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Colonial Issues in W.S. Maugham's Short Stories

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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Předmětem práce bude krátká próza W.S. Maughama - spisovatele, jehož generace se dostala do kontaktu s životem v koloniích britského impéria ještě před jeho rozpadem. Autor se ve svém výzkumu zaměří na vybrané krátké povídky (The Rain, The Fall of Edward Bannard, The Force of Circumstance) s cílem charakterizovat jejich vztah k literatuře s koloniální tematikou. Úvodní kapitola zasadí W.S. Maughama do širšího kontextového rámce autorů, kteří ve svých dílech z počátku 20. století oslovovali koloniální otázky (Forster, Conrad, atd.). S pomocí relevantní sekundární literatury jádro textu vymezí povahu koloniálních témat, které Maughamova próza obsahuje a student provede jejich detailní rozbor. Důraz bude kladen především na otázky kontaktu kolonizátorů s domorodým obyvatelstvem a jeho dopadu (např. asimilace, autonomie, vliv ideologický a morální). Práci uzavře kapitola shrnující výsledky předchozích úvah a zjištění.

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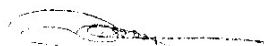
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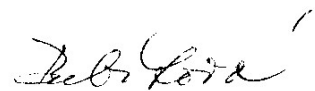
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ANNOTATION

This work focuses on the reflection in British literature of issues related to the era of European colonialism during the second half of the 19th century. The main part of the text provides a detailed critical analysis of selected short stories by William Somerset Maugham. Special emphasis is placed on the author's depiction of the colonial background and certain related specific issues – for example on the issue of assimilation within the different socio-cultural environment, on complicated relationships with the native population or on the depiction of racial issues in relation to author's cynical attitudes towards human nature.

KEY WORDS

Maugham; colonialism; colonies; otherness; short story

SOUHRN

Tato práce se zabývá tím, jak jsou problémy spojené s érou evropského kolonialismu druhé poloviny 19. století vyobrazeny v britské literatuře. Stěžejní částí práce je detailní kritická analýza vybraných povídek Williama Somerseta Maughama. Hlavní důraz je kladen na autorovo vyobrazení koloniálního prostředí a určitých specifických problémů – například problému přizpůsobení se odlišnému sociálně-kulturnímu prostředí, problému komplikovaných vztahů s domorodou populací případně na vyobrazení rasových problémů ve vztahu k autorovu cynickému pohledu na lidskou povahu.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Maugham; kolonialismus; kolonie; odlišnost; povídka

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Introduction

The Era of colonialism or more precisely the era of the European colonial expansion in the second half of the 19th century is considered as one of the most influential but also the most controversial periods in the human history. One way or another numerous colonial struggles at the time greatly influenced the political, cultural and economic development of the European colonial powers. Colonies served many different purposes. Firstly they were the vital source of raw materials and other commodities for the colonising countries. They represented huge markets, where the domestic manufacturers could sell their products or on the other hand merchants could gain profit from the imports. In some cases colonies played their role in the territorial expansion and served as settlements for waves of immigrants from the home countries. Lastly, the colonial period was a source of inspiration for numerous artists and movements, especially the avante-garde of the early 20th century.

In British literature the actual portrayal of the colonial era ranged from the first adventurous narratives which depicted colonies as strange exotic places bearing the stamp of otherness, through the early works of Joseph Conrad and Rudyard Kipling set in the last stage of the Victorian times, to rather critical works by George Orwell dealing with certain moral dilemmas of colonialism. William Somerset Maugham presented quite a unique picture of the colonies in his writings. His short fiction and other work were loosely based on his own personal experiences from his six travels to the South Pacific region. What distinguishes Maugham is his 'apolitical', non-ideological approach to the colonies marked by an obvious effort to depict the colonial world as he experienced it and without obvious attempts to moralise or idealise. He used the colonies only as an interesting setting for his stories and their characters.

This work is divided into three main parts. The introductory chapter provides a basic theoretical division between colonialism and imperialism. When discussing the colonial era, some theoreticians, for example Roland J. Horvath or Dean Baldwin and Patrick Quinn, differentiate between colonialism and imperialism and consider these two ideologies as similar on an ideological basis but with relatively different goals. Moreover, this part also provides several different views on issues

related to colonialism and imperialism, such as cultural dominance, economic exploitation and permanent settlement in the dominated countries. It also briefly mentions how these issues are reflected in Maugham's short stories set in the colonial background.

The second part, based on Stanley Archer's study of Maugham's short fiction, provides some basic facts from W.S. Maugham's life. It comments on his literary style and on sources of inspiration for his short stories. According to Archer, Maugham was one of the most popular, thus financially successful authors of the early 20th century era. However his works were often criticised for their rather cynical tone and Maugham's interest in exploring various flaws of the human nature. The passage concludes with the examples of literary critiques presented in Archer's study.

The third part contains a detailed literary analysis of specific issues related to colonialism as depicted in the selection of Maugham's short fiction. The first three short stories, "The Outstation", "The Fall of Edward Banard" and "The Pool", deal with the issue of assimilation and depict how various characters adapt themselves in a completely different cultural environment. This issue is viewed both from the point of view of the colonisers and natives. In examples from "Mackintosh" and "The Outstation" the issue of complicated relationships between the white administrators, representing the colonial government, and the native population is described. Both stories view this problem from a slightly different perspective. Racial issues and Maugham's cynicism in the portrayal of the white colonisers and indigenous population are analysed in three stories "The Rain", "The Pool" and "The Force of Circumstance".

1. Definition of colonialism and imperialism

Colonialism and imperialism are often viewed as similar ideologies or as ideologies with similar goals. However it is not possible to provide one single true or universal definition of what colonialism or imperialism actually is. The colonial and imperial issues could be viewed from many different perspectives – among others, from cultural, political, ethnical or economic perspective.

For example, Peter Pels in his article “The Anthropology of Colonialism” presented the most common view on colonialism by describing it as a gradual evolutionary process, involving certain forms of exploitation and dominance (1997, 164). Roland J. Horvath in “A Definition of Colonialism” presented similar view regarding colonialism as a constant struggle for domination over either a specific group of individuals or over a specific territory. “It seems generally, if not universally, agreed that colonialism is a form of domination - the control by individuals or groups over the territory and/or behaviour of the individuals or groups.” (1972, 46) In Maugham’s short fiction, set in a colonial background, various forms of dominance could be identified.

The first, the most noticeable and also the most significant type is the official form of dominance. Which is represented by the sovereign colonial government with all its local branches, offices, outstations and numerous official representatives. In this whole bureaucratic apparatus the white man, in relationship between the coloniser and colonised, was artificially put above the indigenous population. Several characters from Maugham’s short stories are more-or-less part of the colonial authority, being portrayed as the governors, functionaries, clerks or other administrative workers.

The other form of dominance concerned the diversity and several layers of hierarchy among the natives. Although being put under the colonial supervision the native population, at least partially, maintained its original structure. The traditional tribal way of life was still present in remote or less developed areas. Natives working for the colonial government, e.g. local policemen, low ranking clerks or servants for white administrators, were given special social status. As instruments of

colonial power, they were given certain privileges and were placed somewhere in the middle of the imaginary ladder of hierarchy, below their white masters, but slightly above the ordinary population. Another group with relatively unique social status were the half-castes, who usually were being pushed aside both by colonisers and natives. All these examples could also be briefly seen in Maugham's short fiction.

In the other part of his article Horvath compares colonialism and imperialism from the point of cultural dominance, where the colonizing country acted as a donor culture and the colonized country as a host culture. This principle of cultural dominance was usually supported with a population transfer and migration from one country to another. According to Horvath: "Colonialism refers to that form of intergroup domination in which settlers in significant numbers migrate permanently to the colony from the colonizing power. Imperialism is a form of intergroup domination wherein few, if any, permanent settlers from the imperial homeland migrate to the colony." (1972, 47) In this case, the intergroup domination refers to the domination process in a culturally heterogeneous society. His theory also deals with different types of scenarios based upon the amount of permanent inhabitants transferred to the colonized country and on the interaction with the indigenous population. In extreme cases, the native population and its culture are almost completely extinct and replaced with inhabitants from the colonizing power (e.g. during the colonization of Tasmania). On the other hand European settlements in Indonesia or South Africa may serve as an example of a situation when the original population is neither extinct nor assimilated and live side by side or apart from the newly arrived colonial settlers. British dominions in India and South-East Asia are considered as an example, in which the colonial power did not try to establish any permanent settlements in the colonised country or try to completely eradicate the local population (1972, 46-48).

