



EXPLORING THE UNCONSCIOUS MOTIVES IN THE SHORT STORY THE KITE BY SOMERSET MAUGHAM

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Abstract: *The article focuses on the influence of the Freudian psychoanalytic theories and the riveting writings of William Somerset Maugham. This article has narrowed down its focus on the only one enthralling short story by Maugham, namely "The Kite". Somerset Maugham and Sigmund Freud's lives intersected in the early years of the twenty-first century. They were both fascinated by human relationships and the building blocks of human bonds. This study was qualitative descriptive. The theory adopted for analyzing the selected text was the Freud approach to the issue as a psychoanalyst and clinician. Simultaneously, Maugham delved deep into the psyche and behavior of human beings he met, watched, and interacted with. This article aims to critically evaluate the compelling themes and motives of Maugham's short stories and to establish the ascendancy of the theories of psychoanalysis as propounded by Freud in them.*

Keywords: *Freud, Maugham, Motive, Psychoanalytic, Kite.*

INTRODUCTION

William Somerset Maugham's short story "The Kite" was published in 1947. The story's four primary protagonists are Herbert, Bettie, Samuel, and Beatrice. Ned, Preston and an "omniscient" first-person narrator are two other characters. Samuel and Beatrice's only child is named Herbert (Mr. and Mrs. Sunbury.) He is first shown as a polite youngster and then a charming adult. He is a bright kid but also adamant about not changing his mind. His connection with his mom is unusual compared to the standard for mothers and sons. Beatrice has a commanding demeanor despite her tiny stature and robust physicality. Beatrice is too conservative; she does not allow Herbert to hang around with other kids, and she does not let him go out on Saturday nights, even though he is old enough. Beatrice comes up with several ridiculous restrictions for her kid so that he may only learn valuable life lessons from her. Beatrice also comes off as quite haughty to me because she treats and communicates with totally strangers (Boys, 1994). From where I sit, Samuel's wife has a stifling effect on him. Throughout his life, Samuel has worked as a clerk in a legal office, where he has been both diligent and dependable. He entered the company as a lowly office boy but eventually rose through the ranks. The Sunbury is a model of the upper middle class. Ned Preston visits Herbert in jail at Wormwood Scrubs in this capacity. This tale was first relayed to our narrator by Ned Preston.

Reading a well-written short narrative might be challenging since so much is concealed. Like other authors, William Somerset Maugham's works are heavily infused with personal details. Because of his natural talent for storytelling and his polished narrative skills, he has managed to keep his audience engaged right up to the last page. "Mostly, short tales are distinguished by a straightforward, unadorned language, cosmopolitan locations, and a smart insight of human nature" (Sai, 2017). The people in Maugham's stories have depth

and complexity. Adding a small amount of himself while creating his characters makes them so exciting and adaptable. His sympathetic gaze and sympathetic viewpoint made the reader feel better.

When developing the characters in his short tales, Maugham meticulously noted every little detail. As a result, W.S. Maugham's artful depictions of human reality are a pleasure to enjoy on several levels. W.O. Ross (2018) writes, "A contemporary critic passionately claims that currently Maugham is the greatest inventive genius in the area of the English novel," and it is safe to conclude that Maugham is among the most highly regarded writers of all time. Many of Maugham's readers have speculated that the author's actual life experiences inspired the fictional characters and settings in his novels and short tales because they resembled real people and events. The events which motivated him must have happened very early because they are reflected nearly from the beginning of his career as a writer," W.O. Ross said to Ross. Maugham was profoundly influenced by Freud and his beliefs because he could, in some way, identify with them. Maugham's portrayal of his character was significantly influenced by Freudian principles put forward by Freud and even Carl Jung. W. O. Ross says that "the responses of his characters are always extreme, even perverse," which is a hallmark of Maugham's writing. The people of the nineteenth century must have had a hard time accepting these characters in their natural states. Understanding Maugham's character would have remained elusive, if not for Freud's psychoanalytic theories. "The twentieth century owes its willingness to believe in Sigmund Freud and his successors," writes W.O. Ross. "They have directed attention to various perverse responses and explained them by reference to the unconscious mind."

In the Kite, the entire tale is given a symbolic value by flying a kite. It is an act of loving devotion. Even yet, it is not a toy but rather an instrument of Beatrice's dominance over her son. After they are married, Betty becomes dissatisfied and rebellious when Herbert continues to spend Saturdays kite-flying with his parents. She thinks it is embarrassing and advises Herbert not to do it. But Herbert's tragic fascination for the kite is a thread of maternal obsession. Mrs. Sunbury uses her emotional tie to her kid like a kite string to exert power over him. Betty resorts to cutting down the kite after all other attempts at persuasion have failed. Herbert prefers jail instead of delivering alimony to his wife. The crushing of the Kite is a form of matricide for him, which he cannot forbear (Bulut, 2009).

The reader will find Samuel and his wife, Beatrice Sunbury, in the suburbs of London. He is a modest guy who works as an assistant at a law firm. For many years, he has been employing identical conveyances for employment. Herbert is their sole son to them. This young boy was incredibly muscular with lovely blue eyes when he grew up. As soon as he finishes school, his father, Simple Sunbury, gets him set up at the accounting office, which provides the family with an excellent supplement to their income. Kite fliers may indulge in their hobby on a nearby field's hill. Herbert begins frequenting this area and actively participates in kite flying. Over time, everyone in the family follows Herbert's lead and begins to enjoy this hobby. They start socializing with the commoners.

