William Somerset Maugham was born in Paris in 1874. As the family name shows, he may come from the Celtic lineage originally. From the family many great persons concerned with jurisprudence appeared from generation to generation. His grandfather was the founder of the Society of Jurisprudence, and wrote many essays. His father was also the famous lawyer, who was a counsellor of English Embassy to France, and practised in Paris.

According to what Maugham writes in *Summing Up*, his father was a man of very singular inclination, and travelled much to Turkey, Greece and Morocco; such places where many persons do not often visit. I feel his father’s romantic vein of blood in Maugham’s inclination of vagabond and adventurous spirit seeking for new experiences. He studied at the University of Heidelberg before taking up medicine in London. Since then, his travels have been frequent and extensive. He had been to India, Burma, Siam, Malaya, China, the South Seas, Russia, and the Americas, but his homes are made in London, Paris, and New York, and on the French Riviera which forms a kind of seasonable annexe to those three capitals.

In my opinion, his travels nourished his writings. A cosmopolitan society supplied the background for most of his fiction and his plays, but he is as much at ease with the outpost life of British and French colonies and with remote mission stations. There must be a huge number of people whose only knowledge of missionaries is derived from the most famous story of all Maugham’s short stories, *Rain*.

His mother lived in Paris for a long time. She loved music and literature very much and was a very beautiful woman of much delicate elegance.

When he was eight years old, he lost his mother. Soon afterwards, at the age of ten, he lost his father. So he became an orphan. Then he was taken to his father’s uncle at Witstable in Kent of England and entered the preparatory school attached to King’s School in Canterbury. At 13 he entered King’s School in Canterbury. It was his uncle’s hope and expectation that he should enter Oxford University and become a clergyman in the future. But his uncle was a pure philistine.

There is an episode in Philip’s childhood to which Maugham is probably referring when he says that, in *Of Human Bondage* he tried to describe his own loss of religious faith. Philip discovers that his uncle insists upon the literal belief that faith can remove the mountains. He prays that his clubfoot may be cured before the
beginning of the next school term. On the appointed day he wakes up confidently expecting to find himself cured. But he could not find any change in his foot at all. He was very much discouraged. At breakfast he asks for the explanation of it. The vicar explains that the failure to remove the mountains, must be due to the lack of faith. Philip concludes: 'I suppose no one ever has enough faith.' So he decides: 'He thought his uncle had been playing a practical joke on him.'

According to *Of Human Bondage*, the life at uncle's house was unpleasant and wretched mentally, materially, for Uncle was an earthly man. Then he began to take a sceptical attitude toward clergymen by despairing at Uncle's conducts. He suffered from the dilemma between the preaching at church and the common every-day life, that is, the real life. In boyhood, all boys and girls are full of sensibility. So it is quite natural that Philip should have suffered from the dilemma a great deal. The resistence, defeat, and disillusionment that Philip had at that time seems to be very touching to us. Besides the school life in King's School under the rigorous instructors was not good and pleasant for Maugham who was brought up in Paris, not healthy, short, weak, self-conscious and a little stammering.

Originally he had a very much liking for literature, and so had no intention of becoming a clergyman at all. Therefore he persuaded his uncle to allow him to go abroad for the purpose of studying in Heiderberg, Germany upon the small heritage of his father's fortune to him. And over there he enjoyed a very delightful life and deepened his original interest in literature more than before.

But his father's heritage being spent, he was compelled to earn his own living for himself. After his return to England, he decided to study medicine, admitting a little of his uncle's hope. So in 1892 he entered the medical school attached to the St. Thomas Hospital. He spent five years (from 1892, when he began, in the notebooks, his writing career) as a medical student at St. Thomas Hospital in London.

But at that time that he would become a doctor was far from his original intention. Accordingly he studied hard to become a writer by writing or reading novels. On the contrary that he entered the medical school, brought him a lot of profitable results for him. Because through medicine he not only learned to see the human life and human being scientifically, but also his literary creative instinct was stimulated a great deal by seeing the human sorrows, miseries, absurdities, pities, and the change of the expression upon the patient's face, hearing at a doctor's diagnosis, when he was allowed to see a lot of patients as a student apprentice in the consultation room.

