CHAPTER — I

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER 5

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But the author does not only write when he is at his desk; he writes all day long, when he is thinking, when he is reading, when he is experiencing; everything he sees and feels is significant to his purpose and, consciously or unconsciously, he is forever storing and making over his impressions. He cannot give an undivided attention to any other calling. He will not follow it to his own satisfaction or that of his employers.

Somerset Maugham, The Summing up

William Somerset Maugham (1874 – 1965) dedicated his entire life to the discipline of literature. He was born on 25 January 1874 at the British Embassy in Paris to Robert Ormond Maugham, solicitor to the British Embassy and Edith Mary. Maugham had three elder brothers and his mother died of consumption a few years later. "The small boy, who had lived a life of cossetted indulgence with two parents who cared much
for each other, was an orphan.¹ He was sent to England to be brought up by his uncle Henry MacDonald, a priest and his wife, a German-born lady called Barbara Sophia. Maugham later in his Introduction to the Traveller's Library wrote thus on the effect of his having been brought up in two countries: "The accident of my birth in France, which enabled me to learn French and English simultaneously and thus instilled into me, two modes of life, two liberties, two points of view, has prevented me from ever identifying myself completely with the instincts and prejudices of one people or the other."²

Maugham received his early education at King's school, Canterbury. After he finished his schooling, he went to Heidelberg in 1891 and attended the lectures of Kuno Fischer. He tried chartered accountancy for a couple of months, hated it and returned to Whitstable. In 1893, he became a student of St. Thomas's Hospital, London. He passed his exams and became a clerk in the out-patients' department, in 1897. About this period in his life Maugham said, 'In those three years I must have witnessed pretty well every emotion of which man is capable. It
appealed to my dramatic instinct. It excited the novelist in me".3

While working as an outpatients clerk in St. Thomas' Hospital, Maugham attended many confinements in the Lambeth slums of London and used the experience he gathered for writing Liza of Lambeth published in the year 1897. He made up his mind not to pursue a career as doctor and for the rest of his life devoted himself to the writing of novels, plays, short/stories and travelogues. "In all the main genres of prose-writing, including the theatre, there was nothing he touched that he did not adorn".4

Maugham's life spanned "a great deal of nineteenth and twentieth century history beginning with the last years of Queen Victoria, ... the Edwardian age, the First world war, the early rumbling of the Russian Revolution... the British Colonial administration in the Far East... and switching in the later chapters to the world of the French Riviera"5... Ted Morgan6 in his biography of Somerset Maugham lists his contemporaries to emphasize the length of his career. When he published Liza of Lambeth in 1897 his
contemporaries were George Moore, Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad and H.G. Wells. When he published *Of Human Bondage* in 1915 his contemporaries were Arnold Bennett, James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence and Theodore Dreiser. When *Cakes and Ale* was published in 1930, his contemporaries were Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Scott Fitzgerald, and Sinclair Lewis. Norman Mailer and Irwin Shaw were his contemporaries in 1943 when he published *The Razor's Edge* and in 1962 when he published his last book *Truly for my pleasure* his contemporaries were J.D. Salinger and John Updike.

A sample of the correspondence that Maugham received even at the age of eighty-two would enable us to understand his enduring literary reputation: "The Ceylon Daily News wanted twelve articles for fifty pounds. A Japanese theatrical group wanted to put on *The Sacred Flame* at ten dollars a performance... A Frenchman wanted to translate *The Land of Promise* in Esperanto to demonstrate that "the international language is perfectly suitable for literary works, both original and translated." Roland Petit wanted to direct a ballet based on "Rain", starring Zizi
Jeanmaire. Doubleday wanted to use "Lord Mountdrago" in an anthology of good reading. The B.B.C. wanted to print extracts from *The Moon and Sixpence* in their European bulletin. Graham Greene wanted to include "The Hairless Mexican" in the *Spy's Bedside Book*. Dr. Thomas Cross of the Neuropsychiatric Institute at the University of Michigan wanted to include "The Luncheon" in a Swedish School anthology. *The Ladies' Home Journal* wanted to pay five dollars for the use of one sentence from *The Summing Up*. There was no end to it.

Maugham not only enjoyed worldwide popularity; he was also extremely serious about his role as a creative writer. He wrote in *The Summing Up* that an artist by his gift of creation enjoys... catharsis, the purging of pity and terror, which Aristotle tells us is the object of art. For his sins and his follies, the unhappiness that befalls him, his unrequited love, his physical defects, illness, privation, his hopes abandoned, his griefs, humiliations, everything is transformed by his power into material, and by writing it he can overcome it. Everything is grist to his mill, from
the glimpse of a face in the street to
a war that convulses the civilised world,
from the scent of a rose to the death of
a friend. Nothing befalls him that he
cannot transmute into a stanza, a song or
a story, and having done this be rid of
it. The artist is the only free man... 

