
Transposing of the Cognitive-Centered Space to the Margins in Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man*

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Abstract

Cognition always mirrors human psychology; the more it is acknowledged, the more it highlights human behavior. The individual's 'cognitive space' in Western society is entangled and has broken away to worsen. People of color in the West are going through the stereotypical pandemonium of racially discriminatory remarks. The bewilderingly baffled racial incidents jeopardize the identity of the people of color. Each day in the West, people are curious about their survival. It seems all the circumstances after each turmoil incident threaten the foundations of humanity. The human cognitive space stance insists on acquiring, systematizing, utilizing, and revising the environmentally received knowledge, but this outer space-societal received knowledge imprints various psychosis. The paper hits the nail on the head that socioenvironmental factors directly challenge the embodied human mind. Evidence that overshadowed racial incidents aligned in the present commenced in the past. Then, the study gives various examples of postcolonial binaries to examine how the individual-centered space is marginal. The study provides multiple possible solutions and crucial rules to educate societies on geopolitical tolerance and individual freedom. In conclusion, the article critically highlights a white man who has witnessed misfortune after turning black one morning in Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man*.

Keywords: Cognitive Space, Environmentally Received Knowledge, Black, *The Last White Man*

1. Introduction

The values inherent in humans consistently reflect a preoccupation with the dislocation of their central stance. The recent surge of microaggressions in the West presents a complex narrative for the cognitive positioning of individuals. Intricacies of the skin color, contribute to the emergence of various topophobias, particularly evident in a socio-environment characterized by cognitive dissonance. The scenario intensifies as its spatial core alignment reflects a globally pessimistic perspective towards the West, where racial practices are perpetually witnessed, seemingly institutionalized with the continuous introduction of new legislation under the guise of progressive transformation. In a remarkable development, the recent surge in racism is alarming: "While approximately 80% of African-Americans encounter racism, 77% of Black individuals in Germany experience discrimination rooted in their race" (Aktaş, 2024). It has become evident that individuals from marginalized communities, including people of color and migrants in the United States and the West, are expressing concerns regarding the increase in institutionalized racial incidents that have targeted these groups.

This merely scratches the surface, revealing that 1) systemic psychosis and ¹melanophobia stem from microinsulting, a pressing concern in the global West that challenges individual's identity, and 2) the alignment of socio-environmental factors in addressing racial issues. Identifying resolutions to the significant challenges regarding space for individuals of colour residing in the West encounters a profound psychological struggle (Lazaridou, 2023, p. 1009). The internal spatial experience of individuals from marginalized communities is further compromised by the punitive nature of their external environments. As reported by the BBC, three Black men expressed their grievances against an airline, articulating their distressing encounter: "American Airlines singled us out for being Black, embarrassed us, and humiliated us," (Matza, 2024). During the reboarding process, the plaintiffs reported enduring significant feelings of "embarrassment, humiliation, anxiety, anger, and distress," (Matza, 2024). The regrettably racial discriminatory comments suggest that even the global power, the United States, is not a sanctuary for people of colour, minorities, and migrants.

Moreover, within the realm of literature, the written word serves as a reflection of societal observations, whether rooted in fiction or reality. When articulated by those in the diaspora, the narrative of striving to demarginalize one's identity encapsulates authentic socio-environmental experiences. The historical prints of literature illuminate and clarify the pathways, reinforcing the colonial narrative that entrenched biases against people of colour: "Queen Elizabeth was in closer alliance with the Moors - Blacks" (Elaskary, 2008, p. 3) and divided individuals into distinct groups, judged by the hue of their skin. Subsequently, these factors institutionalized the biases directed towards individuals of Brown and Black descent, migrants, and other ethnically marginalized communities.

As an illustration, "Jim Crow's law of late 19th century endorsed racial segregation through legislation making economic, educational, and social segregation between people of color and Whites legal" (Hswen et al., 2020). Through racial segregation, these harsh measures halted the economic, educational, and health advancements of Black people.

The article seeks to challenge the socio-geographical factors that negatively impact the identity of people of color in the West. The Western narrative often perpetuates its policies; for instance, Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Last White Man*, published almost two and a half years ago, is deluged with postcolonial issues, but Hamid reverses this narrative by depicting the life experience of Anders, a white man who unintentionally transforms into a brown man one morning. The study's concept illustrates that altering skin tone does not support individual space, as both Hamid's writing style and the novel's Anders character are influenced by Kafka's "The Metamorphosis" and Samsa; both are outcasts searching for a way to survive in a socio-centered space "The struggle for individual freedom against internal and external oppressive forces" (Yongo, 2025).

