



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

Representation of History and Urban Spaces: A Postcolonial Critique to Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*

Usman Ghani (Corresponding Author)

Department of English, Division of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Education

Lahore. Email: ug80395@gmail.com

Uzair Shahid

Department of English, Division of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Education

Lahore.

Muhammad Muneeb Elahi

Department of English, Division of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Education

Lahore.

Abstract

The study analyses Mohsin Hamid's novel, *Moth Smoke*, which explores how history is reimagined and how urban spaces are visualized in Lahore, reflecting the effects of colonialism. It also analyses the novel to explore the class division, corruption, and fractured identity of a post-colonial city. It aims to explore the impact of colonial history on urban space, social hierarchies, and individual identities, revealing the dynamics of power and identity. The theories of Postcolonialism and Marxism will be utilized as critical insights to analyze the novel. The insights will be used to examine the engagement of the novel with complex issues of postcolonial identity, class, and the effect of urbanization on individual and collective consciousness. The study will also critique the representation of history through Lahore's urban landscape revealing how colonial legacies and socioeconomic disparities shape identities. The study implicitly extends beyond literary analysis, offering insight into the socio-political complexities of contemporary Pakistan. It will also touch upon the issue of representation of postcolonial cities by indigenous writers. The study will contribute to understanding the politics of colonial discourse as presented through various perspectives.

Keywords: History, Urban Spaces, Postcolonialism, urbanization, colonialism, identity

Introduction

Mohsin Hamid, a writer from Lahore has built up roots, developed, and flourished in places as unique as Pakistan, London, California, and New York. *Moth Smoke* is the debut novel by British Pakistani novelist Hamid, published in 2000. It tells the story of Darashikoh Shehzad, a banker in Lahore, Pakistan, who loses his job, falls in love with his best friend's wife, and plunges into a life of drugs and crime. Researching Hamid's *Moth Smoke* through the lens of history and urban spaces, especially with a post-colonial critique, is valuable because the novel addresses critical aspects of postcolonial identity, social hierarchies, and the influence of history on contemporary society. The significance of studying *Moth Smoke* through a postcolonial lens, focusing on the representation of history and urban spaces, lies



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

in its potential to uncover complex themes of identity, power, and social divisions. It reveals literature's role in critiquing historical power dynamics shaping contemporary society. This study highlights how literature can mirror and critique real-world societal and cultural issues in postcolonial societies, making it relevant for discussions on modernity, identity, and historical legacy in Pakistan and similar contexts. "It's hot, steamy, the nights are long, the days are too bright. Lahore stands on the brink, like a man waiting to be pushed" (Hamid, 2011, pg.3). It illustrates Lahore's tense urban atmosphere, reflecting social pressures and the city's symbolic significance. "In the land of the pure, purity is considered an end in itself, and the end justifies the means" (Hamid, 2011, pg.34). It critiques societal and moral decay, shaped by historical and social divisions in postcolonial Pakistan. It emphasizes Hamid's portrayal of urban and historical themes within a postcolonial context.

Literature Review

This work, *Moth Smoke* by Hamid, gives a portrayal of such a society that is gripped by social problems as a result of the economy in the 1990s. The characters experience social issues like unemployment, corruption, and class differences. The characters belong to different classes of society. The society in Hamid's *Moth Smoke* led to discrimination among different social classes. Class differences have been a main issue throughout the novel. Marginalization, subordination, stereotyping, violence, and workload are used to symbolize gender injustice in the novel, whereas access, involvement, and control are used to represent gender equality (Ullah et al., 2022, pg.534). Lower-class people are always marginalized in society. The rich people were considered liberals and up to the mark. The poor people were not even allowed to think the same way as rich people do. The people who belong to high-level status are fully shown corrupt, and these people gamble with the rights and lives of poor class people. Elite-class families enjoy their luxurious lifestyle while ignoring the people who are working under them. The novel also displays the impacts of unemployment on Pakistani youth and how these people delve into the process of crime and drugs. Unemployment, corruption, social class structures, and discrimination are all crises that can lead society towards crime, hatred, and violation of any law and order. Daru, who loses his job, becomes jobless and indulges himself in the world of crime. The circumstances and the economic condition of Pakistan at that time were at their lowest. This novel also creates tensions between Pakistan and India due to nuclear tests that happened in 1998. A moth is metaphorically representing the character of Daru whose own desires burn him to smoke with the flame of drugs, wealth, and his friend Ozi's wife, Mumtaz. Class and social inequality are shown through the characters, belonging to different classes. Throughout the novel, Daru experiences his self-sabotage, and how he destroys himself by performing criminal activities. He became responsible for his actions. This novel is also an allegorical representation of the two rival nations Pakistan and India. Pakistan's divided social status is shown by the sudden change in living conditions of Daru from being wealthy to miserable poor man which represents the decline of Pakistan's economy (Hamza et al., 2023, pg.218). The characters in *Moth Smoke* are unlikeable, and that is alright because the author wants to expose the failings, and not to hide them. The main thing is that Hamid does not present his main character sympathetically in our eyes at the end of the novel. Hamid talks about the major problems that every Pakistani has to face