Maugham who never doubted the seriousness of his
calling was under-rated by many critics. His extreme
popularity was one of the reasons for the general critical
disfavour, especially in England. Walter Allen touched
upon this reason when he stated that "during the thirties
he was largely dismissed as Commercial because of his
popularity". In the same article Walter Allen gave a reason
from his point of view for Maugham's unpopularity in England.
He stated "Part of the answer lies in the English attitude
towards Naturalism. Naturalism the pure thing, never caught
on in England; and Maugham began as a Naturalist and has
remained one in some essential respects".

In many analyses on the growth of the English novel
Maugham is ignored or relegated to a footnote. "Elizabeth
Drew in The Modern Novel (1924) complains that Of Human
Bondage is heavy and monotonous, and she ignores The Moon and Sixpence. Pelham Edgar in The Art of the Novel accuses Maugham of offending good taste in his use of Gauguin and Hardy as models for characters. In Edward Wagenknecht's Cavalcade of the English Novel Maugham is granted recognition in one foot-note and in the Appendix he is mentioned in another note in which the literary historian acknowledges Maugham's competence but deplores the absence of philosophy, poetry and imagination.  

In the chapter on Maugham and the critics, Cordell lists the critics who were antagonistic to Maugham: "John Brophy finds the style of Cakes and Ale too informal, and as a result the writing is full of cliches and hackneyed phrases. Harrison Smith found The Razor's Edge written with superb and contemptuous arrogance... Cowley wonders why Maugham, who, during a career of nearly fifty years, has produced so little first-class work, is still read and reviewed seriously."

The most vitriolic of Maugham's detractors was Edmund Wilson who took the occasion of reviewing Maugham's Then and Now, a historical novel, to attack him blindly:
It has happened to me from time to time to run into some person of taste who tells me that I ought to take Somerset Maugham seriously. Yet I have never been able to convince myself that he was anything but second-rate. His new novel *Then and Now* seemed to me, all through its first half, one of the most tasteless and unreadable books from which I had ever hoped to derive enjoyment, and nothing but the necessity of supplying this review could ever have taken me through it. *Then and Now* is a historical novel: it deals with Machiavelli and tells the story of his mission, as envoy, from Florence, to the head quarters of Caesar Borgia, when the latter, in his campaign of domination, appeared to be at his most effective and most menacing. The way in which this promising subject is handled suggested, I was shocked to discover, one of the less brilliant contributions to a pre-school magazine. The admirers of Mr. Maugham will tell me that he is old and tired now, and that historical novels are not his forte—that is, it is quite unfair to judge him by *Then and Now*, which is one of the least of his books. I know that he has done better stories, but I am not sure that it is quite unfair to judge his quality by the quality of *Then and Now*. This quality is never, it seems
to me, that either of a literary artist or of a first-rate critic of morals; and it may be worth while to say at a moment when a tendency seems to be prevalent to step up Mr. Maugham's standing into the higher ranks of English fiction.  

That Edmund Wilson's attack on Maugham was the result of his prejudice to him is testified to by the editor of the Critical Heritage series on Maugham: "Wilson's attack on Maugham was the product of prejudice, if not actual malice... (This) is suggested by Wilson's later comment on his own review: "you know, I think I settled that fellow's hash.' And do you know, I have never read Of Human Bondage, Cakes and Ale, and The Razor's Edge?"  

To John Raymond Maugham would not interest critics in future as he is already so much there in his work, "explicit, lucid, unmysterious". To this he adds that "one of Maugham's greatest drawbacks as a writer is that, except in rare instances (Driffield, Elliott Templeton), he remains outside his own characters."
John Raymond and a few other critics tried to find the reasons behind Maugham's unpopularity with other critics. He attributes the critical disfavour that Maugham suffered from as being due to his lack of "any wound".

"Thanks for Edmund Wilson's penetration, it is now recognised that in the make-up of a creative writer a good-sized wound is essential. The contemporary common reader has eagerly caught on to the idea that genius and disease, like strength and mutilation, may be inextricably bound up together. Dickens had his father, Zola his mother-complex, Proust his asthma (caused the psychologists tell us, by his hunger for affection), Kafka had his T.B. Mr. Maugham has long enjoyed fame, riches, excellent health and a swimming pool on the Rivera."

Maugham's unpopularity with the critics might have also been due to his tireless fighting with all forms of snobbery. Ivor Brown, acknowledges this aspect of Maugham's works: "All kinds of intellectual snobbery were offensive to him... From many of his plays and stories, one might conclude that Maugham was exclusively concerned with two widely contrasted types of character: the settlers and sailors who roughed it in the Far East, the mayfair
rich who perfectly tailored and costumed, moved smoothly from their elegant dinners to their sexual intrigues...
The fawners and flatterers he ridiculed. The intellectual snobs he detested. Moreover, he did not omit the middle-class from his scrutiny.¹⁶

Maugham's belief in "the linear logic of narrative"¹⁷ made him narrate stories with a beginning middle, and end and hence was scoffed at by critics who praised Joyce or Woolf. Maugham expressed his faith in readerly "well-made" novels in a letter he wrote to a woman who wanted him to advise her son: "You will not have failed to notice that many novels are written which have every possible excellence and yet are quite unreadable. I hope you will not think it a wilful eccentricity when I tell you that I look upon readableness as the highest merit that a novel can have... a good novel should have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and all its parts should be duly balanced."¹⁸