This clash of two different cultures is portrayed in Maugham's short fiction through the experience of the individual characters. In most cases, characters deal with the problem of isolation in an unknown cultural environment or with the problem of assimilation. Some of the characters have problems with, or even completely refuse to blend in with their new surroundings. This concerns both the

white colonists failing to settle for a life in the colonies or the natives ripped from their traditional way of life. On the contrary few characters have any problems with willingly accepting their new social role

As Dean Baldwin and Patrick Quinn quote Robert Young, imperialism and colonialism could be compared from the ideological perspective as well. Young regards imperialism mostly as an ideologically driven policy promoted in the case of a territorial expansion:

Some theorists regard imperialism as territorial expansion from a centre outwards, driven by ideology, and resulting in a coherent geological entity. The Roman and Ottoman Empires are typical examples. The criterion of coherent geography as an essential aspect disappeared when European countries (Spain, for example) were able to conquer and communicate with distant territories via sailing ships. The primary distinguishing factors in imperialism, then, are its practice as a policy of state and its ideological motivation

(Baldwin and Quinn 2007a, 2)

His definition of colonialism, regarding the amount of settlers transferred to the colony and the issue of political and economic dominance could be compared with Horvath's theory of the group domination. But Young focuses more on the economic factors:

Colonialism, in contrast, is a less homogeneous practice than imperialism and tends to develop without a coherent plan or driving ideology; rather it comes about for commercial motives and therefore frequently presents problems of centralised control for the government of the colonizing power. Furthermore it is helpful to distinguish between two types of colonies: settler colonies, consisting of emigrants from the home country who take most of the land and dominate economically and politically (for example, Australia and Canada); and administered colonies, whose main goal is economic exploitation (for example, India and the Congo). In administered colonies, Europeans dominate politically and economically but do not settle for a large portion of the land.

(Baldwin and Quinn, 2007a, 2-3)

Concerning the economic exploitation, colonies served as a vital source of raw materials and as a huge market allowing manufacturers from the domestic country to sell their products or otherwise gain profit from importing goods from colonies back to the home country. Due to strict laws and trade policies colonies were not allowed to trade directly between themselves or with other foreign countries:

Our fundamental notion of colonists was that of customers who could not escape us, and growers who must trade with us alone. We guarded their commerce with the most jealous and severe restrictions. [...] They were compelled to buy everything they wanted from us, and to send to our markets everything they produced. (Greg, 1862, 536)

Maugham's short stories often take place in these administered colonies, mostly in the South West Pacific and in the Malay Archipelago. Traces of this economic interest in the colonies may be found in the briefly mentioned copra production or on numerous small plantations where the native population works under the supervision of the colonial government or in raw material mining. In addition, a few minor or even main characters in the stories figure as bankers, managers, salesmen or business representatives of various trade companies, directing and monitoring the local branches of their enterprises.

Even though, permanent settlement was not the primary goal, another way in which colonies helped the economies of the colonizing countries, was that they helped to relieve the surplus population:

As our numbers multiplied here beyond the demand for their labour, and threaten to become, as paupers, a heavy burden on the resources of our wealth and industry, we were enabled to send them across the Atlantic or to the Antipodes, where we could offer them the attractions of land for nothing, and of still living under English laws and English protection, and to a great extent, with the comfort of English customs and associations. (Greg, 1862, 536)

Many of Maugham's characters escaped to the colonies in order to hide from their problems, to regain their lost fortune or to start a new life. Some of them chose life in the colonies voluntarily while others were driven by circumstances. At the time colonies were considered as an exciting place full of opportunities, a place where you could live a comfortable life and earn money easily. Unfortunately the reality was usually not as idyllic as originally planned and some characters became stuck in their surroundings or were forced to stay because they had nowhere else to go.

2. William Somerset Maugham as an author

According to Stanley Archer, William Somerset Maugham became, despite the initial struggle, when his early works were rejected or widely criticised, one of the most successful, most popular and most potent authors of his times:

With more than 30 dramas, 20 novels, 3 travel books, 91 collected short stories, 1 major autobiography, and 4 volumes of critical and miscellaneous essays to his credit, his had been one of the most varied and productive literary carriers in history. During a writing career that spanned over more than a half-century, he left only one major literary genre, poetry, untouched. [...] Millions had read his works, and countless other millions had viewed popular screen and stage adaptations that starred the leading actors and actresses of their day.

(1993, 3)

Maugham was a member of the British upper-middle class - an orphaned son of a solicitor. He abandoned his career of a licensed physician to become a professional writer. He overtly regarded literature as a profession - as something which could help him to make money, through which, he could make a living. After some initial success he travelled a lot and during the 1920's he obtained a luxurious villa on the French Riviera. He enjoyed living as an upper class gentleman.

However he could hardly be described as some second-class author feeding out one generic text after another hoping for any kind of commercial success. Above all, Maugham was an excellent storyteller. His goal was to tell a good story, to

entertain the reader, make him or her merge with the plot and think about the background. His stories were often set around the characters, around their problems, struggles, personal conflicts, flaws and imperfections. He combined carefully prepared and well-structured dialogues with detailed descriptions of the scenes. Actual personas he met, situations he experienced or stories he overheard during his travels served him as a source of inspiration. In some stories Maugham even appeared as a minor character witnessing the action, introducing himself as Mr. Maugham or more often, in his later stories, as Willie Aschenden. Archer's study of Maugham's short fiction describes his literary style as:

The fondness for aphorisms, the description of carefully prepared scenes, the natural, colloquial dialogue, and the conflict involving two personalities are repeated throughout the prose narratives. [...] He is an urbane, worldly-wise traveller who keenly observes what others might miss and directs the reader's attention to something significant. He may appear in Seoul, Yokohama, Singapore, Petrograd, Rome, Paris, or New York, or on shipboard bound for a distant port. He reveals little of himself and exerts little influence on the action, but he establishes a friendly relationship with the reader, who enjoys the seemingly candid comments of the successful author. [...] From a bare anecdote he perhaps has heard or overheard on his travels, he constructs a complete story. More often he builds a story around a character whom he finds interesting (1993, 7, 8, 10).

Because of this interest in the exploration of the unpredictable human character; with its strange and sometimes irrational behaviour and manners, Maugham, as an author, was often in a negative way, compared to Guy de Maupassant and his comedy-of-manners:

Maugham chose Maupassant, and throughout his career has stuck to Maupassant. It is interesting to recall here that Maupassant has been described as "the born popular writer, battered by Flaubert into austerity," and perhaps Maugham is an example of the sort of writer, popular, cosmopolitan, commercial and yet in some way distinguished, that Maupassant might have been if left alone. (Bates, 1972, 106)

Also due to Maugham's scepticism, cynicism and pessimism about the human life, it is hard to judge his stories after the first reading. What seems as a clear case at the beginning may transfer into something else at the end. His characters commonly share a tragic or at least partially tragic fate. Among other things, they often commit suicide under the pressure of circumstances. Feeling unable to solve their problems; they tend to drink heavily when they realise they are practically trapped in their life situation. According to Archer:

He is sceptical, clinical, and keenly observant of human beings. Free of illusions and ideals, he is often cynical and ironic. He finds rouses and scoundrels more interesting than solid citizens, and his tolerance causes him to try to understand rather than condemn human vices. Although he admires goodness when he sees it, he finds it less interesting to recount than eccentricity, wickedness, and vice. (1993, 9-10)

Archer partially contributes these pessimistic attitudes to the influence of the 1890's aesthetic movement, with its lead representative, Oscar Wilde, and to Maugham's natural shyness and sentimentality (1993, 10).

However, Maugham's cynical attitudes were as well a source of literary criticism. For example H.E. Bates refuses to accept Maugham as a cynic and his self-supposed cynicism is seen only as a façade, an illusion created by the author's immature personality and unexpressed emotions:

Maugham, having mastered the art of irony, mistakenly supposed himself to be a cynic. But through out Maugham's work, and notably in the stories, there exists a pile of evidence to show that Maugham the cynic is in reality a tin foil wrapping for Maugham the sentimentalist. Maugham's cynicism indeed peels off under too-close examination, thin, extraneous, tinny, revealing underneath a man who is afraid of trusting and finally of revealing his true emotions.

(1972, 107)

Archie K. Loss, on the other hand, sees Maugham's cynicism in repeating the same themes, maintaining a perpetual attitude towards the human nature and always seeking the same flaws. His characters are accused of being flat, bearing and sticking only to the one particular character quality of being predictable through acting according to exactly the same pattern:

If bad they may grow slightly worse, but they seldom become better; if good – though their goodness may lead them to folly – they are likely not to turn evil. Good may come of evil actions, or evil of good, but the moral nature of the characters tends to be of a piece.

The cynic always tends to view human nature as fixed, and this perhaps accounts for the feeling one gets in Maugham's best short fiction (as in his long) that his characters are simply fulfilling our expectations of them. In the course of his long career as a writer of short fiction, Maugham varies his subject matter, but seldom his themes, his technique, or his fundamental sense of human nature. The ground might shift to England or to the south of France, but with great consistency the themes remain the selfishness of human motives and the frailty of human will. (1987, 115)

One way or another these negative reactions can not deny Maugham's success and the fact, that numerous readers have read his literary works and numerous viewers have seen his plays and their film adaptations.

2.1 Maugham's portrayal of the colonies

As with the definition of colonialism itself, there is no single or universally truthful definition of a colonial writer either. For example, Baldwin and Quinn differentiate between colonial and post-colonial authors according to the fact of whether or not they had directly encountered colonialism:

By colonial we mean stories written by British authors who witnessed their nation's empire as colonists in one sense or another. Few of them were actively engaged in the colonial enterprise as such, but all of them encountered

colonialism firsthand. The post-colonial stories are written by authors who encountered colonialism at the other end – as its subjects or as inheritors of its legacy. In nearly all of these cases, the stories were written either during the struggle for independence or afterward (2007b, 5).

