A Critical Discourse Analysis of Identity and Sociopolitical Power Dynamics in Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man*

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The Last White Man by Mohsin Hamid offers a potent examination of societal change and identity crises. This study examines how the novel portrays the emotional and societal scuffles related to identity, predominantly through diasporic practices. With Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the study scrutinizes the language, ideologies and power structures of the description. This qualitative approach exposes how the text occupies sociopolitical orders, historical backgrounds and cultural transferences. The central character, Anders, suffers a transformation from white to black, denoting a deep loss of self. This variation forces him to challenge societal biases and straight approaches of isolation, dismissal and agony practices that reflect the tests confronted by many diasporic characters. From Anders' journey, the novel reviews how society connects whiteness with honor and recognition, while blackness embodies downgrading and marginalization. His change high spot the widespread nature of these concepts and the psychological peal they take on characters. By scrutinizing the interaction among language and sociopolitical themes, the study discloses how Hamid practices Anders' story to encounter extremely entrenched views of race and belonging. The findings offer a sophisticated understanding of the novel's appraisal of societal power dynamics and its focus on the convolutions of identity in a varying world. Eventually, this research determines how The Last White Man summonses readers to mirror on their own partialities and the structures that figure our understanding of race and identity, proposing a persuasive appeal for compassion and change.

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Introduction

Inside discourse analysis, Socio-political viewpoints prolong away from the technical particulars of language refining the mutual association among language and its social

setting. An important participant in these methods is Critical Discourse Analysis which clarifies power assemblies demonstrated by the interaction between a teacher and a student dividing how reflects discourse and is shaped by the complex tapestry of society. Rooted in Michel Foucault's early exploration of power dynamics Critical Discourse Analysis unfurls its investigative prowess by scrutinizing normalized power structures, unraveling the connections between language, society and the subtle dance of power (Crosley, 2021).

The social politics theory posits that certain societal political legal and economic transformations occurring in *Weak* and *Failing* states contribute to the emergence of conditions that foster human trafficking for both sex and labor purposes, along with other manifestations of injustice (Williams, 2008).

Diaspora from the Greek word for (*scattering*) refers to the dispersion of people from their homeland. A simple definition of *diaspora literature: then, would be works that are written by authors who live outside their native land.* The term identifies a work's distinctive *geographic* origins (Halvorson-Taylor, 2023).

A diaspora represents a population dispersed across countries distant from its place of origin. Diaspora authors reside outside their native land and create literary works such as novels, stories, articles, and memoirs that showcase their culture traditions and norms. Living in a foreign country influences their language predominantly using English. They incorporate English vocabulary but with non-translated words from their place of origin italicized. This approach allows writers to introduce their home country's culture to a diverse readership unfamiliar with the native language. For instance, a term like (*guddi*) from Urdu meaning (*kite*) would be presented as is fostering cultural connection with readers (Najam U. 2023, p. 12).

People are changing remarks a character in Mohsin Hamid's latest novel *The Last White Man*. For enthusiasts of peculiar tales these words carry a deliciously ominous undertone as unbridled change forms the core of fantastical descriptions like *Invasion of the Body-Snatchers,* Dracula and Hamid's most direct muse Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. Similar to Gregor Samsa awakening to find himself transformed into a giant bug, Hamid's protagonist Anders a white individual with a Nordic name experiences a peculiar transformation One morning *woke up to find he had turned a deep and undeniable brown.* Inevitably this enigmatic darkening begins spreading affecting white individuals across an unspecified country. As showcased in his 2017 novel *Exit West* Hamid excels as a chronicler of instability borders dissolving beliefs shifting and settled populations abruptly migrating. His surreal narratives hover just on the verge of plausibility tethered to once improbable realities such as the events of September 11 and the ongoing catastrophe of climate change (Corrigan, 2022).

Research Problem

This research aims to address the sociopolitical and diasporic themes within the novel *The Last White Man* with a specific focus on the central character (Anders) transformation from white to black. By exploring the profound implications on Anders sense of self and society's treatment of him. The study seeks to illuminate the broader issue of how societal perceptions associate whiteness with acceptance and blackness with alienation in the diasporic context.

Research Question

1) How does Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) uncover the ways language constructs and represents diasporic experiences in Mohsin Hamid's The Last White Man?

