

## **The conflict of life and death in Ghafir Shahzad's novel "Mokash"**

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### **Abstract**

The novel "Mokash" by Ghafir Shahzad was published by Fiction House Lahore in 2023. In this novel, Ghafir Shahzad has tried to prove that some people are able to choose the place and time of their choice to die by making death a topic related to the deceased. Four characters in this novel, who are familiar to us to a recognizable extent, determine their own place and time to die. For example, Azhar Nafees, who lives in the narrow and dark streets of the inner city, dies at the radio canteen so that his relatives do not have difficulty in bringing his body to the funeral parlor, because in these streets he has seen the scene of another body being desecrated. This character's relationship with his past and present is so strong that the novelist had to create his counterpart to show it. Rahat Wasim, a curious person, 's progress towards spirituality, his attempt to hide his illness, and then his premeditation in choosing the place of his grave also reinforces the novelist's theory. After this, his mother's illness after coming to the city, the Corona epidemic The plot of dying and waiting until transportation was convenient, then dying in the city and then remaining safe in the hospital's cold storage for three days until the arrival of his children also serves as a major reference to the novelist's philosophy of life. And on top of all this, the story of Mustazad Ahsan Jamal dying among his loved ones in his village shows that these four characters were free to choose the place and time of their death, and despite not being able to defeat death, they did not become targets of its spirit of mockery. This philosophy has been discussed in the article.

### **Key Words:**

"Mokash", Ghafir Shahzad, Azhar Nafees, funeral parlor, character's relationship, Rahat Wasim, Corona epidemic, philosophy of life and death, spirit of mockery.

### **Literature Review**

Ghafir Shahzad's novel "Mokash" was published by Fiction House Lahore in 2023. He attributed it to his late parents in these words: "Mother Mohd. Mehboob Begum (Day of Death: 16-17 June 2022) and Father Mohd. Faiz Rasool (Day of Death: 5-6 September 2023)" This novel consists of two parts. The first chapter of the novel "Life and Death" begins with life and the second with "Death" and then the order of the chapters continues in the same way. "Moksh" literally means freedom or liberation. That freedom in which a person of ancient

and modern times overcomes death and wants liberation and freedom from it. But this liberation cannot be his destiny

The problem of extinction and survival has always been the center of attention of man. The desire to live forever has been present in man from day one due to the love of this world and the attraction of the gathering of its comforts. He is not ready to accept the fact that one day he will have to leave this world. His material body will perish. To comfort his heart, he has accepted the idea of the survival of the soul. The reason for this is also that the heavenly books and divine religions have accepted the survival of the soul. Why does a person die? The answer given by religious priests is that a person does not die. His soul separates from the body and goes to some place where it will remain forever, while a body made of clay merges with the clay. This problem of extinction and survival has also been present among Sufis and Yogis. They have been trying to control the relationship between the body and the soul. It is stated in the novel that it is said about Hazrat Mian Mir that his body used to be present inside the chamber but his soul used to reach somewhere in the upper world. Such things are also attributed to Hazrat Sultan Bahu and other Sufis. The origin of "Moksha" is based on two incidents that are mentioned in history books. First, man, in his quest to live forever, once reached the water of life. Where he saw a bird lying on the ground with the water of life, which had become weak and emaciated. It did not have the ability to fly and was lying on the ground waiting for death. Since it had drunk the water of life, death could not come to it. Seeing the bird, man decided that he would not drink the water of life. It is as if he had accepted annihilation, death. Now here the novelist adds one thing that then man had accepted the reality of death by not drinking the water of life, but at the same time he had also made a promise to himself that he would continue to fight against death and continue to defeat it until the end so that his life could be as long as possible, which was his desire. In this game of life and death, man discovered all kinds of machines, treatments, medicines and foods to control diseases and keep himself healthy and strong. Whatever the disease, he can guess from its symptoms which medicine he should use to overcome it. First, thanks to wild herbs, then homeopathy and now, thanks to the development of allopathy, he has medicine for all kinds of physical ailments.

The second incident that is mentioned in the novel in a similar way is with regard to Fariduddin Attar, when a beggar comes to his perfume shop and asks for alms, after being refused, he asks Fariduddin Attar, "How will you die in this crowded shop?" To this, the beggar gets the answer that just as you die, I will also die in the same way." Hearing this, the beggar lies down on the ground in front of the shop and says: "I will die like this" and then dies with him. This incident changes Fariduddin Attar's world and he gives everything in charity and sets out in the path of Allah. Both these incidents describe the mystery of life and death in their own way. Going beyond this relationship between death and the body, Ghafir Shahzad has put some other questions before his reader in this novel. Although these are assumptions, they may also be true in the future. A character in the novel says that man

chooses the time and place for his death himself. Just as modern discoveries have succeeded to some extent in controlling man's birth, similarly, he is gaining control over death as to where and when he should die.

