomplished within the perspectives of stylistically marked units and their convergence, poetic details based on descriptive context and use of represented speech in the work.

In the story “Red”, **stylistically marked units** of the author’s preference are personification, allusion, simile, epithet, metaphor, metonymy and antithesis. Foregrounding has a separate, significant role in the construction of author’s ideas in the given piece of writing.

Genuine and unique examples of **personification** reflecting author’s creativity may be illustrated in the following extracts from the story:

“...when **the dawn crept over** the tranquil sea; ...**his features were sunk** into its fatness; **His neck was buried** in rolls of fat.; And then all about were the coconut trees, as fanciful as women, and as vain. **They stood at the water’s edge and spent all day looking at their reflections.**; **A smile played** on his lips, but his eyes were grave.; ...**the loss of the career which had fired his imagination** with ambitious thoughts.”

Allusions are the most preferable units of expressive language after personification in the story:

“He lives in my imagination with the distinctness of **Paolo Malatesta** or **Romeo**. But I daresay you have never read **Dante** or **Shakespeare**; It must have been of that wonderful colour that the pre-**Raphaelites** raved over.; He was like **Apollo**, with just that soft roundness which **Praxiteles** gave him; ... took the northern strength from him as **Delilah** took **Nazarite’s**.; That is the love that **Adam** felt for **Eve**”;

Simile is the next successful stylistic device in the text:

“Here love had tarried for a moment **like a migrant bird.**; ...beautiful **passion** hovered over it **like the fragrance of hawthorn** in May; **He** was made **like a Greek god**; **His skin** was dazzling white, milky, **like satin**; **His skin** was like a woman’s.; **His mouth** was **like a scarlet wound.**; ...**large eyes like pools of still water**; **Her skin** was like a field of ripe corn; ...shot a **golden ray, like the outstretched paw of a Persian cat.**”



Epithets are additional efficient devices in drawing exact meaning:

“...swarthy fellow, **with somewhat the look of a later Roman Emperor**; He gave a **whimsical** smile; ...on account of his **flaming** hair; The skipper gave a **fat, cynical** chuckle...”

Metaphors are used relatively few in the story:

It was almost impossible to imagine that this **creature of vast bulk** had ever been a boy who ran about.; He was a **happy accident of nature.**; **It tears my heart** just as my heart is torn when; A soul is a **troublesome possession**; **she sank into a sullen apathy.**; opportunity to **weave around her graceful person of a web of beautiful fancies.**; He would **intoxicate her with his passion.**

The only but brilliant use of **antithesis** is illustrated in the following example:

“We are **foolish** and sentimental and melodramatic **at twenty-five**, but if we weren’t perhaps we should be less **wise at fifty.**”

One more stylistic device that is met in a single use is **metonymy**:

He loved not only her beauty, but that dim soul which he divined before her **suffering eyes.** (In fact, soul is suffering not eyes)

Foregrounding is a crucial device in the story to pay a special attention. Within the text it is met in three forms including convergence of stylistic devices, coupling and defeated expectancy.

Foregrounding in the form of convergence:

His face was red and blotchy, **with a network of little purple veins on the cheeks (epithet)** and **his features were sunk (personification)** into its fatness. His eyes were bloodshot. **His neck was buried (personification)** in rolls of fat. But for a fringe of long curly hair, nearly white, at the back of his head, he was quite bald; and that immense, **shiny (epithet)** surface of forehead, which might have given him a false look of intelligence, on the contrary gave him one peculiar imbecility.

Foregrounding in the form of coupling:

That is the love that Adam felt for Eve when he awoke and found her in the garden gazing at him with dewy eyes. **That is the love** that draws the beasts to one another, and the Gods. **That is the love** that makes the world a miracle. **That is the love** which gives life its pregnant meaning.

Foregrounding in the form of defeated expectancy:



The reader doesn't even imagine that this obese skipper turns out to be the very "Red", whom the story is about till the end. Furthermore, a sudden decision of Neilson to leave Sally at the end of the story creates complete shock not only for the heroine, but also for the reader.

Poetic details based on descriptive context are given in three forms such as description of appearance, situation and nature.

Extracts for appearance description:

She was rather tall, slim, with the delicate features of her race, and large eyes like pools of still water under the palm trees; her hair, black and curling, fell down her back, and she wore a wreath of scented flowers. Her hands were lovely.

Extracts for situation description:

There was a bridge across it, but a bridge constructed of single trunks of coconut trees, dozens of them, placed end to end and supported where they met by a forked branch driven into the bed of the creek. You walked on a smooth, round surface, narrow and slippery, and there was no support for the hand. To cross such a bridge required sure feet and stout heart.

Extracts for nature description:

The sea was deep blue, wine-coloured at sundown, like the sea of Homeric Greece; but in the lagoon the colour had an infinite variety, aquamarine and amethyst and emerald; and the setting sun turned it for a short moment to liquid gold. Then there was the colour of the coral, brown, white, pink, red, purple; and the shapes it took were marvellous. It was like a magic garden, and the hurrying fish were like butterflies.

Speech occurs mostly in the form of **direct speech** given in quotation marks and mostly followed or preceded by such words as said and asked. However, **represented speech** is also met (...Chinese in white trousers, very dirty and ragged, and a thin white tunic, **came to say that supper was ready...**). Single use of inner uttered speech is illustrated in the given example: ...it was with surprise that he heard himself spoken to. **"It takes a bit of nerve to cross these bridges when you're not used to them."**

To conclude, one can say that the writer's specific irony and sharp observation create the special style doing his stories unique. The story has a deep emotional appeal. It is intended to provoke thoughts. The concept of the author's image is particularly useful in textual interpretation because it helps us describe the layered



process by which meaning is generated. The presence of the author's image highlights the fact that narrators, their texts and meanings expressed in them are all represented. Only on the level of the author's image these meanings acquire their final semantic intention.

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