2. Color Does Matter: Key for Living in the West

Previously discussed concerns of incrementing the racial discriminatory incidents pointing out towards subaltern echoes. Furthermore, hitting the nail by the head of the subjectivity of the matter of centered positioning of the people of color in the West. Although, the growth of black middle class on high instead of it the 'white space' surmise the Black community penurious and fear of the neighborhood (Anderson, 2015). The stereotypical situation is more entangled with the less opportunities for the people of color, dependent on 'white space' which is independent and prosper (Anderson, 2015).

The above mentioned novel by Mohsin Hamid is a contemporary writing ideology, having active appearance, and featuring real literary aesthetics. After 9/11, Hamid was detained by the airports several times and terrified by fellow passengers, so he highlights those things that he experienced, judged by skin color. So, these incidents of race and religion encouraged him to write *The Last White Man* (Kapur & Naik, 2022). It appears to be that Hamid's ambivalent vigorous predilection style has candidly replaced other South Asian diaspora progressive cannons of literature, an example to Bapsi Sidhwa, a contemporary Pakistani diaspora writer. Her novel, *An American Brat*, where the protagonist of the novel, Feroza, faces the same immigration issues as Hamid while traveling to US at the airport, "The immigration officer, with his abrupt manner and rapid questions, rattled Feroza. She was unsure if she had filled out all the forms correctly and fumbled with her papers, feeling a rush of anxiety" (Sidhwa, 1993, p. 45). Sidhwa's novels share sufficient issues from the late 20th century that are present, similar to Hamid, though discusses the 21st century.

The readers and researchers familiar with the American literature respond to sudden and irresistible compulsion. They are acknowledgeable with Mohsin Hamid's cut-out approach associated with the Western ambiguous circumstances. The fear of being recognized, psychological struggle, sense of alienation, self-confrontation, and displacement of cognitive-centered space

are the themes of Hamid's novels: for instance characters of Anders and Oona from *The Last White Man*, share similarities with the character of Harry Bittering and his wife Cora in "Dark They Were, and Golden Eyed", resisted then advised earthlings in 1) "Dark They Were, and Golden Eyed" by Ray Bradbury, that they are different, then fear is described an unknown and uninvited guest, a third person between two humans "They knew that it was not just a matter of hiding from the rain. It was a matter of fear they had of the unknown, the fear of the change" (Bradbury, 1951, p. 23); 2) "The Killers" by Earnest Hemingway in which fear is seen permanent, continuously terrified Ole Anderson, a boxer who does not want to resist, surrendered, as he was tired of escaping by the threat of assassination; and 3) "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allen Poe, where the murderer is totally engulfed in the burden of horrified terror after stabbing to death an old man, later the killer internal cognitive feelings enforced him in confession of his crime.

3. Discussing the Ouster of the Centred Physical Space

The research study describes the cognitive—acquiring knowledge, then understanding and answering—centered positioning distort by the outer space, as well as coloreal factors in *The Last White Man*, which opens with a surrealist postulate: Anders, the protagonist of the novel, awakening one morning, notices that his skin has turned dark, "With surrealistic overtones; however, Mohsin Hamid sketches an imaginary travel to the future to anticipate fissures in borders and a migration apocalypse, as well as a Western nostalgic return to racial consciousness and imperial control" (Aljhdali, 2020, p. 141). This magical realist factor by Hamid awaits upon impetus exploring deeply rooted societal issues such as power, race, ethnic discrimination, and identity. However, the novel lands in realism, with the space of characters struggling in society for survival. The reactions and thrilled fear of tragically being dark discuss the undenied realism. The color shape-shifting of Anders's persona discusses how the trauma in the human schema—a miraculous change in color—turned out to be a dreadful portent, an example of a survey over racial discrimination in the US conducted at the youth school level:

Reported experiences of racism were most prevalent among Asian (56.9%), multiracial (48.8%), and Black or African American (Black) (45.9%) students and least prevalent among White students (17.3%). Black and Hispanic or Latino (Hispanic) students who reported experiencing racism had a higher prevalence of all health risk behaviors and experiences investigated, including indicators of poor mental health, suicide risk, and substance use, compared with students of their racial and ethnic group who reported never experiencing racism (McKinnon II et al., 2024).

