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Child Marriage As A Major Concern in Pashto Poetry

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Abstract

While the concepts of identity and culture carry political and ethical implications, they also play an essential role in representing the post-colonial experience as it is lived. The process of transplantation leads to the emergence of a culture of exile. The formation of an undifferentiated identity occurs within a context influenced by both the conscious and unconscious past, as well as the realities of migration. This context serves as a representation of the experience. Though still connected to specific localities and cultures, the disruptions of space and time can reveal the complexities of self and culture within their original contexts. This dynamic allows for multiple forms of belonging, potentially fostering a sense of holistic identity while rejecting rigid and simplistic notions of existence. This condition does not merely promote a singular subjectivity or make itself inaccessible to social structures or personal experiences. The argument presented in this article aligns with the exploration of how human agency, expressed through narrative, positions itself within broad, imperfect theories or meta-narratives that shape larger forces in the development of alternative spatial and political discourses. Personal and collective cultures, along with contextual references, are fundamentally contingent and unstable, remaining open to interpretation..
Keywords: *Somerset Maugham, Indigenous, Identity, Hybridity, The Painted Veil.*

1. Introduction

Somerset Maugham's career as a novelist and playwright was both long and prosperous. By the end of World War I, he was widely recognised as an eminent English novelist. Emerging as a significant author in the early decades of the 20th century, Maugham adhered to the "picture of life" tradition initiated by Henry James, emphasising nuanced perspectives on human experience. Like James, he became a reference point for critics interested in the modernist period. In addition to his literary success, Maugham gained prominence as a playwright. By the 1920s, he was among the leading dramatists in the English-speaking world. At a time when English theatre direction was relatively undeveloped, he paid meticulous attention to staging and casting (Watling, 2019).

Maugham's observations of life and people were shaped by extensive and unconventional travels, enabling him to depict characters, events, and attitudes from places and cultures rarely explored by other novelists. These experiences demanded a style beyond conventional narrative methods—vigorous, lucid, and precisely shaped.

He advised aspiring writers to cultivate reading and keen observation. Before committing to literature, Maugham pursued various professions, and his early travels familiarised him with diverse ways of life. In correspondence with D. H. Lawrence, he stressed the balance between

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observation and intuition. Over time, he came to be regarded as a gifted raconteur whose stories reflected his lived experiences. Critics after the détente period often described him as optimistic, with letters that were tender, sincere, and unaffected (Abu Baker, 2009).

Maugham's realistic approach lends his works universality and enduring relevance. He illuminated themes such as colonialism and English cultural traits with a style that was simple, direct, and laconic—comparable to minimalist painting.

2. Literature Review

The relationship between coloniser and colonised often produces a hybrid culture that is neither wholly one nor the other. Hybridity introduces displacement or alienation from native culture and creates new spaces between cultures by challenging fixed boundaries. In contemporary contexts, globalisation intensifies this dynamic, with hybridisation sometimes functioning as a form of subaltern resistance. Indigenous peoples in "developing" nations frequently rework popular cultures imposed by global centres to reflect local values (Odhiambo, 2013).

Maugham blended an anthropologist's sensitivity to time and place with a novelist's talent for observation and evocative imagery. His depictions of foreign settings and peoples avoid ethnographic caricature, instead treating cultural differences as meaningful distinctions. The ideas, events, and locales of 1920s England and Asia are vividly rendered, offering perspectives distinct from traditional colonial narratives (Watling, 2019).

3. The Context of *The Painted Veil*

Colonial writing often shifts between romanticising the exotic and exposing the harsh realities of empire. *The Painted Veil* reflects this tension through three key elements:

1. The exoticised Indigenous population, whose beauty is admired yet judged by Western moral standards.

2. The chaotic colonial city, contrasted with serene coastal landscapes.

3. The troubled estate, a setting for personal and cultural disillusionment.

Beneath these lies an awareness of imperial violence, expressed through fictional scenes. The novel portrays a woman's life in colonial China through layers of patriotism, cultural misunderstanding, and personal growth. Calder (1972) observes that Kitty Fane's character is shaped by her upper-middle-class upbringing, with Maugham critiquing English societal conventions as sharply as in Mrs. Craddock and The Moon and Sixpence.