Literature Review

Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Last White Man* underwent a lengthy gestation period evolving over two decades. Shaped by Hamid's reflections on the aftermath of the September 11 attacks the narrative envisions a world where white individuals awaken to discover they are no longer white. Hamid acknowledging a personal shift in perception notes losing the perceived benefits of whiteness previously granted by his education and social status. Similarly, the protagonist Anders experiences the abrupt disappearance of his white privileges. Embracing magical realism, a technique also employed in Hamid's previous work *Exit West* the novel introduces a fantastical element where Anders transforms into an *undeniable brown* overnight. This magical aspect serves as a foundation for Hamid to explore human nature and scrutinize the socially constructed concept of race emphasizing how it is molded by imagination but yields real-world consequences. Anders confronted with his brown reflection grapples with intense emotions symbolized by a *murderous rage* that prompts him to physically confront his altered identity. The narrative unfolds as Anders navigates a world where the anonymity once afforded by his whiteness dissipates leading to a profound realization that the quest for his lost whiteness paradoxically contradicts the essence of whiteness itself. This transformative experience prompts Anders to reevaluate his place in the world challenging societal norms and perceptions associated with race (Hamid M, 2022).

Omera saeed argues in her article *Negotiating Transition, Transformation, And Change In Mohsin Hamid's The Last White Man* that Anders and his father's individual struggles become woven into a broader chronicle as reports circulate about widespread changes occurring across the country. The writer's use of language introduces a notable irony emphasizing that initially it was the color of people that changed rather than the individuals themselves. Despite this irony the concrete reality is that the transformation in color is indeed leading to fundamental changes in people. Oona finding solace in the shared experience observes that Anders is no longer alone. However, Anders despite being in similar company expresses no improvement in his emotional state, indicating that a societal tipping point has not yet been reached. Nevertheless, his personal coping mechanism rooted in perceptually controlling the meaning of his experiences gets a boost. Momentary setbacks arise such as when Anders' boss makes a drastic statement about self-harm in response to such a situation leaving Anders unsure how to respond. Interestingly Anders perceives his boss as larger than life possibly because the boss has not undergone the anticipated change. The unsettling stares from athletes at the gym disrupt Anders' coping mechanism revealing ongoing challenges in navigating this evolving societal landscape (saeed, 2023).

Marvi Mastoi's analysis of Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man* (2022) employs Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial framework focusing on hybridity mimicry and ambivalence from *The Location of Culture* (1994). The novel explores themes of identity crisis, cultural hybridity, racism and colonial legacies within a globalized context. Hamid's narrative presents characters undergoing drastic transformations without clear explanations reflecting the arbitrary nature of identity. Mastoi examines how Bhabha's

concepts elucidate the characters' struggles to adopt new cultural identities while grappling with their colonial pasts. This analysis highlights the novel's portrayal of cultural complexity and the challenges of navigating hybrid identities in a postcolonial world, contributing to a deeper understanding of contemporary literature's exploration of identity and cultural dynamics. (Mastoi, 2024)

Diasporic writers hold a unique and significant place in literature as they direct the intricate connections of identity belonging and cultural displacement. Their works often reflect the experiences of individuals who have migrated from their homeland to different parts of the world exploring themes of cultural hybridity diasporic consciousness and the negotiation of multiple identities. Diaspora refers to a dispersed population residing in countries distant from their place of origin. Diaspora writers living abroad produce novels stories articles and memoirs that illuminate their native culture traditions and norms. Despite residing in a foreign country their works often explore aspects of their homeland reflecting the cultural and societal life (Najam u, 2023).

Throughout history numerous migration movements have led to the creation of diasporic populations and many of these movements have been associated with traumatic experiences. The African diaspora was shaped by the forced migration of African people to the Americas through slavery. Economic hardships like the Irish famine contributed to the Irish diaspora pushing many to North America and Europe. Conflict led to the Armenian Palestinian and Syrian Diasporas. However not all diasporas result from traumatic events for instance Vikings in the eighth to 11th centuries spread their population and culture across the Northern Hemisphere constituting a diaspora (Larson, 2021).