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

in society when he/ she has no job. Showing the main character's struggle with his own identity is a reflection of today's society. People, mostly lower and middle class, face all these challenges and class disparities. In the novel, the author contrasts the characters and their social life, like Daru who has a low status while his best friend leads a luxurious lifestyle. He targets a city in Pakistan, Lahore, exploring different societal discontent. In this novel, Pakistan's economy has been a major issue. The situation of the economy is getting worse day by day. As the country is run by elite class families, they actually decide the future of the country. The novel *Moth Smoke*, its title mentioned, is a representation of unsafe, risky, or deadly attraction (Faiz et al., 2022, pg.43). This work of Hamid is considered one of the best works, presenting today's problems and societal norms. The character of Mumtaz, Ozi's wife, leads a life that is full of deception and emotional conflict. She hides a secret from Daru that she is having an affair with Ozi, and she can't leave him because she loves him heartedly. Now, Daru faces inner turmoil and emotional conflict. Daru was fully addicted to her, but she left him. Betrayal has been one of the themes of this novel. Daru is deceived by his own best friend's wife, Mumtaz. At the end, he becomes responsible for his own actions that lead him to self-destruction. The downfall of Daru metaphorically indicates the downfall of the Mughals ruling in the Sub-Continent. From a historical point of view, the novel shows historical allusions such as Shah Jahan's imprisonment in Agra from where he looks at the Taj Mahal that he had built for his wife Mumtaz. He receives the news of his eldest son Darashikuh's murder by his youngest son Aurangzeb. So the allegorical construction of Daru's character provides a political satire on Mughal's rule (Zakirullah et al., 2024, pg.603). As the main character, Daru, following his own decisions leads him to his destruction. The story of this novel is related to the downfall of the Mughal period. The Mughal Empire has influenced Pakistan and India. Both countries saw the rise and fall of the Mughal era. We see the friendship between Daru and Ozi, and how Ozi holds power in society, in comparison to Daru. These two main characters show us a picture of the Mughal era. Throughout the novel, Daru's struggle to achieve fulfillment causes his destruction. His love triangle with Mumtaz fails him, symbolizing the inner conflict. *Moth Smoke* captures a Pakistan that is precisely on the threshold between "too soon" and "too late." This tension materializes as the characters expect the consequences of nuclear build-up, but also because Pakistan stands on the threshold of a new century after fifty years spent defining itself. The threshold effects at work in *Moth Smoke* rely on these tensions (Jeanniard, 2022, pg.18). In this novel, it is also shown that Pakistan became an atomic power in 1998. The major thing to notice is that there has always been turmoil or problem in Pakistan's history. The political system is ruled by high-status people, they are running the country. They just work for their personal advantage. Hamid portrays Pakistan as a country in which there is no stability at all. Pakistan's urban areas are portrayed in this novel. Lahore is a place where crime is considered common. People are indulged in different criminal activities, like gambling and smoking. These activities are performed by lower-class or middle-class families. It is also shown that a person commits a crime when he has nothing in life, like Daru. When he loses his job, he becomes addicted to all these bad activities. Apart from this, he expresses his feelings for love to Mumtaz. Initially, they both love each other and like to share each other's desires. She rejects him, saying that she cannot leave her husband, Ozi, and his child. Hamid



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

discusses the important theme of betrayal. She deceived Daru and moved on in her life. Throughout the novel, we see Daru ruining his own life.