The novel depicts a woman's experience in colonial China through the lens of patriotism and cultural misreading. Calder (1972) notes that Kitty Fane, the protagonist, is a product of her upper-middle-class background, and Maugham critiques conventional English society as fervently as in Mrs. Craddock and The Moon and Sixpence. Kitty's upbringing under her domineering mother, Mrs. Garstin, and her sister Doris, shapes her preoccupation with pleasure and her flawed decision-making.

Mrs. Garstin's views on marriage and family life reflect her relationships. After marrying Bernard Garstin, she assumed control of everything, never appreciating her husband, who

failed to meet her expectations. Her ambitions were redirected toward her daughters, whom she hoped would secure advantageous marriages to compensate for her disappointments (Maugham, 2006, p. 22).

Kitty's journey symbolises the clash of reason and cultural misreading. Her initial perception of the East as colourful and vital contrasts with the West's drab historical absence. This ambivalence underscores the transition from Enlightenment rationality to anti-modernist vitality. *The Painted Veil* parallels East-West modernisation, where violence breaches cultural boundaries.

Kitty's socialisation emphasises submission to men and domesticity. Houghton (cited in Maugham, 2006) highlights the gender distinctions in British society: men were preoccupied with advancing their families socially, while women relied on wealthy, educated husbands for financial security. Kitty's marriage to Walter Fane is driven by expediency rather than love.

The colonial encounter institutionalised pre-existing cultural barriers, with the West denying the East's sovereignty. This historical asymmetry frames Kitty's bewilderment in China, where she feels like a child navigating an unfamiliar world. Her alienation mirrors the broader colonial dynamic, where the colonised are rendered passive or grotesque. In the context of postcolonial literature, the concept of sustainability goes beyond environmental concerns and extends into cultural and social realms. Somerset Maugham's *The Painted Veil* raises questions about how identities, traditions, and perspectives can be maintained in the face of colonial domination and hybrid encounters. The portrayal of Chinese society, viewed through a colonial lens, reflects both the erasure and the persistence of indigenous perspectives. From a postcolonial viewpoint, cultural sustainability means the endurance of local knowledge, values, and voices amid imperial discourse. By examining hybridity and otherness, the novel highlights the challenges of maintaining identity within unequal power dynamics, thereby linking postcolonial critique to the broader discourse of sustainability.

4. Indigenous Identity: Definitions and Theories

The Painted Veil has been explored from postcolonial viewpoints due to its unclear representation of colonialism. The novel both questions and attracts the reader. It recognises cultural differences but does not completely break down colonial hierarchies. Maugham's narrative voice often aligns with British views of China, reinforcing the idea of the Oriental Other while selectively presenting certain Chinese characters as more relatable (Ali & Ahmad, 2018).

Symbolism is key in expressing these tensions. The veil symbolises the dual nature of Kitty's life, hiding her true self while highlighting the gap between colonial appearances and actual experiences. The colour white represents a false sense of moral purity, while the city of Mei-tan-fu illustrates the tough conditions and strength of local life. Over time, the veil's purpose changes; it shifts from shielding Kitty's vanity to reflecting her growing self-awareness (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2014).

Set during the late Manchu or Ch'ing Dynasty (1644–1912), the novel takes place in a China shaped by imperial rule yet increasingly influenced by foreign presence. While Maugham focuses on his European characters, Indigenous people—local Chinese—bring the setting to life. For example, Grey Abbey was built by Chinese craftsmen using local materials in the 17th

century. Though the estate becomes a symbol of British pride, it is also a product of Chinese architectural skill and cultural strength (Flynn 2000).

The transformation of Grey Abbey reflects changes in power and identity. In the early 20th century, it symbolised the Webb family's values and goals. However, political turmoil and competing forces, partly due to the rise of Chinese sovereignty, weakened this colonial stronghold. In less than ten years, the Webbs went from proudly owning a "trophy house" to recognising their loss of power.

Maugham critiques the obsession with place, showing how colonial fantasies fall apart when faced with local realities. At first, the Webbs romanticise Grey Abbey and Chinese landscapes as timeless treasures suited to Western dreams, using poetry and art to depict them as exotic. A cousin's postcard of a Chinese temple sparks a desire to "own" such beauty. However, their initial encounters with Kwang-Chow-Foo reveal a vibrant city that does not fit colonial ideals. The crowded streets, complex histories, and self-sufficient communities challenge European ideas of order and beauty. The Shumshu district, insular and self-sustaining, acts as a quiet resistance—mocking the Webb family's Eurocentric views while highlighting the endurance of Indigenous cultural independence.

