

COMMON FEATURES OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS OF SOMERSET MAUGHAM AND ABDULLA KAHHOR'S SHORT-STORIES

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Abstract: This article explores the common features of the main characters in the short stories of Somerset Maugham and Abdulla Kahhor. Despite their different cultural and historical backgrounds, both authors portray protagonists with rich psychological depth, moral ambiguity, and inner conflicts driven by societal norms. The study highlights how both writers present characters who struggle with alienation, adapt to social pressures, and ultimately reflect the universal aspects of the human condition. The paper emphasizes the similarities in character development, thematic concerns, and narrative techniques employed by Maugham and Kahhor, offering a comparative perspective on English and Uzbek short story traditions of the 20th century.

Keywords: Somerset Maugham, Abdulla Kahhor, short stories, main characters analysis, psychological depth, moral conflict, literary comparison, English literature, Uzbek prose

Introduction

The 20th century marked a period of significant growth in short story writing across various cultures, with two notable contributors being Somerset Maugham and Abdulla Kahhor, an influential Uzbek writer. Despite differences in geography, language, and ideology, both authors share a deep interest in exploring the complexities of the human experience through the characters they create. This paper seeks to examine the common traits found in the main characters of their short stories, aiming to uncover literary parallels that transcend cultural boundaries. Both Maugham and Kahhor, although emerging from distinct cultural and historical contexts, share a remarkable ability to portray the psychological depth and moral struggles of their protagonists. Known for their sharp psychological insight, both authors delve into their characters' inner conflicts, desires, and ethical dilemmas. This paper will explore the common features of the main characters in their short stories, considering both the thematic and structural similarities in their works. Short stories, with their compact yet powerful narrative form, often serve as poignant reflections of society, providing deep insights into human behavior through the experiences of a select few characters. Maugham (1874-1965), celebrated for his concise and ironic storytelling, and Kahhor (1907-1968), a satirist and prominent Uzbek writer, both captured the essence of their respective times by focusing on the individual's emotional struggles within broader societal frameworks. This study aims to draw connections between the main characters in selected stories by both authors. The paper seeks

to explore how similar human concerns are conveyed through distinct cultural lenses and how character development functions as a critique of the social norms of each period.

Literary Review And Methodology

The study of character development in short stories has long been a central concern for literary critics, especially in the works of authors like Somerset Maugham and Abdulla Kahhor, who focus on the intricacies of human nature and the tension between the individual and society. While both authors come from distinct cultural and historical backgrounds, their exploration of similar psychological themes has drawn the attention of comparative literature scholars. In the case of **Somerset Maugham**, scholars have often praised his ability to capture the complexity of human emotions and moral ambiguity. His characters are frequently depicted as individuals torn between their desires and societal expectations. Both authors have been studied individually in the context of their respective cultures, but comparative studies focusing on the intersection of their psychological and thematic concerns are still scarce. This research aims to fill this gap by analyzing the similarities between the characters in Maugham's and Kahhor's short stories. The methodology employed in this study combines **comparative literature analysis** with **psychological literary criticism**. The primary focus is on identifying and analyzing the common psychological traits, moral conflicts, and thematic concerns of the main characters in selected short stories by Maugham and Kahhor. The approach is structured as follows:

1. Character Analysis:

The primary focus of the analysis will be the protagonists in these stories. A **psychological character analysis** will be conducted to examine how the characters' inner conflicts, emotional isolation, and moral ambiguities are portrayed. The psychological motivations driving the characters' actions will be explored, focusing on their emotional and ethical dilemmas.

2. Thematic Analysis:

A **thematic comparison** will be drawn between Maugham's and Kahhor's works, particularly focusing on the themes of alienation, societal pressures, and personal resilience. This will involve an exploration of how both authors depict characters who struggle with societal expectations and how these struggles reflect universal human concerns, despite the differing political and cultural backgrounds.

3. Narrative Techniques:

The **narrative techniques** employed by Maugham and Kahhor will be examined to understand how each author conveys the psychological depth and moral ambiguity of their characters. Maugham's use of irony, minimalism, and detached narrative voice will be compared to Kahhor's use of symbolism, realism, and emotional intensity. A special focus will be placed on how these narrative techniques serve to highlight the characters' inner lives and moral dilemmas.

4. Cross-Cultural Literary Comparison:

Finally, a **cross-cultural comparison** will be made between the English and Uzbek short story traditions. The cultural and historical differences between the two authors' contexts will be considered, but the main aim will be to identify the universal psychological and moral themes that emerge from the characters' struggles. This will help illuminate the shared concerns



across cultures in portraying human nature and societal pressures. In addition to primary text analysis, secondary sources from literary critics and scholars of Maugham and Kahhor will be consulted to provide a broader understanding of the authors' thematic preoccupations and the critical reception of their works. By synthesizing both literary criticism and comparative analysis, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how character development in the short stories of Maugham and Kahhor reflects broader human experiences, transcending cultural boundaries.