Thus he understood the unbearable distress, impatience, and excitement from the worst illness of patients.

When sometimes he took charge of the poor quarters at Liza as a student apprentice for one year, he felt the mental tension which made him forget his physical fatigue.

His maiden work *Liza of Lambeth* was written based on the medical experiences
at Liza and published in 1897. This novel had considerable reputation mainly because of the novelty of the novelistic materials. Therefore Maugham had a great confidence in his original ambition that he would become a great writer. Immediately after his graduation he studied in Spain and felt the town of Sevira very attractive.

It is very surprising that we should find a sharp contrast in style and outlook between Maugham's early and late work. If *Liza of Lambeth* can be classed as a typical Late Victorian novel, the play *Lady Frederick* is a comedy that is typically Edwardian.

In my opinion, about this time he formed the clinical attitude toward literature. I think his literary attitude is rather clinicalism than cynicism. Because he keeps the dispassionate and systematic habit of observation which is more often found among descriptive scientists than among the creative artists.

This clinical attitude should not be regarded merely as a by-product of Maugham's medical training. It is almost certainly temperamental, inherent in the man, and nourished by his admiration for the 'objective school of French Literature' and especially for Maupassant, who was himself a literary disciple, and indeed a pupil, of Flaubert.

Clinicalism is closely related to those religious and philosophical opinions which Maugham has expressed from time to time with some explicitness, and it is an outlook which is often fostered, if not produced, by the habit of life which is commonly and conveniently called cosmopolitan.

The acquaintance with a diversity of standards, and manners, and morals which he obtained through travels, fully serves the clinicalism of his writing.

Maugham limits himself to the clinical practice of describing the case. There is nothing of a physician about him. He never suggests a cure or the probabilities of a cure or even that a cure might be desirable.

The clinical attitude is maintained, although precariously, because of an emotional intrusion, in the Maugham's most satisfying novel, *Cakes and Ale*.

Then for about ten years he applied himself to the human and literary cultivation, struggling with the poverty in company with the young men who are intending to become a writer or an artist mainly in Paris. It was about this time that he learned to see the reality of life straight and realized the realistic mind would see life as it is, throwing off the sentiment of youth, and romanticism completely. It was about this time also that he was much influenced by the naturalism of Flaubert, a French novelist. He adopted Flaubert's literary descriptive method. He writes about the general influence of the Flaubert's naturalism upon all the writers of fiction since his days and Flaubert's literary attitude as follows;

"One thing admits of little doubt: Flaubert created the modern realistic novel and directly has influenced all the writers of fiction since his day. Thomas Mann when he wrote Buddenbrooks, Arnold Bennett, when he wrote *The Old Wives' Tales*, Theodore Dreiser when he wrote *Sister Carrie* were following a trail that
Flaubert blazed. No writer that we know of devoted himself with such a fierce
and indomitable industry to the art of literature. It was with him as it is with
most authors, an activity of paramount importance, but one that allows for other
activities which rest the mind, refresh the body or enrich the experiences. He did
not think that to live was the object of life; for him the object of life was to
write; no monk in his cell ever more willingly sacrificed the pleasure of the
world to the love of god than Flaubert sacrificed the fullness and variety of life
to his ambition to create a work of art.” (Great Novelists and Their Novels p. 138)
Here I will write about the Maugham's realism in his works. He is always proud
of his dispassionate and composed view of life. He always tries to observe life itself
objectively and clinically with great efforts for all his life, and describes the result
of the objective observations faithfully in his novels. His novels start mainly from a
character. Even in The Painted Veil that he thinks it starting from story, he says as
follows;