The Chinese communities in *The Painted Veil* are not mere backdrops. Their survival strategies, local knowledge, and social networks shape the world that Kitty and Walter navigate. Walter's work as a bacteriologist relies on collaboration with local medical staff and residents, whose firsthand understanding of disease and sanitation surpasses colonial theories. This subtle interdependence complicates the imperial story; while Europeans hold formal power, their success often depends on Indigenous skills and labour.

In this context, Kitty's transformation from vanity and self-interest to humility and some self-awareness—happens as she becomes more exposed to Chinese resilience and cultural depth. Maugham critiques her superficiality and colonial arrogance, but the novel does not fully highlight Indigenous voices. Nevertheless, glimpses of local agency seen in architecture, community organisation, and quiet resistance—emphasise that the colonial encounter is not one-sided. It is a contested space where cultural meaning is negotiated as much as it is enforced.

5. Analysis of *The Painted Veil*

Questioning his ability as an artist, Somerset Maugham remarked in The Summing Up, “As I write, I feel a little giddy; I feel as again on that very hot day, and as I drove through the road that followed the coast from Quang-chow-fu to Canton, with the land on one side of me and the sea the other, and there came into my mind so numb a thought that in waking life none but the insane might have thought it. ... In the two worlds that are more to me than the others, England and the East, I have asked myself which of them I love the more. … I passed the smooth greens of the valley, and then craggy cliffs rising sensibly above the sea.” There seem similar echoes and fissions in Maugham’s other writing, especially in the short novel *The Painted Veil*, against which this study is concerned. The narrative sticks to the experience of a painter named Walter Fane and the circumstances through which he encounters a number of civilizational and psychosocial shifts in his life.

According to scholar (Byer, 2019), Maugham depicts a struggle against the consequences of worldly introspection through characters that offer searing examples of lives lived entirely

for others. Such character studies are complex in their oscillation between love, rage, despair, and ultimately a nuanced form of mutuality. In *The Painted Veil*, she observes, Maugham plumbs these depths with notable nuance within a framework of unconditional dedication and gratuity. Maugham's examination of guilt and jealousy—one borne of devotion, the other of selfishness—brings to light the complex nature of love through a careful mapping of social respectability. External processes affiliated with identity and interpersonal connection, however exhaustive, exist poignantly alongside through internal disintegration and tragedy.

In *The Painted Veil*, a tale of infidelity, jealousy, and eventual redemption, these central themes operate on varying levels of potency. Given Maugham's varied background across journalism, playwriting, and novels, this project draws upon comparative textual analysis of the short novel and its volume adaptation to the theatrical stage to demonstrate the intended strength of Maugham's iridescence on interpersonal cruelties and civilizational veneers that operate on different, often unseen, levels. While the novel deploys a carefully crafted opacity that takes the form of scrupulous attention to detail, the adaptation enforces a brassy fervour at the cost of the language's lyricism and contextual nuance. Overall, this studies both the essence of Maugham's *The Painted Veil*, and the varied ways an artist's works may be expressed across different media.

5.1. Plot Summary

The tale recounted in the book is deemed a typical product of the period, which is attractive, stimulating, vividly descriptive, and full of colour, emotion, and gusto. It is a lasting piece of work, when the knots tighten furthest, it appears at its best; at the same time, the book is written in an intense but not excessive way, the style is smooth and modulated, sometimes as tranquil as a still lake, and sometimes as galloping thunder. (Abu Baker, 2009) Besides, the story's understanding requires precisely the consideration of hidden elements behind its vivid plot. It records the love entanglement of the heroine, Kitty. Kitty's husband is a medical official and stationed in China. She immediately defies her husband's call when she learns that her husband recommends her for treason. At last, she is separated from her husband. Endowed with an appealing story, the book has still some other features which are worth significance.