Mohsin Hamid stands as a prominent literary figure within the Pakistani diaspora currently based in the UK. Renowned for his insightful storytelling he has authored novels *Moth Smoke, The Reluctant Fundamentalist, How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia and Exit West*. Additionally, he has contributed to the literary landscape with a collection of essays titled *Discontent and Its Civilizations*. Mohsin Hamid's novels address the impact of globalization and migration on individuals with cultural and personal transformations. Hamid's works have been translated into 40 languages reflecting their universal appeal. *Moth Smoke* his debut novel gained international acclaim and received The Betty Trask Award. *Moth Smoke* is a riveting exploration of societal unraveling set in Lahore Pakistan. The novel follows Darashikoh Shezad an ex-banker turned opium addict as he becomes entangled in a web of desire crime and social upheaval. The novel's reminiscent style and convincing letterings bid a stabbing explanation on the densities of class morality and power in a quickly altering world designs Hamid's unique voice in current works (Hamid M, 2000).

The Reluctant Fundamentalist another masterpiece by Hamid unfolds against the backdrop of the post-9/11 era. Delving into themes of prejudice and biases within the Western community the novel stands as a profound exploration of the complexities of our globalized world. The book has been adapted into a film and has received international acclaim. Mohsin Hamid's writings emerge as keen observations and reflections on the schisms shaping our contemporary global background. The novel unfolds as a conversation between Changez a Pakistani man and an American stranger in a Lahore Cafe. Against the backdrop of post-9/11 tensions Changez recounts his journey from a young Pakistani student in the United States to a corporate success on Wall Street and eventually to a man questioning his identity and allegiances. The novel explores

themes of identity belonging and the impact of global politics on individual lives (Hamid M, 2007).

The Last White Man is a short novel of very long sentences. The description is assumed a winded incantatory sensation by the layering of division over division in sentences that roll upon numerous sheets rather than full stops by the use of commas and by the logic of the novel at a strict level being driven insistently forward. It makes for a book that is fascinatingly understandable and oddly melodic as if being narrated as a kind of myth to future generations (Preston, 2022).

Research Methodology

In this qualitative study the research methodology involves a close textual reading and analysis of Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Last White Man*. The chosen analytical framework for this exploration is Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model known for its in-depth examination of language use and societal implications. This chapter serves as a blueprint for the research outlining the approach and tools employed to explore the socio-political and diasporic aspects within the novel.

Meticulous, Systematic and Methodical study and then analysis of any knowledge is known as Research. In other words, exploration for information is Research. Slesinger and Stephenson defined research in *The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* as: *The manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extend correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in the construction of theory or in the practice of an art* (Stephenson, 1930).

Theoretical Framework

Originating from the critical linguistics pioneered at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s, CDA shares an intertwined history with critical linguistics with terminologies often used interchangeably. Initially developed by the Lancaster school of linguists led by prominent figures like Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak CDA emerged in response to the limited attention paid to social hierarchy and power in sociolinguistic research.

CDA integrates linguistic theory with social theory drawing insights from thinkers such as Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu. It scrutinizes ideologies and power relations embedded in discourse considering language as the primary realm of ideology and a central arena for power struggles. Ideology is perceived as the foundation of social representations and psychological extensions of CDA propose a sociocognitive interface between social structures and discourse structures.

Data Analysis Method

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a powerful tool for unpacking the layers of meaning embedded in language particularly in the context of socio-political and diasporic themes. This framework pioneered by Fairclough offers a systematic way to analyze how language both reflects and shapes power relations ideologies and societal practices (Hammersly, 2021).

Fairclough's method permits manifold facts of analytic entry obliging various forms of analysis that are equally descriptive. The interconnections between these analyses reveal patterns and disjunctions offering rich insights for description, interpretation and explanation (Janks, 2016).
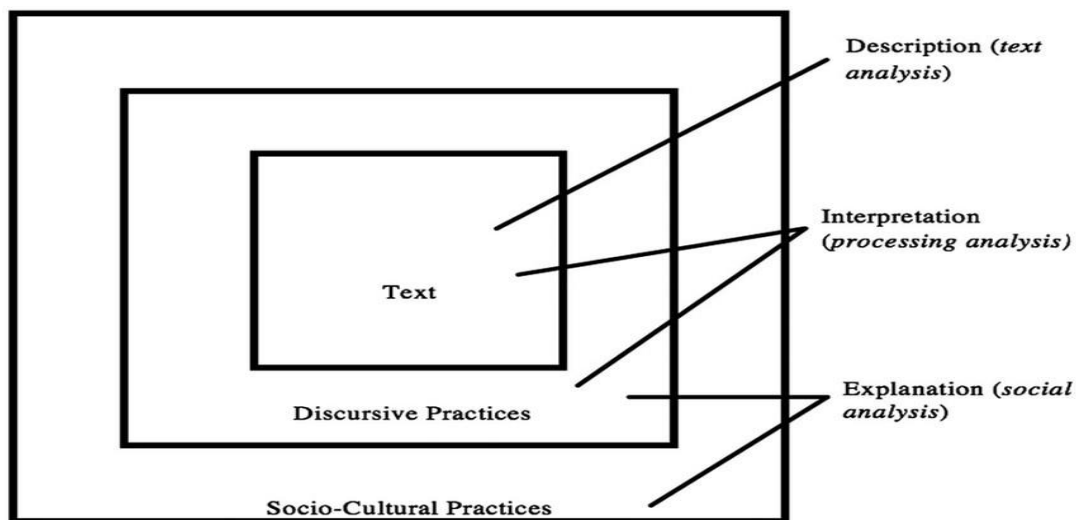