Another quality of the novel's style is that death has been made a part of the novel in the form of a character. Death addresses itself and tells its story about what games man and religions have played against it. To end its status, sometimes the concept of life after death was given and sometimes it was considered the separation of body and soul. Sometimes it was associated with the cessation of breathing. Death here seems to suffer from a severe sense of deprivation. If the novelist had not presented death as a character, this part of the novel would have become very boring and would have remained a mere bundle of information. This did not happen because of this style adopted.

The interest of the story is maintained by including characters from the surrounding life in the novel. This is why the reader who starts reading the novel is captivated by the story and familiar characters. He does not put it aside until he reads the novel in its entirety. The lives and deaths of all the characters presented in the novel are separate, but they are somehow connected in the fabric of the novel's life. This skillful connection of the story gives centrality to the style of the novel. The characters who live separate lives choose the place and time of death for themselves separately. Someone is afraid of dying in his house located in the winding streets of inner Lahore because there is a fear in his subconscious that if the funeral falls into the street drain, the dead person will be desecrated and he will have to be bathed again. Therefore, he wants the funeral and bathing rituals to be held within the mosque premises and for this purpose, he likes to die outside the city at the Radio Pakistan canteen. Thus, his death occurs there. Another character, who is a doctor himself, sees patients dying at the hands of doctors in hospitals every day and understands that this is not a death of honor. An honorable death is only if the funeral takes place outside his home, where he was born. One character is so fed up with the selfish behavior of his friends around him in the world that he faints before dying in the hospital so that if his friends come to visit him, they cannot see them. A mother, who has gone abroad in search of a prosperous future, is worried about her children, who are worried that it will take two or four days for them to come to her death and that they may not even be able to see her face. Therefore, she comes to the city and accepts death so that her dead body can remain safe for as long as possible in the cold room of a large hospital. Such a novel has never been written before in Urdu literature. The truth is that our novelists and philosophers have never seen the phenomenon of death and life from this angle before. Even Sufism has not reached this far in understanding the issues of life and death, soul and respiration. No one has ever described the experiences after death. Among Hindus, the theory of Avagun also describes the same philosophy of "moksha" and nirvana, but does not talk about the choice of place and time for death.

What can be the outcome of such a novel? This was a difficult stage. Here too, the novelist has taken the help of the scientific method of research. Just as some questions of science are

left unresolved, just as a film or drama ends with a moving train or a flying plane. That life is moving. The series of life and death is going on. The novelist has adopted this technique regarding the hypothesis established in the theses presented in this novel with the help of the surviving character of this novel, Arif Mahmood. This is a skill and cunning, but it seems that the novelist had no other choice but to do so.

The study of the novel “Moksh” is of utmost interest. The subject of the novel is death. Death itself also appears as a character in the novel. There are four other main characters in the novel and all four characters are reliable references to poetry and literature. There are examples of presenting real characters in the form of fiction, but the special thing about this novel is that the author has shown places, cities and some characters from the inside. In this sense, this novel is a reflection of real life. Three characters are close to death at different times and choose their own place. Or it should be said that fate brings the characters to a particular place and brings them closer to death. Perhaps no novel has ever discussed the mystery of death so thoroughly before. I think that one of the main characters of the novel is Dr. Ghafir Shahzad himself and this character is revealed in the last page of the novel.

The first character lives in inner-city Lahore and dies of a heart attack in the canteen after a program on Radio Pakistan. The second character, despite being a medical doctor, loses his life due to neglect of his health. The third character is a professor who goes to his death due to neglect of his illness. The author's thesis is that each character determines the place and time of death in his individual capacity. We do not ultimately agree with this opinion, because we have to accept the consequences of mere coercion. The two supporting characters are Rita and Maaji. The doctor meets Rita in Austria, which turns into love, and Rita soon commits suicide. The doctor regrets Rita's death and thinks that perhaps suicide is a consequence of his relationship. Here the novel takes a turn. Just like in Najib Mahfouz's novel "Aab Neel Pe Awargi" a man dies after being run over by the main characters' car. They regret it and consider themselves responsible for this death when it is just an accident. Arif Mahmood's mother comes from the village to the city and dies despite all the medical facilities. The author presents all these deaths as solid evidence for his thesis position. Death is considered the greatest truth of the universe. Half the world does not believe in God but believes in death. We see people dying before our eyes. The problem is that the deceased does not come back and tell us what happened to him. There is a wall between life and death and we are present only on one side at a time. Thus, the application of any science or philosophy is not possible here. The concept of soul existed before the Islamic religions and death reinforces the concept of afterlife. After a thorough review of the concepts related to death of different civilizations and religions, the author considers the concept of death in Islam to be better and also presents the argument for it.