The situation overwhelmingly looms over all the races, especially the Black society, individually face the epic disparity of racial discrimination, "There is a notable disparity between the observed prevalence of schizophrenia spectrum disorders in racialized persons in the United States and Canada and White individuals in these same countries, with Black people being diagnosed at higher rates than other groups" (Faber et al., 2023).

The paper investigates two questions, 1) how does inner bodily cognitive space marginalize by the outer bodily space of the protagonist of the novel, Anders then 2) how does outer space that is socioenvironment, affects Anders inner bodily sociocognition. The paper is answering to the above asked fallacies that Anders positioning is co-related to the multiple transformations. Figuring out the first query, Professor Walter Ong stated "inner transformation of consciousness" (Hassan, 2024) deliberately outer space overwhelmed the inner embodied space of Anders, stuck into the house due to the less social involvement in the socioenvironmental affairs. Disadvantageously, unveils that fear of the skin color is actually a transformation to state of unconsciousness "moreover frightening", an unknown fear of Anders of losing control of the body parts, 2) while arguing the second question, humans are dependent on their environment "the role of human behavior patterns in the face of the physical environment and its socialization" (Hashemi et al., 2022). Giving arguments, Georg Northoff in his book *Philosophy of the Brain* acclaims that "The 'internal' space within the body must be somehow related to the 'external' space of the environment", then he highlights that 'internal' space in a body is 'phenomenal space', it is characterized individually, so it is mentioned that 'individual phenomenal space' is 'intra-subjective space', giving reference to Anders whose individual space is phenomenal as looking for the proper attention in an 'environmental space' (Northoff, 2003, p. 61). So, the second utmost query is about Anders's social behavior and 'individual space', both are co-related to finding attention "the spatial properties of built worlds are consequential for shaping psychological states and social behavior" (Han et al., 2024). Since the environmental space has physical space, reasoning that Anders went back to the gym, even though knowing the circumstances were quite offensive. Philosophy helps in understanding the outer environment having 'physical space', then human 'social identity' is captivated to that space and presenting own 'individual identity'.

Furthermore, the metaphoric phrase "trapped indoors" insists that Anders is worried about escape. Later, he decides to go to the grocery store for the pantry, afraid of being recognized by the storekeeper and others, but his approach to the food notifies his wish to survive. Hamid goes with Darwinism (Kapur & Naik, 2022). In the context of Anders, Darwinism is the survival of humans in a society that begins with struggling and adapting to the environment. Then, in addition to modifying and metamorphosing in the severely challenging environment. Nevertheless, while living in the 21st century, Anders's 'survival of the fittest' is interlinked to AI, social media, and online platforms that are the metamodern platforms of the society, altered Darwinism over to the bewitchment of the age of 'new social Darwinism' (Ahmed, 2024). There are such digital unprecedentedly notable incidents featured in the novel sparkled where characters are firstly equivocal about the use of online access to their need, later happy with it and tightly dependent for survival with a new social Darwinist theme, "But deliveries continued, and you could get a pizza or alcohol or medicine or drugs, or anything you might imagine, right there on your doorstep, maybe not in minutes," (Hamid, 2022, p. 49), another, the digital approach of meeting is somehow fulfilling the needs

of characters in the novel, “Oona messaged, and they spoke until late, and after that Anders wandered online” (Hamid, 2024, p. 41).

The paper argues that before discussing Anders’s ‘cognitive positioning,’ the scholastically pithy remarks of Hobbes and Descartes should be applauded. Their thought-provoking ideas initiated the cognition debate while discussing the ‘human mind’ encapsulating the exchange of the arguments. In their well-known works, *Leviathan* and *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Hobbes and Descartes pointed out that the ‘human body’ has a proper functional physique than there is the ‘human mind’ too. Later, this study of the ‘embodied human mind space’ bounds to the school of ‘cognitive poetics,’ systematically functionalized the ‘cognitive science’ to interpret the ‘embodied human mind’ in literary texts, “Our minds are ‘embodied’ not just literally but also figuratively, finally clearing away the mind-body distinction of much philosophy most famously expressed by Descartes” (qtd. in Stockwell, 2002, p. 4). Cognitive science was introduced on the thought that the smartness of human behavior is due to inner psychological operations that work similarly to the same way of binary computers (Kiverstein, 2012, p. 1).