According to this definition, it is possible to consider Maugham as a colonial author. He directly experienced the last stage of the colonial era and between years 1916 and 1926 personally visited some of the colonies in the South Pacific region. However, he did not try in his works to contribute to the classical image of the colonies, or the image of the Orient in general. As the image created and widely supported by a large mass of writers, philosophers and politicians, the Orient was publicly accepted as a distant, exotic place, as the “other” place which was different from what people knew in Europe. Edward Said viewed this contrast between the West and the East (the Orient) as the result of 19th century western cultural hegemony:

The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences. [...] The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. (1978, 329)

On the contrary, Maugham did not try to describe any particular problems connected with colonialism. He did not write about the economic exploitation of the colonies, about the issues connected with the colonial government or about the discrimination and other struggles of the local population. He did not try to portray the “White Man” as an oppressor standing above the native population, or as an absolute ruler, who believed, that the actual colour of his skin predestined him for the task. For comparison Said described Rudyard Kipling’s portrayal of the White man as:

As he appears in several poems, in novels like *Kim*, and in too many catch-phrases to be an ironic fiction, Kipling's White Man, as an idea, a persona, a style of being, seems to have served many Britishers while they were abroad. The actual colour of their skin set them off dramatically and reassuringly from the sea of natives, but for the Britisher who circulated amongst Indians, Africans, or Arabs there was also the certain knowledge that he belonged to, and could draw upon the empirical and spiritual reserves of, a long tradition of execute responsibility towards the coloured races. [...] Behind the White Man's mask of admirable leadership there is always the express willingness to use force, to kill and to be killed. (1978, 336)

Maugham's portrayal of the white colonizers is not any kind of a generalizing view, which places them into a certain, fixed role. Even though it is possible to find numerous examples of a selfish, crude or arrogant behaviour, these examples are connected with individual characters and they do not have any global implication.

Exactly the same strategy applies to the native population as well. Maugham did not try to describe them only as universal victims of the European colonial power or as defenceless dolls in the hands of colonizers. Nor did he try to idealise them in any way, contributing to the 18th century concept of the Noble savage. Aborigines in Maugham's stories have their own problems, they bare their own prejudices, e.g. towards the half-caste population, and they are capable of causing hurt or committing a crime just as any other human being.

Maugham used colonies only as an interesting setting for his stories and his characters. Although it is possible to trace certain issues connected with colonialism in the background, it was not Maugham's primary intention to pinpoint these issues or to create any false images via being biased for one side or the other. As an author, he described the colonies as he saw them, according to his own personal experience. His stories were stories of individual characters, set in the kind of an exotic environment, dealing with a variety of different life situations:

The slow pace and easygoing life-style of the archipelagos along the equator and the loneliness of the new inhabitants profoundly affected people accustomed to refined social conventions and keen competition with peers.

While the settings offered picturesque scenery, lush tropical foliage, a placid sea, and seductive native women, the settlers also had to contend with boredom, tropical diseases and parasites, and the enervating heat of the equatorial region. (Archer, 1993, 23)

Maugham's explanation for this interest in remote locations and isolated personas was that he believed that individuals, under the influence of the modern civilised urban society, wore smooth, as pebbles in a stream, as their lives slowly merge into the grey dullness of every-day stereotype. He believed, that only individuals unrestricted by the invisible barriers of society could develop the full potential of their character, in relation to his cynicism, mostly in the negative way (Archer, 1993, 10).

3. Specific colonial issues in Maugham's short fiction

3.1 The issue of assimilation in a different cultural environment

The issue of assimilation and the follow-up impact of a prolonged stay in a different cultural environment were very often portrayed in Maugham's shorter fiction set, at least partially, in the colonial background. Both main and minor characters in Maugham's stories deal with their life situations in many different ways. It is possible to find various examples ranging from the complete denial and struggle for retaining their own identity in the unknown environment, through a relative reconciliation with the new surroundings, to the conscious and willing acceptance of the actual settings.

Mr. Warburton – aged 54, the main character of “The Outstation” story, is the resident at a remote Malayan outpost. He is described as a typical well-educated and well-mannered upper-class gentleman. At the age of twenty-one he had inherited a considerable fortune of hundred thousand pounds. Also among his possessions were a private flat in Mount Street with his personal hansom and a hunting lodge in Warwickshire. Warburton lived an expensive and luxurious life full

of partying, wealthy company and exclusive nightclubs. After his studies at the University of Oxford, he quickly became a well-known figure in the early 1890's London upper-class society. He never missed any significant social occasion. During the time, although he was an unsuccessful player, he gradually developed a passion for card gambling. Later on, these formidable gambling debts in combination with horse wages and the Stock Exchange losses brought him to the brink of bankruptcy. In order to save his reputation he decided to leave England and went to the colonies in order to earn money so that he could repay his debts. It was a semi-optional choice. Practically there was no other acceptable option left for Warburton and he hoped that one day he would be able to return back to his homeland.

Although being placed on the remote island, he still retains habits from his former lifestyle. In the evenings he wears his white jacket, boiled shirt with a high collar and patent-leather shoes. Every time he dresses, it is as formally as if he was dining in his club in Pall Mall. The continuous correspondence with numerous great women and gentlemen whom he knew and whom he regularly sends a letter of congratulations or condolence as the situation requires, helps sustain the illusion, that he is still a member of the aristocratic society. The exactly six weeks old issue of *The Times*, carefully wrapped and marked with the exact date when it was dispatched by a newsagent, served on the table on the veranda of his own bungalow with his early morning cup of tea, gives him the feeling of being at home. Warburton grew up in the aristocratic society and never experienced anything else. He refused to give up his old manners, simply because they were a vital part of his personality. It was a kind of a defence mechanism that prevented him from forgetting who he really is.

But even though Warburton's change in the story is unobtrusive and more or less unconscious, it is still noticeable. Despite all the attempts to retain his old identity, and not to assimilate, he slowly blended with the local environment. He spent almost twenty years on Borneo, got used to the local conditions and learnt to speak the native language almost fluently.

When he returned to Borneo from his visits to England it was now with something like relief. His friends, like himself, were no longer young, and there was a new generation, which looked upon him as a tiresome old man. It seemed to him that the England of to-day had lost a good deal of what he had loved in the England of his youth. But Borneo remained the same. It was home to him now. (Maugham, 1954b, 1364)

In those twenty years Warburton got estranged. All the habits he tried so hard to sustain were old 1890's habits. Practically, he was an 1890's gentleman returning not to the well-known England of his youth, which he kept so dearly in his memories, but to a "new" England, which had changed during the time he was absent. If he still were living in England and not in Borneo, he would not notice the change so significantly, because he would probably change as well under the influence of the surrounding environment. Warburton is aware of this fact but intentionally refuses to admit it.

The situation in the story gets complicated after the arrival of Cooper, Mr. Warburton's new assistant. Regardless of being described as a hard worker, he does not leave a good first impression on the resident during their first dinner due to an absolute lack of tact and relatively ignorant behaviour.

"Hulloa, you're all dressed up," said Cooper. "I didn't know you were going to do that. I very nearly put on a sarong."

"It doesn't matter at all. I dare say your boys were busy."

"You needn't have bothered to dress on my account, you know."

"I didn't. I always dress for the dinner."

"Even when you're alone?"

"Especially when I'm alone," replied Mr. Warburton, with a frigid stare.

[...] When I lived in London I moved in circles in which it would have been just as eccentric not to dress for dinner every night as not to have bath every morning. When I came to Borneo I saw no reason to discontinue so good habit.

(Maugham, 1954b, 1358)

Cooper grew up at a small farm in Barbados in a relatively common background. He never studied at college or spent any longer period of time with someone from the higher class. His resident's customs are considered meaningless, unnecessarily complicated and posh. In the climax of the story during one of the resident's official trips outside the kampong, Cooper borrows some of Mr. Warburton's Times and unintentionally tears a few apart. This relatively meaningless event ultimately damages any remaining kind of relationship between him and his resident. They hardly speak with each other afterwards and their communication is strictly limited to official matters.

For Warburton, Cooper represents the negative element in the story. Compared to him, Cooper had spent a significantly shorter period of time in the colonies. Therefore, Warburton's attempts to sustain certain habits or attempts to retain his identity are misunderstood, seem pointless and even redundant to him. Cooper's dispute with the resident is a mirror which reflects Warburton's inner conflict. He is, at least partially, contented with his position in Borneo, because it allows him to retain his former lifestyle or at least pretend that he is still living in England. When Cooper unintentionally disrupts that image Warburton suddenly realises his isolation. He is aware of the fact that his old manners and habits prevented him to fully assimilate with the local environment but he can not return to England either. Warburton does not want to go back because he knows that he has changed during his stay at the outpost. The return would also mean losing the position he is used to. Therefore he is more or less reconciled with his stay on the island.

"The Fall of Edward Banard" views the issue of estrangement from the other perspective. The main character of the story, Edward Banard, a young representative of the American upper class, a fresh graduate of university and the son of a famous banker, is engaged with Isabel Longstaffe. Before the actual wedding can take place, Edward is supposed to take a two-year business trip to Tahiti in order to restore the family fortune after old Mr. Banard's bankruptcy on the Stock Exchange and his subsequent suicide. It was a moral obligation for Edward to take the trip, because he could not let his fiancé marry a penny-less niemand. Initially the trip is viewed as a promising opportunity. George Braundschmidt, a South Sea merchant, offers

Edward a lucrative position in his business and possibly a promotion, after he gains some experience and a desk job in an office in Chicago. Edward is strongly devoted to come back and marry Isabel.

Lately Isabel notices a slight change in Edward's correspondence home and finds out that he was fired from the company due to his incompetence and laziness. Considering this some sort of mistake and something completely unlike Edward; Bateman Hunter, Edward's best friend since childhood and Isabel's companion during his absence, volunteers himself to investigate such a matter. After arriving in Tahiti, to his surprise, Edward is found working in a cheap cotton store.