Cordell's question in his study of Maugham is based on this factor—Maugham's belief in a well-constructed novel. "Is it this competence, his old-fashioned predilection for the well-made narrative with a beginning, middle, and an
end, with recognisable characters and appropriate dialogue... that makes him seem unimportant to so many critics?" 19

In sifting the merits of Maugham as a literary artist one has to fight Maugham too as he under-rated his own ability as a writer. He wrote in The Summing Up, "I have a clear and logical brain, but not a very subtle nor a very powerful one. For long I wished it were better... I have painted easel pictures... not frescoes". 20

The detractors of Maugham on the whole based their attack on the linear arrangement of narratives with a beginning, middle, and end; their attack was based on their prejudice to his enormous popularity and readableness. They forget the fact that readableness did not stand in the way of crediting a work with literary seriousness in the past, even as recently as the works of Dickens or Jane Austen.

While it is true that Maugham wrote two pot-boilers like Up at the Villa and The Magician - the rest of his prodigious output in the realm of fiction, drama, and travelogues smack of true literary seriousness. Maugham's detractors are motivated by their weak personal distrust of impeccably designed narratives. They pay little attention
to Maugham's experimentation with technique, in particular, his management of point of view, to suit the themes of his works, which explore the whole gamut of human emotions.

If Maugham had his detractors, he had his band of admirers too—other than those who judged his works impartially—like W.H. Auden.

W.H. Auden's commentary on Maugham's *Writer's Notebook*, says:

A career as long, as productive and as successful as Somerset Maugham's earns a writer his membership in that select and curious group which Jean Cocteau has aptly named *Les monstres sacrés*. When Maugham publishes a new book, therefore, it would be dishonest of the critic to pretend that he either can or wishes to read it as if it were by an unknown writer or to judge it by aesthetic standards alone; in addition to any literary merit, it has inevitably and I think, quite properly a historic interest as the act of a person in whom one has long been interested... art, like
friendship, is personal that is, unique, and no writer is replaceable by or even comparable with another. Thank you for having given us so much pleasure for so long, for having never been tedious.  

S.N. Behrman in his article attributes Maugham's amazing worldwide popularity to his personality revealed in his works: "... his personality comes through in all his works and fascinates his readers, as it does those who have encountered it in person. It is a personality at once frankly revealed and withdrawn... he manages to be at once candid and enigmatic!" Lorin Calder in his study of Maugham is sure of his immortality because of his arresting story-telling ability and handling of universally applicable themes: "Maugham will survive to be read by future generations because he is, as he always claimed, basically the story-teller, having his affinities with the tellers of tales around camp-fires ages ago... His themes of love, hate, murder, suicide, belief and doubt are timeless and his treatment of man's search for liberation may become more significant a humanity becomes more controlled by
technology and circumstance". Glenway Wescott is sure that "eight or ten of his books are better than almost anyone's today and will continue to be read for many years to come. There will be no twentieth century novelist who will be so widely read in the 21st century". Christopher Morley, an American reviewer states, "I have always envied Mr. Maugham for his eminent readability". Karl G. Peiffer attributes Maugham's fame as a writer to his "smooth flowing euphonious style, the bits and pieces of autobiography that escape his reticence, the pungent flavour of the Maugham personality and uncompromising integrity": The writer of an unsigned leading article in an issue of the Times Literary Supplement concludes that "his writings have added enormously to the sum of human pleasure": His style is singled out for praise by J.D. Scott when he praises Maugham's "force and swiftness", and the "dramatic leap of his short sentence", and Christopher Isherwood draws our attention to a quality in Maugham's writing, "the quality of giving reassurance!"

N.S. Pritchett in his review of The Mixture as Before speaks the truth when he states, "accomplishment has always been sneered at in English letters and
readability has become a sneer too... by them and by the combination of bitterness and tolerance... he has managed to convince an enormous public which has grown more and more embittered, disillusioned, tolerant and even frivolous, that he is their man... His scepticism has the virtues of pity, tolerance, humanity, an eye for humbug and a love of the diversity of human nature". Cyril Connolly is confident that "if all else perish, there will remain a story-teller's world from Singapore to the Marquesas that is exclusively and for ever Maugham, a world of verandah and prahu which we enter, as we do that of Conan Doyle's Baker street, with a sense of happy and eternal homecoming."  

In short Maugham's admirers praise his ability to tell a good story but they ignore his manipulation of the narrator-device to serve the thematic demands of his works. As a result they are not able to pin-point the precise nature of his literary merits. His critics on the other hand, have largely attacked his works because of their dislike for his enormous popularity, readability, and his predilection for narratives with a beginning, middle, and end. They have ignored the truth that popularity did not
stand in the way of a writer's claim to serious literary consideration in the past.