Theoretical Framework

In analyzing the novel *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid, we will apply the theory of Marxism by Carl Marx. Coming towards the novel in analyzing the socio-economic divide, class struggles, and power dynamics between the characters, Marxism of Marx is highly applicable. Marxism, as a social, political, and economic theory, focuses on the conflicts between the ruling class (bourgeoisie) and the working class (proletariat), and the resulting exploitation and inequality that shape human society. Mohsin Hamid's first novel depicts the dejection and outrage of bit blessed among nations where the ruling people degenerate and where the economic bay is tremendous to such an extent that the well-off protect themselves from the standards that is fixed with the remainder of society. The theory of Marxism was originated by Marx to create a classless, stateless society, where no one is considered neither poor or rich and everyone will get equal rights in terms of everything such as Job, Business opportunities, Education, Social, Political, Economic rights, Human rights, and no one will be judged because of their financial status, Skin color, Race, Identity, and everyone shall lead a peaceful and happy life. That was the original purpose of introducing Marxism but unfortunately, it was accepted by few and also rejected by many over time, which led to its failure. Furthermore, we see this theory introduces many topics in favor of poor people such as Alienation, Surplus Value, Class struggle, and many more. According to him, alienation is a material and social process that influences human beings. Class conflict is condemned by Karl Marx and considered as the negative force that creates the un harmony and inequality among people based on property and wealth this gap produces the difference of classes in the form of proletariat and Bourgeoisie and this social variation and social division is because of Struggle between classes in the society (Saleem et al., 2024, pg.531).

Marx's concept of alienation, the estrangement of individuals from their work, society, and ultimately themselves under capitalism is strongly relevant to *Moth Smoke*. The term Alienation simply means that the poor people or workers are not treated equally like rich people, but they are always used for producing excellent amount of work for the rich, to benefit the rich and are thrown away when they are of no use and it is considered that they are born to do hard work and also getting manipulated by their owners and are force to do what is being told to them by their owners. Furthermore, the workers are separated from their work, their identity, and their humanity and are expected to work like machines and benefit the capitalist.

On the other hand, the surplus value simply means how much work is being done by the poor people and how much the number of wages is paid to them, is it equal to their amount of hard work, or more or less than that. Now taking about these two terms, in Alienation Marx is telling society that poor people are being wrongly used by the capitalists for their own benefits, regardless of their hard work they are not even considered humans and are treated and manipulated like they are just like machines or they are machines, who are bound to work hard day and night in order to provide their owners' benefits, taking everything from the workers even their identity. Coming towards the novel we will see there



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

are many events in the novel which represent the Alienation by Marx such as we see in the character of Daru. Karl Marx conceptualized alienation as an extended outcome of economic class conflict that creates a binary opposition of the two main classes that eventually find resistance in the dialectical war for material benefits against the bourgeoisie (Junaid, 2024, pg.34). Daru's sense of alienation is compounded by his inability to find meaningful work and his disillusionment with his former life as a banker. His financial troubles and addiction symbolize how the capitalist system not only exploits the working class but also alienates individuals from their true selves. As Daru sinks deeper into his drug addiction and engages in increasingly self-destructive behaviour, his alienation becomes more pronounced. Marx argued that alienation occurs when workers are separated from the fruits of their labor, which is precisely what happens to Daru. He is unable to reconnect with the world around him in any meaningful way, which leads him into a spiral of despair. This sense of powerlessness is a direct consequence of his socio-economic position and the rigid class system. The novel also critiques the materialism and consumerism associated with capitalism, particularly through the characters' obsession with wealth, status, and consumption. The present study has analyzed Hamid's *Moth Smoke* treating the history of India and Pakistan allegorically.