Theoretically, the practical approach to the ‘cognitive literary criticism’ in *The Last White Man* case flourished in the late twentieth century, called the ‘cognitive turn,’ Sowon S. Park mentioned it in his article, “Traditionally, the term ‘cognitive’ referred to ideas of thinking and inference but in this new field, it frequently refers to mental phenomena other than thinking, such as feeling, perception, unconscious memory, and kinesis” (Park, 2014, p. 68). The articulated fact is that the human mind and brain are both influentially intermingled multidisciplinary. However, it is unclear whether the scientific findings are useful in facilitating the humanities and whether we can draw any result-oriented conclusions from them. In the case of Mohsin Hamid, who is a literary scientist, it is valuable that the ‘cognitive-centered space’ of Anders in *The Last White Man*, concave Hamid’s scientific stance, an example of thematic norms made the major characters of the novel bewilderingly baffled, their minds are concerningly imprisoned to the tear-jerking memories and grieved to the lose of their beloved family members “Anders would have liked to speak to his mother, if there was one person in the world he could have talked to just then,...but she was some years departed,...when cancer came that ate her up from inside” (Hamid, 2022, p. 5). Arguing Mohsin Hamid’s approach that is supremely scientific in writing, in his book, *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution*, C.P. Snow stated worthy science and scientists “have their own culture...which contains a great deal of argument, usually much more rigorous and almost always at a much higher conceptual level than a literary person’s argument” (1959, p. 13).

The drastic transmogrification and psychological navigation of Anders, Oona, and other characters in the novel are chained into the space of cognitive sciences. Moreover, it delves the readers with hermeneutics, “hermeneutics,...the theory of interpretation investigates some questions that are also asked in the cognitive sciences” (Gallagher, 2004, p. 162). In 1926, Wilhelm Dilthey attributed hermeneutics to understanding the behavior of humans to analyze their experience and inner life motivation. The functioning of these inner feelings cannot be disturbed, as they are in the form of a continual structural chain; in the case of Anders, his inner feelings are continued and influenced by his mind’s various cognition developments; his mind-body has a cohesion with schema so that in a quest looking for the meaning of his inner change.

Decoding the entitlement of the ‘spatial cognition’ of the characters in the novel *The Last White Man*, in *Validity and Interpretation*, Hirsch, digging into the discussion of hermeneutics, “argued that the ‘meaning’ of a literary text is objectively knowable, and distinguishable from the ‘significance’ attributed to that meaning by particular readers” (qtd. in Lodge & Wood, 2000, p. 230). In the context of the schema of Anders’s cognition, ‘meaning’ in this way is objective rather than the ‘significance’ that is subjective, helping in understanding the space of the human mind; furthermore, it discusses the spatial, physical interaction, “the relations between conscious and unconscious knowledge, and how we understand other persons, are all good examples of issues that form the intersection of hermeneutics and the cognitive sciences” (Gallagher, 2004, p. 162). The following table displays cognitive binaries:

meaning	significance
objective	subjective

Digging into it for further understanding Anders’s ‘cognitive space’, the linguist Peter Stockwell argues in his book, *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction* that ‘cognitive space’ is a linguist systematic approach, “we can engage in detailed and precise textual analysis of style and literary craft” (Stockwell, 2002, p. 4), while sorting out, cognition is a detailing approach gives pithy arguments about ‘knowledge and belief,’ that what Anders has in his schema, as well as what he thinks is going to happen, cognitive helps in this way. Spanning it, Stockwell re-utters, “context, and this is a crucial notion for cognitive poetics,” (Stockwell, 2002, p. 2) stating that ‘context’ is not objective, so that ten-tickles with previously discussed ‘significance,’ and different from meanings, negotiating with the characters having various psyches proven various contexts, “there are as many meanings as there are different contexts for different readings” (Stockwell, 2002, p. 3), so the concerns of Anders cognition is due to transmogrification of the skin color is embodied not meaningfully but also figuratively.