Maugham's reputation has endured in the nineteen eighties as is testified to by the re-prints of his works. He has "weathered rejection slips, poor sales, and bad reviews. He had kept going with a singleness of purpose that few could match."

A writer can be readerly and at the same time can offer his readers some insight into life - leave them in some degree enlightened. Maugham is one such writer. By making use of the first or third person narratorial device, he reveals human beings grappling with fundamental emotions like love, hatred, and jealousy in a variety of settings - London, Samoa, Tahiti, Australia, Russia, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Borneo etc.

"His works have afforded topics for dozens of doctoral dissertations, many of them excellent, in American and German Universities, and uncounted Masters' theses. The question that Maugham poses his critics is this: "The critic I am waiting for is the one who will explain why, with all my faults, I have been read for so many years by so many people." My stories and novels have been translated not only into all
European languages, but into Turkish, Arabic, Japanese, and into several of the Indian dialects... I should have thought it would interest a critic to inquire into what qualities my work must have in order to interest such vast numbers of people in so many countries".34

Maugham when he elaborated on the narrator persona and his interest in him unconsciously gave the key to this puzzle. He elaborated in his Introduction to Ten Novels and their Authors about the various kinds of point of view:

There are two main ways in which a novel may be written. Each has its advantages, and each its disadvantages. One way is to write it in the first person, and the other is to write it from the stand-point of omniscience. In the latter, the author can tell you all that he thinks is needful to enable you to follow his story and understand his characters. He can describe their emotions and motives from the inside... (there is) a sub-variety of the method of omniscience. In this the author is still omniscient, but his omniscience is concentrated on
a single character, and since the character is fallible the omniscience is not complete... The device, besides, gives an air of verisimilitude to what he writes... to tell the story in the first-person has also certain advantages. Like the method adopted by Henry James, it lends verisimilitude to the narrative and obliges the author to stick to his point:... There is ... a variety of the novel written in the first person... In this variety, the author tells the story himself, but he is not the hero and it is not his story that he tells:... His role is not to determine the action, but to be the confident, the mediator, the observer of those who do take part in it. Like the chorus in a Greek tragedy, he reflects on the circumstances which he witnesses; he may lament, he may advise, he has no power to influence the course of events. He takes the readers into his confidence, tell him what he knows....

It is Maugham's adroit management of point of view in keeping with the story he has to tell, that invests his stories with
artistic excellence and which at the same time has won for hi m an enormous number of readers in all parts of the world.

A few critics on Maugham have devoted their attention to this aspect of his works. Charles Lee praises his narrative technique and his use of the narrator persona in his review of the short story collection *creatures of circumstance*:

'Maugham not only has good stories to tell, he knows how to tell them well. His narrative technique has about it the grace of all finely executed art. He unreels his spell with the same well-lubricated assurance as the most cunning angler does his line; and the quarry stays hooked... without his perspicacity, his suave searchings of motives, his ironic asides, in short his expressed or implied readings of life, his short stories would lose their unique authority and substance. It takes a special point of view, perhaps an old Roman philosopher's detachment fused with modern psychological probing, to observe coolly and wisely that life's bus is no more wayward than its passengers.'
Even Walter Allen, usually thrifty in his praise of Maugham admits the magnetic power of Maugham's point of view: "with Maugham, one comes back always to the point of view. It is not the most agreeable in the world, and its limitations are obvious: yet... in three to four novels, some short stories and three plays, it has provided a vision that is compelling and lingering".  

Curtis observes "you can always tell one of his books in outward appearance by the spiky wigwam... that sits on the binding, and in inward appearance by the presence in the narrative of Maugham's professional self, a creature who is witty, courteous, gentlemanly, commonsensical, sceptical, agnostic, hedonistic, totally absorbed in the technique of his craft."  

While critics generally applaud Maugham's use of the narrator device there is no full-length examination of the use of the narrator device but for Robert Lorin Calder's examination of the Cosmopolitan aspects of the Maugham persona and Burt D Forrest's study of his novels from a psychological perspective. Calder dwells on the cosmopolitan aspect of the narrator persona as its most dominant feature: "The most
original quality of the Maugham persona is his cosmopolitanism. The geographical and social range of the stories is remarkable, and the ease with which the narrator seems to move in various milieus - the south seas, the Far East, the Riviera, the prison colonies, the ocean liners, or Mayfair parties - helps to draw the reader into the stories.\textsuperscript{39}

To Burt D. Forrest "the dramatized narrator of Maugham's fiction, as it touches on and gains strength from the psychological depths of his personality (inferiority, compensation, social interest, etc) ultimately becomes one of the finest achievements in modern British Literature.\textsuperscript{40}

To sum up, Maugham's admirers are content to praise his ability to tell a good story. While they express gratitude to him for having given them a great deal of pleasure by his writings they grant him only the praise that he granted himself—that he has achieved his goal of providing entertainment to grateful readers. They judge him with James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, and Henry James in their minds and never by what he wanted to do and did. They seem to be governed in their criticism by the idea that a work of art which affords pleasure to many loses partly its serious literary quality.
That this is not so is proved by the fact that a compilation of reviews based on Maugham's works has found its place in *The Critical Heritage* series. They fail to appreciate his artistic excellence which is a product of the perfect correlation of form and theme in his works. Such a lacuna can be filled only by a systematic analysis of the narratorial stances of Maugham in relation to his themes.