It was a trader's store, such as he had passed half a dozen of on his way, and when he entered the first person he saw, in his shirt-sleeves, measuring out a length of trade cotton, was Edward. It gave him a start to see him engaged in so humble an occupation. [...]

"Just wait till I've wrapped this package."

With perfect assurance he ran his scissors across the stuff, folded it, made it into a parcel, and handed it to the dark-skinned customer.

[...] Edward's candour seemed to Bateman very surprising, but he thought it indiscreet to pursue the subject.

"I guess you won't make a fortune where you are," he answered, somewhat dryly.

"I guess not. But I earn enough to keep body and soul together, and I'm quite satisfied with that."

"You wouldn't have been two years ago."

"We grow wiser as we grow older," retorted Edward, gaily.

(Maugham, 1954a, 48-49)

Bateman is unable to understand how Edward could change from a proud, ambitious, honourable, young man into a lazy, easy-going person selling goods to natives in a dirty ten-cent store. Apart from the notable change in his behaviour, Edward seems to be more cheerful than ever. He is content with his position.

After a short discussion, Bateman is introduced to Mr. Arnold Jackson, the despicable rouse of the Longstaffe family. Mr. Jackson is the long time forgotten

brother of Mrs. Longstaffe and the person responsible for one of the largest financial scandals in Chicago. Bateman is then invited to dine in his house together with Edward. Initially he blames all the negative influence on Mr. Jackson but after the dinner Edward explains his change.

“It came upon me little by little. I came to like the life here, with its ease and its leisure, and the people, with their good nature and their happy smiling faces. I began to think. I’d never had time to do that before. I began to read.”

“You always read.”

“I read for examinations. I read in order to be able to hold my own in conversation. I read for instruction. Here I learned to read for pleasure. I learned to talk. Do you know that conversation is one of the greatest pleasures in life? But it wants leisure. I’d always been too busy before. And gradually all the life that seemed so important to me began to seem rather trivial and vulgar. [...] I think of Chicago now and I see a dark, grey city, all stone – it is like a prison – and a ceaseless turmoil. (Maugham, 1954a, 58-59)

In contrast to Edward, Bateman in the story personalised some stereotypical values of western capitalistic society. He was described as reserved and hard working, always determined to succeed at all cost, an individual with a good education and a wealthy background. He was a member of the higher society, the future continuator of the family tradition and heir of the family enterprise. Edward once valued similar ideals, not as much personally but rather as the values of the social environment, of which he was a part. Also compared to Mr. Warburton from “The Outstation”, he was not completely isolated or separated from the society when he moved to Tahiti. He did not insist of retaining any formal values or special habits, because they were not a vital part of his personality or identity. Edward’s change was clearly conscious, he voluntarily blended into the new social environment, rejected the old values, which were unsuitable for him and for his surroundings, and simply adopted the new ones he was more comfortable with.

The isolation in a different cultural environment could also be viewed from the perspective of the natives. In “The Pool” story Lawson, a young bank manager from Scotland, is sent to the town of Apia on Samoa, to manage the local branch of

an English bank. He quickly made acquaintance with the local surroundings and became a well-known figure. He was often an object of interest for the local white ladies, who put their heads together and gossiped every time he passed by. He also enjoyed the long idle talks in the lounge of his hotel and spent nights and evenings at the English club where he played pool with a group of friends. Lawson was initially astonished by the nature of living on the island.

He never had never before known freedom or leisure. And he was intoxicated with sunshine. When he rode through the bush his head reeled a little at the beauty that surrounded him. The country was indescribably fertile.

(Maugham, 1954a, 103)

During his travels around Apia, he discovered a small river pool a mile or two from the town to which he often went to bathe in the evenings. After some time he met Ethel, a beautiful half-caste daughter of the local coconut plantation owner, at the pool. She went bathing every evening before the sunset, just as Lawson, and despite the initial mutual shyness he managed to get closer to her. For the native population bathing was not only a leisure time activity but it was also a usual custom or even considered a social activity.

The natives of the island are devoted to the water. They bathe, somewhere or other, every day, once always, and often twice; but they bathe in bands, laughing and joyous, a whole family together; and you often saw a group of girls, dappled by the sun shining through the trees, with the half-castes among them [...]. (Maugham, 1954a, 105)

But Ethel was somewhat different than other girls. This was partially given by her half-caste origin and given upbringing. Mr. Brevald, her father, was an old Norwegian schooner captain who settled on the island about 40 years before Lawson's arrival. He had been a blacksmith, a planter and quite a successful trader before the hurricane in the 1890's completely ruined his business. He also had four native wives and an unspecified large number of children. Most of them had already

died or had left the house together with their mothers. The only child that did not leave him was Ethel and he wanted the best for her. Ethel was educated at the mission school, told the European manners and Brevald wanted a son-in-law, who would be capable of taking care of her and the family. Preferably she was supposed to marry one of the white men on the island.

The marriage was only a matter of time. After a year of married life in a small bungalow on the outskirts of the native village near the Apia bay a son was born. Lawson was devoted to give the child a proper education and a chance for a successful career. He wanted his son to attend university and become a doctor. He would never have such an opportunity in the colonies. It was a common fact that half-caste boys were unable to find suitable jobs for themselves on the island or were forced to do some inferior second-rate work in order to make a living. After some consideration Lawson contacted one of his old friends in Aberdeen and surprisingly for him it was not too hard to convince Ethel to leave the island. She was excited about the journey. The trip was considered as a step up for her and she enjoyed boasting in front of her half-caste friends about living in England. However after settling down in the little Scottish town of Deeside, when the first excitement of arrival into a completely different environment slowly faded away, she seemed to eventually take the less interest in the new life than she had expected. Lawson was naturally happy to be back once more in his homeland and among his own people.

He looked back on the three years he had spent in Apia as exile, and returned to the life that seemed the only normal one with a sigh of relief. It was good to play golf once more, and to fish – to fish properly, [...] and it was good to see a paper every day with that day's news, and to meet men and women of your own sort, people you could talk to, and it was good to eat meat that was not frozen and to drink milk that was not canned. (Maugham, 1954a, 111)

This kind of relief could be put into contrast with his initial amusement with living on Samoa. Although living in the colonies may have seemed exotic or leisurely, he never blended fully into the local environment. The only thing that could keep him there was Ethel. Lawson wanted her only for himself but the native population shared some very strong social bonds, sometimes even with very a small room for

privacy, at least from the European point of view. In Apia Ethel had led a very sociable life, she was a part of the quite large community of family relatives and other native and half-caste kith.

Sometimes Ethel's relations would come to the bungalow, old Brevald of course, and her mother, but cousins too, vague native women in Mother Hubbards and men and boys in lava-lavas, with their hair dyed red and their bodies elaborately tattooed. He would find them sitting there when he got back from the bank. (Maugham, 1954a, 109)

However, in Scotland Ethel does not accustom herself well with the surroundings. She is a little lethargic; she lays most of the day in bed or on the sofa reading novels or more often not doing anything. Several letters she receives from home makes this situation even worse. Despite Lawson's attempts to create friends among the neighbours in order to create an image, that she is not completely isolated in their house and an image that she actually is a part of some kind of society, Ethel feels lonely and displaced. The climate is too cold and aggressive for her to feel comfortable, even during the summer. People with whom Lawson tries to make friends, are not her own kind. Due to her natural shyness, she often sits apart during meetings, and does not try to make any social contact. She even tells him directly, that she can not stand being in Scotland anymore.

One evening late in the spring when the birch trees were bursting into leaf, coming home from a round of golf, he found her not as usual lying on the sofa, but at the window, standing. She had evidently been waiting for his return. She addressed him at the moment he came into the room. To his amazement she spoke in Samoan.

"I can't stand it. I can't live here any more. I hate it. I hate it." [...]

"Let's go away from here. Let's go back to Samoa. If you make me stay here I shall die. I want to go home."

Her passion broke suddenly and she burst into tears. (Maugham, 1954a, 112)

Lawson then tries to calm her down and tries to explain to her reasonably why they can not go back to Samoa, what he has given up in order to be with her and what plans he has for their son. But she is unable to listen to reason as more and more she yearns for her previous life. Subsequently Lawson finds out that she regularly takes a bath in a small mountain pool, which resembles the one where they first met near Apia. Even though this is a kind of a reminiscence of her previous life it is not enough to sustain her spirit. Eventually she uses a situation where Lawson is preoccupied with his work at the bank, therefore unable to follow her and escapes with the child back to Samoa. In an act of despair, Lawson leaves his job, sells all his valuable possessions and sets out to journey back to Samoa. Back in Apia he finds out that Ethel is living in a bungalow with her parents and other relatives. Lawson tries to find a job but after finding out that Ethel become completely estranged and does not have any feelings for him whatsoever, he starts to drink heavily. She even does not try to conceal the fact that she is having an affair with another white man, Mr. Miller, a small, fat, bald-headed but quite rich trader with a German-American origin. The story ends when Lawson commits suicide in the pool where he met Ethel for the first time.