The depiction of the luxurious lifestyle of Ozi and his family contrasts sharply with Daru's increasingly degraded existence, highlighting how capitalism fosters greed and an insatiable desire for more, regardless of the social costs. In Surplus value, Marx is arguing that the capitalist makes the worker work harder and doesn't provide them the amount of wages equivalent to their hard work. Furthermore, they are often cheated by getting small amount of wages, and the same materials goods, produced by them are sold almost at double the rate by the capitalist they get more benefits from the poor's hard work and also earn double the amount of money by selling the same materials, goods which they buy in very cheap amount form the workers. Also, the rich always benefit in taking opportunities because of money which poor people cannot afford, as we see in the character of Ozi. Ozi's wealth allows him to indulge in a lifestyle of excess, while Daru, who once had a similar potential for success, is relegated to a life of crime and despair. This contrast between the two characters emphasizes the arbitrary nature of wealth distribution in a capitalist society and the unfairness of a system that perpetuates such stark inequality. The concept of upward mobility, central to capitalist ideologies, is shown to be largely illusory in *Moth Smoke*, Daru's fall from financial stability to desperation highlights the impossibility of transcending one's class position in a society where economic and social systems are stacked against the disadvantaged. The concepts of dominance and hegemony within class structures are deeply rooted in Marxist thought, which aims to expose the power dynamics that sustain social and economic inequalities. The novel shows that in capitalist societies, the gap between the rich and the poor often widens, and personal ambition can do little to change this dynamic. Alongside class inequality, *Moth Smoke* also deals with power dynamics related to patriarchy, where gender roles intersect with social class. The male characters, particularly Ozi, have the power to manipulate the lives of the women around them, as seen in their relationships with the female characters. Women in the novel, like the characters of Mumtaz and Aurang, are often subjugated to the desires and whims of the male characters, reinforcing the Marxist critique of the exploitative nature of capitalist



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

society, which oppresses not just the working class but also women. All the fields of education like philosophy, religion, the arts, science, technology, the media, and all others are connected to Marxism. Marxism deals only with the economy and economics is a main part of Marxism. Economics deals with the power of social, political, and socioeconomic class (Perveen & Awan, 2017, pg.759). Karl Marx discusses the concept of economy, and how an economy can make better or destroy any country. The success of any country is based on its economy. Economy is a backbone for any country.

Marxism's critique of capitalism and its focus on class struggle, exploitation, and alienation are deeply embedded in the narrative of *Moth Smoke*. The novel explores how economic and social inequality, exacerbated by a capitalist society, leads to personal and societal fragmentation. Through the lives of Daru, Ozi, and the other characters, Hamid reveals the damaging effects of class divisions, the illusion of upward mobility, and the power structures that perpetuate inequality. In this way, *Moth Smoke* serves as a critique of both the capitalist system and the social and economic forces that shape individuals' destinies in a deeply stratified society. Postcolonialism, as a theory, critically examines the lingering effects of colonialism on societies, particularly focusing on issues of identity, culture, power dynamics, and economic exploitation. Under British control, the ruling class was largely made up of a small elite group, with power centralized in the possession of a few, while the majority of the population faced poverty and deprivation of rights. After independence, the power relations did not significantly change, and Pakistan's postcolonial leadership largely consisting of those with wealth and Western-style education continued to sustain colonial class structures. For instance, Ozi, who is wealthy and advantageous, represents a new generation of elites that maintain the same class privileges as their colonial ancestors. The novel shows that even after Pakistan's independence, imperial frameworks of power remain unchanged, with the elite class enjoying a life of extravagance, while the marginalized, like Daru, continue to suffer in a society that still reflects the colonial remnants of the wealth gap and social stratification. Postcolonial theory is concerned with how individuals and nations deal with issues of cultural identity and the trauma of colonial subjugation. *Moth Smoke* highlights the identity crises faced by postcolonial subjects, particularly through the experiences of the protagonist, Daru. Daru, a member of Pakistan's urban middle class, struggles with his personal identity, and this internal conflict mirrors the larger struggle in postcolonial societies to define themselves beyond the shadow of colonialism. Daru's sense of alienation is amplified by the socio-economic changes in Pakistan, where colonial-era Western ideals of materialism, modernity, and consumerism are promoted, leading him to feel disconnected from his cultural roots. The novel illustrates how, in postcolonial societies like Pakistan, there is often a tension between modernity (which is often linked to Western ideals and capitalist values) and traditional or indigenous cultural values. In the current scenario, there are two societal processes at play in the discourse about gender, that is, the struggle between women and men, and struggle between the upper class and lower class (Khan et al., 2018, pg.36). Pakistan is going through a very tough time, facing a lot of problems at once. There is a struggle that is shown between men and women. Both are struggling with their identity, based on their race, color, ethnicity, and caste. Class difference has been one of the major issues, even in today's time, there have always been clashes between two different classes. In the novel, different characters are presented,