While life demands its own understanding, the understanding of death has also been an integral part of human thought. Every person has his own way of living and accepting death. We can say that the way of life of a person is a mirror of the thoughts related to death of that

person. The novel "Moksh" is also the story of characters living life who need an answer to the question of the place and time of death, and this is the question that the novel also puts before us. The reader's interest can be increased or decreased by the fact that in this novel, death itself comes before us through a character in his own month and year and people found in different regions of the world. "Moksha" is a new novel by Ghafir Shahzad, which has been created with the philosophy of life and death as its theme. Muksha or the desire to be free from suffering is very old and in this regard, religions of the world have presented many theories, which are discussed in this novel. The story of overcoming death and going in search of the tree of life, from whose branches the sap that sustains life drips, is also told with great creative elevation in the stories of Gulgamish. So, stopping the process of destruction and maintaining youth has always been the dream of the Prophet of Humanity, but an even bigger problem is that of being free from the pain and sorrow that are inflicted by life itself and from which it is not possible to get rid of before death.

In this novel, Ghafir Shahzad has tried to prove that some people are able to choose the place and time of their own choice to die by making death a topic related to the dying person. The four characters in this novel, who are familiar to us to a recognizable extent, determine their own place and time to die. For example, Azhar Nafees, who lives in the narrow and dark streets of the city, dies at the radio canteen so that his relatives do not have to worry about bringing his body to the funeral parlor, because he has seen another body being desecrated in those streets. This character's connection to his past and present is so strong that the novelist had to create his counterpart to show it. Rahat Wasim, a curious person, progress towards spirituality, his attempt to hide his illness, and then his premeditation in choosing the place for his grave also reinforces the novelist's theory. After this, his mother's illness after coming to the city, his death due to the corona epidemic and his stay until the convenience of transportation, after which he dies in the city and then stays safe in the hospital's cold storage for three days until the arrival of his children, also become a major reference in supporting the novelist's philosophy of life. And on top of all this, Mustazad Ahsan Jamal's decision to go to his village and die among his loved ones The story suggests that these four characters were free to choose the place and time of their death, and despite not being able to defeat death, they did not fall victim to its spirit of mockery.

"Moksh" is a novel with a double narrative. The narrator of the novel is Arif Mahmood, who is not completely connected to literature and poetry, but he is fully aware of the life story and sphere of action of the other three male characters, Ahsan Jamal, Azhar Nafees and Rahat Wasim, whose lives are completely connected to the creation of art. While his relationship with the fourth character, namely Mother, is very close, that is, being their child. Thus, he is right in understanding and describing the lives, backgrounds and psychology of these four characters. While the

second narrator of the novel is Death, who describes in detail his behavior and man's attempt to escape from it in terms of time and thought, and tells how man has tried to control it, how he has avoided it and defeated it, and to what extent he has succeeded or failed in it.

In this regard, the novelist has taken a critical look at the origins of religion from pre-historic times, starting with the oldest religions of the world, namely Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, and then at the theories of life and death of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. He has personified death and described this entire development in such a way that this novel has become a rare scholarly document that is of great importance in its own right.

Like the rest of Ghafir Shahzad's novels, this novel also falls into the category of fiction. This technique of novel writing is nothing new. Aziz Ahmed's book "Madan Sina Aur Sadian" in Urdu and especially his short story "Tavor-e-Sheikh" are very good examples of this. Intazar Hussain's novels "Basti", "Tazkira" and "Aaye Samandar Hai" are also forms of fiction and now in our time, Shamsur-ur-Rehman Farooqi's novel "Ke Chand Thi Sar-e-Asmaan" and Mirza Hamid Baig's novel "Anaar Kali" have also adopted the style of describing historical facts through known characters. "Moksh" will also be counted among such novels whose characters are familiar to us or we are familiar with their nature and an important chapter of Lahore's literary history has been preserved forever in this book with regard to them. But Ghafir Shahzad has not deviated from the basic theme of this novel anywhere and has used this entire story to give a special meaning to death and its relationship with man.