Herbert has developed a regular pattern of going to the movies late at night. Herbert met Betty Bevan, seated next to him at a bar one night. Herbert wants to have tea with Betty. Herbert admits he has feelings for Betty. Beatrice Samuel, the mother of Herbert, opposes the proposal alleging that it is a ruse by Betty to kidnap away their only son.

With their parents' wishes, Betty and Herbert tie the knot. Since Betty is an orphan, she lives entirely on her own. They rented a two-bedroom house and brought their furnishings. As time goes on, the excitement and thrill of being newlywed fade, and in its place comes regret and routine. Betty thinks flying a kite is a stupid, infantile pastime. When Herbert visits the kite field, Betty gives pursuit. His mother gives him a big hug and offers him some tea. They got into a heated argument because Betty had lost her cool. Once again, calling his folks home, Herbert packs his belongings and moves in with them (Calder, 1978).

Malas A. (2017), in the study "Girish karnad is the dream of Tipu Sultan and broken images: The study of the human unconscious" exploring the history and culture through various features of human character. The purpose of this paper was to analyze Tipu's psychology as it is disclosed via his dreams and to demonstrate how the dramatist has portrayed Tipu's unconscious to uncover the other aspect of Indian psychology that has never had the opportunity to be explored historically (Malas. A, 2017).

In another study, Bano, S., Bacha, M. S., & Aslam, M. W. (2022) used Freud's theory to analyze "Clear Light of the Day" to study unconscious components and their influence on personality formation (psychoanalytic theory, 1910). In addition, this research aimed to analyze the book's primary characters by employing Freud's psychoanalytic theory to identify the idea, ego, and Superego personality traits displayed in the book (Woodward et al., 2019).

While Black, S. A. (1970) "Whitman and psychoanalytic criticism: Response to Arthur Golden" Miller contends that Walt Whitman's poetry is an autobiographical self-analysis that pulls from unconscious, infantile sources and creates "regressive imagery, imagination, and the reactivation of infantile longings." Some believe that Walt Whitman conquered the Freudian narcissism he struggled with by embracing the Marcusean narcissism he struggled with (Black, 1970).

In the article "Psychoanalytical analysis of the Folktale," published in 2014 by Das R., this study emphasized how important it is to interpret folktales to understand society and its issues correctly. The Freudian approach to analyzing folktales was the only method utilized in this study. The study of folktales and their interpretation frequently uses several different psychological or sociological research approaches. (Das, 2014)

Given the previous studies, the novelty of this research is to explore the unconscious motives and how psychoanalytic theory presents class discrimination in "The Kite" by Somerset Maugham. Furthermore, this research focuses on exploring the significant character's unconsciousness as, due to extreme rage, Herbert has decided to end Betty's life. His dad calms him down. Betty no longer receives financial support from Herbert. Aside from verbally abusing and physically assaulting Herbert's wife, she often tosses stones through



their bedroom window. After Betty filed a suit against Herbert, the two of them again came before a magistrate who wanted to mediate and bring the family back together, but Herbert was unwilling to back down. He would instead go to jail than help out. The straightforward activity of flying a kite brings an end to a young woman's life and the lives of her family in this story.

The current study finds answers to the following questions; What are the unconscious motives in the short story "The Kite" by Somerset Maugham? How does psychoanalytic theory portray class inequality in Somerset Maugham's "The Kite"?

The present research has the following objectives; To explore the unconscious motives in the short story "The Kite" by Somerset Maugham; To Explore how psychoanalytic theory presents class discrimination in "The Kite" by Somerset Maugham.

Two benefits can be obtained from analyzing "The Kite" by Somerset Maugham. First, it is theoretical and practical benefits as follows: This study can add knowledge and treasure in the world of literature that other researchers in the future need. This study can serve as a reference for future researchers interested in the same subject because it offers information that can be helpful to those researchers. This research also has a benefit for the author itself. This research will be a work that contains some things about literature. What the author learns about the literature is used in conducting this research. Therefore, the author can sharpen their literary knowledge by doing research.

METHOD

1. Theoretical Framework

According to the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud (1923), personality develops in various phases, each with an internal psychological conflict. According to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical personality theory, human behavior results from interactions between three mind components: the id, ego, and superego. Underscored in Freud's theory, which came to be known as the structural personality theory, is the significance of unconscious psychological tensions in shaping behavior and personality. It is widely accepted that five distinct psychosexual stages of development occur due to the dynamic interactions between the various aspects of mental development. However, Freud's ideas were called into doubt in the previous century, partly because they placed an unusual emphasis on sexuality as the primary driving force behind the formation of human personalities (S. Freud, 1923).

2. Sigmund Freud's Structure of Human Mind

Id, ego, and superego are the three primary components of the human mind, and Freud believed that our personalities result from the interactions between these three components (Freud and Strachey 1996; S. Freud, 1923). Conflicts between these three structures and our efforts to strike a balance between what each of them desires to shape our behaviors and how we interact with the outside world. How can we resolve the conflict that exists between two significant behavioral trends? The degree to which we can maintain a healthy equilibrium between our biologically aggressive and pleasurable desires and the socially conditioned internal control we exert over these drives is contingent upon the particular context in which we find ourselves.