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

belonging to different classes, with different mindsets. In the novel, the characters' obsession with wealth, consumer goods, and Western luxuries reflects the lingering influence of colonialism, which introduced Western materialism and capitalism to Colonized societies. Ozi, for instance, represents the new bourgeoisie that has embraced Western values, and his excessive lifestyle stands in stark contrast to the struggles of the lower classes. The novel critiques how, in postcolonial Pakistan, the pursuit of wealth and social status values that were heavily influenced by colonialism leads to corruption, moral decay, and the alienation of individuals. We see in today's time, people are differentiated based on their race, color, and gender. Gender has been a critical issue throughout history. These are the common issues that people face in this contemporary era. The people in society are judged differently, by what they are wearing, how they look, and how they behave. Hamid portrays a society in which people live with different thoughts, religions, traditions, and customs. In this novel, it is also shown that Pakistan became an atomic power in 1998. The major thing to notice is that there has always been turmoil or problem in Pakistan's history. The political system is ruled by high-status people, they are running the country. Hamid portrays Pakistan as a country in which there is no stability at all.

Discussion and Analysis

The study views the character of Daru and how he lost his job and became a jobless person. Also, he indulged in illegal activities such as selling and taking drugs from his friend. The themes we see in the character of Daru are mostly deceit, cheating, and irresponsibility as he was betraying others by indulging in illegal activities. Also, he was not an intelligent student as compared to his friend Ozi. Here we see Hamid is showing us how a stable honorable banker lost everything just because of his interest in drugs and also another important reason that played an effective role in his failure was his love and feelings for Mumtaz, who was the wife of Ozi. Many boys, probably most boys, have a first love before they fall in love with a woman. It begins the moment two boys realize they'd die for one another, that each cares more for the other than he does for himself, and it lasts usually until a second love comes on the scene, because most hearts aren't big enough to love more than one person like that (Hamid, 2011, pg.184). These lines describe a deep, intense friendship between two boys, Daru and Ozi, often experienced in childhood or early adolescence. It's a kind of pure, selfless love where they care deeply for each other, sometimes even more than for themselves. This bond feels like the most important relationship in their lives at that moment. However, as they grow older and start to fall in love romantically, this first, powerful connection often fades or is replaced because people usually find it hard to maintain that same level of intense love for more than one person. Mumtaz's husband was high in status as compared to Daru so she was not ready to keep any type of friendship or relationship with Daru, however in start she was also showing friendly and very caring behavior for Daru which caused Daru to think she might also love him or truly care for him, here Hamid is reflecting on the theory of Marx in which he said that colonizer never did equality with the colonized, and the rich people are always ahead of controlling and using the colonized for their benefits, nothing else apart from that. So, we see the character of Daru in Hamid's *Moth Smoke* truly reflects the theory of Marxism, and what Marx said in his theory is shown here by Hamid in the character of Daru. There's a



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

reason prophets perform miracles; language lacks the power to describe faith (Hamid, 2011, p.193). It suggests that faith is something so profound and beyond words that it cannot be fully explained or captured through language. Prophets perform miracles to show the power of faith in a way that people can see and understand, as words alone aren't enough to convey their depth and meaning.