The language of "Moksh" is very simple and fluent. It is so rich in the quality of readability that the entire novel can be read in one sitting. One of the reasons for everyone's deep interest in it is our personal connection with the characters of this novel and perhaps for the first time we become so deeply involved in their lives and their joys and sorrows that we do not feel their sorrow sinking into our souls and we also become its heirs and think that if only the ending of their stories had been different, a little better.

"Moksh" is an excellent intellectual novel. Ghafir Shahzad has not only handled the subject but has done complete justice to it. No other novel on this subject has passed my eyes with this level of

philosophical wisdom. So he deserves praise for this daring and daring.

As has been mentioned, the main theme of this novel is death. Death has been the main theme of many other works of art as Khalid Javed is a living example of this in Urdu fiction. But in Ghafir Shahzad's case, this topic also becomes distinctive because in this novel, a thesis about death is presented in a questioning manner. The novelist asks whether the dying person himself determines the time and place of his death. In the first part of the novel, he raises this question through the main character Arif Mahmood:

" un sahib ne chand aur sawal arif Mahmood ke samnay kharray kar diye Ahsen jamal hospital ke bajaye –apne ghar ja kar kyun marna chahta tha ?  
azhar nafees ne radio station ki contain ko kyun –apne marnay ke liye muntakhib kya ?  
raahat waseem ne marnay ke liye private hospital aur tadfeen ke liye har khanaay ki intikhab kyun kya ? ' ' ( ? )

Since death is the central theme of the novel, death repeatedly shows its hiddenness in embodied form and tells historical facts about the ideas that different religions and different civilizations have formed about death and its related matters. In this regard, see Death's observation on the relationship between death and Adam:

" mera aur aadam ka yeh khail azal se jari hai. hum aik dosray ke sath zindagi aur mout ka khail khail rahay hain. kabhi usay lagta hai ke mein haar gayi hon to woh zindah bach jata hai. jab mein jeet jati hon to woh is haar ke liye kayi izr تراشتا hai. waqt guzarnay ke sath usay izr tarashi mein mahaarat haasil ho gayi hai. woh jab jungle mein shikaar ke liye jata hai to usay ilm hota hai ke woh agar zindah wapas agaya to is ke paas shikam Sairy ke liye shikaar ho ga. usay yeh bhi maloom hai ke agar is ne shikaar nah kya to woh khud shikaar ho jaye ga.' ' ( ? )

In a few other places in the novel, these ideas are also mentioned in the language of death, in which the desire of man to live even after death is expressed. This desire is clearly seen to turn into defeat and regret.

" hayaat baad ulmaut ki awleen talabb فراعين mein peda hui aur is ke baad aam insanon mein bhi is khwahish ne janam liya. marnay ke baad jism ko anay walay waqton mein tibbi tor par mehfooz rakha hayaat baad ulmaut ke nazriya ke tehat nihayat zaroori samjha gaya tha. mqbre, ahraam aur bohat baad mein mzarat ki taamer ki riwayat isi nazriya ke khameer se uthti hai.' ' ( ? )

Death is a terrifying companion. This is a fact, but to reduce the fear and terror of this companion, what kind of ideas have humans established after death? See also the words of death:

" dosra nazriya jo mere ke sath jora gaya, woh marnay ke baad saza aur jaza ka nazriya tha. is ki zaroorat insaan ko is liye par gai ke woh mera khauf –apne dil se kam karna chahta tha. –apne faani honay ke tasawwur ko ghair mo-asar karna chahta tha. hayaat baad ulmaut ke nazriye ko mo-asar andaaz se paish karne ke liye zaroori tha ke jism ke fanaa honay ke baad kuch aisa tasawwur diya jata jisay baqa aur Dwam haasil tha. is maqsad ke liye rooh ka tasawwur muta-arif karaya gaya. yeh bataya gaya ke rooh ko Dwam haasil hai. marnay ke baad yeh rooh hai jisay wapas is duniya mein lout ke aata hai ya qayamat tak intzaar karna hai ke jab aamaal ki saza o jaza ka faisla hoga.' ' ( ? )

As mentioned, there is also a special mention of the views on death that have developed in different civilizations. Here is an excerpt in this regard:

" aadam se Meer امعانقه pehli baar tab sun-hwa jab is se gunah sarzad sun-hwa !  
babli, اشورى اور سوميرى t\_hzibon ke mutabiq bemari aur mout gunah ka nateeja hain. duniya ki mukhtalif t\_hzibon mein mere hawalay se ravayye mukhtalif aur dotok rahay hain. mujhe jaan lainay mein insaan ne kya kya koshishen nahi kee magar hazaron saal guzarnay ke bawajood yeh mujh tak nahi pahonch saka. usay mujh tak pounchanay ki is liye zaroorat hai ke woh mujhe –apne control mein karna chahta hai. woh mera –apne sath talluq manay ke liye tayyar hi nahi ke hum aik dosray ke sath ujalay aur andheray ki terhan hain.' ' ( ? )

Ghafir Shahzad is a clever creator who knows very well that if a reflection of the political and social life of the society in which a person lives is not present in this work of art, then that work of art will become colorless. Along with presenting the topic of death, the novelist has also kept in mind the corruption associated with the medical field. In which all the secrets are revealed in which Jesus himself has apparently taken the form of the Messiah mafia and robs the public through various tricks and pretexts. See an excerpt in this regard:

" Lahore mein medical tiston ke liye libartryon ka jo mafia shehar ko apni lapait mein liye hue tha, usay is ka bhi andaza tha. medical companiyon ke numainday bag uthaye nai pradkts jis terhan muta-arif karate aur un ke sath jo paish kash woh dr Sahiban ko dete thay, usay khoob ilm tha. is ka tib ke payshay se aetmaad uth chuka tha. usay is baat ka bhi andaza tha ke haspatalon mein narson aur lady doctoron ko jis terhan senior professor apni mann marzi karne par majboor karte aur jo jo hthknde istemaal karte hain, medical college se paas out honay ke baad aik nai duniya is par aashkaar hui thi.' '(?)

The sorrow presented in the world of poetry and literature is very different from the sorrow of real life. These poets understand this when they themselves are going through such sorrow in real life. Ahsan Jamal is a poet who is a well-known character in this novel. He has expressed the emotions of sorrow, happiness and romance in his poetry, but when his daughter Norma dies, she introduces him to a different sorrow. So, see an excerpt from the passage:

" is ne bohat nazmein likhi theen magar tamam iktisabi dukh thay. zindagi mein pehli baar is ka dukh se saamna sun-hwa tha. dukh ka pehla tajurbah tha jisay woh lafzon ki soorat mein dhaal hi nahi paaya. kya bhi woh –apne gham ka izhaar kar paye ga ke dosray is ki nazam parh kar is ke dukh mein shareek ho saken? ya woh is ki nazam parh kar –apne dukhoon ka madawa kar saken ge ?' '(?)

While life demands its own understanding, the understanding of death has also been an integral part of human thought. Every person has his own way of living and accepting death. We can say that someone's way of life is a mirror of that person's thoughts related to death. The novel "Moksh" is also the story of characters living life who need an answer to the question of the place and time of death, and the novel also puts this same question before us. The reader's interest can be increased or decreased by the fact that in this

novel, death itself narrates to us the story of a character in front of us about his months and years and the ideas about himself found in different regions of the world. While talking about his birth and evolution, man also seems afraid of his own death due to his progress. The novelist has especially taken care of this arrangement that, leaving one or two chapters, in each subsequent chapter, the thoughts of death should be described or the concepts that are practiced in different regions of the world regarding death should be explored. What concepts did the Egyptians, Sumerians, Indians, Judaism, Christianity and Islam present about death? All these concepts are mentioned in detail in this novel. Concepts about death are described in this novel in the same way. Like what do the people around a character think about it? In this novel, while remembering the past, Death seems satisfied, while seeing the development of medical science, he is also worried that the time for death to die may not come. The title of the novel about death, Moksh, is very powerful in itself and is also connected to the earth.

Most of the characters in the novel are people connected to the literary world of Lahore, but the character of Death, instead of being connected to a particular region, has gone on a tour of the whole world. The novel begins with a condolence reference on the death of Azhar Nafees, where the main character of the novel puts the thesis of the will of the deceased in front of the audience present regarding the time and place of death. In the rest of the novel, Arif Mahmood talks about the place and time of death with the help of various characters. Let us see what kind of questions the different characters faced before their death in the novel. Azhar Nafees has retired from the office of a magazine published under the supervision of the government. His financial conditions in life have never been good enough to build a house in a suitable place, so he spent his entire life in his ancestral house in the inner city. In the last days of his life, he publishes his literary magazine, but now he has neither a clear goal in life nor any special desire. However, one thing was worrying for him that taking the funeral procession out of the streets of the inner city was a very difficult process, and often the funeral processions of the deceased were desecrated in the narrow and dark streets. One day, suddenly, after finishing reading a poetry from Radio Station Lahore, he dies of a heart attack while sitting in the canteen. Arif Mahmood sees this manner of Azhar

