



DECONSTRUCTING RACIAL ONTOLOGY AND STRUCTURAL INEQUITIES IN *THE LAST WHITE MAN* THROUGH MAGICAL REALISM AND CRITICAL THEORY

Maliha Kalsoom

maliha.bseng3122@iiu.edu.pk

Student, Department of English, IIUI.

Laraib Hussain

laraib.bseng3104@iiu.edu.pk

Student, Department of English, IIUI.

Smavia Sajjad

smavia.bseng3199@iiu.edu.pk

Student, Department of English, IIUI.

Maryam Majeed

Maryam.majeed@iiu.edu.pk

Teaching and Research Associate, IIUI

Abstract

This study inspects the way themes of race, identity and power are explored and criticized in Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Last White Man* by using the theoretical framework of Magic Realism along with Critical Social Theory. The key question is how the novel's narrative exposes and challenges the social hierarchies and identity crisis that dark people face due to white privilege. This paper uses the qualitative and thematic base analysis embedded in frameworks of Magical Realism and Critical Social theory that focuses on foregrounding the social anxieties, discrimination, and racial tension prevalent in society. The major claim of this research is that Mohsin Hamid used a blend of fantasy and reality to show naturalized racial superiorities, whereas Critical Social Theory critiques those constructed power structures, highlighting the need for equality by dismantling racial norms. The significance of the study lies in its contribution to highlighting not just the ordinary but also the speculative elements of the novel that contribute in creating the overall meaning of the novel, and it highlights the ability of rethinking to break rigid societal norms to bring harmony in society. In essence, this study investigates the causes and implications of the transformation, analyzing societal and individual responses, and the broader impacts on daily life and social dynamics. By exploring racial ontology and socio-structural inequity, the findings of this paper show how dark-skinned people suffer identity crises and discrimination in their own society. By combining both magical realism and social critical theory, this research highlights how Hamid uses fiction in the novel not just to escape from reality but to critique the rigid social discrimination that is still present in the modern world.

Keywords: *Critical Social Theory, Magical Realism, Mohsin Hamid, Race and Identity, System Inequality, The Last White Man*

Corresponding Author: Maliha Kalsoom (Student, Department of English, IIUI.)

Email: maliha.bseng3122@iiu.edu.pk

1. Introduction

The reality behind who we are as individuals and how our society wants to behave in this world has long shaped literary explorations of race and power. Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man* emphasizes this question through an aghast imaginative premise: a white man, one morning wakes with dark skin. Through this transformation, the writer seeks to dismantle the borders between the fictional and real worlds. By adding a fictional element to his novel, Hamid highlights how racial identities are constructed and normalized by society. The novel's unrealistic events reveal the instability of racial categories, which are assumed to be fixed by those in power. Many researchers have explored themes such as family, love, loss, change, and identity in *The Last White Man*. However, few studies have analyzed it from the perspective of how magical realism deconstructs racial identity and social inequality in the novel. Most existing works focus on how society shapes racism and Hamid's writing style in this novel, but lack of research explores how the novel's magical realism, alongside Critical Social Theory, exposes deep real issues such as race, identity, privilege, and social inequality. This gap is important because Hamid uses this speculative element purposely in his novel to critique a society that respects only white people and marginalizes others.

This research claims that Hamid uses magical realism as a narrative strategy to disrupt the stable or natural racial identity. On the contrary, critical social theory is applied to reveal the power structure and inequality that create racial hierarchies. These two theories together emphasize how the novel critiques racial superiority and explore personal and social violence when hierarchies collapse. To support this claim, this study first aims to explore how magical realism uses unrealistic events to expose the bitter reality that identity is not biological but constructed by society by labeling fixed markers. For instance, the state of chaos and violence is spread among people as they slowly lose their Whiteness. Second, this research applies critical social theory to illustrate how the transformation to black skin shows a power system and privilege towards only whiteness, reflected through discrimination and bias. Finally, the paper highlights how breaking old social and racial norms can open space for freedom that leads to healing, identity, and equality.

1.1. Research Questions

- 1) In what ways does Mohsin Hamid implement Magical Realism as a narrative strategy in *The Last White Man* to critique and dismantle rigid racial identities and uncover the social structure of race?
- 2) How does Critical Social Theory expose the racial classifications, systemic inequality, and power hierarchies through the destabilization of whiteness and its effects on identity as well as systemic privilege?