Compared to Mr. Warburton and Edward Banard, Ethel did not change at all under the influence of the different socio-cultural environment. Mr. Warburton retained the old fashioned manners because they were a part of his very own identity. Ethel also managed to find a link with her previous life, the letters and the mountain pool in the Scottish highlands, but it only strengthened her desire for the return. Edward willingly accepted values of the new environment he was set into. Ethel, although she was partially raised in European manners, did not have any conscious need to accept any new social values. She was only partially Samoan but her native roots had a major influence on her character. Her attraction to Lawson or to the life in England was purely practical. He was viewed as something exotic and something which could provide her prestige among other half-castes. When he failed, he was simply replaced with someone more capable. The only feelings for him that Ethel overtly displayed in the story was despise for his weakness when he turned into a desperate drunkard. Lawson also represents the only character in the story who suffers any significant change.

3.2 Portrayal of relationships between the white administrators and the indigenous population

Administrators and residents at local outposts represented the executive branch of the colonial government. Unfortunately they were often appointed to the office without any extensive consideration of their skill or ability and at remote or distant locations they were chosen simply because they were one of the few or even the only white residents in the area. Sometimes their actions could cause conflicts with the native population but generally the relationships with the natives varied from case to case depending on the individual personality of the administrator or resident.

In both stories, “The Outstation” and “Mackintosh”, the character of the administrator plays a significant role. Walker, from the “Mackintosh” story is described as kind of a vulgar, despotic, unrestrained ruler of the whole island proud of his fearful reputation. He ran away to sea when he was fifteen and for over a year he shovelled coal on a collier. After some time he managed to win about a thousand pounds in horse race stakes and leave the ship. At the age of 26, Walker arrived at Talua, one of the larger Samoan islands, as a planter. Being one of the few white men settled in during the German occupation of the island, he was appointed to the position of administrator, the position which he occupied for more than a quarter of a century. When the British government seized control over the Samoan islands, Walker was confirmed in his post. Mackintosh, a middle-aged clerk who used to work in London and recently was appointed to Talua as a resident’s assistant, despises Walker’s attitude towards Kanakas - the natives.

At last Walker came in. The natives surrounded him as he entered, trying to get his immediate attention, but he turned on them roughly and told them to sit down and hold their tongues. He threatened that if they were not quiet he would have them all turned out and see none of them that day. [...]

“By heaven, I’ve got a thirst.”

He turned to the policeman who stood at the door, a picturesque figure in his white jacket and lava-lava, the loincloth of the Samoan, and told him to bring kava. The kava bowl stood on the floor in the corner of the room, and the policeman filled a half coconut shell and brought it to Walker. Then he told the

policeman to serve the waiting natives, and the shell was handed to each one in order of birth or importance and emptied with same ceremonies.

(Maugham, 1954a, 132)

This short passage depicts two layers of hierarchy portrayed in the story. First, the colonial, the artificially made one, where the administrator or any white man in general always stands above the native population and second, traditional division between tribal leaders, village elders, grown-up men, women and children. Walker never had any administrative experience; all the official stuff connected with his position had to be done by Mackintosh. In his words Walker is so illiterate “that he has an invincible distaste for anything to do with pens and paper” (1954a, 132). He was appointed to the office without any kind of election or even any consideration of his skills and previous experience. If there were another man on the island at that time willing to accept the role of the administrator he would most likely be in the position Walker is in now, and would remain there until his replacement or death. Walker’s authority is clearly the authority of a position more or less-willingly accepted by the natives. Apart from his administrative role, he serves as a supreme judiciary power in the colony, the prosecutor, the solicitor and the judge in one person and also as a self-appointed doctor.

“They insisted on building a jail for me,” he said. “What the devil do I want a jail for? I’m not going to put the natives in prison. If they do wrong I know how to deal with them.”

One of his quarrels with the higher authorities at Apia was that he claimed entire jurisdiction over the natives of his island. Whatever their crimes he would not give them up to courts competent to deal with them, and several times an angry correspondence had passed between him and the governor at Upolu. [...]

“What have you come for?” Walker asked him abruptly.

In a whining voice the man said that he could not eat without vomiting and that he had pains here and pains there.

“Go to the missionaries,” said Walker. “You know that I only cure children.”

“I have been to the missionaries and they do me no good.”

“Then go home and prepare yourself to die. Have you lived so long and still want to go on living? You’re a fool.”

The man broke into querulous expostulation, but Walker, pointing to a woman with a sick child in her arms, told her to bring it to his desk. [...]

“Go into the dispensary and bring me some calomel pills.”

He made the child swallow one there and then gave another to the mother.

“Take the child away and keep it warm. To-morrow it will be dead or better.”

(Maugham, 1954a, 137, 139)

Another thing connected with his administrative role that he is responsible for is the construction of roads along the island and supervising the transport of the copra production to Apia. Roads are considered as one of his greatest passions, the joy of his heart, and Walker talks about them with pride and in an almost poetical tone, they are the work of his lifetime. A grant from the colonial headquarters at Apia was set to cover the construction expenses but Walker is using only a very small portion of it to pay the native workers. One of the chief elder’s sons, Manuma, who had spent some time living outside the island, raised an objection towards this matter. Walker in response expels him and his father from the office with a humiliating laugh and orders the other villagers to start working immediately. The next day, when the administrator visits the construction site to see if his commands are obeyed, a strike is initiated under Manumas’ leadership. Native workers claim, that if he pays them a hundred pounds instead of twenty, they would start working immediately. Walker sets upon them a series of threatening invectives, but Manuma remains calm and repeats his fellow villager’s demands. Without achieving any success in negotiation, the administrator leaves in anger. Later, during the night after the incident one of the natives tries to scare Walker off during his walk around the compound by throwing a knife at him. To strengthen the image of his superiority, he rushes into the village in the morning on his horse, calling the residents impudent devils, and throws the knife to the ground before the chief’s hut. It was the battle of wills and neither Walker nor Manuma wanted to back down.

When standard intimidation methods of fear and anger failed, new more indirect or insidious methods were introduced. Walker deliberately tried to blackmail Manuma’s village by hiring another group of workers willing to build the

road section for the twenty pounds promised. According to the Polynesian rules of hospitality, the tribe was supposed to provide food, drink and shelter for any stranger who visits the village. Walker was aware of this rule and advised the road builders to work very slowly and prolong their stay as long as possible ruining the host village's food reserves. Broken and defenceless, villagers from Manuma's tribe purpose to finish the work without payment. More than that, by this, Walker achieved the complete victory by discrediting Manuma. He was no longer a hero for his people but only a fool who wanted too much and gained nothing. His actions had only led his tribe into greater misery. The greatest struggle against Walker's unshakable authority was finally suppressed.

In an act of revenge Manuma visits Mackintosh in his office and under a false pretence of being sick and asking for medicine he steals the assistant's revolver. Walker was shot during the night and mortally injured. He was dragged to his room accompanied with many natives. In his last words the administrator reveals his hidden sentiment for the local population and begs Mackintosh to treat them in similar father-like manner. Even when it was hardly recognisable under Walker's crude, vulgar exterior he considered them as his own children.

A number of natives ran into the compound, men, women and children; they crowded round Mackintosh and they all talked at once. They were unintelligible [...].

Walker shook his head wearily.

"I've had my day. Threat them fairly, that's the great thing. They're children. You must always remember that. You must be firm with them, but you must be kind. And you must be just. I've never made a bob out of them. I haven't saved a hundred pounds in twenty years." [...] (Maughan, 1954a, 156, 158)

It seems that this father-children relationship was mutually accepted both by Walker and Kanakas. Despite his passion, Walker never wanted to build a road as any kind of his personal monument. The building of the road was a practical thing, which was supposed to help the natives in their work, so they would not have to carry their copra to the port through the vast areas covered by impermeable jungle vegetation.

Concerning the money, he knew, that Kanakas had very little need for the money. Most of the basic things they could obtain on the island. However some of the natives tended to spend their wages on alcohol and other things imported from Apia by traders. Walker wanted to prevent this.

Manuma was an outside element which did not fit into this hardly recognisable relationship shared between Walker and Kanakas. Manuma was the one who told them to initiate the strike; he was the one who objected to the administrator, he was the one who told them about the money. Walker's influence did not apply to him, because he had spent some time off the island. If it were not for him, Kanakas would never have turned against their administrator.

“The Outstation” provides a different example of the relationship between the administrator and the native population. Mr. Warburton, an old school, well-educated, well-mannered English gentleman, who once was a member of the higher society, arrived in Borneo after the loss of his earned fortune. Despite his continuous attempts to retain habits from the previous life and an ongoing pretence of still being a member of the higher-society, he gradually created a bond with the local environment and inhabitants.

He became a skilful administrator. He was strict, just and honest. And little by little he conceived a deep love for the Malayans. He interested himself in their habits and customs. He was never tired of listening to their talk. He admired their virtues, and with a smile and shrug of the shoulders condoned their vices. [...]He knew by instinct exactly how to treat them. He had a genuine tenderness for them. But he never forgot that he was an English gentleman, and he had no patience with the white man who yielded to native customs. He made no surrenders. (Maughan, 1954b, 1363)

Warburton's relationship with the Malayans could be described as relationship between a good master and obedient servant. He knows and also respects the local language, customs and character. As the administrator he knows how far he could push them and he never intentionally crossed this virtual line nor tried to force his servants into something they would not accept as Walker did (even

with unexpressed good intentions). All Walker's actions and decisions, carried by the mixture of an upright firmness, flexibility, gentle manners and his personal wisdom, gained him absolute trust and loyalty among the natives. But as a good master he knows how to keep his distance and does not try to get too personal with his servants.