“I think this is the only novel I have written in which I started from a
story rather than from a character. It is difficult to explain the relation between
a character and a plot. You can not very well think of a character in the void;
the moment you think of him in some situation, doing something; so that the
character and at least his principal action seems to be the result of a simulta-
neous act of the imagination. But in the case the characters were chosen to fit
the story I gradually envolved; they are constructed from persons I had long
known in different circumstances.” (The Preface of The Painted Veil p. Xi)
As above quoted, the characters of the persons who appear in the novel are not
a robot but an organism having the characters as a real existence. Maugham often
treats a very strange affairs in novels. In my opinion, it is mainly due to the result
that comes from the interrelation between characters and situations.
I think Maugham learned these kinds of characterization from Tolstoy. Because
in Great Novelists and Their Novels (p. 8), he says as follows;

“Like writers of fiction in general Tolstoy framed his character on persons
he knew, or knew of; but of course he used them only as models, and by the
time his imagination had worked upon them they had become creatures of his
own invention. The thriftless Count is said to have been suggested by his grand-
father, Nicholas Rostov by his father and the pathetic, charming Princess Mary
by his mother. In the two men who may be taken as heroes of War and Peace,
Pieere Bezukhov and Prince Andrew, Tolstoy is generally supposed to have had
himself in mind; and . . . .”
Though his novels are realistic and gloomy, Maugham's novels are very inter-
esting. I think it is due to the fact that he writes the truth of human nature. John
Brophy writes about this in his Somerset Maugham (p. I) as follows;

“It is one of Maugham's distinctions that he presents his stories as matters of
fact, with the minimum sacrifice of verisimilitude, and yet makes them readable.
He achieves this without relying on the detective story's device of mystification. Indeed, Maugham's stories often do without suspense, which is commonly regarded as an essential element of any good story. Nor does he rely upon topicality, as the political reporter does, or upon argument as the philosopher does, both of whom can create a kind of indirect suspense because the conclusion of their narrative may affect the reader's personal life. In a Maugham's story the reader's self-interest is not involved: nothing is presupposed in the reader but a potential interest in the diverse conventions and oddities of human beings."

His maiden novel *Liza of Lambeth* is the typical realistic novel. His realism is expressed not only in his realistic method of writing but also in his view of life itself. I think *The Summing Up* is the record in which he wrote the realistic process in his literary life in some sense.

By the way, his objective realism turned its edge to the common-sense in its conventional meaning, that is the virtue of the middle class. In Maugham's mind what seemed to be virtue, is nothing but the conventional custom and habit respecting the social respectability or the thing that shadows the falsehood and imposture. The critical mind which originally comes from the good sense, broke the harmony with the moderation supporting the good sense itself.

Maugham says about this in *Of Human Bondage* as follows;

"... It was a strange life, dark and tortured, in which men and women showed to remorseless eyes the evil that was in their hearts; a fair face concealed a depraved mind; the virtuous used virtue as a mask to hide their secret vice, the seeming-strong fainted within with their weakness; the honest were corrupt, the chaste were lewd, .....

*(Of Human Bondage* p. 142–143)*

We can see these kinds of things in his short story *The Ant and Grasshopper*. So I will write about the outline of the story and my opinions about it in a simple way.

Tom Ramsay is a troublesome fellow to his family. Looking back upon his past life, he began his life very decently: he went into business, got married and had two children. The Ramsays were perfectly respectable people and had every reason to suppose that Tom Ramsay would have a useful and honourable career. But one day, without warning, he announced that he didn't like work, and that he wasn't suited for marriage. Wanting to enjoy himself without listening to any expostulations, he left his wife and his office. But he certainly had a very good time. He made a steady income from his friends. But he always said that the money you spent on necessities was boring: the money that was amusing to spend, was the money you spent in luxuries. For this he depended on his elder brother George.

On the contrary George Ramsay is a serious and respectable man in a worldly conventional sense.

Once when Tom was nearly going to prison, George was terribly upset. George thought that if Tom were prosecuted, he would be surely convicted, so he could not allow his only brother to go to gaol to save appearances. Consequently his social
respectability made him settle the affair by a lot of trouble and money. The apparent good conduct of George's, is not out of his hearty affection and kindness to him, but out of his social respectability and hypocrisy.