1.2. Literature Review

1.3. Magical Realism

Wendy B. Faris, a scholar of this topic, defines magical realism as a blend of fantastic elements with the realistic representation in a way where the extraordinary grows organically out of ordinary. Khan et al. (2025) in their study examine how magical realism works within the novel, *The Last White Man* (2022) and how Mohsin Hamid uses magical realism to “voice the unvoiced” by theatricalizing the social, political and psychological consequences of being the “racialized other”. Anders after turning brown becomes the “other” in society which highlights the connection of skin color with the determination of power. By blending magic with reality, Hamid in his novel exposes the fragility of racial categories and the pain of brown people which they endure when considered as “other” in their own society.

The overnight shift of people from white into dark-skinned individuals is an irreducible thing in the novel which is a magical transformation that is outside of natural laws but it is treated as a normal thing in the text. For instance, Anders after sleeping wakes up as “an unmistakably dark brown color” (Hamid, 2022, p. 4) which is taken as an evidence of magical realism. Hamid explains the realistic setting of stores, towns, families which let the magic shift happen inside the everyday life. It fits in Wendy B. Faris’s definition of magical realism as **realistic descriptions** (Amir et al., 2024, pp. 684–686).

Kamran et al. (2025) uses Jean Baudrillard’s ideas of hyper reality and consumerism, highlights the world where reality is replaced by symbols, false images and signs which makes difficult to differentiate between real and fake. Their research connected directly hyper reality with capitalism and consumerism. It proposes that not only things or objects are commodified, humans also are assessed in same way. People are commodified in the society where skin color operates as a tag or label according to which they are given worth. Mohsin Hamid’s novel uses fantastical and mysterious overnight transformations as a critique of real-world racial hierarchies. The magical events are treated as a part of everyday life which forces novel’s characters to face distorted and “unreal realities” surrounding them. The central event of novel; abrupt transformation of white into brown as a supernatural event is actually a matter of fact which dismantles the social as well as psychological norms which is hallmark of magical realism (Perveen et al., 2025). This transformation is used as a speculative tool to examine racial anxieties, constructed categories of white and non-white and social privilege that is attached to whiteness in a globalized world.

1.4. Race and Identity

Race and identity are notable themes in Mohsin Hamid’s *The Last White Man*. Racism is the expression of one’s own beliefs of superiority and hatred against a person or group based on race, way of life, and nationality (Sunnemark, 2003). Additionally, racism is defined as a term to describe the practice of offense centered on race, culture, and

religion. (Arum, 2007). Scholars have scrutinized how race and identity are socially constructed ideologies propagated by white people to maintain their power and marginalize black people. Racism functions as a “constructed and discursive knowledge” that subjects dark-skinned people to an identity crisis by placing them in a lower social position. For instance, in the novel, the protagonist Anders turns black when he wakes up and experiences an identity crisis after he transforms from white to black. This creates a sense of chaos and fear that he must accept to overcome social struggles (Manzoor and Singh, 23, p. 3).

Critics argue that this socially created artificial ideology should be accepted as a change because it is necessary to overcome racial oppression. Another study confirmed the previous study’s findings by stating that racial “otherness” is not natural but created by society through its rules and stereotypes (Arshad et al., 2025). Grosfoguel (2016) claims that racism works like a universal hierarchy that categorizes people as superior and inferior, making it justified by race, ethnicity, and culture. To clarify this claim, Anders’ loss of whiteness is directly related to Grosfoguel’s idea that hierarchy collapses when the dominant group loses its privilege. Similarly, in another study by Grosfoguel, he claims that racism serves as a universal hierarchy. It classifies people as superior and inferior based on race, ethnicity, and culture (Grosfoguel, 2016). This argument is evident in the novel when Anders’ transformation into a brown makes him abject, because he is no longer seen as a dominant racial group. His change in skin color makes him “other” in his own community and is now viewed as inferior and different in society. Another scholar likewise argues that Hamid deliberately shows Anders’ transformation in the novel to highlight that race is a social construction to uphold power (Bhatti et al.). This point of view of Hamid, which the authors noted is worthy, because society’s role is significant; it can construct and deconstruct everything.

