

CHAPTER -5  
CONCLUSION

Lillian Hellman was born into an auspicious setting for theatre, in New Orleans. Being a Southern, she saw ups and downs in the South and became aware of the demand of the theatre. From the beginning she was fond of people around her. She explained later on that from her teenage she started knowing people around her and studied them carefully. While writing the plays she used the autobiographical element to portray life - figures. In her skill of characterization South plays the important role. Except a few characters, every character, in the plays, is an American, and especially a Southern. Social condition of the South is depicted in many plays and, naturally, the characters are Southerners.

In Days to Come, Hellman depicts the situation of a Southern family, in small town America, facing a strike. After the Second World War, America has changed rapidly, in many respects. There is struggle for money and people faced drastic situation. Participants of Days to Come are mill-owners and workers. No one of them is happy with the result. Everyone is frustrated and, later on, shattered. The vivid picture of the South is created by Hellman, in the play. They do not have faith in love and they are chasing some dream, which will never come into reality. These lost people represent the contemporary South.

In The Little Foxes, we meet Hubbards, who are dramatized on Hellman's maternal relatives. Her mother was from Louisiana.

So the Hubbards, too, are Southern characters. These people are money - minded and they do not give importance to morality. They are behaving licenciously. Katherine Lederer compares these Hubbards with Faulkner's characters.

The same characters of The Little Foxes appear in Another Part of the Forest, The action takes place in Alabama town of Bowden. They are Southern and represent, viciousness. Marcus represents the Southern opportunistic people, who are used to malapractices. Ben asks him sarcasticly on Marcus' ~~tefling~~ telling that there was a lot of money in the envelope.

Marcus represents Southern man Hellman calls him "Greek Southern" Because he loves Greak philosophers, and thinkers. He sees himself as a sort of Marcus Aurelius - the beneficent Roman emperor called "the philosopher."

The characters representing Hellman's autobiographical etement are Southern~~s~~. The characters of The Autum Garden and Toys in the Attic are Southern characters, with their own peculiarities. They represent Southern way of living, thinking and behaving. Through the characters, we realize the contemporary social changes and the people of the countemporary period. Hellman does not go back. All the events take place in present, at the time of writing, so, she uses social changes while depicting her characters. There are Southern aristocrates, Southern businessmen, the middle class people, Southern workers, servants, and the outsiders settled in South. Some of them are despoilers, and sometimes, they are

preservers of morality. Variegated and vivid portrait of South we see through these characters.

Hellman uses the technique of the irony in characterization. While depicting the Hubbards, she becomes very ironic. The title itself suggests the use of irony in her characters. These Hubbards are called little foxes. There is difference in their appearance and reality. Outwardly, they are impressive and decent persons, but their action makes them purely ironic characters. Regina, Oscar, Leo and Ben represent Hellman's ironic approach. Birdie belongs to the aristocrat family but there is difference in her behaviour and her origin. She represents decadent Southern aristocrates, who drink South instead of facing the reality. The Little Foxes is called the best example of irony of detachment. The characters of Watch On the Rhine are not ironic, Kurt and Sara are admirable characters and we find an example of boomrang irony in Teck's blackmail threat, which causes his death. Irony is created in the action of Kurt and Teck. Hellman introduces their plan about the future, and how it changes later on into an ironic situation.

In The Searching Wind, Hellman uses boomrang irony as well as irony of repetition. Sam feels that his father has lacked in his duties but he himself is not successful in his duties. Sam later on hates his father for despoiling his loved country. Almost all characters are ironic. Cas and Emily face their frustration. All these characters are purely ironic. Moses makes ironic comments throughout the play. But he is as guilty as the rest. He has



abdicated a position of power and responsibility. Emily knows the relations between Alex and Cas. Once she invites Cas for dinner and accuses her for stealing her husband. Cas confesses everything. All these actions are purely ironic.

In The Autumn Garden, the ironists are Crossman, and Mrs. Ellis, Nick is called the ironic catalyst. Nick affects everyone but himself remains unaffected. The irony in his character is remarkable. In Toys in the Attic, the characters of Carrie and Jullian prove Hellman as an ironist.