The story is told through landscape. Beautiful sceneries are a prominent part of the web of events. The appealing vision and the majesty of the sceneries contribute highly to the realisation of the book. Readers are drawn close to the companionship of blooming flowers, vibrant birds, murmuring brookets and barbeques at the sea. Through landscape, the mood is drawn out of rugged realities into a dream of delight. The characters against the landscapes are thus realised more delicately than possible if the delineation could only depend on words since the character realisation here relies on observing and feeling instead of other's scornful knowledge or punishing ruminations. The surrounding sceneries contribute much weight to the story, and the point of view from the landscape makes this book crisp and fresh. The voice of the heart is realised through love poems. Love poems are delicately transplanted into the narration, with the poetic exposition dropped coarsely into steep rockeries. The realistic exposition is thus dressed in an elegant way, as if the glorious sunset on the crude hill. The landscape poems echo with love mate poems. The reference here to love poems enriches the book and highlights Kitty and her lover's innocent love.

However, the social changes did not reduce the number of marriages particularly among the women in their teens and twenties. Instead of this, even a higher proportion married although

one may expect a decrease in the ratio of women's marriage as the concomitant of the post war effects and feminist movements. Pugh adds that the women's approval of marriage at early ages emanated from the reform of 1923. It enabled women to have more rights in marriage and divorce and the belief that pregnancy and child care was not as hard as before (199). Thus, developments in technology and grasping more rights from the government encouraged women to get married at an early age.

Women's essential ambition was to climb up social ladder by marrying suitable rich suitors. Class distinctions were as cleft as before in society. In clash with the modernization movements for women, the Victorian type of families and women preserved their traditions (200). The social reasons framing Kitty's lifestyle and her adultery can be understood by catching a glimpse of the Victorian understanding of family life and relationships by and large. According to Calder, "Kitty Fane is a product of her upper-middle-class background, and the author here attacks conventional English society as enthusiastically as he did in Mrs Craddock and The Moon and Sixpence" (153). This argument invites one to glance through Kitty's family. Kitty's mother Mrs. Garstin and her sister Doris and Kitty's preoccupation with pleasure in life, in more general terms, the deficiencies in her personality play an important role in her decisions. One of the most crucial factors that brought about Kitty's hasty decision to get married and then to regret it was her mother's manipulations on her to find a rich and a prosperous husband. It is stated in the novel that "Mrs. Garstin bestowed upon her all affection, a harsh, competent, calculating affection, of which she was capable; she dreamed ambitious dreams; it was not a good marriage she aimed at for her daughter, but a brilliant one" (23). Mrs. Garstin was an ambitious and demanding woman who imagines climbing up the social ladder by encouraging Kitty for such a marriage. Mrs. Garstin's concept of marriage and family life is also reflected on her own relationships. After she had married Bernard Garstin, she got the control of everything. Never did she appreciate her husband since Mr. Garstin was not up to her expectations and standards: "It was unlikely now that Bernard Garstin would ever be made a judge of the High Court, but he might still hope for a country Court judgeship or at the worst an appointment in the Colonies. […] But it was on her daughters that she set her hopes. By arranging good marriages for them she expected to make up for all the disappointments of her career" (22).

5.2. Character Analysis

As it is impossible to make an exhaustive, or even comprehensive analysis in a limited time, an attempt is made to take up one or two of the important characters that should afford sufficient material for an examination of the problems of genre and interpretation. Kitty Fane, the lady who is 'cursed' and 'blessed' with too much passion, basis and the only one among Maugham's created women who does not allow perception of reality to overwhelm her sensibilities, is perhaps the most complex character in the novel. The inertia of the characterisation is penetrated by essence and ambience, firmly embedded in the socio-cultural context. What is presented is not the persona of Kitty, but the identity and interactiveness of the social body. The uniqueness of the individuation coupled with the incidental emergence of the "anima" enriches the character. From this centre, as a part of the act of co-recreation, the consciousness-horizon ruptures and folds back upon itself, leading to a process of skewed self-discovery. As the interpretative vistas multiply, the guest critic slips into the role of the creator, while Kitty's odyssey becomes the grounds for both self-discovery and co-suffering to a limitless audience. When Kitty's humiliation was over, the

matter of her existence was taken up by the critic. The role of the other, as in life, is an autogeneous one.

In spite of herself, the character resists the seductive promises of the critic. In his interpretation, reality is threatened by logocentrism and eventual loss of its aura, a fear greatly heightened by the conflation. The interpretative asyncs ultimately blur the points of shift and dislocation, endowing the character with a gumboil of feelings. Her response, in turn, reveals the routinised antagonism with criticism of logocentricity. The critic reluctantly recedes from his greasy prodding that goads her into self-disclosure, embodying colourations of envy, desire and suffering. Kitty's reawakened firsthand cognisance objects to the viewer's attempts to impose his vision on her; the conscious choice to preclude or restrain such cross-casting becomes proximate with Kitty's eventual exodus from tonalities of impossible woman-breeding. Unlike Maugham's earlier characters who have to submit to an almost dichotomous choice between artifice or authenticity, Kitty emerges caught in the web of her unmediated too-muchness.