And he did not imitate so many of the white men in taking a native woman to wife, for an intrigue of this nature, however sanctified by custom, seemed to him not only shocking but undignified. A man who had been called George by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, could hardly be expected to have any connection with a native. (1954b, 1363-1364)

If the story was not set in Borneo, Warburton could possibly be a resident at his summer mansion in England, or anywhere else in Europe, having his personal chef, room maids and other servant staff. As a master he very much knew the value of his servants and he treated them accordingly. His boys were used to their role and if they were not serving Warburton as a colonial official they could have served in one of the royal Malayan palaces. Also Warburton's position was more formal in comparison to Walker's semi appointed nearly dictatorial leadership.

3.3 Depiction of racial issues in relation to Maugham's cynicism

The depiction of the racial issues corresponds with Maugham's portrayal of the white colonizers and the indigenous population. He did not try to idealise either of them and even though it might, due to Maugham's cynicism, seem that the white characters are usually the most corrupt, the examples of intolerant behaviour and racial prejudices could be found on both sides.

Probably the best example is provided in "The Rain". The racial issues are depicted mostly in the initial part of the story where Dr. and Mrs. Macphail meets a pair of missionaries, Reverend Davidson and his wife, returning to their posts at the medical mission somewhere in the South Pacific after a one-year leave. During talks

with The Macphails aboard the liner, Mr. and Mrs. Davidson explain their task at the mission and reveal slightly old-fashioned and quite racist attitudes towards the natives. The pair of missionaries regard indigenous population only as primitive savages and considers their native customs low and immoral compared to the European standards. They even introduced some extreme measures at their mission, for example, the local population was forbidden to dance and to wear their traditional costumes, the lava-lavas.

“It’s a very indecent costume,” said Mrs. Davidson. “Mr. Davidson thinks it should be prohibited by law. How can you expect people to be moral when they wear nothing but a strip of red cotton round their loins?”

“It’s suitable enough to the climate,” said the doctor, wiping the sweat off his head. [...]

“In our islands,” Mrs. Davidson went on her high-pitched tones, “we’ve practically eradicated the lava-lava. A few old men still continue to wear it, but that’s all. The women have all taken to the Mother Hubbard, and men wear trousers and singlets. At the beginning of our stay Mr. Davidson said in one of his reports: the inhabitants will never be thoroughly Christianised till every boy of more than ten years is made to wear a pair of trousers.”

(Maugham, 1954a, 4-5)

The Davidsons were almost fanatically devoted to their task of bringing a moral salvation and in cleansing any traces of a sinful behaviour among the local population.

“We worked without ceasing, day and night, and we seemed to make no progress. [...] We had no one to help us. We were alone, thousands of miles from any of our own people, surrounded by darkness.” [...]

“You see, they were so naturally depraved that they couldn’t be brought to see their wickedness. We had to make sins out of what they thought were natural actions. We had to make it a sin, not only to commit adultery and to lie and thieve, but to expose their bodies, and to dance and not to come to church. I made it a sin for a girl to show her bosom and a sin for a man not to wear trousers:” (Maugham, 1954a, 10-11)

Later on, the liner is quarantined for ten days at the bay of Pago Pago, due to the epidemic of measles, and all passengers are lodged at a small apartment building owned by a local half-caste trader, Mr. Horn. Miss Sadie Thompson, a young woman in her late 20's, is introduced to the story. She is described as jolly, garrulous, a little bit extravagant and, in a coarse fashion, relatively pretty. But no one knows much else about her. Mr. Horn only mentions that she was also onboard the liner and was supposed to travel to Samoa, to work there as a cashier. When Sadie starts hanging out with sailors at the port and arranging loud dancing sessions in her apartment, Dr. Macphail, during one especially loud evening, realises that she might be a fugitive from Iwelei, the infamous red-light district of Honolulu. After hearing this, Mr. Davidson, in a blind rage, immediately rushes downstairs and tries to stop the ongoing party. As a result, Miss Thompson's guests throw him away from her room after a fierce row.

After this incident Mr. Davidson makes the owner of the apartments, Mr. Horn, ban Miss Thompson's parties under the threat of being expelled from her lodge. The missionary is determined to get Sadie off the island and despite Dr. Macphail's objections, even convinces the governor to deport her by the next boat to San Francisco. She turns desperate and asks Mr. Davidson, if she could stay another week and take the boat to Sydney instead, because if she went back to San Francisco she would end up in prison. On the brink of a nervous breakdown, Sadie begs for redemption. She wants to repent. Suddenly, from this moment Mr. Davidson becomes gradually more and more hooked to this case of a corrected sinner. He refuses to eat and almost ceases talking with other residents in the apartment. Miss Thompson is now the only object of his attention.

During the next three days the missionary spent almost all his time with Sadie Thompson. He joined the others only to have his meals. Dr. Macphail noticed that he hardly ate,

"He's wearing himself out," said Mrs. Davidson pitifully, "He'll have a breakdown if he doesn't take care, but he won't spare himself."

She herself was white and pale. She told Mrs. Macphail that she had no sleep. When the missionary came upstairs from Miss Thompson he prayed till he was exhausted, but even then he did not sleep for long. [...]

The whole household, intent on the wretched, tortured woman downstairs, lived in a state of unnatural excitement. She was like a victim that was being prepared for the savage rites of a bloody idolatry. Her terror humbled her.

(Maugham, 1954a, 31-32)

On Tuesday morning, the day when Sadie is supposed to leave, Dr. Macphail is waken up by Mr. Horn and asked to examine the body of Mr. Davidson, who was found dead in the harbour with his throat cut open. Davidson committed suicide; it was a self-inflicted wound. Dr. Macphail then returns to the apartment, finds Sadie Thompson all dressed up in her best clothes chatting with another sailor in the hallway and confronts her with the situation.

She gathered herself together. No one could describe the scorn of her expression or the contemptuous hatred she put into her answer.

“You men! You filthy, dirty pigs! You’re all the same, all of you. Pigs! Pigs!”

Dr. Macphail gasped. He understood. (1954a, 36)

In the purest example of Maugham’s cynicism, Mr. Davidson, the one who so often spoke about being moral and tried so hard to cleanse all the sinful and corrupt behaviour, turned out to be as immoral and corrupted as anyone else. His unfulfilled sexual thirst was hidden deeply behind the image of civility and religious celibacy.

“The Force of Circumstance” touches briefly on the relations between the native population and the issue of the half-castes. The story is narrated from the point of view of a newly married couple, Guy and Doris, who have been married only for nine months. Guy works as a court representative at small Malay outpost near the Sembulu river while Doris gave up her post as a secretary to the member of the parliament and accepted the role of a housewife and usually stays whole day long in their bungalow. He is around 29 and according to the description looks rather unattractive, a little rounded man with a red face but with a joyful and charming character. Despite the initial hesitation, Doris married him for his child like behaviour, good-tempered manners and his ability to make her laugh. She feels quite content and happy about their marriage.

During one of the luncheons together, Doris asks Guy about the half-caste children she saw in the kampong earlier that day. Guy then explains to her the way in which half-castes are usually treated.

“There are two or three half-caste children in the kampong,” he answered.

“Who do they belong to?”

“Their mother was one of the village girls.”

“Who is their father?”

“Oh, my dear, that’s the sort of question we think it a little dangerous to ask out here.” He paused. “A lot of fellows have native wives, and when they go home or marry they pension them off and send them back to their village.” (Maugham, 1954a, 357)

Instead of showing sympathy for them, Doris calls half-caste children brats and strongly denotes that she would never accept it if Guy had an affair, especially with one of the Malay girls.

After some time an unknown native woman, with a three-year-old baby is introduced to the story. She seems to be stalking Guy and his wife on numerous occasions. Doris also notices a sudden change in Guy’s behaviour. Although he denies it and tries to act like in normal circumstances, he is no longer jovial and good tempered, he looks sullen and thoughtful. Towards the climax of the story Doris observes how a few native boys in the kampong beat up this unknown woman.

There was a scuffle. She went to the window and opened the shutters. The water-carrier had hold of a woman’s arm and was dragging her along, while the house boy was pushing her from behind with both hands. [...] She was holding a baby against her breast. All three were shouting angrily. “Stop,” cried Doris. “What are you doing?”

At the sound of her voice the water-carrier let go suddenly and the woman, still pushed from behind, fell to the ground. (Maugham, 1954a, 363)

After this incident Guy is forced to admit, that he had an uncommitted relationship. Before he met Doris he had been with her for about ten years and as a result of their relationship, Guy has three half-caste children. However he does not express any feelings or emotional bonds towards her, he does not even mention her name, or act towards their children.

“And the children?”

“Oh the children are all right. I’ve provided for them. As soon as the boys are old enough I shall send them to school at Singapore.”

“Do they mean nothing to you at all?”

He hesitated.

“I want to be quite frank with you. I should be sorry if anything happened to them. [...] Of course, when it was a baby it was rather funny and touching, but I had no particular feeling that it was mine. I think that’s what it is; you see, I have no sense of their belonging to me. I’ve reproached myself sometimes, because it seemed rather unnatural, but the honest truth is that they’re no more to me than if they were somebody else’s children. (Maugham, 1954a, 368)

Guy regrets this relationship as a terrible mistake; it was kind of an act of despair. He came to Malaysia right after school at the age of 18. Before the current assignment at the Sembulu river, he spent the initial three months at Kuala Solor with the local resident and his wife. Until the transfer, he actually never realised how lonely the remote station could be. Guy was a sociable person; he needed at least some kind of social interaction. He needed someone to talk to, someone he could spend his time with. Unfortunately he was the only white man at the colony. During his office hours he could talk with natives at the office but after the work he felt desperately isolated in his bungalow. The relationship with the native woman was the only thing that kept him from turning insane. Before the marriage with Doris, he had paid her off and sent her back to the village she came from.