Figure 1: Fairclough Dimension of Discourse

Figure 1 illustrates Fairclough's dimension of discourse and discourse analysis. The model emphasizes the interdependence of these dimensions showcasing the convoluted movement between different types of analysis. The three-dimensional representation emphasizes the interconnections illustrating that a focus on any single box is a relatively arbitrary starting point. The interdependence requires subsequent moves to re-insert each box into its interconnected place. To capture the simultaneity of Fairclough's CDA method the model embeds the three types of analysis within one another demonstrating their interdependence. This three-dimensional image allows for a comprehensive understanding of the interconnections and necessitates a dynamic non-linear approach to analysis (Janks, 2016).
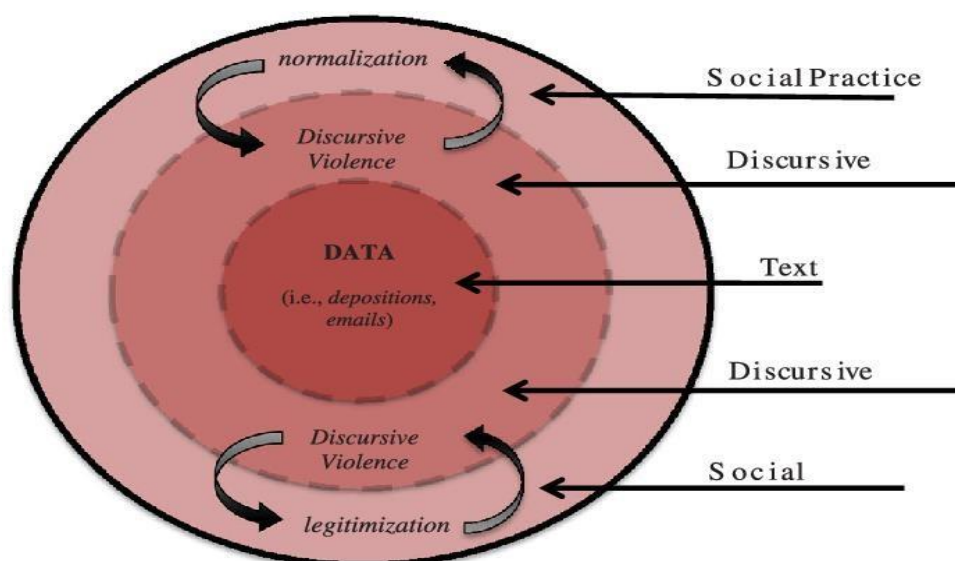

Figure 2: Functions of Fairclough's Model

Figure 2 is a consolidated visual representation crafted to elucidate the conceptual and methodological frameworks designed for streamlining the implementation of discursive violence. This modified rendition of Fairclough's model functions as a structured framework for scrutinizing the influence wielded by a particular class or system over another as well as exploring the manifestation of power imbalances within society through discursive practices (Fairclough, 2010).

CDA as conceptualized by Fairclough scrutinizes various forms of discourse encompassing texts spoken language video and practices. Fairclough's methodological approach often referred to as textually oriented discourse analysis (TODA) is distinctively concerned with the reciprocal influences of linguistically structured textual properties sociolinguistic speech genres and formally sociological practices. Central to his analysis is the propositions that in alignment with Foucauldian theory practices is not only influenced by discourse but are also discursively shaped and enacted. Fairclough emphasizes the significance of linguistically analyzable intrinsic properties of discourse as key elements in interpreting social practices and their discursive effects. In his seminal work *Language and Power* (1989 revised third edition in 2014) Fairclough explores the interconnections between language and social institutional practices along with broader political and social structures (Wikipedia, Norman Fairclough, 2023).

