

Tribhuvan University

Women's Quest for Independence in Maugham's *The Painted Veil*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English,  
Tribhuvan University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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**Letter of Recommendation**

Pabitra Mainali has completed her thesis “Women’s Quest for Independence in Maugham’s *The Painted Veil*” under my supervision. She carried out her research from March 2013 to June 2014. I hereby recommend thesis to be submitted for viva-voce.

Jiva Nath Lamsal

Supervisor

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**Approval Letter**

This thesis entitle “Women’s Quest for Independence in Maugham’s *The Painted Veil*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Pabitra Mainali has been approved by the undersigned of the research committee.

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## Abstract

The research focuses on William Somerset Maugham's novel *The Painted Veil* which revolves around its major character, Kitty and her journey towards the recognition of the self. She was ill bred; she was neither well educated nor economically independent. All she taught was to abide by the norms and values set forth by patriarchy. Her realization that she was neither financially sound nor socially supported by anyone makes her surrender and marry a man whom she was not at all in love with. She has adulterous relation with Charlie Townsend. As a punishment of adulterous relation, Walter, without second thought, intimidates and takes her to a cholera infested land to die. Walter does not forgive Kitty because he is in love with Kitty's physical beauty nor her inner beauty. But she gathers the experience of living at different places with various walks of life. In the Mei-Tan-Fu she sees the sacrifice job of the nuns, miseries of the people and meaningless death. This makes her to see the world in different perspective. She does not confine herself into the house but wants to do something new and she engages in orphan house for volunteer service. She learns from her follies and she leads towards her awakening and becomes an independent woman in that epidemic land and is able to carve a niche on her own.

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