5.3. Themes of Identity

Maugham's description of China is ironic, given that he was a substantial traveller in the country, and thus the viewpoint of a tourist would seem peculiarly untrustworthy; however, it is still representative of the period's Western attitudes toward the Orient. The description rests on a dichotomy between the West and the East, between the "unclad savage" regions to the south of the Yangtze and the West, represented chiefly by Hong Kong, which are "progressive, prosperous, clean, orderly." To Maugham, the capital of Jiangxi is "disorderly…perpetual motion." The natural features are ironical as well, since towns are either unpicturesque or misdescriptions. For example, "the sight of a white stork, black heron or great bird, or of peasant-women paddling home with bamboo basket" does not coincide with tranquillity and beauty as Maugham tries to convey, but tries to build up an annus horribilis as is seen in the first paragraph. It is ironic and untruthful because Maugham saw the Tai Hang stream flowing through the "smooth, firm, brown stone bed…under the great bamboo trees, always green or delicious hue." Maugham tries to create a repulsive image of a Chinese town, which in turn is hugely contrasting with the real sights experienced by the author in a visit as an adult years later. The passage is narrated with a sense of distress to resort to light imagery showing beauty. For instance, "the evening light slants over the rolling plain of rice, golden yellow…to evil purple under the evening rose" presents a tranquillity and elegance of the Jiangxi town.

Maugham's Orientalism need not be confined solely within the Western maligning attitudes toward the East, but may turn inwards, counting the self to a lesser group and perhaps also as the object of another's Orientalism. In *The Painted Veil*, to whom does Maugham feel a deeper sincerity? The Chinese with some flimsy foibles or the frivolous English? The answer is with the Chinese. Maugham's description of culture is not flatly complimentary like that of China. Instead, there is a sense of sobriety and a watchful eye to right the ills within its culture. However meanly petty Shanghai's dwellers are depicted, it is still requisite as the world seems richer with its broad ends—sense of meanness is an improvement oft wanted or even sacrificial. How do the Chinatown dwellers wrestle down existence against all calamities? Their laugh is a eunoia or song of a rain-bird untouched by despair, whereas the other's laugh is luscious and vacant—like a scorching sun unsheathed from a sandstorm. Maugham's

account on the others is fustian caricature rather than a dirge of twilight. Additionally, it does need the Chinatowns to complete the Eastern Europe part.

6. Indigenous Identity in *The Painted Veil*

In *The Painted Veil*, the protagonist Kitty Fane visits China with her husband Walter Fane who is an English doctor. A racial epiphany comes to Kitty when she comes across the Chinese coolie Maractive Chang, who has long been in the service of the Fanes. However, at first, she forgets his presence and on his arrival recalls the fact of his existence as a servant only. Her lips are pursed and her face is furtive on Chang's arrival. When Chang gets rid of Maractive's clumsy and awkward gait, his gestures seem pleasant to her. Kitty Fane forgets her identity and feels shy to talk with Chang, which evokes her enduring guilt. Kitty's elation because of the requirement of Chang, the coolie, maintains its tranquility till the smile on Chang's face is converted into a grim neutral expression. At a time, Kitty feels aghast at Chang like, 'But all in a moment she felt aghast, the shock of it made her stiff...'. Kitty's rest, sigh, and emotion dwindle when Chang walks away. All the joy out of the moment departs with Chang in the denouement. Kitty's jocosity is comparable to and evoked by Chang's smile. Kitty, who usually has contempt for the Chinese, wants to smile because Chang has done a service above his station in life, which is humiliating. At last, Kitty's sorrow pervading her consciousness is expressed by sallow description. 'What a hollow mockery it seemed! She had been exulting, and now she could have wept!' As a Euro-American woman, Kitty feels the inferiority complex of being a member of a nation evoking contempt in the British, as well as contempt because of being a white woman.