4. A Contemporary Allegory: The Transformations in *The Last White Man*

The contemporary magnum opus novel by Mohsin Hamid is a fictive masterpiece in which whiteness dominates in the cognition of characters, later vanishing and being replaced by dark-skinned, similar to unseen malware glitches or contagious viruses. The author of the book has been living in the US, UK, and Pakistan for several years, his novel, *The Last White Man* is multifaceted of various societal issues, highlighting those things that cannot be denied in a Western society, which is a meta-modern. Hamid discusses prejudices that whatever something wrong happens in the West, the spatial stance of minorities,

immigrants, and people with complex and mixed colors are criticized stereotypically, and facing the most. Almost all of his novels reveal racial, gender, and cultural transformation, as well as cognitive space hierarchy, and he takes charge in the world of literature as a contemporary diaspora Anglo-English novelist. Novels by Mohsin Hamid are sequenced as *Moth Smoke* (2000), *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013), *Exit West* (2017), and *The Last White Man* (2022). Hamid’s novel *Exit West* (2017) was on the reading list of former US President, Barack Obama, who praised Hamid’s literary approach (Pait, 2018). Hamid’s novels, having remarkable worth, even adopted in cinematic expressions, exemplified *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, a Hollywood film, casting Hollywood, Bollywood, and Lollywood cine-stars, which were filmed. Later, Obama’s film production house acclaimed the rights of Hamid’s novel *Exit West*.

The Last White Man has three parts, comprising sixteen chapters, and the very first chapter appears to be a human asylum allegorically, where a man, Anders, who is desperately scared of society, his internal space struggles, and looking for societal attention, an outer peaceful space. Anders’s personality presents a drastic identity, a fish out of water when go outside to face society where races are marginal, but attempting to break free from societal conventions by telling himself that “he had to go out and face the world” (Hamid, 2022, p. 3). The sequenced activities demonstrate that due to color transformation, all of the characters in *The Last White Man* go through multiple binary challenges in the following figure:



The transmutation of the skin color in the novel, similar to an epidemiological instinct, responsible for the loss of humanity, unity, love, and unconsciousness about identity. Anders, going to drown in an ocean of fear while going outside he covered himself in a hoodie (Hamid, 2022, p. 12).

In the initial bird’s eye view, the story tends to open with the idea of ⁵far-fetched imagination, proving that the author of the novel, Mohsin Hamid, is ingeniously genuine in portraying the new ways, elaborating Anders and other characters perplexed and instinctively cognitive behavior:

the dark man was not a dark man, even though the dark man was Anders...The television channel she watched most had gone off the air, but now was back, and there were dark hosts mixed in with the white hosts, and they were awkward with each other, awkward and unnatural,...one of her favorite radio personalities had changed color, and changed brains it felt like too (Hamid, 2022, p. 54).

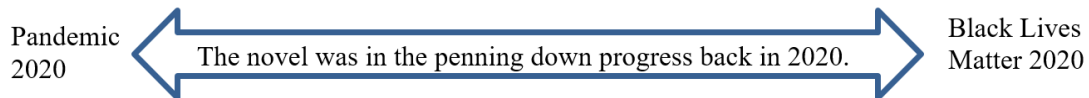
In this research article, the traumatized mental phenomena that are pathetic, undeniable, and dismantled the society that dominates Anders after turning black will be interrogated, “a tidal wave that would come and sweep over town, sweep over every neighborhood, no matter what anyone tried or did” (Hamid, 2022, p. 39). The author does not provide any exact location of the placing of the story of the novel, intending to curiosity, but the labeling of ambivalent whiteness points to the UK, US, or West, “an unnamed place that feels like a small town in America or somewhere in the west in which he depicts the racism and biasness that prevails in the society” (Kapur & Naik, 2022). If we go through the historical and postcolonial context, it is ultimately clear that the psychological alienation effects of the embodied race are not new. During WWII, many troops from South Asia participated under the British. After the war, they broke racial incidents in which ‘skin headed’ aggressively on the march against immigrants (TRT, 2024). In Anders’s case, the twenty-first century is a possible consideration of the continuity of the previous century’s cognitive abnormality, in which Anders has seen and memorized several cataclysmic racial incidents before turning brown, so he was acutely terrified of the narrowing complex circumstances that air the stereotypical racism in a white society for other races in the West, however, Anders is a white but cognitively struggling of tragic transformation of the skin color to brown, “he wore a hoodie, his face invisible from the sides...Anders was not sure where his sense of threat was coming from” (Hamid, 2022, p. 12). In the matter of ‘skin color does matter’ facing racial hierarchy by both Anders and Oona, even though their elders know fatal circumstances, gives a nostalgia that racial dimensions have not vanished instead of alive, “Anders’s father did not like to look at Anders, at what had his son had become, and he did not like that he did not like it, and so he forced himself to look at his son, to hold on to his son’s hand even longer, the brown skin against his pale skin” (Hamid, 2024, p. 32).