Doris was disgusted with the discovery. She said that she does not blame Guy for what he did and that she understands the circumstances under which he acted, but they became estranged. Even though they retained their old habits, such

as going to play tennis and talk together on the veranda during the evenings, they no longer shared intimacies. Doris became rather cold and distant. Guy was asked to sleep in the living room while Doris locked herself every night in the bedroom. She felt no longer comfortable in the house. After six months Doris sails back to England and ironically, Guy, broken with her loss, is forced to accept the native woman and her children back to the house.

“The Force of Circumstance” quite illustratively depicts the usual fate of the half-caste population. Often they were rejected both by white colonisers, in the story represented by Guy, who as a father does not feel any kind of emotional attraction towards his half-caste children, and Doris with her racial prejudices; and they also were treated harshly by other natives. Despite of how unfortunate the situation of the native woman and may looked like in the story Maugham as an author did not try to moralise it in any way. It was a story of a rejected woman that eventually achieved her original goal, to make Guy to accept her and their children.

Lawson, a young Scotsman from “The Pool” short story, experienced a similar thing but from the perspective of the white man. His position of a bank manager granted him a certain kind of a social prestige. It was one of a few reasons why Ethel, his fiancée, truly chose to marry him. For a half-caste girl on the island the marriage or any other kind of a relationship with a white man was considered as a step up on the imaginary ladder of social hierarchy.

It was a great thing for a half-caste girl to get a white man to marry her, even the less regular relation was better than nothing, but one never tell what it could lead to; Lawson’s position as manager of the bank made him one of the catches of the island. [...] He knew that when a white man marries a native or half-caste he must expect her relations to look upon him as a gold mine. (Maugham, 1954a, 108-109)

Because of the racial discrimination the half-caste population often created closed and self-administering communities with their own rules and social hierarchy. By marrying Ethel, Lawson became a member of such a community. On numerous occasions they visited together white planters who had native wives, attended parties arranged by half-caste traders at the town or hosted Ethel relatives

in their house near Apia bay. Half-castes on Samoa accepted Lawson as one of their own. However when Lawson accepted his role as a member of the half-caste community he was uprooted from his original social status. The other white inhabitants on the island looked at him with contempt. He virtually descended himself to the level of the half-caste population.

Since his marriage he had been ignored by the white ladies of the colony. When he came across men in whose houses he had been accustomed to dine as a bachelor, they were a little self-conscious with him; and they sought to cover their embarrassment by exaggerated cordiality.

“Mrs. Lawson well?” they would say. “You’re lucky fellow. Damned pretty girl.”

But if they were with their wives and met him and Ethel they would feel it awkward when their wives gave Ethel a patronising nod.

(Maugham, 1954a, 110)

This loss of social status was later fatal for Lawson. When he failed to provide Ethel with sufficient prestige, she started an affair with another white man, Mr. Miller, a wealthy German-American trader. As a result Lawson started to drink heavily and he gradually descended to the lowest possible social position. The process was irreversible. The white community despised him, because he married a half-caste girl and the half-caste community did not care about him either because he was no longer an influential figure.

Conclusion

William Somerset Maugham (1874-1965) was considered one of the most successful and most productive authors of his times. A substantial part of his life was travelling, which provided him with an eyewitness experience of the last stage of Britain's colonial era. As a source of inspiration Maugham used personal experience from his six travels to the South Pacific region during 1920s. In his works, Maugham constructed quite a unique image of the colonies, by describing them without any moralisation, idealisation or tendency towards exoticism.

The theoretical part of this work provides the basic definition of colonialism and imperialism. Both phenomena are usually considered similar ideologies but with slightly different goals. Generally, colonialism and imperialism were connected with a certain form of dominance such as political dominance, cultural dominance or with the economic dominance. However imperialism is more an ideologically driven policy aimed primarily on the territorial expansion while colonialism is a less homogenous practice promoted without any coherent plan or significant ideological basis and rather is focused on commercial motives. Also, when discussing colonialism, it is necessary to distinguish between the so-called settler colonies (where immigrants from the home country took most of the land and practically replaced the native population) and between the administered colonies (which as well fell within the colonial administration but the permanent settlement was not the main goal and these colonies were used rather for economic purposes).

The majority of Maugham's short fiction from the colonial background takes place in these administered colonies within the Malay Archipelago or Polynesia and in their background it is possible to find traces of some general issues connected with the colonial era.

The analytical part of this work deals with some specific issues portrayed in the selection of Maugham's short fiction. The first often-portrayed motive was the issue of isolation and assimilation in a different cultural environment. At the time, colonies were generally considered as an exciting place full of opportunities, where it is possible to live a comfortable life without too much effort, or as a place where one can escape from their problems. Unfortunately the reality was usually not as

idyllic as some characters originally planned and some of them eventually became trapped or felt uncomfortable with their new surroundings.

Mr. Warburton, the main character of “The Outstation” short story, represents a character who is struggling at retaining his own identity. He never wanted to voluntarily leave England, but was forced to do so by circumstances. In Borneo he tries to retain most of the manners from his previous life but despite all his attempts not to assimilate he eventually become estranged. Warburton’s change in the story is gradual and more or less unconscious. He eventually got used to the local conditions, to his position at the outstation and became reconciled with his stay on the island. The direct opposite to Mr. Warburton is the character of Edward Banard, from “The Fall of Edward Banard” short story. His departure to the colonies was also kind of semi-voluntary but after his arrival in Tahiti he willingly blended with the new environment. Edward’s change was clearly conscious, he simply rejected the old values, which were no longer suitable for him or for his new surroundings, and adopted the new, more comfortable ones. Ethel, the half-caste girl from the short story “The Pool”, represents a character who did not change at all under the influence of a different cultural environment. She consciously decided not to create any bonds within the new environment and left it as soon as it was possible.

Another issue portrayed in Maugham’s short stories is the issue of complicated relationships between the white administrators and the indigenous population. Administrators and residents at local outposts usually represented the executive branch of the colonial government. Unfortunately they were often appointed to the office without any deep consideration of their skills or abilities.

Walker from “Mackintosh” is a rather vulgar, despotic, unrestrained ruler of the whole island. Apart from his administrative role, he serves as a supreme judiciary power of the colony and also as a self-appointed doctor. He never had any kind of administrative experience or even any proper education. His authority is clearly the authority given by the position, more or less willingly accepted by the native population. In contrast, Mr. Warburton from “The Outstation” is a kind of an old-fashioned 1890s gentleman. Like Walker, he did not have any administrative experience before he arrived on Borneo, but he knows how to thread his servants.

Warburton behaves as if he were not stationed in Borneo but as if he were a resident at his summer mansion in England or anywhere else in Europe. However, the description of issues connected with the colonial administration in these short stories was not Maugham's primary goal. Both short stories are portrayals of two completely different men appointed to the similar official positions.

The depiction of the racial issues in Maugham's works was connected with his cynicism and with his depiction of the white colonisers and the indigenous population. Maugham did not try to idealise either of them and even though, it might seem that the white characters are usually the most corrupt, the examples of intolerant behaviour or racial prejudices could be found on both sides.

Probably the best example of Maugham's scepticism is Reverend Davidson, the most morally spoiled character of "The Rain" short story, whose unfulfilled sexual thirst and severe racial prejudices towards the native population were hidden deeply under his façade of civility and religious celibacy. On the other hand the character of the nameless native woman with half-caste children from "The Force of Circumstance" quite illustratively depicts the usual fate of the half-caste population. But despite the strong racial context it is rather a story of a rejected woman who eventually achieved her original goal - to make her lover to accept her and their children. Lawson from "The Pool" was as well due to racial prejudices uprooted from his original position and eventually descended to the lowest possible social position but rather than commenting on racial discrimination "The Pool" is a story of the man who lost everything.

Above all, William Somerset Maugham was a cynical commentator of human manners and behaviour, a careful observer looking for an interesting story, rather than an ideological author praising or on the other hand criticising the era of colonialism. Maugham's stories were mainly based on the focus on the individual characters, on their conflicts and flaws, thus plot and suspense. The depiction of colonial issues was not his primary intention, colonies only provided an exotic background for his literary works. As an author, Maugham wanted to entertain his reader, to tell a good story and particularly to be commercially successful.

Resumé

Éra kolonialismu nebo lépe řečeno éra evropské koloniální expanze v druhé polovině 19. století byla jedním z nevlivnějších, ale také nejkontroverznějších období lidských dějin. Na jednu stranu koloniální éra významným způsobem ovlivnila politický, kulturní a hospodářský vývoj evropské společnosti, ale také s sebou přinesla určité specifické problémy.

William Somerset Maugham byl považován za jednoho z neplodnějších a neúspěšnějších autorů své doby. Během své dlouholeté literární kariéry napsal více než 20 románů, 30 divadelních her, 91 povídek, 3 cestopisné knihy a jednu rozsáhlou autobiografii. Maugham, narozen v roce 1874, sám zažil poslední fázi britského kolonialismu na přelomu 19. a 20. století. Ve svých dílech poskytl vcelku unikátní pohled na kolonie a koloniální problémy. Nesnažil se moralizovat ani idealizovat. Kolonie popsal tak, jak je sám viděl, jak je sám zažil. Jako zdroj inspirace mu posloužilo jeho šest cest do oblasti jižního Pacifiku v průběhu let 1916 až 1926.