It is the intention of this researcher to analyse Maugham's use of the narratorial device to explore universal human emotions in his novels and short stories. Such an analysis which would examine the perfect blending of his technique and theme can explain at once his literary strength and tremendous popularity.
Section II

A brief look at the history of critical enquiry would help us choose the model that could best serve in analysing the narratorial device of Maugham.

It was Aristotle's *Poetics* that made a vital contribution to traditional criticism of literature and his ideas continue to be used in some form or the other even today. He believed that art must correspond to life and achieve a certain structural order. He contrasted the poet and historian and praised the poet. To him, the historian reflects the particular and the factual, while the poet represents the universal and the general.

Traditional critical approaches to literature were either Historical - Biographical or Moral-philosophical. The Historical - Biographical approach regards a literary work "as a reflection of its author's life and time or the life and times of the characters in the work". The Moral-philosophical approach was practised by classical Greek and Roman critics. The practitioners of this approach believed that the basic function of literature was to teach morality and to probe philosophical issues. Neo-classical critics like Pope
followed this approach. Early Romantic poets like Blake believed that observation and experience were not enough to make a poet; the poet was also a visionary. In the middle of the eighteenth century Coleridge (1772-1834) proposed his conception of "a dynamic imagination as the shaping power and unifier of vision - a conception he had acquired from his studies of the German philosophical idealists: Kant, Hegel, and Schelling".43

Late Victorian and Georgian criticism regarded poetry as a pure expression of emotion. Most important of such poetics was that of I.A. Richards, based on the differences between the emotive and referential functions of language. He belongs to the school of the New Critics who revolted against the "older philological, historical, and biographical approach to literary works of art".44

The New critics felt that the readers should be given importance and it is their response which must be given priority irrespective of the intentions of the author.

The first reaction to New criticism came in the nineteen forties and sixties from the Chicago Aristotelians who stressed plot, theme and genre rather than a close study of the text.
The autonomy of the text which New criticism talked about gave place to subjective criticism which emphasised the role of the reader. One such approach is the phenomenological approach which places in parenthesis everything outside the text, and which reduces the text to a pure manifestation of the writer's consciousness. This in turn paved the way for the Reader - Response Criticism which sees meaning as a result of the interaction between the text and the reader.

Structuralism is a dominant area of enquiry in the twentieth century. Fundamental insights on which structuralism is based are those provided by Ferdinand de Saussure and Claude Levi Strauss. In his introduction to *Anthropologie Structurale*, Levi-Strauss calls upon anthropologists to discover "the unconscious structure underlying each institution and each custom, in order to obtain a principle of interpretation valid for other institutions and other customs".²⁵ Saussure's objective was to study the language system and he showed by observing and studying individual utterances (parole) that there is a system governing them called *langue*. Structuralism aims at forming a poetics or the science of literature from a
study of literary works. It takes for granted the death of the author and looks upon texts as self-organized linguistic structures.

Structuralist narrative theory is known as narratology. It takes language (langue) as its model. The structure of a sentence is seen as the model of the structure of narrative. Propp, Greimas, Gerard genette and many others have analysed various aspects of the narrative.

Propp's *Morphology of the Russian Folktale* is based on the hypothesis that in mythical traditions a multiplicity of characters contrasts with a markedly small number of functions. Function is defined by Propp as an act of a character defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of action. Propp gave the following example to illustrate his theory:

A King gives an eagle to a hero. The eagle carries the hero away to another kingdom 2. An old man gives sucenko a horse. The horse carries sucenko to another kingdom 3. A sorcerer
gives Ivan a little boat. The boat takes Ivan to another kingdom. A princess gives Ivan a ring. Youngmen appearing from out of the ring carry Ivan to another kingdom.

Propp concluded that functions and not motifs should be considered the basic units of the folktale. He felt that different motifs are capable of conveying one and the same action in the sequence of events and can therefore be traced back to smaller units.

He reached the conclusion that thirty-one functions can be identified in fairy-tales, and in addition the sequence in which they appear is constant. To him a fairy-tale is understood to be every story which moves from function A (villainy) by way of intermediate function to the problem-solving function W (Wedding). The seven functions preceding A are to be considered introductory. The function chain A - W Propp calls a sequence. Each appearance of an A (villainy) indicates a new sequence. A fairy-tale can consist of several sequences. Besides sequence-forming functions Propp made an analysis of the role of motivations and repetitions of functions as well as
the connections between them.