The complex identities, unseen terror, “Anders thought he could feel the ancient horrors awakening” (Hamid, 2022, p. 41), fear-inducing vocabulary, and complex straightforwardness situation “Oona expected to hear sirens, from police cars and fire trucks and ambulances, but she did not hear them, and that was strange” (Hamid, 2022, p. 39), facing by the characters in the story can pave a wave for the sequel of the novel. The overshadowing would captivate the audience about what comes next, whether and what will happen after the complete transformation of the skin color “and in town it seemed people were continuing to change, white people becoming dark” (Hamid, 2022, p. 41).

The ideas in the novel, *The Last White Man* are magnificently new in the rink of literature, imbalanced as a seesaw where Anders is surprisingly deprived of whiteness on the dawn of a day and drenched in thrilled fear, on the contrary, Oona, Anders’s girlfriend standing opposite, likely eager to paint herself black with various cosmetics which she got after replacing and receiving a cosmetics parcel she ordered online (Hamid, 2022, p. 49). Later, when she got the black color similar to an infectious virus, a thrilled over attempt “she lay in her bed taking it all in with her heart beating fast but without panic” (Hamid, 2022, p. 59), an acknowledgment of the fear that something outrageous is going to happen. Several cognitive empathy spoiler incidents in the novel give complex negotiation to the characters. Oona knew that she would turn too dark. However, she welcomed it as previously she was delighted to paint herself dark, possibly passing on after several sexual intimacy meetings with Anders.

However, the mood of her mother was challenging, “When Oona’s mother saw Oona she knew it was Oona, and Oona’s mother sat on her sofa and did not speak, and Oona said, mother, and her mother looked down” (Hamid, 2022, p. 62). The chaotic violence against color, “a white man had indeed shot a dark man” (Hamid, 2022, p. 23), due to racial cognition forced people to rely on online platforms, similar to COVID-19, when online business was initially at its peak. These instinctive behaviors of humans encapsulate many widespread catastrophic issues.

The novel was in the penning down progress back in 2020, made solo advancements to the next, similar to the Black Lives Matter, and pandemic globalized archetypal blast “Though by this point several of them had surely changed color too” (Hamid, 2022, p. 52). The following figure summarizes this point:



The hot topic of cognition revolves around the loneliness and paranoid behavior of Anders. The ‘transmogrification, “something strange to the color of his forearm, subsequently, and with a start, as a momentary conviction that there was somebody else in bed with him” (Hamid, 2022, p. 1), portrays that the conversion of the color is the alteration of Anders’s dermatological status. The first captivating goosebumps notion is Mohsin Hamid’s way of dealing with the critical circumstances while living in the West, then as an anglophone diaspora writer, how he got the idea to go with *The Last White Man*. Proceedings of the lines, feel that a man is fighting with his innermost or mentally deranged by giving more than values to society, a fear of what socio-space will think of him. In an interview with Natalie Jabbar, Mohsin Hamid acclaimed, “A lot of what I have been trying to do is to sort of re-complicate what has been oversimplified” (Stanford Humanities Center, 2014).

The lines and paragraphs in the novel are spread over three parts, detailing that ‘color does matter,’ “the cleaning guy was the only guy at the gym who never exercised there, and he was such a small guy, and was he hired because of that, because he was small, in a place where it was important to be big,” (Hamid, 2022, p. 26), so, the gym owner who was a white man hires the labor deliberately black, feeble and less social giving damn assured that whiteness is always masculine. Another culminating point of white dominance is that they treat blacks or people with color as puppets, similar to boosting white supremacy, tagging black people as marginal. This racial practice has become permanent somewhere in the author’s schema, developing inquisitiveness interest, “Novels of strange, sudden physical transformations are a fascinating subgenre” (Tepper, 2022).