Critical Discourse Analysis *CDA* is distinctive for its inherent critical perspective. In simpler terms CDA seeks to uncover implicit assumptions in the realms of social societal political and economic spheres. It scrutinizes power dynamics existing between different discourses and actors *van Dijk 1998; Fairclough 1989, 2003*. Essentially CDA endeavors to bring to light social phenomena that often go unnoticed. Crucially CDA rejects the notion of discourses as neutral in their ideological content considering them a significant locus of ideology. Fairclough *1989* even asserts that ideology is pervasively present in language and advocates for acknowledging the ideological nature of language as a key theme in modern social science. In this type of discourse analysis, the concept of ideology is broad. Fairclough *1989* defines ideologies as *common-sense* assumptions that portray specific ideas and power relations as natural. *Van Dijk* on the other hand regards ideology as the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group *1998*. This perspective differs from the traditional Marxist notion of *false consciousness* and aligns more closely with post-structuralist *Laclau and Mouffe 1985* or culturalist e.g. *Chiapello 2003* conceptions of ideology. According to this viewpoint the emphasis is not on a singular *ideology* but on examining alternative or competing ideologies connected with or mediated by specific discourses (Vaara, 2015).

Primary Sources

The primary source for this study is the novel *The Last White Man*. The process of extracting relevant discourse involves a close reading of the text emphasizing passages that highlight socio-political and diasporic elements. Considerations for selecting specific chapters or dialogues are based on the concentration of these themes.

Secondary Sources

Complementing the primary source, secondary sources such as literary critiques scholarly articles and relevant texts are collected. These sources provide context and additional insights into the socio-political and diasporic themes within the novel contributing to a comprehensive analysis.

Data Analysis

but there was no escaping Anders, for Anders, that day. The discomfort only followed (Hamid M, 2022, p. 11). Here the unavoidable emotional turmoil experienced by the protagonist Anders on a specific day is depicted. The frequent use of the word Anders not only underscores his centrality but also put emphasis on the profound internal struggle he faces. The discomfort referenced here is not merely physical it is a psychological and emotional weight that Anders carries throughout the narrative. The recurrence of Anders creates a sense of claustrophobia emphasizing how his presence dominates the scene making it impossible for anyone including himself to escape the forthcoming discomfort. The text hints at the omnipresence of this discomfort indicating to its grip it has on the character's psyche leaving readers to ponder the underlying consequences of this unyielding emotional burden. In George Orwell's dystopian novel 1984 the protagonist Winston Smith similarly experiences a suffocating sense of control by the totalitarian regime of Big Brother. The constant presence of government forces and surveillance technology makes Winston feel like he cannot escape the oppressive state's reach, much like Anders cannot escape his discomfort. This highlights the theme of individual helplessness in the face of oppressive socio-political systems (Orwell, 1949).

In this line the repeated mention of Anders highlights the linguistic aspect of CDA. This power imbalance can lead to discomfort and anxiety for white people who may be afraid of losing their privilege or being judged for their racism. The quote also reflects the fact that white people often benefit from ignoring people of color. The quote can be seen as a commentary on the ways in which white people are socialized to fear and avoid people of color. From a young age white people are taught that they are superior to people of color. This message is reinforced through the media through the education system and through the everyday interactions that white people have with people of color. As a result, white people often develop a deep-seated fear and prejudice towards people of color. The quote also reflects the fact that white people are often unable to escape their own feelings of discomfort and unease when they are around people of color. This is because white people are constantly reminded of their privilege and their complicity in racism. Even when white people try to be anti-racist, they may still experience anxiety when they are around those of color (Korducki, 2020).

Oona did not feel that she wanted to be touched, that she wanted physical release, she wanted something else, company maybe, yes, his company, Anders's company, to sit with him, understood, and simply be. What had happened to Anders almost dissuaded her halfway, stopped at a red light, but she did not turn back, and then she arrived, and his door was, as always, unlocked, and with a couple of warning bangs she was inside, and the dark man was there, the dark man who had been Anders (Hamid M. , 2022, p. 31).