To George's surprise, Tom became engaged to a woman who was old enough to be his mother and she died and left everything she had: half a milliom pounds, a yacht, a house in London and a house in the country.

Knowing this, George beat his clenched fist on the table, crying, "Its not fair, I tell you, It's not fair. Damn it it's not fair." George got angry about Tom's good fortune. For he thought that Tom was idle, worthless, dissolute and dishonourable rogue, and that George himself was a good man proper to receive good fortune. That is, he got angry at the dilemma of his fate in this world.

I think Maugham sympathizes with Tom. I will explain the reason by his opinion about *The Ant and The Grasshopper*.

*The Ant and The Grasshopper* is a useful lesson that in an imperfect world, industry is rewarded and giddiness punished. The ant spends a laborious summer gathering its winter store, while the grasshopper sits on a blade of grass singing to the sun. When winter comes, the ant has a lot of food but the grasshopper hasn't. Accordingly he goes to the ant and begs for a little food. Then the ant gives her classic answer: "What were you doing in the summer time?" Then the grasshopper says to her, "Saving your presence, I sang, I sang all day, all night." Then the ant says to the grasshopper decidedly, "You sang. Why, then go and dance."

Maugham says that his sympathies were with the grasshopper and for some time he never saw an ant without putting his foot on it, and he sought to express his disapproval of prudence and common-sense.

In my opinion, the ant having no prudence, commonsense and social respectability that we, human beings, have, she can say frankly to any one else what she thinks. We, human beings, lacks in the very frankness. It is commonsense, social respectability, vanity, hypocrisy that makes us forsake the very frankness. I think Maugham points out, and caluminates them in this short story.

From this we can see Maugham's humanistic attitude toward the human life and literature. I think this is one of the most important fundamental element of his view of Life.

The critical mind discloses the misery and humour within himself and then changes into the doubts to the human society, human world, and the ideals of the society. As we can see in *Of Human Bondage*, Maugham suffered from the physical deficiency. In his youth he thought that if he had a strong religious faith in god, and religious, pious life, his physical deficiency would be all right. And so he put it into practice, but the religious and pious life, and the earnest prayer to god every morning and every night could not do anything good about the physical deficiency. So he despaired and gave up his faith in god. Maugham had another reason in giving up the faith in god. That is to say, he realized the dilemma between his uncle's
preaching and his selfishness, and disliked his uncle very much. And besides he began to have the distaste for all the clergyman. In my opinion, the hypocrisy of his uncle's, aroused not so much indignation as distaste in Maugham's mind in his youth.

But these pessimism might have been in the inner part of his mind. The bitter experiences that he had at his uncle's house, together with his physical weakness and his original character made the habit of confining himself within himself apart from others.

In my opinion he is essentially a man of solitude and retrospective character. For instance in love affairs he was afraid of being laughed at and despised by others rather than absorbed in love. But his lonely solitude brought forth many dreams. They are sometimes very romantic but I think, in most cases sarcastic, sync, ironical, and gloomy mainly because of his retrospective character and physical weakness.

Maugham learned Freud's mental analysis and adopted this psychological theory in writing novels and short stories. *Lord Mountdrago*, one of the Maugham's short stories, is the short story that Maugham wrote by adopting the psycho-analytic method as a literary writing method. In this story he tries to dissect the human mind with the scientific knife. That is, Dr. Audlin, psycho-analyst, tries to cure the abnormal mind of Lord Mountdrago's. Lord Mountdrago is busy dealing with the important affairs of his government. He was greatly distressed by the bad dreams every night. So he was afraid of going to bed. Accordingly he consulted Dr. Audlin about this. Dr. Audlin succeeded in making him confess his bad dreams as they were, though with much difficulty. The confession of the bad dreams being of the great importance in this story, I will write one of his bad dreams below.