While scholars like Grosfoguel and Bhatti focus on racial transformation, many authors emphasize identity crisis, which comes as a result of racism. The authors critique the racial binaries that strongly affect the characters’ conscious and unconscious thoughts. The authors use Fanon’s theory of Black psychology to show Anders’ mental struggles in the form of fear, shame, and self-doubt, which is common for people who experience racial discrimination. For instance, society looks at Anders strangely, which deepens the identity crisis. It makes him feel like an outsider in his own community. (Ijaz et al.). This study shows the psychological effect on an individual caused by racism; on the contrary, the present study not only explores personal and social violence caused by racism but also critiques the rigid societal norms that destroy society and continue to work in the modern world. Similarly, other scholars focus on the psychological and sociological effects of racism by applying Critical Race Theory (CRT) in their research. For instance, in the novel, Anders and Oona face an unexplained racial transformation that leads to their social

rejection. It shows that the novel emphasizes the violence of white people against black people, and also shows how marginalization affects people's emotions and relationships. Although Wahab et al.'s study focused on CRT, it did so from a psychological perspective. In contrast, the present study adopts the Critical Social theory from the viewpoint of how shifting racial identities reshape power structures, relationships, and social inequality.

1.5. Systematic Inequality

Ahmad, Rasool, and Noor, in their study "Voicing the imprisonment in skin," explore racial identity and systemic inequality by arguing that black people go through racial oppression at the hands of white people. They have faced social and economic injustices for centuries, which destroy their mental health, shatter their confidence, and damage their self-esteem. Therefore, they highlight the power dynamics that construct racial inequality to violate human rights and lead to emotional suffering for the black community. Besides the issue of race, it also focuses on human relations, identity, and love. Further study by Sadiq offers a subtle perspective on America's unequal political, social, and racial system after a critical analysis of *The Last White Man*. Additionally, he also emphasizes human relations, identity, and love. Similarly, Anderson states, "The backlash against the racial advancement of black people exposes white Americans' racist attitudes". She reflects the hatred of White Americans against the advancement of Black people. She points out the reason for white people's enmity because they benefit from systemic injustices against black people, and their progress becomes a threat to their privileged position.

Earlier studies have repeatedly highlighted the experiences of postcolonial subjects under an unjust system. For instance, Ashfaq (2022), in "Home Boy: A Case of Identity Crises and Transformation," analyzes issues of identity construction within the structural oppression of the neocolonial system to emphasize the influence of institutional and systemic forces in shaping identity. In his study, the main focus is on Chuck's suffering, cries, and resolution of identity issues, which are somewhat similar to the present study, which will also explore Ander's struggles, cries, and resolution of identity issues. Similarly, another study illustrates the authority of White Britain over hybrid or black Britain, specifying the role of social structure in creating racial hierarchies rather than personal prejudice. Collectively, these works indicate the theme of systematic inequality, centered on the novel *The Last White Man*, where the sudden racial transformation of the protagonist reveals an unjust social system (Ali and Khadim). Additionally, Aijazuddin, in her research, claims that Hamid's novel reflects a dystopian society. She further criticizes the systemic inequality deeply rooted in racialized identities, where a white man turns into a black man, and his sudden transformation changes society's perception of him.

Moreover, some critics in their study explore the deep loss of self from Ander's journey to investigate how prestige and recognition are associated with whiteness, while downgrading and alienation are associated with the blackness construct by society (Mahboob et al.). Furthermore, Saeed uncovers the intense reactions of society regarding Ander's transformation, illustrating how institutions and social structures react differently to racialized subjects in the novel. In her study, she mentions a drastic statement of Anders' boss's about harming himself, the scary reactions of gym athletes, and social instability over Anders' transformation reveal systemic racism and unjust treatment based on race. This is exactly what is discussed in the present study, that after losing white skin color, Ander immediately loses the social status, self-esteem, and identity because whiteness is not just a color, it is related to a social comfort that is deeply rooted in society. Further researchers evaluate the shifting dynamics of power and privilege through Anders' changing character traits after he transitions into a black man. Society gave him a privilege and a social position when he was white, but the loss of whiteness made him other and backward (Anam, Ajmal, and Sharif). Hunter opines that racial supremacy is about believing that white skin is innately superior. Besides skin color, superiority also considers factors such as hair color, facial features, language, accent, culture, and the benefits that come with whiteness. Similarly, Nogueira claimed that society accepted white supremacy, considering white as more desirable, educated, and attractive compared to non-white groups like Native Americans and Africans because they are black.

While earlier research on *The Last White Man* presents a detailed analysis of racial transformation, structural racism, and social repercussion, most studies primarily emphasize external reactions and institutional prejudice. However, limited work has been done on the embedded nature of racial bias and the process through which racial injustices are uprooted. In particular, the common forms of inequality in which loss of whiteness reshapes self-worth and emotional security are still underexplored. Furthermore, little attention has been given to the ambiguity and psychological instability experienced during Anders' transitional state. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill these gaps by examining how systematic inequality function together at social and psychological levels, revealing whiteness not only as a social position but as a deeply rooted structure of solace, control, and acceptance. In doing so, this study representing the unjust social structures along together with the intertwined ideological system that support racial hierarchy.