Results And Discussion

The comparative analysis of the short stories by Somerset Maugham and Abdulla Kahhor reveals several key similarities in how both authors portray the psychological depth and moral struggles of their protagonists. Despite their distinct cultural and historical backgrounds, the central themes and the portrayal of the human experience transcend these differences. Both authors explore universal themes such as alienation, moral ambiguity, societal pressures, and personal resilience. A prominent feature in both Maugham's and Kahhor's stories is the deep psychological complexity of their characters. Both authors focus on protagonists who experience significant inner turmoil, torn between personal desires and the societal expectations placed upon them. These internal conflicts drive the characters' actions, revealing their emotional and moral vulnerabilities. This psychological depth is one of the main similarities that allows the stories of both authors to resonate across different cultural contexts, as the emotional struggles of the characters are universally recognizable. Another shared theme is alienation. Both authors depict characters who feel disconnected from their environments, but the nature of this alienation differs. In Maugham's works, alienation is often a result of personal conflict or dissatisfaction with one's position in society, whereas in Kahhor's stories, it is frequently caused by the oppressive political systems and the ideological constraints of Soviet rule. Despite the differences in the sources of alienation, the emotional isolation experienced by the protagonists is similar in both cases. In both authors' works, the alienation is not merely external but also internal, as the characters grapple with their own identities and values in the face of societal norms. The theme of moral ambiguity is also central to both Maugham and Kahhor's narratives. In each case, the protagonists find themselves facing difficult choices that involve moral conflict. The characters often have to navigate between their desires, ethical principles, and the social expectations imposed upon them, which creates a sense of moral grayness. This moral ambiguity emphasizes the complexity of human nature, as the characters are neither wholly virtuous nor completely flawed. Instead, they are presented as individuals struggling to make sense of their own actions in a world that does not offer clear answers. Both authors also explore the theme of personal resilience. While the characters face overwhelming external pressures—whether from social norms, political ideologies, or personal dilemmas—they demonstrate an ability to adapt and endure. This resilience manifests in various ways: some characters adjust by conforming to societal expectations, while others resist or find ways to assert their personal values, even if it means making sacrifices. Regardless of the outcome, the characters' ability to endure and adapt highlights a universal aspect of the human condition—the need to navigate adversity and maintain a sense of self in challenging circumstances. Narrative techniques play a crucial role in the development of these themes. Maugham often employs irony and a detached narrative voice to highlight the contradictions in the social structures his characters inhabit. This distance between the narrator and the characters allows Maugham to subtly critique the societal norms



that shape his characters' lives, adding a layer of complexity to their psychological struggles. In contrast, Kahhor's narrative style is more immersive, using realism and symbolism to convey the emotional intensity of the characters' experiences. This approach allows Kahhor to create a more vivid emotional landscape, where the characters' psychological states are reflected in the symbolism and atmosphere of the narrative. Despite these differences in narrative technique, both authors succeed in conveying the inner lives of their characters with great depth. Whether through Maugham's ironic detachment or Kahhor's symbolic realism, both authors effectively draw attention to the emotional and moral complexities of the characters, allowing readers to empathize with their struggles. Both authors explore universal human experiences such as alienation, moral conflict, and the struggle for personal resilience in the face of societal pressures. By examining the common traits in their character development and thematic concerns, it becomes clear that Maugham and Kahhor, through their distinct narrative techniques, offer a profound exploration of the human condition that resonates across cultural boundaries. This study highlights the enduring relevance of their works and the ways in which literature can serve as a mirror to the universal struggles of humanity.

Conclusion

This research has explored the common features of the main characters in the short stories of Somerset Maugham and Abdulla Kahhor, emphasizing the psychological depth, moral ambiguity, and inner conflicts that drive their protagonists. Through a comparative analysis, it is evident that Maugham and Kahhor share a keen interest in exploring the complexities of the human psyche. Their protagonists, while distinct in their individual circumstances, are united by their emotional and moral struggles, making them relatable to readers across different cultures. These characters often find themselves caught between personal desires and external societal expectations, a dynamic that leads to profound internal conflict. Additionally, both authors depict their characters as facing moral ambiguities, where the lines between right and wrong are blurred, allowing for a more nuanced portrayal of human nature. The theme of alienation is explored by both Maugham and Kahhor, albeit through different sources. The emotional isolation shared by their protagonists highlights a common human experience—the struggle to reconcile individual desires with the expectations imposed by the external world. Both authors also highlight the resilience of their characters, who, despite facing overwhelming societal or political pressures, demonstrate an ability to adapt and endure. This resilience speaks to a core aspect of the human condition: the desire to maintain a sense of self and personal integrity in the face of adversity. In terms of narrative technique, Maugham's use of irony and a detached narrative voice contrasts with Kahhor's immersive realism and symbolism. These distinct approaches, however, serve a similar purpose: to deepen the psychological complexity of the characters and to critique the social structures that shape their lives. While Maugham's ironic distance offers a subtle critique of societal norms, Kahhor's vivid emotional landscapes draw attention to the emotional intensity of the characters' experiences. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that, despite the historical and cultural differences between Maugham and Kahhor, their works share profound thematic and psychological concerns that speak to the universality of the human experience. The comparative analysis not only deepens our understanding of their characters but also emphasizes the enduring relevance of their works in exploring the complexities of human nature, moral conflict, and societal pressures. This exploration contributes to the broader



discourse on the shared themes in world literature, highlighting the power of storytelling to transcend cultural boundaries and reflect the universal struggles of humanity.

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