

Psychosocial Analysis on Kamila Shamsie's In the City by the Sea

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Abstract -- Psychosocial analysis looks at individuals in the context of the combined influence that psychological factors and the surrounding social environment have on their physical and mental wellness and their ability to function. This paper proposes to highlight the psychosocial elements with special reference to Kamila Shamsie's In the City by the Sea published in 1998. Kamila Shamsie is the successful writer who concentrates on psychosocial elements in her writing. She is one among the famous writers who writes about political, social and religious ideas. This paper delves the family and neighbour's vital role in the growth of the protagonist, Hasan. It portrays the emotional development of a child and his longing for the love. The uncle's love and support made him to overcome his torments in life and lives his life happily.

I. INTRODUCTION

Kamila Naheed Shamsie was born on 13 August 1973. She is one of the new waves of Pakistani writers who are based Britain based and successful in both Pakistan and the West. As a female born in Pakistan in the early 1970s, in a culture in which girls were expected to become only wives and mothers, Shamsie was fortunate in her family background and the support she received from her affluent and literary family. Her works are *In the City by the Sea* (1998), *Salt and Saffron* (2000), *A God in Every Stone* (2014). Her first novel *In the City by the Sea* was shortlisted for the Mail on Sunday or John Llewellyn Rhys Prize in the UK, and she received the Prime Minister's Award for literature in Pakistan in 1999. In 2009, she donated the short story.

In the City by the Sea is set in an unnamed city in Pakistan, where a political struggle is uprising. Hasan is eleven years old, an imaginative, intelligent boy, who loves cricket; pomegranates; the night sky; his clever, vibrant, artistic mother; and his witty lawyer father; and he adores his next-door neighbour Zehra. One early summer morning, while lazing happily on the roof, Hasan watches a young boy flying a yellow

kite and falls to his death. And soon after, Hasan's idyllic, sheltered family life is shattered when his uncle, a dissenting politician, is arrested and charged with treason.

Set in a land ruled by an oppressive military regime, this charming novel vividly recreates the confusing world of a young boy on the edge of adulthood, and beautifully illustrates the transformative power of the imagination.

The themes of sadness, loss and vulnerability are clear in this tale. It is a tale of political instability in Pakistan and it affects people who are living in such a country. The people of the country suffer by military rule. The readers get an idea of the situation in the city through the eyes of the eleven years old protagonist. He gets hurt and harmed mentally. Azeem's death and Salamna's house arrest give him a great loss and sadness in life.

The novel *In the City by the Sea* is told from the perspective of an eleven-years-old boy. He is comfortable and happy with his family and neighbours but the unexpected storm of events shakes his life. He struggles to bare Salman's absence and feels for his misfortunes. With the support of his family members and their guidance, he is recovered from all the miseries of his life. They played an important role his emotional development. Their love and support made him to overcome his torments in life.

The novel covers many aspects of our culture: kite flying, rituals at someone's death. Salam is the democratic rival of the president and his repressive military regime. Hasan and his family, and the rest of the inhabitants of this unnamed Pakistan city, must live with civil strikes and the resultant days off school and work, curfews and political unrest. Hasan, his best friend and neighbour Zehra are intelligent, observant

children and make a charming pair. The slightly eccentric characters, the Old Man and Widow provide plenty of smiles dispensing their life.

Hasan observes a young boy on a nearby roof, flying a kite. He sees the boy fall. It becomes a constant image in his head. He feels guilty and connects the boy's fall to his fault. The delighted flyer watches his colourful dancing speck rather than his own footing, and plummets to his tragic death. His beloved uncle, once a powerful political force, has arrested in the house surrounded by entertaining family members to indulge him silly jokes and his love of pine cones. But suddenly he is arrested and disappeared. His reeling family has forty days to figure out the possibility to save him. Hasan, imaginative and obsessed, is convinced that if he can only figure out what Salman's spirit wants, he can win his precious uncle's freedom.

This is a novel of a young boy coming to terms with change- with his feelings of guilt about the death of the kite-flying boy, with imprisonment of his uncle, the changing political landscape within the country, and his changing relationship with Zehra. The story is delightfully told and it reveals a boy's interactions with family and friends, whom he confides in during difficult situation.

Salman is the important character in the novel. The plot is set around his uncle. Salman and her wife Gul Mumani show love and affection to Hasan. He goes against the military rule. His vision of starting the political party is successful in the end. In order to help the people in the country, his political party has army targets to serve the people.

Erik Erikson was a neo- Freudian psychologist who accepted many of the central tenants of Freudian theory, but added his own ideas and beliefs. His theory of psychosocial development is centered on epigenetic principle, which proposes that all people go through a series of eight stages. At each stage, people face a crisis that needs to be successfully resolved in order to develop the psychosocial quality central to each stage.

The fourth stage "Industry versus Inferiority" which occurs between the ages of 5 and 12, is focussed on developing a sense of personal pride and accomplishment. Children at the stage will be learning to read and write, to do sums, to do things on their

own. The child's peer group will gain greater significance and will become a major source of the child's esteem.

In the City by the Sea is remarkable in projecting self-assurance of a young boy. With this subtle political flavour, this is a sensitive story of the mind of the adolescent boy. The novel develops into the depths of relationships as much as it takes to lighter planes of imagination. Hasan's life is shattered when his uncle, a dissenting politician, is arrested and charged with treason. So, he suffers from nightmares and imagination. His family members and his neighbours supported him to overcome the trouble. The dilemmas and frustrations of his life are captured in the novel.

Hasan's friend, Zehra plays an important role in the novel. Whenever the unpleasant things happen in his life, he aspires to get her advice. It gives him happiness and a relief. As illustrated in Erikson's theory friends' help lead him to reach his success in life. even though she is two years elder than him, she can understand his troubles. The friendship between both of them are tactfully handled by Shamsie. She is much matured to face her problems in life. Whenever Hasan is upset and sad, he would go to Zehra's house and have a conversation with her. They both share their problems and convince each other. His father helps him to forget his thoughts on the nightmares and makes him feel happy whenever he is depressed.

There are many children like Hasan who struggles with the inner conflicts. In that situation the children need some guidance and soothing support of family. Here the family of the eleven-year boy Hasan helps him to develop psychologically. But many of the children are mentally affected by the family itself because there are not enough amounts of love and affection showered in most of the family. Families are the golden key to promote the social skills. If the children get family support like Hasan they will definitely get rid of psychological problems.

Kamila Shamsie through the novel In the City by the Sea reveals that the society must understand the psychology of a child, Hasan and provide support and guidance to overcome obstacles to reach greater heights. In the novel, Hasan starts to look his life into a positive way. All the changes in his life, supports him to become the happiest person in his life.

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