Nafees' death in relation to the place chosen for his death. It should be remembered that Azhar Nafees became a poet only because the nature of his work in the literary magazine was something like that. Ahsan Jamal, another character in the novel, does not like the sudden death of Azhar Nafees, who dies away from his family. Ahsan Jamal is a poet who goes to Austria with his wife, but returns to Pakistan after getting fed up with the meaninglessness of his life there. But even after coming to Pakistan, he is unable to find a new meaning in life and is so depressed by the death of his newborn daughter, the death of his beloved who died in Austria, and the death of Arif Muhammad's mother that he goes to his native area where he dies among his relatives. Similarly, Rahat Wasim, due to the changing landscape of the literary world and his own insignificance, hates his literary friends so much that he distances himself from everyone and does not let his friends and relatives know about his liver cancer. He even dies and is buried in the shrine about which he tells his children in his dreams. Similarly, Arif Mahmood's mother, who lives in the villages, but in her last days, comes to Lahore to be with her son Arif Mahmood. Here, she starts losing her memory while remembering her children who have gone abroad. Until death occurs. Arif Mahmood thinks that this is why her mother came to him. She should not be buried immediately, but should be kept in a morgue in the city. Until her children come from abroad to visit her. All the characters described in the novel have one thing in common that they are just living by playing the game of their lives.

As has been mentioned before, all the characters of writers. All of them are shown breathing in the life of Lahore. For example, a character named Rahat Wasim, who comes to Lahore from Shahkot area of Sheikhpura, and who is very keen on making a name for himself in literature. He sees the difference between the two well-known literary magazines of the literary world, Oraq and Funoon, while sitting in Lahore. Here is an excerpt in this regard:

" raahat waseem ke samnay do rastay thay. aik rasta ourak mein shaya honay walay adeebon ka aur dosra Ahmed Nadim qasmi ke ' fanoon' ' group ka shahkot mein baith kar usay yeh dono group aik dosray ke mad maqabil dikhayi dete. is ki wajah yeh thi ke shahkot aur Faisal abad mein woh un ke baray mein musalsal aisi guftagu

santa chala aaya tha. usay shairi se lagao tha. aik shayar ke tor par pehchan banana chahta tha. usay yeh group baazi bohat ajeeb lagti thi magar is ke wujood se woh to kya, koi bhi inkaar nahi kar sakta tha.' '(?)

This novel not only mentions the mutual quarrels between writers, but also tells the story of those writers who made their name in different ways and became the need of the people. For example, when Rahat Wasim was not heard in the literary world, he started a fortnightly newspaper titled "Adab Nama". In which interviews and opinions of those writers who were defeated and who had many secrets from the literary world are included. The result was that there was a stir in the literary world and people in the literary world considered this act of Rahat Wasim as blackmail and started giving importance to it. In this regard, Ghafir Shahzad writes:

" aik baras ke andar andar raahat waseem ne apni pehchan adbi duniya mein banali. Khyber taa Karachi , koi avbi azeem ba shayar Adeeb aisa nahi tha ke jo is ke naam aur akhbar se waaqif nah ho. zilai satah ka koi sarkari mushaaira aisa nahi tha jahan raahat waseem ko دعوتہیں kya gaya balkay is baras to usay Karachi aur queta ke salana sarkari mshaaron ke dawat naame bhi masool hue. yahi kuch to raahat waseem chahta tha. dosray saal raahat waseem ko beron malik mshaaron ki dawatein bhi aana shuru ho gayi theen. is ne akhbar ki maqboliat ke sabab is ke safhaat chaar se barha kar aath kar diye thay. kabhi كہارا se khusoosi chahar rang ka addition bhi shaya karna parta magar yeh tab hi mumkin hota jab usay do teen achay اشتہاریل jatay thay.' '(?)