Claude Bremond agreed that Propp's functions were basic units in determining narrative structures, but unlike Propp who considered narrative as an unilinear chain he considered it as an interlacing of sequences, Bremond did not approve of Propp's "exclusive concern" for syntagmatics i.e. the succession of actions on the time co-ordinate. To him, Propp fails to take into account the paradigmatic aspect of the logic of action according to which several logical possibilities remain open when a function is inserted. Bremond illustrated his idea by stating that the function battle for instance, can entail defeat, victory, victory and defeat, or neither victory nor defeat. Bremond also introduced the concept of role and he defined function, "not only by an action... but by the position and relation of a person-subject and process-predicate; or in other words he stated that the structure of the narrative rests, not in a sequence of actions but in the constellation of roles".47

A.J. Greimas conceived of the ideal postulates of a narratology as a combination of the paradigmatic - oriented model of Levi-Strauss and the syntagmatics - oriented model of Propp. He analysed myths in addition to the fairy-tales
that Propp analysed.

Tzvetan Todorov, the fourth contributor to structuralism in France, was also influenced by Propp and Levi-Strauss. He was also influenced by Russian Formalism. The distinction between fabula (story) and sjuzet (discourse) not common in French narratology, does find a place in the work of Todorov. He proposed a dichotomy of 'fable' and "sjuzet".

To Gerard Genette "narrative is governed not by any relation to reality but by its own internal laws and logic." He distinguished three levels in narrative discourse:

The story (histoire) which is recounted
the account (recit)
the narration (the way in which the account is presented)

He based his discussion of these three aspects on the model of the three features of the verb in language: tense, mood and voice. "Tense stands for the temporal relations between story and recit; mood relates to perspective, scene and narrative; voice concerns the relation of the narrator to the audience."
Critical enquiry has taken various forms in the twentieth century: Russian Formalism, which originated in Moscow in 1920 and which regards literature as essentially a semiotic or linguistic phenomenon - a system of signs, the poets' job being the manipulation of language rather than a representation of reality; Rhetorical criticism, which arose as a corrective to New Criticism in the second half or the twentieth century which preserves the New critic's interest in the work but at the same time directs attention on the author and audience; Psycho-analytic criticism with its emphasis on the unconscious impulse; the Arche-typal approach which seeks to uncover "the collective unconscious" which underlies the production of a work of art; Marxism which studies works of art on the basis of their contribution to the understanding of the goals of society; Feminist criticism based on women's attempt at self-definition and Post-Structuralism based on the indeterminacy of meaning.

Several books and articles have been written on the role of point of view in narrative fiction based on various critical traditions. One of the "distinctive features of narrative is its source, the narrator... narrators are typically trusted by their addresses."
seeking and being granted rights to a lengthy contribution... narrators assert their authority to tell, to take up the role of knower, or entertainer, or producer, in relation to the addressee's adopted role of learner or consumer. To narrate is to make a bid for a kind of power".51

Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction is written in the tradition of rhetorical criticism which 'considers the interactions between the work, the author, and the audience'.52 "Like Aristotle Booth is interested in rhetoric at the level of structures higher than the word. He believed that an adequate rhetoric of fiction would have to account for different kinds of narrator and narration to be found in novels".53

Booth's typology of narrators provides us the most satisfying model for analysing the strategies employed by Maugham to hold the attention of a world-wide audience and offers at the same time an enduring analysis of fundamental human emotions. As Booth's "subject is the technique of non-didactic fiction viewed as the art of communicating with the readers—the rhetorical resources available to the writer of epic, novel, or short story as he tries, consciously or unconsciously, to impose his
fictional world upon the reader it would help us to analyse the ploys used by Maugham in creating his fictional world. His rich tabulation of narratorial stances offers this writer a roomy frame-work to study Maugham's use of the device.

Briefly summarised it has the following features:

1. **Person:**— The most over-worked distinction is that of person. To say that a story is told in the first or the third-person will tell us nothing of importance unless we become more precise and describe how the particular qualities of the narrators relate to specific effects.

2. **Dramatized and Undramatized narrators:**—

   The most important differences in narrative effect depend on whether the narrator is dramatized in his own right and on whether his beliefs and characteristics are shared by the author. Even the most deficient narrator has been dramatized as soon as he refers to himself as "I".

3. Every novel has an implied author who is the author's second self and even in novels without a dramatized narrator he stands behind
the scenes, whether as stage-manager, as puppeteer, or as an indifferent God, silently paring his finger-nails.

4. The third-person centres of consciousness through whom writers filter their vision are the most important narrators in modern novels. They are either highly polished mirrors reflecting complex mental experience or can be turbid sense-bound camera eyes of much fiction since James.

5. Dramatized narrators can either be observers (the "I" of Tom Jones) or they can be narrator agents like Nick in The Great Gatsby who produce some measurable effect on the course of events.

6. Narrators whether first or third person, can relate their tales primarily as scene or as summary or as a combination of the two.

7. In addition to relating the events as scene or summary narrators can use commentary that is a. Ornamental b. commentary that serves a rhetorical purpose but is not part of the dramatic structure and c. Commentary that is integral to the dramatic structure.
8. Narrators whether observers or narrator agents can be either self-conscious-narrators aware of themselves as writers (Tom Jones, Tristam Shandy) and narrators or observes who rarely discuss their writing chores (Huckleberry Finn) or who seem completely unaware of the fact that they are writing, thinking, speaking, or reflecting a literary work.