In her approach to Chang as a man of different race and nationality, she undergoes all manifold reactions entailing Chinese identity and particularly racial identity. All the existential pain and yearning transgress barriers on her embrace of difference against all odds. Kitty's apparent self-sufficience and relaxation are wide of the mark in the religious tension ratcheted up by the presence of Chang. Despite the initial lapse, both Kitty and her Chinese coolie befriend diminutive gestures and minuscule smiles in numerous intense encounters. Despite a mental state of trepidation and restlessness, Kitty experiences revelations of purity engulfed by grief and guilt. Besides the consuming sorrow out of loss of life, Kitty also fears vexing sublimity and vulnerability incomprehensible to the dominant civilizational viewpoint. The oppositional binary structures yield to the paradoxically intertwined coexistence of difference and identity, wildness and civilization. Such a transgression of boundaries cuts across the Chinese-English, and even human-animal divides, disrupting all sorts of dichotomies and identities. Kitty's transformations as a white woman taking on the Chinese ethos and denying herself endlessly echo an 'unsolvable' and queer existence. *The Painted Veil* reveals the remarkable power of horrific and wonderful difference from elsewhere, subsuming everything including Euro-centric racism and imperialism in the peace and love concentrated in the eastern city of China.

7. Themes of Colonialism and Identity

The Painted Veil has been examined from postcolonial perspectives for its ambiguous representation of colonialism. The novel simultaneously interrogates and seduces both coloniser and colonised, acknowledging cultural difference without fully unpacking it. Maugham's colonial discourse often aligns with British imperialist perceptions of China, reinforcing the Oriental Other (Ali & Ahmad, 2018).

Symbolism plays a central role in the narrative. The veil signifies the duality of Kitty's life, concealing her true self. The colour white symbolises an illusory purity, while the city of Mei-tan-fu embodies harsh colonial reality. Over the course of the story, the veil shifts from a device that hides Kitty's flaws to a metaphor for her growing self-awareness (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2014).

The novel takes place in China during the late Manchu or Ch'ing Dynasty (1644–1912), a period of relative isolationism. Although roads and rivers were developed, travel remained difficult, and controlling access to territory was central to foreign power. At the heart of the Webb family estate stood Grey Abbey, designed by an architect and built by Chinese craftsmen in the 17th century using durable local materials. Over generations, the family altered the building, but it remained a grand structure that displayed the fading grandeur of empire. The mansion came to reflect the Webb family's desires, struggles, joys, sorrows, and bewilderment (Flynn, 2000).

The transformation of Grey Abbey reflects the changing identity of the Webbs. In the early 20th century, the estate symbolized cherished values and cultural pride. After an expedition to Changsha Municipality to celebrate the new emperor's succession, political conflict caused its decline. Within a decade, the family went from proudly owning a symbolic trophy to realizing they could no longer control its fate.

The novel critiques the glorification of place. The Webbs initially romanticize Grey Abbey as a mythical site, using poetry, art, and music to conjure an imagined world of beauty. A cousin's postcard of a Chinese temple ignites their desire to experience such landscapes firsthand. However, their first impressions of Kwang-Chow-Foo fade into disillusionment. What they saw as elegant antiquity soon appears as artificial beauty, imperfect elegance, and ancient decay. The hazy and unfamiliar scenes of the city create a heavy and gloomy atmosphere, far from their romantic expectations. The Shumshu, self-contained and inward-looking, mocks the Webb family's Eurocentric views.

Set in 1920s China, the story follows Kitty, a pretty but shallow young woman who marries Walter Fane, a bacteriologist. Her affair with Charles Townsend exposes her selfishness and naivety. When Walter takes her to a remote area for public health work, Kitty faces both her personal shortcomings and the cultural disconnection of colonial life. Walter, portrayed as the "man of science," is dedicated to truth and helping others, only to experience betrayal in his marriage. Through Kitty's journey from vanity to self-awareness, Maugham critiques personal selfishness while examining the limits of redemption during the colonial encounter.

Conclusion

The Painted Veil shows characters struggling with identity within the British Empire, while Indigenous Chinese people remain marginalized. The novel contrasts civilization and savagery, with white Englishmen dominating the colony. Native life is represented realistically but treated as secondary, reflecting a false sense of otherness.

Kitty's journey ends in self-acceptance, highlighting the tension of cultural mixing. The novel does not explore the "real" Indigenous experience, instead focusing on colonial insults and transnational pain.

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