Lord Mountdrago dreamed that he was at a party at Connemara House. It being an official party, the King and Queen was to come there. When he went into a sort of cloakroom to take off his coat, he found a little man called Owen Griffiths, who was a Welsh Member of Parliament. He was surprised to see him there. For Owen Griffiths was too inferior, common, and vulgar to come there. He cut the little bounder and walked upstairs. Lady Connemara was very much surprised to see Lord Mountdrago when he shook hands with her, and then began to giggle. But he did not pay much attention to it, thinking that she was a very silly ill-bred woman. Among a number of the people there, he saw the German Ambassador talking with one of the Austrian Archdukes. Particularly wanting to talk to him, he went up and held out his hand. As soon as the Archduke saw him, he burst into a roar of laughter. Being deeply affronted, he looked him sternly, but the Archduke laughed the more. He would have abused him sternly, if the King and Queen had not come in then. Turning back on the Archduke, he stepped forward, and then, quite suddenly, he noticed that he had not got any trousers on. He was in short silk drawers, wearing scarlet sock-suspenders. He thought that it was quite natural that Lady Connemara had giggled and the Archduke had laughed. He awoke in cold sweat.
After telling the bad dream to Dr. Audlin, what he told to Dr. Audlin is worthy for us to know. Next day a strange thing happened in the lobby of the House of Commons. That is, to his surprise, he found that fellow Griffiths walking slowly past him, deliberately looking down at his legs and looking him in the face. He wondered how he could know the bad dream that he had the night before. He thought it impossible because it was only a dream.

I will write about the Maugham's sarcasticism. Maugham is generally said to be a sarcastic realist. In my opinion he is a clinical, satirical realist. But I will write about the reasons why he is generally called so. The first reason is that Maugham is a man of good sense in a certain sense. He looks at human being, human society, and nature as the practical liver planting his foothold strongly upon the reality, and keeps his own dispassionate attitude toward them. The second reason is that as a medical student he saw many patients and could look into the human nature very closely. He learned the real distress and disquiet of the poor personally. He participated in the war as a medical officer and went through all kinds of the naked bitter experiences in the battlefield. It might be said that it is mainly due to these experiences in the battlefield that he got the truth, the philosophy of life for himself. It goes without saying that in such a place as battlefield all men and women disclose truly naked human nature, throwing off all vanities, which in any other place could not be seen. It is in such a place that the true psychology of human mind could be understood in a true sense. In a word Maugham may be called a man of experience, I think. Maugham heard many precious life stories from a lot of patients at many army hospitals, which could not be heard in any other place, and so that he was well versed in the psychology of human mind. These experiences became the main source of the literary materials for him to write his novels, short stories, and dramas. The third reason is that Maugham was greatly influenced by Flaubert, Balzac, Tolstoy. The fourth reason is his original character and weakness in health.

These four reasons made him take the clinically sarcastic attitude toward life and literature.

In some sense, Maugham's novel may be the record of the result of his dispassionate observation. He would not like to write about the human actual life, based on the philosophical theories, and not like to adjust human behaviours to the theoretical ideas. Namely he wrote everything as it was. But as long as the report of his dispassionate observation is novels and literature, it can not take the from of an academic report in which many facts and theories are arranged orderly. Therefore not by arranging the result of his observation, but by describing the human real life in his own literary method of writing, he brings the truth of human nature into relief. Of all writers Maugham is best at describing it.

I think Maugham is a good story-teller. He can proceed on his story very well. He describes the human life not by the philosophical, ethical point of view, but by the faithful record of his dispassionate observation of human life. Therefore any
reader can read his novels and short stories with interest, feeling sympathy with them. Most of his short stories have no conclusion. In my opinion, the conclusion of Maugham's observations at home and abroad seems to be that his experiences are too diverse for any universal conclusion to be drawn from them at all. There are too many impressions of many separate facts in his mind. And these impressions of facts provide Maugham with the literary matter to write short stories and novels.

But at any rate Maugham's literature has an unique literary value in relating the truth of human nature.