Tato práce se zabývá některými problémy spojenými s érou kolonialismu a tím, jak jsou tyto problémy vyobrazeny v povídkách Wiliama Somerseta Maughama. Práce je rozdělena do tří hlavních celků.

První, teoretická část práce, se detailněji zabývá základní definicí kolonialismu a imperialismu. Obecně lze říci, že obě tyto ideologie vycházejí ze stejného nebo velice podobného ideologického základu, ale každá má své specifické cíle. Jak kolonialismus, tak imperialismus je spojován s určitou formou nadvlády. Ať už s politickou, většinou zastoupenou svrchovanou koloniální administrativou, ekonomickou, kdy evropské státy využívaly kolonie primárně jako zdroje nerostného bohatství a odbytiště pro svoje výrobky, případně s nadvládou kulturní, spojenou s přísunem evropských osadníků do kolonií a postupným vymizením domorodé kultury. Imperialismus je spíše zaměřen na teritoriální expanzi. Jeho hlavním cílem je vytvoření jednotného územního celku, impéria, zatímco kolonialismus jako ideologie nemá vytyčený jeden hlavní nebo zásadní cíl. Při popisu kolonialismu je také nutné rozlišovat mezi takzvanými „osadnickými koloniemi“, jejichž hlavním účelem bylo permanentní osídlení určitého území

novým obyvatelstvem, většinou za cenu vymýcení místního obyvatelstva, a mezi „správnými koloniemi“, u kterých osídlení určité oblasti nehrálo hlavní roli. Tyto kolonie pouze spadaly pod koloniální správu a byly využívány spíše pro hospodářské účely.

Většina Maughamových povídek z koloniálního prostředí se odehrává v těchto správních koloniích, a to především v oblasti Malajského poloostrova, na Borneu nebo v oblasti Polynésie. V pozadí těchto příběhů je možné identifikovat některé obecné problémy spojené s koloniální administrativou. Mnohé postavy v těchto povídkách vystupují jako guverněři, správci kolonií, případně jako úředníci pracující pro koloniální vládu, jiní zase jako obchodní zástupci velkých společností. Maugham také letmo zmiňuje domorodce pracující na plantážích nebo popisuje těžbu nerostného bohatství. Popis těchto problémů však nebyl Maughamovým hlavním cílem. Kolonie pouze poskytly zajímavé prostředí pro jeho příběhy, a jelikož se nesnažil tyto příběhy jakýmkoliv způsobem přikrášlit nebo zidealizovat, tyto problémy se do nich také promítly.

Druhá část práce se zabývá autorem samotným. Maugham byl členem britské vyšší třídy, jeho otec pracoval na ambasádě v Paříži. Během svého života také hodně cestoval. Jako autor několikrát otevřeně přiznal, že literaturu bere pouze jako profesi, jako prostředek, kterým si lze vydělat peníze. Ale i přes svou touhu po komerčním úspěchu nebyl žádným druhořadým autorem. Maugham byl výborný vypravěč, chtěl pobavit svého čtenáře, vtáhnout ho do děje. Jeho příběhy jsou postaveny okolo jednotlivých postav, jejich problémů a chyb. Ve svých dílech spojil detailní popisné pasáže s dobře připravenými a přirozeně znějícími dialogy. Maugham se také zabýval lidským chováním, věřil, že pouze jedinci mimo rámec moderní civilizované společnosti mohou plně rozvinout svůj potenciál, a to hlavně v negativním smyslu. Ovšem za tento svůj pesimistický a cynický postoj vůči lidské povaze byl častokrát kritizován.

Poslední a stěžejní částí této práce je rozbor určitých specifických problémů zobrazených ve vybraných povídkách Wiliama Somerseta Maughama. Prvním, častokrát popisovaným problémem, je problém izolace a přizpůsobení se novému společensko-kulturnímu prostředí. Kolonie byly většinou považovány za zajímavé, exotické místo, kde je možné si snadno vydělat na živobytí a vést pohodlný život,

případně za místo, kam je možné uniknout před svými problémy. Bohužel pro některé postavy v Maughamových povídkách realita nebyla vždy tak idylická jak si původně představovaly. Každá z postav se se svou nově nastalou životní situací vyrovnala jiným způsobem. Je možné najít příklady relativního smíření se s novým prostředím, případně příklady kompletního odmítnutí nebo naopak dobrovolného přijetí nových podmínek.

Mr. Warburton, hlavní postava povídky „The Outstation“, představuje charakter, který se odmítá přizpůsobit novému prostředí a snaží se za každou cenu zachovat svoji původní identitu. Se svým životem v Anglii byl vcelku spokojen, z vlasti by dobrovolně nikdy neodjel, byl však donucen okolnostmi. Jeho proměna v příběhu je pozvolná a víceméně nenápadná. Postupně si uvědomuje, že se do Anglie nejspíše nikdy nevrátí, a zjišťuje, že je se svým pobytem na ostrově smířený. Právým opakem Warburtona je Edward Banard, hlavní postava povídky „The Fall of Edward Banard“. Jeho odjezd do kolonií také nebyl úplně dobrovolný, avšak narozdíl od Warburtona se Edward po svém příjezdu na Tahiti od základu změnil. Jeho změna byla dobrovolná a vědomá. Jednoduše opustil hodnoty, které mu nevyhovovaly, případně které byly v novém prostředí nevhodné, a místo nich přijal nové, jemu více vyhovující. Ethel z povídky „The Pool“ naopak představuje postavu, která se pod vlivem nového prostředí prakticky vůbec nezměnila. S novým prostředím, do kterého se dostala, se odmítla smířit, shledala ho jako nevyhovující, a když se jí naskytla vhodná příležitost, prostě ho opustila.

Maugham ve svých povídkách také zachytil komplikované vztahy mezi bílými správci kolonií a domorodou populací. Místní guvernéri a jiní oficiální činitelé představovali výkonnou složku koloniální moci, bohužel častokrát se stávalo, že byli jmenováni do svých funkcí bez jakéhokoliv hlubšího posouzení svých schopností, případně byli jmenováni pouze proto, že byli jedni z mála či dokonce jediní bílí obyvatelé v oblasti. Vztahy s domorodou populací vzhledem k tomu závisely na individuálním jednání každého správce a lišily se tak případ od případu.

Walker z povídky „Mackintosh“ je spíše despotický buran. Mimo své administrativní funkce správce na ostrově zastupuje i funkci soudní moci, je soudcem, obhájcem i žalobcem v jedné osobě a působí i jako samozvaný doktor. Pro

své postavení nemá žádné odpovídající vzdělání ani potřebné zkušenosti. Předtím, než byl jmenován do pozice správce na Talui, pouze nějaký čas přihazoval uhlí do kotle na nákladní lodi. Jeho opakem je Warburton z povídky „Outstation“. Ten sice také nikdy v životě neměl žádné zkušenosti s administrativou, ale díky tomu, že pochází z vyšší vrstvy, ví, jak se má chovat ke svým podřízeným. Hlavním cílem těchto dvou povídek však není poukázat na problémy koloniální administrativy, jsou to pouze příběhy dvou naprosto odlišných mužů jmenovaných do podobné funkce.

Vyobrazení rasových problémů v Maughamových povídkách souvisí s jeho cynismem a snahou neidealizovat ani nemoralizovat. Maugham se nesnažil stavět postavy kolonizátorů do pozice utlačovatelů a naopak domorodou populaci do pozice obětí. Příklady netolerantního jednání, případně různých rasových předsudků je možné najít u obou skupin.

Pravděpodobně nejlepším příkladem Maughamova cynismu je reverend Davidson, morálně nejzvrácenější postava povídky „The Rain“, jehož silné rasové předsudky vůči domorodému obyvatelstvu a nevyplněné sexuální tužby a úchyly byly ukryty hluboko pod maskou pobožnosti a náboženského celibátu. Povídka „The Force of Circumstance“ zase na příkladu domorodé matky a jejích míšeneckých dětí vcelku ilustrativně popisuje obvyklé chování k míšenecké populaci v koloniích. Ovšem i přes svůj značný rasový podtext je pořád příběhem odvržené ženy, která nakonec dosáhla svého cíle. Lawson z povídky „The Pool“ se vzhledem k rasovým předsudkům ostatních bílých obyvatel kolonie dostal až na okraj společnosti, ale „The Pool“ opět není povídkou popisující rasovou diskriminaci, je to příběh muže, který nakonec přišel o všechno.

William Somerset Maugham nebyl žádným ideologicky zaměřeným autorem, který by ve svých dílech nějakým způsobem oslavoval nebo naopak kritizoval éru kolonialismu. Maugham byl především vypravěč, lovec zajímavých příběhů a zážitků, ale také cynický komentátor lidské povahy. Jeho povídky jsou zaměřeny hlavně na příběhy jednotlivých postav v různých životních situacích. Díky tomu, že tyto povídky zasadil do koloniálního prostředí, je na jejich pozadí možné identifikovat některé problémy spjaté s koloniální érou, ale zobrazení těchto problémů nikdy nebylo Maughamovým hlavním cílem.

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