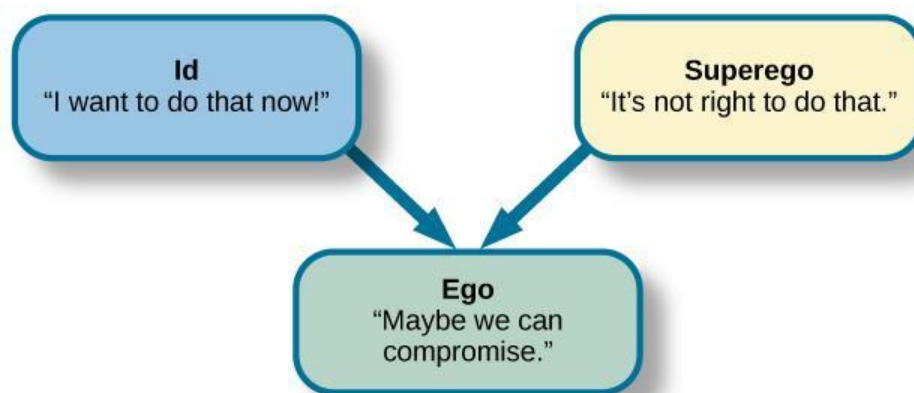


Figure 1: Component of Human Mind (Freud and Strachey 1996; De Sousa 2011; S. Freud, 1923)

According to Freud, the id, ego, and superego are perpetually conflicting, and the effects of these inner fights throughout infancy affect adults' personalities and behaviors (Freud & Strachey, 1996). He believed that a person with a strong sense of self has a healthy personality. Conversely, that ego imbalance can lead to neurosis and undesirable behaviors (what we now call worry and melancholy).

3. Research Design

The current research is descriptive and qualitative. The interpretive technique is used for data analysis.

4. Primary Data

The short story "The Kite" by Somerset Maugham is a primary source to complete this research.

5. Secondary Data

A secondary source is used to develop the literature review and support for a theoretical framework like research concerning books, digital libraries, research articles, and thesis.

DISCUSSION

1. Literature Review

According to Costa (1988a), Maugham's works are renowned for their realism, presentation, economy, and style simplicity. The psychological tales written by Maugham tend to focus on detailed analyses of human character and provide profound insights into the nature and functioning of the human mind. Stories like "Mr Know-All," "The Lavender Scarce," "A Door of Opportunity," "The Kite," and others exemplify Maugham's strengths as a short-story writer.

According to Maugham, "the Psychology of the human beast" lies at the heart of "The Kite." In it, he tries to shed light on the complexities of human nature. Using Freudian concepts of obsession as a foundation, he creates a scenario about a young guy whose preoccupation with kites leads to the dissolution of his marriage and eventually his incarceration.

William Somerset Maugham's story "The Kite" contains psychological undertones and allusions. When reading the short tale, one may discover a multitude of psychological conclusions; nevertheless, the researcher would want to focus the research on two of the most critical Freudian theories, which are "the tripartite structure of personality" and "the Oedipal Complex."

This short novella examines several psychiatric theories, with particular people serving as case studies. The "Oedipal complex" serves as the central topic of the story, and it has been analyzed in all of its possible guises during the story. The narrative focuses on the primal connection that can only exist between a mother and her kids.

According to Costa (1988b), Mrs. Beatrice Sunbury is an overprotective mother who hurts Herbert and her son's emotional growth and development. Mrs. Sunbury's behavior hurts Herbert's emotional growth and development. Mrs. Sunbury's negative effect on her son can be traced back to a very young age when she expressed a desire to be the focal point of his whole existence. She made her presence known in Herbert's life and attempted to dictate his every action. [Case in point] Herbert was trained from an early age to follow his mother's instructions to the letter and to submit to her authority. Mrs. Sunbury instilled in her son Herbert the values and beliefs she believed right and trained him to imitate her behavior. She also instructed him on how to properly consume tea, telling him, "that is, how it is done."

It demonstrates that we are aware of the situation. Herbert is terrified of having to share his mother with another person, so Mrs. Sunbury makes it clear that she disapproves of his decision to get married by saying, "Marry indeed! He is got to have more common sense than that. I only favor a guy getting married once he has made up his mind, and a man only makes up his mind once he is at least 35 years old. This negative attitude is characteristic of a mother who is possessive of her kid and is hesitant to share him with a wife. It is believed that the offspring of such a mother would give up any innate inclination for independent agency and be prepared to consent to any of their mother's requests. Herbert, too, has a close and devoted relationship with his mother. He looks up to her as a role model; as a result, his mother becomes the epicenter of his universe and the axis and pole of his existence.

This connection is strengthened even further when, on the same day each week, they almost ceremoniously engage in the activity of flying kites. Because Herbert gets so immersed in the action he is doing with his mother; he dismisses all other potential attractions. According to Sigmund Freud's definition, an "Oedipal complex" is a situation in which a kid exhibits overwhelming fondness and interest for the parents of the opposite sex while at the same time progressively withdrawing from other people. Although Herbert does not necessarily exhibit hostile behavior toward Mr. Sunbury, he is excessively attracted to his mother.