2. Methodology

The study employed a qualitative approach that is grounded on thematic analysis, with Hamid's novel "The Last White Man" acting as a primary text. The novel's narrative structure and metaphorical element are explored to investigate the representation of racial identity, systematic inequality and power dynamics through the lenses of magical realism and critical social theory. The primary text is studied to comprehend how Hamid's use of

magical realism subverts fixed racial orders and how the narrative style influences larger social structures and racial hierarchies. Furthermore, secondary sources, including a comprehensive collection of scholarly papers, critical essays and earlier research on race, identity, magical realism and systemic inequality, are applied to support the research theoretically and contextually. These sources draw on established frameworks from critical social theory, and literary analyses of magical realism. They also offer critical views on racism, social rights, and systematic racism, which lead to the thematic interpretation of novels. This research design emphasizes symbolic and thematic concerns rather than quantitative data. The study heavily relies on thematic analysis, exploring the social and cultural narratives to reveal the largest structures of power, race and repression that intervene in the society. Through critical engagement with secondary resources, the novel is placed within a broader discussion on race and social justice. The research is centered around critical social theory, first introduced by the Frankfurt school in the 1920s. This theoretical framework serves as a foundation for evaluating the dominant social forces underlying the formation of white prejudice and discrimination. Some theorists critically argue that racial ideology is deeply ingrained in political, legal, and institutional structures of society. Therefore, social institution play an important role in shaping prevailing ideologies and the theoretical framework will reveal the social constructed identity through institutions. Simultaneously, the study exercise magical realism theory, introduced by Scholars such as Wendy B. Faris. He opposes the dominant racist ideals by blending reality and fantasy as a narrative strategy. This methodology provides a clear understanding of the novel, further this work is not only mirrors society but also investigating ongoing race-based issues through the help of primary text and secondary theoretical insights. This approach will emphasizes the significance of novel in extending the discussion on identity, power, and equality in speculative fiction.

3. Analysis

3.1. Race, Power, and Identity

Magical Realism and Critical Social Theory both inspect the themes of race, identity and power in the novel. Magic realism questions the traditional views of identity as well as social order by blending ordinary with the extraordinary elements. For instance, the sudden transformation of a notable character, Anders, from white into a dark individual is a magical realism technique that brings into consideration how characters are influenced by identity. Similarly, Critical Social Theory also interrogates social inequality and racism existing in society due to power hierarchies. In the novel, Ander's sudden transformation changes the behavior of people in their own society. People stare at him strangely, and his boss at the gym says that he should rather die if he has changed his color. Oona is shocked and immediately leaves without saying a word. This highlights

that as long as he was white, he was dominant in society, but when he lost his whiteness, he lost his social power and became a target of discrimination.

At the start of the novel, Ander wakes up dark, which creates a sense of fear and confusion. “One morning, Anders, a white man, woke up and found that there was somebody else in bed with him, male, darker. Though this was terrifying, it was undoubtedly impossible, and he was reassured that the other moved as he moved and was in fact just him.” (Hamid, 9). This speculative element immediately forces Anders into a state of shock and chaos in the narrative. The reaction of Anders after seeing a black man reflects that people from different races are perceived as threatening and “others” in society. By applying Magical Realism Theory, it becomes clear that through unreal and unexplained events, the realities of society are disclosed, that racism is never natural but is always created by society itself. Anders’ symbolic transformation reveals the hidden racial construction, which is influenced by social meaning rather than biological truth.

When Anders interacts with the world after his transformation, the behavior and treatment that he faces from society are examined through Critical Social Theory. His dark appearance changes how people treat him: people judge him from his face, look at him with suspicion as if he was an alien, and the society becomes violent. For instance in the novel, when he goes back to work in the gym after his transformation, his boss remarks: “His boss looked him over and said claimed that if it was me, I would have killed myself.” (Hamid, 27). These reactions show that Anders is now seen as inferior and has lost the privileges he once had as a white man. Critical Social Theory emphasizes that this is not a rejection of Anders’ character but the denial of a system that privileges whiteness and marginalizes others who do not fit into that category.