In *Of Human Bondage* Philip Carey, main character, is excited to hear the old poet's view of life. Here I will summarize the poet's view of life. According to his view, life is after all like a Persian Blanket. There is no great significance in weaving patterns, however simple or complicated, without feeling the delight of weaving itself. Being compared with the vaguely immense universe and eternal life, the life of a human being is quite insignificant. Life passes regardless of the separate human ideals, sentiment and ethical view, in this world. We must look this real fact straight. For the true delight of human being comes from this. These nihilistic and objective views of life, I think, are the foundation of Maugham's life and the fundamental attitude toward life and literature. In this view of life he can see real life with cold calmness, even though he is engaging in his works. Meanwhile he can have the passion to discover his new sphere, constantly seeking for new experiences and adventures. Judging from this Maugham's attitude toward life, he is, I think, the great and objective literary person studying the true human nature.

On the contrary Maugham has something of aestheticism. So I will write about this. If he is originally nothing but a realist, he can not think of the spiritual phenomenon of Lord Mountdrago. In my opinion, these kinds of novelistic materials show that Maugham has something of aestheticism. I will show his aesthetic mind in his famous novel *Moon and Six Pence*.

In *Moon and Six Pence*, the pursuit of beauty is the main theme of the novel, I think. If this novel is essentially a realistic novel, the absolute beauty is only a vision. Strickenland's (the main character) aestheticism, his passionate pursuit of beauty, and faith in beauty, comes not from the realistic attitude but the romantic, aesthetic attitude. If life is noble and fine because of the existence of beauty, the realization of beauty is the best and greatest ideal of human being. Human being can make himself more than what he is by the realization of the ideal beauty. This thought is evidently idealistic and romantic.

This idealistic and romantic attitude of Maugham's reaches the climax in *Moon and Six Pence*. Beauty is life itself; the secret which makes everything to be filled up with life. Strickenland threw away everything to grasp this very beauty. The beauty for which Strickenland was looking, is god. The passion which drives him to the pursuit of beauty often makes all men forsake their lives. It is equal to the truth of faith.
Here I will write about Maugham's mystical thought. As we see in *Of Human Bondage* human being is not the weaver of patterns but the thing to be woven into them. Like the weaver of a Persian rug, a kind of god having good will and intention does make the various kinds of patterns of human being and life. In *Painted Veil* Maugham approaches the god more closely. I will write the outline of this novel.

The husband who was betrayed by his wife went to the remote land in China, that was being attacked by cholera then, to take his revenge in his wife. But after all he died of it, sighing out Goldsmith's “Elegy”: “The dog it was that died”. His wife who was possessed by the sexual desire and the worldly ambition was purified after having had many trials. The center of this novel is the process of her purification.

It may be Maugham's intense self-consciousness that brought forth, developed Maugham's self-effacement. As I have written in many parts of my papers; we can easily understand his self-consciousness by seeing the life of Philip's in childhood in *Of Human Bondage*.

While he has his own intense self-consciousness, he has a lot of intellectual part in his mind. He began to observe the surrounding world in order to realize the true source of his distress. Meanwhile seperating his feelings from his reason, he began to observe himself by his cold, calm, composed self-detachment. But this work was not easy for him, I think. For the great efforts with which Philip tried to repeat resistance, despair, and disillusionment seems to be very touching to us. After all, by regarding life as meaningless, he realized the significance of life only in its creative activities of beauty. But he was not contented with this conclusion. So he thought his self-detachment incomplete.

In *Summing Up* (XIX, XX), he repeats to say how important it is to throw away prejudice and to have open mind, and how difficult it is to get selfness. In my opinion, his works have their great important development mainly because there is a desperate fight of self-effacement. In other words, his creative activities, and his attitude toward life and literature begin with, and end in, the efforts of self-effacement. His fight and admiration of the self-effacement are the most important characteristics of all Maugham's works. Maugham's literature in which he built up the philosophy of conscious self-effacement, and realized the true virtue of it is unequalled in world literature as well as in English literature.

According to the Maugham's point of view, god is the essential part of the world and goodness is its essence, and beauty is its embodiment. We should make the efforts of this self-effacement, in order to get at god, to do goodness, to embody beauty. This is his religion, and his fundamental spirit toward literature.