Along with the mutual rivalry between writers, the literary activities in the same city are also described in this novel under the title of artistic production. Here is an excerpt in this regard:

" sfan wala chowk mein kitaab ghar mein kuch Adeeb o shayar baithtay thay. kitaab ghar ka maalik husn ذوبیب khud bhi shayar tha aur adbi o tareekhi mozuaat par kitabon ki ashaat ko is ne –apne ashaati markaz ki takhsees bana liya tha. aglay hissay mein kitabon ki dukaan thi aur peechay aik kamray mein bethnay ke liye jagah bnarkhi thi. fursat ke auqaat mein husn ذوبیب peechay is kamray mein baith jata, likhnay parhnay ka kaam bhi karta rehta. kuch dost ikathay ho jatay to dukaan mein bethnay ke bajaye, peechay kamray mein chalay jatay. kamray mein aik bed, دوصوفے aur chay kursiya rakhi hui theen. chaye bananay ke liye aik choti maiz jahan electric

har waqt mojud rehti. dost baithy hotay to chaye ke daur chaltay rehtay. kamray mein itni gunjaish thi ke agar choti adbi nashist karne ki zaroorat padtee to bhi das baara Adeeb shayar ikathay ho jatay, kuch neechay bichay qaleen par baith jatay بیٹا اور sofay aur kursiya bhi is maqsad ke liye kaam aatin.' '( ۱۰ )

Along with literary gatherings, the novel also specifically describes the changes in literary values and the quality of literature. Also, see an excerpt regarding how social media has interfered in and controlled human social affairs:

" sfan wala chowk mein kitaab ghar mein kuch Adeeb o shayar baithtay thay. kitaab ghar ka maalik husn ذوبیب khud bhi shayar tha aur adbi o tareekhi mozuaat par kitabon ki ashaat ko is ne –apne ashaati markaz ki takhsees bana liya tha. aglay hissay mein kitabon ki dukaan thi aur peechay aik kamray mein bethnay ke liye jagah bnarkhi thi. fursat ke auqaat mein husn ذوبیب peechay is kamray mein baith jata, likhnay parhnay ka kaam bhi karta rehta. kuch dost ikathay ho jatay to dukaan mein bethnay ke bajaye, peechay kamray mein chalay jatay. kamray mein aik bed, دو صوفے aur chay kursiya rakhi hui theen. chaye bananay ke liye aik choti maiz jahan electric har waqt mojud rehti. dost baithy hotay to chaye ke daur chaltay rehtay. kamray mein itni gunjaish thi ke agar choti adbi nashist karne ki zaroorat padtee to bhi das baara Adeeb shayar ikathay ho jatay, kuch neechay bichay qaleen par baith jatay بیٹا اور sofay aur kursiya bhi is maqsad ke liye kaam aatin.' '( ۱۰ )

The novelist has also specifically noted the inclusion of non-literary and capitalist elements in literature, and has mentioned this in the novel:

" raahat waseem aur Ahsen jamal ki nasal ke shayar o Adeeb dekhte hi reh gaye! yeh allag qisam cause presion tha jo un sab ke liye ghair mutawaqqa tha. kuch sahafion ne bhi adbi taqrebaat high jack karna shuru kar dein. Itriri fistol ka aik nah khatam honay wala silsila shuru sun-hwa ke jin ke پیٹمین mein sarmaya daar thay. barri barri kompaniyon ke spansr jaybou mein liye yeh log al - hamra art konslon mein ghse. aywanِ saddar mein raahat waseem mushaaira parh aaya tha magar baat ban nahi rahi thi. abhi woh un laal banai walon se nmte nah thay ke nojawanon ke aik giroh ne social media

ke zariye lakhoon ki tadaad mein –apne nazreen mein izafah kar liya. yeh nojawan jahan mushaaira parhnay jatay social media par video clips ke zariye –apne anay ki ittila pehlay hi day dete. collegeon ke larke aur larkiyan mushaaira gaah pahonch jatein aur unn ki shairi par daad o tehseen ke naam proh naara baazi hoti ke aathween dahai ke un shura ka kalaam qabuliat haasil nah krpata woh jaisay woh aur in ki shairi, waqt se bohat peechay reh gaye hain.' '( ۱۲ )

The novel also highlights an important issue of the modern era, which is the loneliness of parents. The materialism of the modern era has blinded man to such an extent that he is unable to give adequate time to his parents. Most children go out of the country after completing their education. Here is an excerpt in this regard, in which a mother of four children is suffering from loneliness:

" Lahore anay ke baad maa jee shayad tanhai ka ziyada shikaar ho gayeen aur yad dasht ke masail ne taizi se sir uthaya. dono betay aur beti وبتائس app par un se rozana ki bunyaad par rabita mein thay. video cal ki wajah se baatein karte hue aik dosray ko dekha bhi ja sakta tha. magar sun-hwa yun ke do chaar baar video cal par baatein karne ke baad maa jee ne koi ziyada dilchaspi ka izhaar nah kya. woh khamosh aur chup chaap, be ta-assur chehrey ke sath dekhatii rhtin aur koi baat nah kartin. unhein baar baar batana parta ke falan beta ya falan beti hai jis se unn ke zehen par zor parta aur do d presion mein chali jatein. un ki aankhon mein aik ajeeb si udasi utar aati jo baad mein rani mein badalti chali gayi. woh baar baar bachon ko yaad kar tain magar jab video cal par unhein dekhatii to chup ho ho jati. aik tik unhein dekhatii chali jati. din mein kayi martaba un ke labon se yeh alfaaz nikal jatay" itnay bachon ke hotay hue bhi mein akeli hon' '( ۱۳ )