Costa (1988a) gloated over it. These desires direct the vast majority of his existence buried deep inside him, yet he has no power to change them. Betty Beavan looked very much like Mrs. Sunbury looked at her age, and she had the same sharp features; his mother has always instructed Herbert on how to conduct himself since he was a very young child. Herbert ends up falling for a girl named Betty, who bears a striking resemblance to his mother. This statement confirms the Oedipal complexities that exist within him. She taught Herbert things in line with what she wanted Herbert to learn, such as how to "sit up at the table and not put his elbow on it" and "reach out his tiny finger when he took his teacup to drink." She also taught Herbert to "sit up at the table and not put his elbow on it." By suffocating Herbert in a web of conservative norms and expectations, Herbert's mother, Mrs. Sunbury, came dangerously close to becoming his "superego," a figure who dominates and subdues his "id" and "ego."

Herbert may have desired to carve out his uniqueness; his fascination with the kite may have had a symbolic meaning, as it is when he flies the kite that he feels free soaring high in the air.

According to the psychoanalysis of the French psychologist Jacques Freud, something that fascinates a child transforms into an object of idealism for him, and he wants to be like it. As a result, the kite becomes the object of fascination for Herbert because the kite is the only thing that he can control. Herbert's love for Betty and his decision to tie the knot to her may have been an attempt on his part to escape the excessive attachment, but he could not replace his mother with Betty. He fails to step out of his comfort zone and spends much time

with his parents even after his marriage, which eventually leads to a conflicting situation between Herbert and Betty due to Betty's insecurity. Herbert's love for Betty and his decision to tie the knot with her

Mrs. Sunbury's goal was to ensure that her son would never be romantically connected with another woman. She went on and on about Betty's shortcomings, saying things like "beautiful my foot" to dissuade Herbert from following through with his plan to get married. Every last bit of paint and powder. We have to take our word for it; she would have a drastically different appearance if her face was not permed and she cleansed it. She is an ordinary person; she is as common as dirt. Herbert was essential to the survival of both Betty and Mrs. Sunbury. A mother's priority is to have her child to herself, whereas a wife's priority is to have her husband around for financial support.

According to Gerber (1961), Mrs. Sunbury started manipulating her husband, Herbert, to get him back from his wife, Betty. The latter had strong opinions regarding her husband's obsession with flying kites. Mrs. Sunbury took advantage of Herbert's passion for kites. She began manipulating him. Herbert was forced to put some distance between himself and Betty as a direct result of Mrs. Sunbury's restraint and justification. Betty thought that this mother-son interaction was inappropriate for adults and advised Herbert to steer clear of situations like this in the future. Herbert ignored Betty's advice and maintained his ritual of spending every Saturday with his parents flying kites. This ritual was essential to Herbert. Betty's frustration manifested in the form of vandalizing Herbert's kite, and she incorrectly assumed that it was the source of conflict between her and Herbert.

On the contrary, Herbert saw the kite as a symbol of his closeness to his mother and individuality. Herbert views Betty's destruction of his kite as a kind of matricide, and he cannot bring himself to forgive her. Now, since he does not have a superego, his id takes control of him, and as a measure of retaliation, Herbert refuses to pay for Betty's furniture, which is precious to her. Her suffering gave him an indescribable amount of pleasure, and he said, "I can picture her face when they take the furniture away." Instead of making alimony payments to Betty, Herbert would instead be locked up. He makes the conscious decision to be unique in the face of his suppressed 'id' winning the battle over him. The loss of the kite, which served as a source of comfort for him from his mother, sparked a latent rage in him that ultimately led to his downfall. In the narrative, Maugham probed and investigated the connections from a new and exciting perspective. Therefore, the whole puzzle may be analyzed using Freud as a point of reference.

Herbert Sunbury is the name of the young guy in this tale. He is a fine, a typical guy. Earning his income, he toils away at an office. He falls in love with and eventually marries a girl named Pretty Prevent. However, he has bravery in regard to kite-flying. He has been interested in it since he was a kid, and that fascination has only increased. He is becoming more invested in the topic. He has completely caught the bug and cannot stop thinking about it. Because he loves it so much, he cannot bear to leave it even when he is settled down with a career and family. His kite-flying hobby is frowned upon by his better half. However,

he does not consider any counterarguments. He even quarrels with her and separates from her, and when she ruins his kite to rid him of it, he rejects her alimony and chooses incarceration to have contact with her. Speaking before the enchanted nation, he declares, "She stomped on my kite, so I told her I would not pay, and I still will not. Furthermore, I will go to jail if you send me there." (Gerber, 1961).