In 1930 he published his masterpiece *Cakes and Ale* in which he disclosed the inside facts of the literary world. With his powerful prosaic mind which looks straight the human real life standing above the good and bad, and the plain literal style full of many stern cynical words, and his exquisite narrative talent, he got the
unequalled position and popularity as a novelist.

But his strong interest in human real life, united with his father's hereditary characters, drove him to many parts in Europe.

As soon as World War I happened in 1914 (just when he finished *Of Human Bondage*), he participated in the war as a medical officer by his own will. But while he was working in army hospitals, he was writing some novels.

Then his health being not well, he went over to America to rest himself. It was then that he went over to Tahiti in order to collect the literary materials of his great novel *Moon and six Pence*.

At the end of the war the Russian Revolution happening, with the important mission of continuing the war against Germany, he ventured to enter Russia by stealth, though he was ill. The experiences in those times appeared as the realistic novel *Ashenden* in 1928. At this time he studied the Russian literature. So we can see his appreciation and criticism of the Russian literature in *A Writer's Notebook*.

A little time after the war, he rested himself. But by his original travelling habit, he travelled to Malay, India, and China as he pleased. He wrote his mystic novel *The Painted Veil* in China, and likewise his mystic novel *Narrow Corner* in Malay.

I think it may be due to his strong desire constantly seeking for new adventurous experiences that he has been welcome as the leading popular novelist in England, America, France and all over the world.

In 1930 he enjoyed his delightful life in Riviera, France. He published his masterpiece *Theatre* in 1937, *Christmas Holiday* in 1939 and *Up At The Villa* in 1941. In 1938 he gave to the world *Summing Up* in which he wrote about life and literature, looking back upon his past long literary life.

**CONCLUSION**

In a word, Maugham is the literary person who has done his creative activities as a novelist, playwright, and essayist, depending upon his empirical truth of human life that he got from his various, abundant real experiences with the clinical attitude toward human society and human beings, and the dispassioned observations of human life and human society. Most of his novels and short stories have no conclusion. But I think it quite natural. Because his real various experiences are too abundant to draw the conclusion.

Being well versed in the practical real lines, such as political, economical literal world, Maugham treats them as his novelistic materials with his own satirical attitude. For instance in *Cakes and Ale* he writes about the inside facts of the literary world and literary writer.

Maugham's literature, having much interest in reality, may be generally called the realistic literature, but in my opinion, what we must not look over is that his literature is not completely the realistic literature but has much of aestheticism. For
instance, In *Moon and Six Pence*, Maugham makes the hero Strickenland pursue the beauty, art. By this we can understand his aestheticism. I think it is due to the fact that he was influenced by the aestheticism of Oscar Wilde. In my opinion, in *Moon and Six Pence*, the art that Strickenland pursued is god itself. Accordingly by this we can see his religious thought. And in *The Painted Veil* we can understand his mysticism in his literature. And besides in *Of Human Bondage* we can understand the thought of self-effacement.

Maugham adopted the theory of Freud's mental analysis in his literature. With this he analyzed human minds clinically.

At any rate Maugham studies and pursues the profound human nature which is at the bottom of human mind and heart, and god. So I oppose the general criticism of him that Maugham is only a popular writer. I think the general criticism of him quite wrong.

We can understand clearly this (that he is not a popular writer) by seeing the ten best novels that he chose out of many works of world literature.


He has lived from the times of aestheticism at the end of the nineteenth century, up to now, seeing the various visissitude of economical, political, social, and literary world. And he has had many experiences that human beings can have. Accordingly he learned to look at the human activities with his own dispassioned composure.

I think it is quite natural that his literary attitude should have the satirical inclination. For instance in *Lord Mountdrago*, he dissects the mind of Lord Mountdrago who is the great statesman, satirically with his own scientific knife.

In my opinion, Maugham's literature which is not bounded by the traditional theories of English literature, is, in a real sense, human literature. So it is too much to say that Maugham is one of the greatest literary writers in English literary world.