Hellman is known for her moralistic point of view. She is a stern moralist, and exhibits her views through the characterization. When there is viciousness or villiany, she depicts these things with moralistic point of view. Regina Giddens and Hubbard brothers are placed together. The vulgarity of Hubbards is contrasted with the serenity of Birdie. Once she was the owner of plantation, where Negroes were cared for, Later on, these Hubbards are contrasted with Mr. Marshall, who has come to establish commercial relationship with Hubbards.

Hellman puts forth black side of the society to prove her moralistic point of view. The same contrast we see in Another Part of the Forest. Lavinia is totally different from Regina, though, she is her mother. Both of them are totally different from each other. Every time Hellman puts the good character among vicious persons, and proves her moralistic point of view. Lavinia's credence is contrasted with Marcus' immoral behaviour. At the same time,

Birdie and Laurette are contrasted. Birdie's feminine qualities are more moralistic than Laurette's immorality.

Every play has exceptional quality of moralism. It depicts Hellman's moralistic point of view. Hellman does not like the immorality caused by industrialization and modernity. People have changed very much. The line between morality and immorality has become very thin. And there is no value of serenity. In the contrary. Good is dominated by the villainous persons. Hellman sees the changes openly and attacks immorality through her characters. Critics call her primarily a moralist preoccupied with the evil in man, usually that within the individual but sometimes that in society. In The Children's Hour, the lives of two teachers are destroyed by malicious stories spread by a child.

Hellman is called Chekhovian in characterization. Her Toys in the Attic and The Autumn Garden are Chekhovian plays from the point of view of characterization. In The Autumn Garden, there is character-grouping, which gives the impression of chorus in the play. Toys on the Attic is like Chekhov's The Three sisters. The characters, situation, theme, etc., is like Chekhov's play. Hellman is an admirer of Chekhov, she read Chekhov with great interest and there is influence of Chekhov in her writing.

Sometimes, her style is called Ibsenian, Hellman admits the influence of these two great writers. Not only that, she tells, when she is asked about the novelists, from the beginning of her career she is great admirer of the novelists, like Dickens, Henry James and Stendhal, etc..

According to some critics, Lillian Hellman lets her characters alone to act out their destinies, regarding them only with love and understanding in her earlier play, she took side, one can list the characters she admires and the characters she dislikes. But In Days to Come she can not maintain the balance between good and evil and admits that she has failed to do so.

Lillian Hellman is praised for the characterization by many critics. While depicting the characters, she clearly defines the universal theme. Her characters are yearning for something, and throughout they pursue their goal, but when the imagined good is within their reach they feel as if there is a sort of vacuum in their life, and they become restless. This constant change in the characters is interesting some of them are opportunistic and some are unable to shoulder the responsibilities and challenges of the world and, therefore, there is a sort of negligence in them. They are repeatedly called bystanders. Critics find out that Hellman's characters are more content when their dreams are unattainable.

Hellman is a painter of the middle class, and we must call her a realistic painter. Without interfering the real characters, she portrays them. In almost every play she uses the realistic technique. She makes her characters real and lively and the plays, as critics point out, become a breathing thing. Because the characters are not confined in the wall of theatre, they break the wall and become universal characters their activities are significant. All characters belong to middle class gentry, there are not only good people but at

the same time there are evil character. Realistic technique gives more important dimension of Hellman's skill as a playwright.

Hellman's characters prove her mastery in the characterization. She creates very perfect characters. she is not concerned with only one side of life there are caricatures, life figures, and lost, defeated, greedy, avaracious cunning, shrewd, good, moralists, etc.. Almost every aspect of human mind she has studied well which she uses in her characters.

Sometimes, she uses characters as a medium to express her thoughts. They appear to be Hellman's spokesmen. The character who illustrates Hellman's point of view often has a confrontation scene with other characters. For example, Julie in Days to Come speaks to Whalen as Hellman to Hammet.

Hellman becomes one of the remarkable playwrights of 30's because of her art of characterization. Hellman creates her characters with special efforts and makes them unforgettable. Her skill of characterization is divided in two phases; the first is of active villainy, and the later is of passiveness of the participants. While focusing her attention on the characterization she does not neglect other aspects of the plays. Her plays show her greatness as playwright. Because of all these things, she becomes one of the important and unforgettable, woman playwright with her strength and determination.