As time passes, more people have begun to change from white to black, which increases panic and unrest in the city. Here, Hamid not only emphasizes Anders’ individual struggles but also expands the transformation to the whole society. Through Mystical Realism Theory, this sudden alteration becomes a significant symbol of what happens when racial boundaries start to shift. When everyone starts turning black, the city becomes violent as its residents cannot accept this harsh reality because society is built on fixed racial identities. One of the novel’s lines states: “There has been an increase in violence and murder, which simply presents the hatred of one against another. Guns were used by individuals to purge their brownness. (Hamid, 40), shows how a speculative event created panic and fear among people of losing their racial identity. Although this event is impossible in real life, Hamid uses it to reveal the bitter truth that racial background is deeply connected with power, and people are harming each other to protect their power.

The novel explores how even small events reveal changes in identity after transformation. When Anders turned black, he observed that the janitor was watching him differently. “The cleaning guy had started to look at him in a new way after Anders

changed, and Anders had not liked it, but it got him thinking” (Hamid, 34). He has now become aware of the racial classifications he had never noted before. His reflection that the helper had “dark skin” depicts how people quickly assume racial labelling. The cleaner’s changed attitude may reflect a subtle prejudice rooted in uneasiness and hatred, which Critical Social Theory classifies as a normal practice towards marginalized people. This shows that once Anders transforms back, he begins to analyze how race shapes daily life interactions. When people are transforming quickly, Anders’ father is the only one who remains white. His acceptance of Anders’ blackness shows that identity is more than skin color, but he becomes the “last white man”, which symbolizes the downfall of the old racial hierarchy.

Oona’s relationship with her mother also shows the effect of racism on her identity on a psychological level. Oona is affected emotionally as well as mentally when her mother says that you should be ashamed. “Oona’s mother said, “You should be ashamed of yourself.” When Oona responded, “I am ashamed of myself,” her mother countered, “OH no, you are not, but you should be.” (Hamid, 61). This line shows that her mother is disappointed with her because she is supporting Anders, who has been transformed into a black-skinned person. It shows how difficult it was for the black transformed people to keep their identity stable. Moreover, it also reflects that Oona’s mother absorbs racist ideas without even realizing it. Critical Social Theory is applicable here because society is the one that tells people what is acceptable or not. Oona’s silence and a calm reply to her mother show her emotional pain. It reflects not only racism that happens outside in society but also explains how painful it is to bear the racist remarks in your own family.

With the passage of time, nearly the whole society starts to undergo identity transformation, which slowly diminishes racial discrimination. This ending suggests the possibility of rebuilding the society without any fear of racial biasness. The use of magical realism helps to acknowledge that there exists a world without hierarchies, and we can question the labels society constructs to define people’s values. This shift can be seen from a Critical Social Theory perspective that the breakdown of old social norms and power systems is possible if society stops thinking about racial divisions and builds its relationships based on equality.

When these systems lose their control, people finally get the chance to create identities that are equal and free from racial judgment. The way Anders and Oona quietly start to rebuild their lives shows that healing is possible and that identity can grow again once society stops dividing people by race. Both theories, Critical Social Theory and Magical Realism Theory, together provide a strong framework in order to understand the themes of power, race, and identity in the novel. On one side, where magical realism works to destabilize the rigid notions of power, race, and identity, in the same way, the Critical Social Theory exposes the underlying social hierarchies that enforce these

identities, hence providing the complete base for the analysis of dominant themes of the novel with their counter perspectives.

3.2. Systematic Inequality

Mohsin Hamid's novel *The Last White Man* apparently portrays a simple story of a trivial incident in which people in society wake up with a different skin. Though, the novel becomes a stronger examination of racial hierarchies that shape ordinary life through the lens of magical realism and critical social theory. With the integration of these tools, this study uncover the theme of systematic inequality based on white privilege. This discussion revolves around a fictional world for examining the nature of racial transformation and its influence on the characters' lives. This study analyzes the underlying social structures in trivial life situations that Hamid reflects through imaginary world. The novel employs a technique of magical realism for not only revealing power dynamics in society that becomes visible through altered appearance, as white skin shifting into black skin. Moreover, critical social theory gives insight into how transforming skin color leads to racial identity shifts that trigger institutional response, exposing intervene systemic privileges. In this study, Anders' transformation serves as a key to highlight issues such as racial inequality, social uncertainty, and unfair treatment. It shows that inequality exists within systems, rather than only at the level of personal bias. By incorporating a surreal narrative with social critique, Hamid effectively critiques rigid social orders and exemplifies an unsettled society after the destruction of its basic foundation, just as the loss of whiteness brings threat into society. For instance, when Ander losses his white color at the beginning of the novel," his first reaction to his identity shift is full of hatred and rage". The sight of his new black identity triggers "murderous rage", as he wants to kill the "colored man" he sees in front of the mirror, which he breaks into pieces out of anger. This incident reflects how society gives benefits and comfort to white individuals, and once they loss their white identity, they feel vulnerable and hopeless about surviving in a chaotic society. He finds it difficult to accept his transformed state and seeks solace in mundane activities, attempting to convince himself that everything will be fine, although he remains unconvinced (Hamid, 2022, p.3). This difficulty in acceptance is rooted in social categories that attach whiteness to honor, while blackness is often linked with marginalization.