Further in *Moth Smoke*, we see characters are complex and reflective of the social and financial structures of contemporary Pakistan. The novel talks about the life of Daru and Shehzad, the main character, and his interactions with a range of other characters. Daru is the protagonist of the novel. He begins as a young privileged man with a promising future, but due to his self-sabotage, he becomes twisted in a vicious cycle. His character personifies themes of alienation, disillusionment, and loss. Once a banker from a wealthy family, Daru is unable to deal with his fall from grace after losing his job. He sinks into a life of drugs, crime, and self-pity. His inner conflict between his past privilege and present downfall embodies the larger societal issues of inequality and corruption in Pakistan. His intricate relationships with the people around him, especially Mumtaz and his friend Ozi, further explore his personal sense of disconnection from society. If differences can be hidden, perhaps they aren't differences at all (Hamid, 2011, pg.226). It suggests that if something that makes people different can be concealed or ignored, then maybe it isn't a true or significant difference. It implies that many so-called differences are only as important as the attention we give them and might not matter as much as we think.

Mumtaz, Daru's ex-girlfriend, is a pivotal character in the narrative. She is intelligent, determined, and somewhat detached from the societal forces that snare Daru. While Daru loops deeper into decadence, Mumtaz is trying to better her life by working for a more powerful, affluent, class. Her relationship with Daru represents the shifting class structures in Pakistan, as she begins a new life with Ozi, a man who contrasts with Daru's disillusioned outlook. Mumtaz's character also reflects the idea of personal survival within a rigid, socio economic awareness, and her eventual path shows her ability to navigate and manipulate the elite world, a sharp contrast to Daru's inability to adjust. I commit her to memory. When I'm alone, I feel a strange yearning, the hunger of a man fasting not because he believes but because he's ashamed. Not the cleansing hunger of the devout, but the feverish hunger of the hypocrite. I let her go every evening only because there's nothing I can do to stop her (Hamid, 2011, p.203). These lines describe Daru's situation deeply longing for Mumtaz, but his feelings are complicated. He remembers everything about her, but when he's alone, his yearning feels wrong, like he's fasting not out of faith but out of shame. His desire is not pure or noble, but conflicted and hypocritical. Every evening, he lets her go not because he wants to, but because he has no power to make her stay. It's a mix of helplessness, longing, and self-awareness of his flawed emotions.

Ozi, Mumtaz's new partner is considered another important character who serves as a counterpart to Daru. Ozi comes from a wealthy family, an influential family, and represents an elite class family the novel critiques. While Ozi is externally charming and successful, his world is one of corruption, moral ambiguity, and privilege. He is less explicitly self-destructive than Daru, but he is morally compromised in his contacts and relationships, particularly in his affair with Mumtaz. Ozi's indifference to the struggles of others reflects the novel criticism of the wealthy and privileged in Pakistan, suggesting that the elite are as



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

much a part of the moral decay as the lower classes, although in different ways. I push against the tree and run away, stumbling, the unreal night playing with me, gravity pulling from below, behind, above, making me fall. And I run through a world that is rotating, conscious of the earth's spin, of our planet twirling as it careens through nothingness, of the stars spiraling above, of the uncertainty of everything, even ground, even sky. Mumtaz never calls out, although a thousand and one voices scream in my mind, sing, whisper, taunt me with madness (Hamid, 2011, pg.87). These lines describe a moment of intense confusion and emotional turmoil. Daru and Mumtaz are overwhelmed by their feelings and the world around them. As they run, they feel like the world is unstable—gravity feels strange, the earth's movement is noticeable, and nothing seems certain, not even the ground or the sky. Their mind is full of chaotic thoughts, with voices screaming and whispering, pushing them toward a sense of madness. Despite all this inner chaos, Mumtaz, the person they seem to long for, remains silent, adding to their sense of isolation and despair.

Sherry, a minor character in the novel, plays a significant role in disclosing the consequences of Daru's actions. He is part of the circles of friends involved in drug use and petty crime. Sherry's character exposes Daru's frustration with the world and his sense of powerlessness. Sherry's devastating end demonstrates the novel's frequent themes of wasted potential and tragic consequences arising from the characters' choices and circumstances. The gun of the father is always the undoing of the son (Hamid, 2011, pg.68). It suggests that the actions, choices, or legacies of a father can have negative consequences for his son. The gun symbolizes power, responsibility, or burdens passed down from father to son, which can lead to the son's downfall. It reflects how the influence or mistakes of one generation can impact the next in destructive ways.

