

Chapter - VI

CONCLUSION

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Maugham was a noted novelist of the twentieth century. He did not want to impress nor did he try to disseminate his ideas. He always adhered to simplicity, lucidity and euphony in his writings. It seems that he was a conservative in his method of writing. He believed that a novelist must preserve a child-like belief in the importance of things, which common sense considers of no great consequence.

Maugham followed the realistic method of writing. His writings bear the impact of Maupassant. His writings reinforce the vitality and viability of the realist tradition in fiction.

Maugham's characters are varied and diverse. He paid more attention to the outward delineation and description of his characters. His women characters are no exception to this. Maugham's women characters are often portrayed as amoral. It is quite obvious that they fail in their duties as faithful wives, good mothers and good housekeepers. Perhaps the French influence on him, his close association with the theatre life, the radical change in the role of twentieth century woman, and his own tolerant attitude towards such women have influenced him in portraying his women characters. He gives a clear insight in them. About Julia in Theatre he says that he has tried to

worm himself into the heart of a woman. He says that the novelist in the delineation of his characters gives to them a sensitiveness, a power of reflection and an emotional capacity which are peculiar to the novelist himself.

Liza in Liza of Lambeth becomes the example of a woman who rebels against the existing social conventions of her day. She does not feel anything wrong in loving a married man. She is free to have love affair with Jim. She is like a faded flower, which dies before its full bloom.

Of the two important women characters in Of Human Bondage, Mildred is a reckless woman. She is cruel, selfish and ego centric. Yet Philip loves her. In her company Philip loses his self respect and he is reduced to humiliation. Through her recklessness and indulgence in pleasures Mildred ends up in prostitution. Philip tries to bring her back on the right path. But it is of no avail.

The another important character in this novel is Norah. She is a considerate woman. She keeps her head cool on all occasions. Come what may, she never loses her cheerfulness. She defies adversity through her brave fight against odds. She is a sincere, honest friend and lover of Philip. Along with a good sense of humour she exhibits a broad outlook on life.

She knows the importance of freedom and hence does not try to enchain Philip to her. She has a truly democratic attitude as she values her own independence as well as that of others.

Rosie in Cakes and Ale is an artless, simple woman, who takes pleasure in dispensing joy. She is beautiful but not proud. Rosie's attitude is not lustful. She offers herself to the men merely to give them happiness. She only wants to make them happy. She dispenses joy.

Julia in Theatre is a very talented actress. She values her creativity and her liberty very much. She is amoral, selfish and tough. She does not think of others' happiness. Julia's passion for youth shows the psychological fear of old age in her. This fear lingers in her subconscious mind. Hence she desperately clings to youth, the epitome of Life as opposed to old age the epitome of Death.

These five women characters by Maugham in fact represent the predicament of the modern contemporary woman. She wants to be happy and for this she is ready to sacrifice herself. But unfortunately she is trodding the path of loneliness and unhappiness.