According to Kite et al. (2019), I have a few sentences. Many readers have seen the Oedipal themes in this narrative. Still, we believe the story may be better understood in light of Freud's idea of obsessive-compulsive disease (obsessive-compulsive disorder). The Oedipus complex requisite of resentment against one's father is missing from the tale from the get-go. There is no point in the story when Herbert displays such intense hatred for Mr. Sunbury. Besides, Herbert was highly addicted to the kite, not because it gave him a sense of freedom from the monotonous way of life, as Herbert liked the way of living he had at Sunbury's: "He was feeling more comfortable every day...it was nice having his mother to brush his clothes and mend his socks". Herbert was drawn to the kite because it made him feel strong. While Mrs. Sunbury and Betty exerted authority over him in other situations, he had complete sway regarding kite flying. With any luck, Herbert can see a reflection of himself in the kite. Herbert indeed suffered from a lack of personality development and could not accept the duties of his married life. Betty and Herbert were immature enough to carry on a relationship; when the early romance faded, they both felt cramped. More importantly, Herbert was drawn not by Mrs. Sunbury but by the kite, as shown by the fact that he had no desire to be with Mrs. Sunbury while imprisoned for refusing to pay alimony to Betty. (Kite et al., 2019)

It is valid that an author should not bog down his work with the theoretical baggage that he needs to learn more about.

However, for argument's sake, we find the idea of anxiety and illness in this narrative incongruous. This research suggests that stress, tension, and inner conflicts may contribute to the development of this condition. An excerpt from Hinsic and Campbell's *Psychiatric Dictionary* reads as follows:

"Psychoanalysis sees obsessive-compulsive disorder as a protective mechanism against violent and/or sexual drives by relating it to the Oedipus complex. The first line of defence is at the analytic sadistic level, but the urges are also unbearable and must be resisted via response creation, seclusion, and undoing."

Herbert, however, has developed an irreversible kind of obsessive neurosis in which being incarcerated provides him with malicious pleasure. He sees it as a personal sacrifice for the benefit of his fixation, kite flying, an objective that correlates with his love of his mother in his younger years. Again, having a mother who is overbearing in her influence would undermine his connection to his father and cause her personality to take precedence in his development. When one reads the book, one notices that there are Oedipal undertones, but there are also many ways in which the story is not Oedipal. When we try to

extrapolate the story's deeper meaning from its surface details, we sometimes conclude that it is neither a realistic depiction of human behavior nor founded in reality.

Maugham (2011) designates the Kite to symbolize Beatrice and Herbert's possessiveness. Beatrice, the protagonist, desires complete dependence on Herbert throughout the novel. Her kite flying is a metaphor for her desire to exert command over Herbert, just as she does over the kite. In the narrative, Herbert also feels an intense attraction to his mother. His mother has total authority over him. He hopes to overcome an unhealthy attachment to his mom. Even after tying the knot to Betty, he still feels a strong pull for Betty's mom. Herbert is the kite that Beatrice flies. In addition, Herbert associates his mother's affection with the kite. Herbert feels like he has offended his mom after Betty ruins the kite. He does not forgive Betty and returns to her mother, whom Betty had sought to harm (Maugham, 2011).

Throughout the narrative, the kite serves as a metaphor for the protagonists' pride. The characters imagine that it is they who are flying high when the kite reaches great heights. Beatrice has an ego problem in which she thinks she is better than everyone else. She raised Herbert in isolation from other kids since she did not value their companionship. Betsy is worthless garbage in Beatrice's eyes. Beatrice believes that she is superior to everyone else. Beatrice and Herbert's egos are gratified when their Kite soars higher than anybody else's. It gives them a sense of superiority.

According to Qizi (2020), Herbert Sunbury values kite flying more than his wife, and his life story makes for compelling reading. In human words, his behavior appears hard to understand. However, once we put it in the context of Freudian ideas, it no longer seems so out of the ordinary. A pioneer in psychoanalysis, Freud is widely regarded as one of the greatest psychologists of all time. His studies have shed novel insights on the nature and actions of the human mind. To paraphrase, he claims that when a man develops an unnatural liking for a notion or idea, it is because the concept has so ultimately captured his mind that he cannot exist without it. This research describes Herbert Sunbury accurately. More than his wife and his reputation, he values time spent kite-flying. He has a romantic affection for it. A sensation of strength as he watches the kite soar into the sky, a sense of control over the elements of nature, a sense of freedom reflected by the Kite's high and unfettered flight, or a sense of ideal of adventure all contribute to the unique thrill he has while flying a kite. In light of this, his fixation with kites is brought into sharper focus (Qizi, 2020).

There is also much insight into the female mind. For example, according to psychologists, a typical wife seeks her husband's undivided attention and becomes jealous if his focus is diverted from her.

It is only in her nature to boast about her husband's undying devotion to her and her undivided attention. She will not stand for her spouse to devote more time and affection to other pursuits, such as politics, sports, or schoolwork. When her spouse develops romantic feelings for another woman, she gets envious and does everything to destroy her. Therefore, this is why Herbert Sunbury's kite flying makes lovely Prevan jealous. She has realized that

her spouse enjoys kite-flying more than she does. She, therefore, cautions him against his practice of kite-flying, threatening to leave him if he does not abstain. She goes for the kill when that fails and smashes the whole thing. Mr. Sunbury informs Herbert Sunbury, "She did it all right. Her honesty was refreshing. In sum, she was envious of the kite and was not ashamed to admit it. She shattered the kite because she said Herbert loved it more than he loved her; she would do it all over again if she had to.