The city of Lahore plays a vital role in shaping the character's lives and actions. It is depicted as a city of contrasts between wealth and poverty, traditionalism, modernity and corruption and idealism. The social environment of Lahore amplifies the characters' personal struggles and the societal divisions that underlie their choices. The city streets, parties, and mansions reflect the lives of the characters and the larger themes of corruption, class, and societal fragmentation.

The characters' interactions and their respective backgrounds highlight the sharp social divide in Pakistan. While Daru comes from privilege his downfall spiral illustrates how delicate social standing can be. Mumtaz shifts to a different social class and her relationship with Ozi shows how the high society acts and the moral compromises they are willing to make to maintain their status. The characters in *Moth Smoke* struggle with a sense of moral decay, reflected in their actions and relationships. Daru, Ozi, and even Mumtaz, to a degree struggle with their choices in a world where wealth and power seem to be the only things that matter.

Conclusion

Hamid's *Moth Smoke* offers a profound critique of the economic stratification, Moral conflicts, and colonial legacies that persist in postcolonial Pakistan. By intertwining Marxist and postcolonial perspectives, the novel dissects the rigid class hierarchies and capitalist exploitation that define the lives of its characters, particularly through the background of



Vol. 3 No. 1 (January) (2025)

Daru and the privilege of Ozi. The main character, Daru, belongs to the lower social class, in comparison to Ozi, who belongs to the privileged class. Economic uncertainty is also shown through the characters. Foundational problems, complex representation, cultural hybridity, social fragmentation, and socio-political undercurrents have been the main aspects of the novel. The main character destroyed himself due to his lust for wealth and high social status. Daru's actions lead him to his downfall. Hamid shows us such a society grappling with the tension between tradition and Western influence, displaying how imperial heritage continues to shape power balance, gender roles, and social stratification. Overall, the novel shows the challenges of contemporary life in Pakistan.

References

- Analyzing Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*: Unveiling Internal Colonialization. (2024). *International Journal Of Human And Society*, 4(2), 601-607. <https://ijhs.com.pk/index.php/IJHS/article/view/601>
- Faiz, S., Fatima, I., & Ajmal, M. (2022). *A Deconstructive Analysis of Mohsin Hamid's Moth Smoke*. *Global Language Review*, VII (III), 35-44.
- Hamid, M. 2011. *Moth Smoke*. Penguin Books. London.
- Hamza, A., Wasti, A. T., & Hassan, S. S. U. (2023). Unveiling the Enigmatic Code Hero: A Visual Journey within 'Moth Smoke' by Mohsin Hamid. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*, 7(4), 217-227.
- Jeanniard du Dot, M. (2022). "A hazy world seen through smoke": Threshold Effects in Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*. *Angles. New Perspectives on the Anglophone World*, (14).
- Junaid, S. (2024). Economic Crises and Marx's Theory of Alienation from Self and Society in Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 61(1), 31.
- Khan, T., Bibi, I., Ullah, I., & Khan, R. N. (2018). Gender Issues In Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke*: An Analysis Of Selected Excerpts. *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education and Language (PJSEL)*, 4(2), 28-39.
- Perveen, S., & Awan, A. G. (2017). The Effects Of Marxism On The Characters In Mohsin Hamid's Novel: "Moth Smoke" And Zulfiqar Ghous's Novel: "Murder Of Aziz Khan". *Global Journal of Management, Social Sciences and Humanities*, 749, 749-772749.
- Saleem, A., Baloch, A. R. C., & Abro, I. A. (2024). Marxist Perspective Of Class Conflict In Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke* & How To Get Filthy Rich In Rising Asia. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 3(1), 530-542.
- Ullah, Z. H., Sarwat, S., Shahzad, W., & Ullah, A. H. (2022). Pragma-stylistic Analysis of "Moth Smoke". *Journal of Policy Research (JPR)*, 8(3), 532-538.