9. Whether they are involved in the action as agents or as participants, narrators and third-person reflectors differ markedly according to the degree and kind of distance that separates them from the author, the reader, and the other characters of the story. "In any reading experience there is an implied dialogue among author, narrator, the other characters and the readers: Each of the four can range in relation to each of the others, from identification to complete opposition, on any axis of value, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and even physical."

9.

a. The narrator may be more or less distant from the implied author. The distance may be moral intellectual, physical or temporal—most authors are distant from even the most
knowing narrator because they know how everything turns out in the end.

b. The narrator may be more or less distant from the characters in the story he tells - morally, intellectually and temporally as is the case with the mature narrator and his younger self in Great Expectations; morally and intellectually like the narrator of The Quiet American or morally and emotionally like the narrator of Maupassant's Necklace.

c. The narrator may be more or less distant from the reader's own norms physically and emotionally (Kafka's Metamorphosis) or morally and emotionally (Pink in Brighton Rock).

10. Modern writers make use of narrators whose characteristics change in the course of the works they narrate.

11. The implied author may be more or less distant from the reader. The distance may be moral, intellectual or aesthetic.

12. The implied author may be more or less distant from other characters. The distance may be on any axis of value.

13. A narrator is reliable when he speaks for or acts in
accordance with the norms of the work and unreliable when he does not.

14. Reliable and unreliable narrators can be supported or corrected (The Sound and the Fury) or uncorrected by other narrators.

15. Narrators can be either privileged to know what could not be learned by strictly natural means or limited to realistic vision and inference. Complete privilege is known as Omniscience.

16. The most important single privilege is that of obtaining an inside view of another character... Narrators who provide inside views differ in the depth and axis of their plunge. For example, all authors of stream of consciousness narration presumably attempt to go deep psychologically, but some of them deliberately remain shallow in the moral dimension.

The typology of narrators offered by Roger Fowler in his Linguistic Criticism complements Booths' tabulation of the narrational stances by making "plentiful reference to linguistic features that are said to be
representative and constitutive of the different narrative modes.  

To Fowler, point of view may be interpreted in three ways:

1. Spatio-temporal point of view - Temporal point of view refers to the impression which a reader gains of events as moving rapidly or slowly in a continuous chain or isolated segments; the spatial dimension corresponds to the viewing position in the visual arts.

2. Ideological point of view - refers to the system of beliefs, values, and categories by reference to which a person or society comprehends the world.

3. Psychological point of view - Psychological point of view concerns the question of who is presented as the observer of the events of a narrative - whether the author or a participating character and the various kinds of discourse associated with different relationships between author and character.

The basic distinction in this type of point of view is that between internal and external
perspective. When an author constructs his narration, he can choose either of the following two options: he may structure the events and characters of the narrative through the deliberately subjective viewpoint of some particular individual's consciousness, or he may describe the events as objectively as possible.

There are four types of these two modes of narration:

1. **Type A**: It is internal narration from a point of view within a character's consciousness manifesting his or her feelings about and evaluations of the events and characters of the story. It is the most subjective form of internal perspective and can be either first-person narration by a participating character or third-person narration strongly coloured by personal markers of the character's world-view including internal monologue.

2. The first-person variant is distinguished deictically by prominent use of first-person singular pronouns and sometimes by the use of present tense.

3. The presence of a participating narrator is highlighted by foregrounded modality stressing his judgements and
Feelings and thoughts of the character narrator are referred to by the use of verba sentiendi. Choices of diction may individualize the narrator as a certain psychological type or a member of a certain social class. Finally, syntactic patterns, transitivity may endow the character with a certain ideological position.

1. **Type B** is a type of internal narration from the point of view of someone who is not a participating character but who has a knowledge of the feelings of the character - the so-called omniscient author.

2. It is third-person narration by an omniscient author who claims knowledge of what is going on in the character's heads, reporting their motives and feelings.

3. Deixis and modality are basically the property of the author and narrator who can thus locate himself in an ideological and spatio-temporal position independent of the characters.

4. To a greater or lesser degree, the author gives an account of the mental processes, feelings, and perceptions of the characters so that the chief linguistic marker of this variant of internal narration
is the presence of *verba sentiendi* detailing intentions, emotions, and thoughts.

5. By the device of transforming into third-person internal perspective in which the character's subjective feelings in Type A, and interweaving with and framed by the author's account of the character's inner state in type B, a writer is able to juxtapose two sets of values, to imply a critique of the character's views without the direct judgement which an external perspective would provide. To Fowler such sensitive intermingling of the two internal viewpoints is found in Joyce's *Dubliners*.

1. Type C is External narration which relates the events and describes the characters, from a position outside of any of the protagonists' consciousness, with no privileged access to their private feelings and opinions.