SEN (2017) expressed that Maugham's *Kite* is a psychological exploration of the human psyche and behavior. In this respect, Derek Hudson has this to say about the story: "And the collection demonstrates... The new awareness of the lights and shadows within the human mind, which has been generated by modern psychology and by the nervous intensity of contemporary life in his compelling story 'The Kite' Mr. Maugham shows that he has moved in step with the terms." (A. SEN, 2022)

According to Sharmin (2008), William Somerset Maugham's *Kite* examines several psychological concepts through the lens of the novel's protagonist and antagonist. Oedipal dynamics, the story's central topic, have been dissected. Mrs. Beatrice Sunbury's bond with her son Herbert is the story's foundation. This text has many insights into human nature, character traits, and emotions (Sharmin, S., 2008).

According to Tashiro (2018), Herbert's love for Betty and their decision to marry her represent a last-ditch effort to break free of his too-dependent relationship with his mother. The awful and torturous struggle inside him arises from the fact that he cannot provide to Betty what he gave to his mother. Mrs. Sunbury's jealousy of her daughter-in-law is reminiscent of that of Mrs. Morel in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. Mrs. Sunbury thinks Betty will take her son's soul and leave nothing for her. Thus she hates her. Therefore, naturally, she works hard to destroy their bond. Herbert and Betty's relationship may be seen as a mirror to Paul and Miriam's *Sons and Lovers*, where a motherly figure stands between them. Herbert, like Paul, has a fixation on his mother that prevents him from making a healthy sexual transition. Because of his Oedipus complex, his emotional development has been stifled and damaged.

Flying kite is a metaphor for everything that happens on the kite. It is a demonstration of love and commitment. Even yet, it is not a toy but rather a tool for Beatrice to exert authority over her kids. After they are married, Betty becomes dissatisfied and rebellious when Herbert continues to spend Saturdays kite-flying with his parents. She thinks it is embarrassing and advises Herbert on performing such a ridiculous favor for the boy.

On the other hand, Herbert's tragic fascination with the kite stems from an intense maternal complex. Mrs. Sunbury uses her son's emotional bond with her as a kite thread to exert control over him. When all other attempts of persuasion fail, Betty sabotages the kite, making the situation worse. Herbert goes to jail instead of paying his ex-wife alimony. He cannot abide what amounts to matricide when the kite is smashed.

Through these Freudian complexes, the whole story's complexities become clear. This tale shows that Maugham's exploration of human connections extends to the sex realm. Betty

and Mrs. Sunbury are wrong to be so possessive. Both of them want Herbert's essence or character. Nevertheless, we can only have fulfilling relationships with other people if we can accept their uniqueness and differences from our own. For Herbert to make a smooth transition, the two women in his life need to get beyond their expectations and see that he has a unique personality and identity that can succeed in his way. The mother destroys Herbert's life by refusing to see this reality.

Family is the central focus of this short narrative. Herbert, one of our most crucial protagonists, is raised in a manner vastly unlike that of the typical youngster. He is inseparable from his mother throughout the narrative and only spends time apart from her when he stays with Betty. Nevertheless, even when he is away from her, he cannot help but visit the common with his father and her every Saturday; he is emotionally and psychologically reliant on her. In his mind, he either despises her or adores her more than any other woman. When Herbert's parents determine that another kid can assist them with their new kite, it does not take him long to decide to come over and provide a hand. Herbert has not had the proverbial umbilical cord severed. A kite in the sky might be a metaphor for this idea. A kite can only be flown if its pilot constantly communicates with it through a line or strings. As a result, Beatrice remains in constant communication with Herbert; he may marry, but he will always return to his mother. Herbert's mother buying him increasingly elaborate and pricey kites as he ages may be a metaphor for something else. She desires to have his undivided attention for longer. Despite the seeming ordinariness of the action, her execution is everything. However, her primary goal is to satisfy her vanity and prevent Herbert from learning the reality of life. This goal is her primary objective (Wada & Yoshioka, 1995).

Somerset Maugham's *Kite* is often regarded as one of the best short stories ever written, and for a good reason: it reveals a great deal about the human condition. The plot centers on Herbert, a guy who grew up in the Sunbury household with his parents. Herbert's primary pastime outside of school has always been kite flying. He proposed to the lovely Betty, but his mother was not pleased. Despite this, they tied the knot, and Herbert began secretly flying kites after being compelled to abandon the activity by his new wife, Betty. When Betty discovered him, she immediately kicked him out. Instead of returning to his wife, he moved back in with his parents. After Betty broke his kite in a rage, Herbert refused to compensate her financially and ended himself in jail (Bulut, 2009).

The *Kite* is often seen as a fable of individuality and survival. Even when attached to the rope, a kite is permitted to reach great heights. A person must always hold onto his rope, which will fall if the cord is ever severed. In addition, this exemplifies the social nature of humans by showing how they bond emotionally with others in their immediate vicinity. A person's social ties, which allow them to soar to high heights but never quite let them fly freely, are symbolized by a kite.

The Kite also depicts the bond between individuals via the symbolism of the kite. For example, Herbert's first expression of want to his parents was for a kite. This example illustrates how, as individuals age, their goals and requirements change.