Anders’s turning of the skin from white to brown gives a resemblance glimpse of renowned American author Franz Kafka’s *Metamorphosis*, in which Gregor Samsa, one morning, laid in his bed in an undeniable physique of a giant creepy monster, “As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect” (1971, p. 89). Mohsin Hamid’s *The Last White Man* appears as a predecessor to Kafka’s well-reputed *Metamorphosis*, in which animalism entirely changes the personality, circumstances, and fretted living attitude of the protagonist in a society, “When a metamorphosis occurs, a person or object grows and transforms into something entirely new thus metamorphosis refers to a striking alteration in appearance, character, or circumstances” (Kapur & Naik, 2022). Anders’s case shares similarities with Samsa, headed towards pessimist cognition of Anders inter-wined also with animalism, “sitting in a group that was, he could not help it, that was like a group of animals, not like humans” (Hamid, 2022, p. 12), similar to Kafka’s Gregor Samsa’s tragic turn over. In the context of Kafka’s *Metamorphosis*, Anders tends to struggle with cognitive dissonance, entangled in the complexion of his dark color, an undeniable argument that when there is a transmogrification, it does not only change the body but also affects the whole societal interaction and dismantled the challenge of existence of the particular, “Reports began to emerge from around the country of people changing” (Hamid, 2022, p. 15). The skin color transformation is an imposition, loss of social status, and deprivation of identity because of shifting of color, “he was a stranger to those he could call by name, he did not try to look in their faces” (Hamid, 2022, p. 12).

The need of the hour in literary findings is decoding the collision course between the unknown fear of Anders’s transmuting into black and cognitive dissonance. Furthermore, an enormously overwhelming situation knocks at the door whether *The Last White Man* is in the form of realism or magic realism, “While analyzing the novel, when the protagonist Anders changes his color, he is stranded in the mix of reality and fiction which characterizes magic realism” (Manzoor & Singh, 2023). However, the ghastly transformation adds more prudent ingredients, evidencing aspects of magic realism even though the thesaurus in the very opening lines of the novel goes into realism, “One morning Anders, a white man, woke up to find he had turned a deep and undeniable brown” (Hamid, 2022, p. 1), the ‘one morning’ quoted words are shaking hand with the concave of realism, hits the nail on the head that the story profoundly touches on acquaintance of the ‘real world’ versatility. However, Anders’s fight with color transformation, in addition to being horrified, is the centralized cognitive theme that highlights cognition and coloreal elements, “the general buzz was about progress towards discovering a way to undo the horror” (Hamid, 2022, p. 54). Anders’s understanding of the ‘cleaning boy’ gives a sympathetic gesture; his racial remarks conjure up a lack of self-satisfaction. “Anders said that there was a dark-skinned cleaning guy at the gym, he worked nights, and Anders had always been nice to him, but the cleaning guy had started to look at him in a new way after Anders changed” (Hamid, 2022, p. 26) mistreatment when marginal people are preferentially treated by central. Later, the alteration to the darkening made the characters a module of mystery.

5. Conclusion

In *The Last White Man*, Mohsin Hamid explores cognitive shifts that challenge traditional perceptions of race and identity, illustrating how sudden and profound changes can reshape individuals' understanding of themselves and their relationships with others. As characters navigate their transformed realities, these shifts highlight the malleability of identity and confront deeply embedded prejudices, fostering a more nuanced awareness of the complexities of human experience. Ultimately, the novel suggests that cognitive shifts can lead to greater empathy and connection, encouraging readers to reflect on the fluid nature of identity and the importance of understanding and embracing our shared humanity in an ever-changing world. Because it is a hodgepodge of different topics in a globalized society, the story has several facets. The tale, in its most condensed version, critically emphasizes how cognitive-centered space is marginalized in a white culture and how the difficult narrative alters the environment's entire identity.

This literary research study, indoctrinating outer space—societal space—and calling for structural reforms in the geopolitical system to address racial concerns that completely collapsed through international media and educational policy reform. As demonstrated by the annual International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21, it provides a potential remedy by rethinking the policy of equality and religious and geopolitical tolerance for all races. It also insists on putting humanity first. Furthermore, commemorating the United States' first International Day to Combat Islamophobia can serve as a fire extinguisher and aid in the complete understanding of eliminating the different outburst phobias brought on by judging people based solely on their skin color.

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Notes

¹Melanophobia is a deleterious horror of dark or another complex colour.

² Cognitive poetics has the energy to clarify the stance of both personal and individual interpretations as well as interpretations by a group, community, or civilization.

³ Hermeneutics, “the theory of interpretation” (Lodge & Wood, 2000, p. 230), is a part of linguistics, though it works for literature as a literary tool.

⁴ Metamodern is a concept that has recently been used to describe advancements in contemporary society, suggesting a transition beyond the late 20th century postmodern paradigm, a notion that our generation seems to intuitively acknowledge (Turner, 2015).

⁵ Far-fetched imagination is implausible and difficult to grasp.

⁶ Transmogrification is the process of transforming or being transformed thoroughly.