2. It is the most impersonal form of third-person narration, impersonal in two respects: 1) In relation to the characters, it refuses to report their inner processes, and so *verba sentiendi* are as much as possible banished from the discourse: it claims to be objective in not offering to report what an unprivileged observer could not see.
3. It is impersonal in relation to the author or narrator, declining to offer judgements on the character's actions - this authorial objectivity is indicated by avoidance of evaluative modalities.

4. **Type C** is the formula for the most neutral, impersonal type of third-person narration, which we associate with epic among the older literatures and in the modern period, with the ideal of objective realism associated with news-reporting.

1. **Type D** is a type of external narration which stresses the limitations of authorial knowledge and the inaccessibility of the characters' ideologies.

2. In contrast to the impersonal type C, the persona of the narrator is highlighted perhaps by first-person pronouns and certainly by explicit modality. By these means, the impression is created of a speaker who controls the telling of the story and who has definite views on the world at large and on the actions and characters in the story.

3. Words of estrangement 'apparently' 'evidently', 'as if', 'perhaps' as well as metaphors and comparisons pretend that the author or often one character observing another
does not have access to the feelings and thoughts of the characters.

4. They emphasize an act of interpretation, an attempt to reconstruct the psychology of the character by reference to the signs that can be gleaned by external observation.

5. Verba sentiendi may be used but only if introduced by words denoting appearance or speculation.

6. Texts which use this device also refer considerably to the physical characteristics and gestures of the characters.

7. A more extreme form of external type D - uses words of estrangement accompanied usually by metaphors, to alienate the character, setting him at a distance, without sympathy. The exaggerated refusal to go below the surface, the ostensible guesses at what unimaginable motives might lurk beneath, present the characters as inhuman beyond the comprehension of an ordinary human belief.

The typology of narrators offered by Booth helps us to analyse the strategies used by Maugham to hold the attention of a global audience and it also helps us to appreciate the artistic excellence of his
works by raising questions like the following: "what can we know of the speaker or narrator? To whom is he allegedly speaking? What is the nature of that addressee, that audience? What setting is established or implied? How are we asked to respond to the situation created? Are we being asked to make a distinction between the ethos (the ethical stance of the author) and the statements of the central character?"

Roger Fowler's linguistic approach complements Booth's by identifying the linguistic features that characterise internal or external narration thus enabling us to analyse the kind of language used by Maugham while adopting a particular narratorial stance and its artistic implication.

Briefly the following is the set of criteria derived from Booth and Fowler:

Narrators may assume a third-person or first-person narratorial stance and may be thus dramatised as characters or undramatised. Besides the narrator the reader of a book can 'reconstruct the picture of the implied author from the text.' The distance between the narrator and the implied author or the narrator and the readers can be moral intellectual or temporal. Dramatised narrators can be either observers or narrator agents who
produce some effect on the course of events. Tales can be related as summary or scene on both. Commentary of the narrator can serve an integral purpose in the dramatic structure or it can serve an ornamental or rhetorical purpose. Narrators can be self-conscious or not and they may be supported or unsupported by other characters. They may be reliable or unreliable. Narrators may also change in the course of the narrative. They may be privileged to know everything about the characters or limited to realistic interpretation.

There are two types of narrative modes - Internal narration and External narration. Internal narration can be either Type A - which is intrusive, limited and character-based or Type B - which is intrusive, unlimited and omniscient. The linguistic features which denote Type A are the use of first-person pronouns, verba sentiendi, and modality to highlight the presence of the narrator. The linguistic features which indicate Type B are Deixis, modality and Verba Sentiendi denoting intentions, emotions, and thoughts. External narration can either be Type C - which denotes a detached, limited, impersonal Hemingwayan stance or Type D - a detached limited and estranged stance.
The linguistic feature of Type C is the avoidance of evaluative modalities and that of Type D is the use of first-person pronouns to highlight the persona of the narrator and the use of explicit modality.

The establishment of such a set of parameters is useful in undertaking an analysis of Maugham's narratorial stances in relation to his themes very effectively as it enables the analyser to study the text steering clear of biographical facts concerning Maugham's life. Only when untempted by the desire to explain away every thematic strand as being traceable to Maugham's temperament would we be able to appreciate the artistic excellence of his works. Such an analysis of his texts is made possible in the chapters that follow by the criteria established in this chapter.
NOTES

CHAPTER I


5 Ibid., p.10.


7 Ibid., pp.573 - 574.


11 Ibid., p.215.

12 Edmund Wilson, "Somerset Maugham and an Antidote", *New Yorker*, XXII, 8 June, 1946, pp.96-97.


15 Ibid., pp.101-102.


30. V.S. Pritchett, Nation, 15 June, 1940.


34. Morgan, Somerset Maugham, p. 586.


38. Curtis, Pattern of Maugham, p. 5.


43 Ibid., p. 73.


46 Ibid., Summarised from pp. 62-64.

47 Ibid., p. 68.


52 Guerin, et al., p. 269.


55 Ibid., pp.150-165.

56 Ibid., p.155.


59 Guerin, pp.270-271.