Mrs. Sunbury, Herbert, and Betty are somehow connected to the kite emblem. Herbert, as he matures, longs for the independence to travel the globe as he pleases. That is why he identifies strongly with the sense of liberation symbolized by a kite's flight through the air. However, Herbert was tethered to the ground, much like a kite. All his life, he had been shaped by his mother's example and adored her (Costa. R.H,1988).

By having Mrs. Sunbury represent Herbert's desires and judgments, Maugham compared his character to a kite in the air under his control. This statement may also be interpreted to suggest that individuals are bound by the ideals and standards of their society, regardless of whether they want to follow those standards. Herbert was a child whose mother strictly regulated his interactions with the outside world and forbade him to form close relationships.

Herbert's wife, Betty, was a new figure who played an essential role in his development at various points. Herbert married her over his mother's disapproval since he fell in love with her. Mrs. Sunbury's mother disapproved of the match, but Herbert nevertheless went through it. Betty was a barrier between him and his parents, so much so that she eventually had him move out of his parent's home and onto her own. She gave up her career after getting married, and Herbert was there for her every step of the way.

Nevertheless, her dominance was far-reaching; she also prevented him from engaging in an activity central to his identity for so long: kite flying. Herbert returned to his parents and refused to see Betty again, so she broke his new kite, which might be seen as a metaphor for his rejection of her. Betty's efforts to stifle his kite-borne sense of independence are shown. Betty's possible desire for Herbert's exclusive loyalty suggests that she may have been behind his mother's death by destroying the Kite (Qizi, 2020).

Through the scenarios mentioned above, Somerset Maugham represented freedom, social values, emotional connections, and relationships with a thing as small and seemingly insignificant as a kite.

2. Analysis

William Somerset Maugham's famous short story, Kite deals with the complexities of human nature. It depicts that a subconscious level of the human psyche that often leads one to behave uncontrollably. Therefore Maugham himself says while starting to narrate the story.

"I know this is an odd story."

With the term "strange," Maugham hopes to draw attention to the novel's out-of-the-ordinary plot. However, in the prologue, he also explains that only adults should read the narrative. The Readers have a thorough understanding of human nature and all subtleties that come along with it, given that we humans are the most complex creatures on earth.



"... rather with the hope that some reader better acquainted with the complications of human nature...."

Researchers want to begin with the story's title, "The Kite," before diving into my critical examination of the piece. Many of us wonder why Maugham gave the work such a title. If there is a relationship between human nature and "The Kite," what exactly is it? Herbert's life was governed entirely by his overbearing mother. Even though he was 21 and had a solid job, he lived with his mother and received all his income, except for transportation and allowance. As an adult, he acted like a well-behaved son, any mother would be proud of, one who would never disregard parental orders no matter how tempting. Flying a kite was the only time he felt free. He begged his mother for a kite when he was seven years old. On his next birthday, Mrs. Sunbury saw no damage and gave him a kite instead.

Despite the limitations, Herbert enjoys kite flying much with the amusement of his parents. We argue that Herbert's mother greatly influences his decisions and life. Her mother dictates every aspect of his life, from his paycheck to how he spends his Saturdays. His sole means of self-regulation was a kite. These limitations appeased the repressed part of him. When he went kite-flying with his family on a Saturday afternoon, he felt liberated and amused, as if he had the potential to achieve a lot in his life. We see him tie the knot as one of his successes, despite his mother putting a stop on the thought of Herbert getting married while he is still a small child.

"And a man does not know his own mind till he's thirty or thirty-five."

Nevertheless, Mrs. Sunbury soon discovers that only some things are proceeding as she had anticipated. Herbert begins sneaking out of the house after supper, and when Mrs. Sunbury tries to stop him, Mr. Sunbury argues that as a young adult, he should be allowed to make his own decisions. This transformation in him and his willingness to pursue his interests are now metaphors for kite-flying. When Herbert invites a girl over for tea the following day, he tells his parents about it. Mrs. Sunbury's pride may have been bruised, but she still served tea on her most delicate china.

On the other hand, she had little tolerance for Betty. We can tell that following Herbert's choice, mom and son are not as close as they once were to one other. However, his mother refuses to acknowledge the woman as her son's spouse. Her insistence on a fixation on her son makes it difficult for her to accept Betty. She has bad reservations about the wedding. When asked to characterize Betty, she says

"Common, she is common as dirt."

Nevertheless, after marrying Betty, Herbert leaves his parents' home. Even Betty sees that Herbert is much too dependent on his mom. Herbert continues to meet his parents for kite flying even after he and his new wife have moved away from them. Betty is irritated by this. As a result, they find themselves often at odds with one another.]

"So that is the fellow you got talking to. I have been suspicious for some time, you going for a walk on Saturday afternoon, and all of a sudden, I tumbled to it. Flying

a kite, you, a grown man. Contemptible, I call it. I do not care what you call it. I like it, and if you do not like it, you can lump it."

As things escalate, Betty rips a kite from Herbert's hand. Herbert thinks Betty tore the kite to make him and his mother no longer close. Therefore, he breaks up with Betty. Betty, too, asks for support after her divorce. When he is unable to make the payment, he faces incarceration. Herbert would instead go to prison than pay alimony to Betty, whom he blames for destroying his kite.