In this novel, where many other social evils are discussed, the myths that exist in the name of reward for the deceased after death are mentioned in these words:

" arif Mahmood ne note kya ke mout se jari bohat si ghair zaroori rasoom ki aarr mein logon ne khanay peenay ke bahanay taraash liye hain. pehlay pehal to tadfeen ke baad sirf daur daraaz ke rishta daari khana khatay thay, gaon ke log aisi koi tawaqqa nahi bandhtay thay. arif Mahmood to is samay heran reh gaya ke abhi tadfeen jari

thi aur janaza parhnay ke baad log joq dar jooti maa jee ke ghar ki janib chal parre jahan aala qisam ka khana unn ka muntazir tha. saalan mein murgh nahi تھابل ke bakray ka gosht tha. arif Mahmood ko bataya gaya tha ke murgh Tawaab ghareeb غربا –apne kisi Aziz ke marnay par pakatay hain warna jo sahib istetat hain, bakray ke gosht ke sath desi ghee ka حلو bhi pakatay hain. ghar se janaza uthaye jane se pehlay agar marnay jis ke wali khaton hoti to gaon mein chalne walay bachiyon ke madrassa ki Alima aadha ghanta mrhomh ke armani Hamida bayan karti, quran khawani aur duayen karti. mrhomh ke munfarid Awsaf ka raqt amaiz tazkara karti aur is ki oola daal cover laane ke liye nihayat jazbati khitaab karti. is ka مختانه allag se muqarrar tha aur is ke madrasay ki bachiyon ke liye allag se daig bhjwayi jati thi. aisa hi madrasay ke larkoon ke sath tha.' '( ۱۴ )

The novel has firmly established its grip on its subject, especially the literary world, literary politics, economic pressure and the bitter truth of death. This novel was also the need of the hour, that a country with a population of more than one crore is spread across other countries, while a population of crores is forced to live in big cities far from their native areas to earn a living. This novel interprets the question of the place and time of death present in the lives of all these people-

I also think it is necessary to say here that wherever in the entire novel the place comes to uncover the layers of the sexual life of the characters, the novelist seems to try to avoid this place. For example, Arif Mahmood is living without marriage and there is not a single word about his sexual needs in the novel. The reason for his not getting married is attributed to his domestic responsibilities. Similarly, Ahsan Jamal's sexual relations with Rita are also described in such a cumbersome manner as if the writer is saying something he does not want to say. Talking about the characters, all the characters are integrated with each other and are moving the story forward. But Rahat Wasim's character, despite all his details, seems quite isolated from the rest of the characters. Which advances the narrative of the novel but seems a bit weak in terms of connection with the rest of the characters. There is also a slight twist in the novel that the novelist considers Islam to be the most influential concept regarding the understanding of death. But the title of the novel is Moksh, although the concept of Moksh is born from the soil of India. Even before the regular development and evolution of science, regular attempts have been made to control death. Many spiritual efforts have been made. Now science is trying to know the secret of death and to control it. Ghafir Shahzad has verbally informed about the scientific and medical means to reduce the severity of death, but to what extent will science be successful in controlling death and achieving salvation from it. Nothing is said about this. The main thesis of this novel is that does a person consciously or

unconsciously determine the place and condition for death? So the novelist has left it to the reader. Thus, overall, after reading Ghafir Shahzad's novel, we have come to the conclusion that Ghafir Shahzad's fiction is directly related to society and also has the ability to see the defects found in it to their roots.

References

- .1Moksh by Zaghafar Shahzad Lahore Fiction House 2023, p. 12
- .2Mahula, above, p.37
- .3Mohola Bala, p. 77
- .4Mohola Bala, p. 78
- .5Mohola Bala, p. 86
- .6Mohola Bala, p. 93
- .7Mohola Bala, p. 100
- .8Above, p. 126
- .9Above, p. 131
- .10Mufaala Bala, p. 149
- .11Above, p. 168
- .12Mufaala Bala, p. 179
- .13Muhabala, p. 185
- .14Muhabala, p. 207