

Exploring the Quest for Centralized Identity in Mohsin Hamid's "The Last White Man": Post-Apocalyptic Transformations and Societal Reconfigurations

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Abstract : This study aims to analyze the loss of identity and its impact on one's life in 'The Last White Man' by Mohsin Hamid. The theory of Alienation Effect by Bertolt Brecht has been applied to the text as Hamid offers the readers a unique perspective, alluding to significant themes like identity, race and death. The aspects of defamiliarization align impeccably with the plot, as existence and the corresponding concept of identity seem to have dissolved into utter chaos. This extends from the unexplained transformation to the way the entire world unravels from its general norm into a dystopian mayhem. The characters, starting with the protagonist Anders, have lost their center. One's own self transforms into the 'other', and the struggle is to get refamiliarized with one's own self. Alienation and isolation only rise as the construct of race and identity is taken apart brick by brick, ironically at its own pace as many new realities are blown to bits. The inseparable relationship between identity and grief under the ever-looming cloud of 'death' is studied in detail. The theoretical framework and thematic aspects harmonize in accordance with the writing style put forth by Hamid, tying all the loose ends together.

Keywords : lost identity, post-apocalyptic world, chaos, alienation

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