The Kite, therefore, represents more than one thing in this narrative. Herbert and Mrs. Sunbury's close relationship is shown in this. For Herbert, it describes himself since he sees similarities between himself and the creature. He felt most at ease and liberated when flying his kite out in the open air. It frees him from his mother's control. Another implication is that it is similar to the bond shared between a mother and her son at the time of the baby's birth. Just as Maugham says

"It may be that in some queer way, he identifies himself with the kite flying so free and so high above him, and it's as if it were an escape from the monotony of life."

Freud's psychoanalysis posits that when a young person encounters something fascinating, he idealizes it. He wants to emulate its success. Similarly, Herbert's kite symbolized his "ideal I" since it was one aspect of his life over which he had complete control. He centered his whole existence on the kite and aspired to be like it: untethered yet still subject to the pull of a string. His individuality was mirrored in the Kite. With his homocidal conditioning, Herbert always did what he was told. Since he was a little boy, his mother had exerted complete control over his every move, and he had become used to and even comfortable with this robotic existence. His mother attempted to link herself and her family to a false identity by leaving an impression on her son. When Herbert asked Mrs. Sunbury why he should drink tea in a particular manner, she instilled in him the desired behavior.

"That's how it's done. It shows you know what is what" (Maugham 771).

She acted as Herbert's superego, stifling his 'Id' and ego with her strict adherence to tradition. Maugham, for example, had Herbert mature while his height remained the same. Herbert was a spoiled youngster, so he maintained his baby-like features and flawless complexion throughout adulthood (Maugham 771).

Mrs. Sunbury used interpellation to condition him, shaping him into the man she wanted him to be.

"If you're a good boy and wash your teeth regularly without me telling you, I shouldn't be surprised if Santa brings you a kite on Christmas day" (Maugham 773).

Maugham writes, "It became an obsession with Herbert" because kite-flying was the only time Herbert felt free. The Kite reflected Herbert's ambitions and provided him with a means to overcome obstacles (Maugham 773). Freud's Oedipus complex is predicated on the observation that children are more drawn to and devoted to the parents of the opposite gender, as was the case with Herbert, who fell in love with a girl who looked like his mother.



"...Betty Bevan looked very much as Mrs. Sunbury looked at her age. She had the same sharp features and the same rather small beady eyes" (Maugham 774).

Betty was anxious since Herbert began spending more time with his parents after marrying her against his mother's wishes. Herbert's mother exploited the fact that he could not afford a kite to steal him away from Betty, to whom he was becoming more attracted. Because of Mrs. Sunbury's training, Herbert came out on the losing end of a fight between two ladies. Betty and Mrs. Sunbury, like other women in a patriarchal culture, relied on Herbert for independence. His mother's justification was the last straw that drove Herbert away from Betty, and in turn, Betty destroyed Herbert's kite because she thought it stood in the way of her and Harry. With her actions, she ruined Herbert's dreams and his being. Someone tearing down his kite was like tearing down his hopes and goals. His superego had always kept his id in check, but Betty's immaturity released his id. Betty's furniture was essential to him, so he decided to get vengeance by not making his monthly payments.

"I can see her face when they take the furniture away. It meant a lot to her, it did, and the piano, she set a rare store on that piano" (Maugham 783).

He would instead serve time in prison than reimburse her for the money he stole. The reason, in our view, that Herbert was able to become a free man by the time the narrative came to finish was because the act of killing the Kite allowed him to express his suppressed id, which is why he took the strong choice not to pay any money for her. Betty and Herbert's relationship ended because of the immaturity shown by both of them.

In light of this, our study sheds light on how Herbert established his sense of "I" through Freud's psychoanalysis. The Kite served as a representation of his ideal self; when it was destroyed, the latent rage that had been building up inside him throughout his life finally erupted, causing him to wreck everything in his path.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, 'The Kite' is a story revolving around the complexities of the human psyche. It depicts the level of human psychology below conscious awareness, where the impulse to act irrationally originates. Mrs. Sunbury is a snobby, condescending, and controlling freak. Mrs. Sunbury is a narcissist who expects her family to bow to her every whim and praise her at every turn. She is the dominant figure in her household, holding sway over her son and husband. She is the one that ruined Herbert's character. When his wife realizes that he is making a fool of himself, she leaves him, thinking that he has lost all sense of decency and responsibility. Herbert tells Betty, "I have flown a kite every Saturday afternoon since I was a youngster, and I am going to fly a kite as long as ever I want to." In this case, we think Betty is being too possessive and selfish. She dislikes how Herbert's mother dominates the situation. She seeks power and influence over her husband and works against his becoming close to The Kite and Mrs. Sunbury. Saying something like, "Its that old bitch. She is simply trying to lure you away from me. Her name is familiar to me. If you were a male, you would not want to have any further contact with me after she treated us.

Maugham may be a literary genius with the rare combination of a psychoanalytic mind and a compassionate eye for his many readers across many years and decades. Moreover, he was a sharp observer who never missed a beat and saw right through the complexities and undercurrents in people.

Both Herbert's mother and his wife exert influence on him throughout the novel. However, by the novel's conclusion, it becomes clear that Herbert would instead go to prison and live his own life than be ruled by either of them.

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