In these quoted lines from the text the complex and multi-layered dynamics of human connection and desire offering portrayal of the characters' emotions and actions. Oona's inner conflict is expressed through the language as she deals with her longing for more than just physical intimacy, she seeks Anders's company and understanding. The text explores a shift in Oona's perspective suggesting that the events involving Anders might have given her pause. (Whitehead, 2016).

These symbolic elements contribute to the text's depth and density. The text's handling of Anders's transformation from white to black serves as a powerful vehicle for exploring issues of privilege, social commentary and personal relationships. It challenges conventional notions

of race and identity, inviting readers to contemplate the fluidity and complexity of these constructs in a broader societal context (Haferkamp, Social Change and Modernity, 1992).

the end of things, he was not blind, but they would not take his boy, not easily, not from him, the boy's father, and whatever Anders was, whatever his skin was, he was still his father's son, and still his mother's son, and he came first, before any other allegiance, he was what truly mattered, and Anders's father was ready to do right by his son, it was a duty that meant more to him than life, and he wished he had more life in him, but he would do what he could with what little life he had (Hamid M. , The Last White Man, 2022).

In this text the strong bond between a father and his son Anders emphasizing the enduring and unconditional love between them. Despite the upheaval and societal changes Anders' father remains committed to protecting and caring for his son. The passage underscores the concept that familial relationships and obligations take priority over the whole lot else even with inside the face of adversity. It displays the unwavering willpower of a father to his toddler, and his willingness to do something it takes to make sure his son's wellness and protection even if confronted with uncertainty and constrained resources. The textual content portrays the significance of own circle of relatives and the sacrifices mother and father are inclined to make for his or her kids emphasizing the long- lasting nature of this love and dedication. In Yaa Gyasi's novel Homegoing there may be a poignant instance of the long-lasting bond among a mom and her toddler. The novel lines the interconnected memories of half-sisters and their descendants over numerous generations` one residing in Africa and the opposite in America. In one a part of the tale Effia an individual with inside the African department of the own circle of relatives is taken from her village as a part of the slave trade. Despite the harrowing situations and the separation from her place of birth she holds onto the affection and reminiscence of her toddler. This instance illustrates the effective subject matter of the long-lasting nature of maternal love and familial connections even if torn aside with the aid of using historic and geographical distances (Gyasi, 2016).

Within the CDA framework this article inquires the profound and undying subject matter of familial bonds and parental love. It highlights Anders's father's unwavering dedication to his son no matter the dramatic alternate in his son's look and identification. This dedication is expressed via the perception that Anders comes first earlier than another allegiance emphasizing the primacy of the parent-toddler relationship. Anders's father's willingness to do something it takes to defend and help his son displays the selflessness and willpower that regularly represent the parent-toddler dynamic (Edwards, 2023).

Conclusion

The metamorphosis of the characters reflects the impact of traumatic experiences and the complexity of black identity. The exploration of the characters' psychological states especially Anders sheds light on the internal conflicts, fear and discomfort associated with being a black person in a society that often values whiteness. The novel not only points out the absurdity of racial stereotypes but also suggests that true transformation and acceptance can only occur when individuals confront and overcome their biases. The primary research question investigating the socio-political and diasporic aspects within The Last White Man yields insightful findings. The evaluation well-known shows that Hamid employs plenty of narrative strategies to exhibit the difficult dynamics of present day societal complexities. These strategies correctly remove darkness from problems of identification, cultural displacement and the profound outcomes of globalization. In the characters' interactions and picks Hamid skillfully communicates the demanding situations confronted with the aid of

using people routing a diasporic existence. Hamid rightfully presents both the external and internal psychic conflicts of the colored man an ultimate reality of the contemporary world. The psychological facts are rooted in reality and reside within the black man. Racism and colorism are not merely constructed phenomena but still burning issues in contemporary society prevalent forms of oppression and justification to the deeds of the white man. This phenomenon of racism is invented by the self-claimed civilized white man and associated with inferiority, conflicts and devaluation. The black community is the victim of these with additional traumas. The most venomous of these is psychological disturbance. A man can fight visible external forces, but it's hard to overcome internal clashes, fragmented thoughts, self-doubt and traumas. These are the results of this socially built phenomenon of racism. In the stop the recognition of blackness via way of means of the characters and the disappearance of white people withinside the narrative provide a hopeful outlook suggesting that an area without racial distinctions may lead to a more harmonious existence.

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