Furthermore, this study grounds the novel in detailed discussions of racism and contemporary global inequality, arguing that Hamid uses a fantasy world not as an escape, but as a way to point out ongoing problems of superiority and otherness that still affect our world. The novel highlights the complexities of the contemporary world, where black individuals are constantly looking for opportunities to define their identities in a society that often treats them as "other". For instance, after identity shift, Anders first hides himself inside his home due to the fear of being rejected by people because of his black

color. To hide his black identity, he confines himself to his room and does not want to go outside freely because he feels ashamed of his new self. When he starts going out, he covers his face with a hoodie and hides his black hands in his pockets. At the grocery shop, the clerk “. . . he did not acknowledge Anders’s mumbled thanks and goodbye” as though Anders had not spoken at all.” (p. 4). Here, it is evident that with the loss of whiteness, he also loses his identity. In this context, it is quite clear that he is unable to connect with people after losing his old self because of fear and he finds himself a stranger in his town.

Additionally, this reflects the experience of black minority groups who go through the similar treatment in white dominant societies. One scene in the novel also reflects the loss of Anders’ right to speak or stand against the wrong people. For instance, Anders fails to respond to the rude behavior of a woman who curses him from her car while he is returning home. Anders is treated differently by society, remaining primarily indoors, and “People who knew him no longer knew him” (p. 12). According to William Macpherson, institutional racism is “the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their color, culture, and ethnic origin.” In the novel, Anders experiences institutional racism when he goes to his workplace and faces “quick, evasive stares” that psychologically torment him.

Moreover, his boss’s bitter reaction to his identity shift, as he said he “would have killed himself” reflects behavioral changes in people who were once welcoming but are now unable to accept him. Due to his transformation, he is suspended from his job, which highlights social biasness against people of color. As the novel progresses and more people transform, the social order collapses. As a result, the town erupts in violence, fear, hatred and riots. Initially, everyone struggles to accept him, including his friend Oona, who loves him. It is stated that, “Sometimes he looked normal to her, and sometimes strange” (p. 38). Finally, Oona, who later becomes his wife, accepts his new identity, and after a few days, she too experiences the same transformation that happened to Anders at the beginning of the novel. As changes takes place in the town, it becomes a place of chaos and riots. Militants begin targeting black people and warn them to leave the place. On the other hand, Oona’s mother appreciates the violence, claiming that “...wrongs would be righted...” (p. 30). She openly rejecting black people and considering them trouble makers. The racial biasness can be seen in the Oona’s mother thoughts. She says that “...the dark people could have their places, and they could do their dark things...” (p. 43). This lines reflects the typical mindset of white people who perceive black as backward and outsiders. Oona’s mother is passionate right-wing radio listener and television watcher. Therefore, the media involved in spreading harmful ideologies against black people, which greatly impacts society. That is why some people reject and mourn the loss of whiteness while some accept the change. This idea quoted in these lines,

“Sometimes it felt like the town was a town in mourning...” (p. 83), and at other times, it appear as “something new was being born...” (p. 83). Therefore, the novel ends with the people accepting their new identities as everyone in the town faces the transformation of their color into black.

4. Discussion

First research question was about how magical realism theory plays a role in exposing underlying hierarchies of society. Mohsin Hamid uses the technique of magical realism to challenge racial hierarchies and deconstruct identities that are fixed in society because of racial superiority. The gradual magical transition of a white into a dark-skinned individual disturbs the stability of race, revealing hidden social hierarchies. Through this speculative element, the novel normalizes racial transformation and exposes the uncertainty of the social order that society sustained. Hamid underscores how racial privileges are imposed by powerful people through the character of Ander in the novel. Moreover, the novel disrupts racism, which enables readers to question racial discrimination.

Second research question was about how the Critical Social Theory reveals the systematic inequality and power dynamics in the novel. This theory exposes the power hierarchies and systemic inequality through changing of whiteness into darkness. Loss of color of skin leads characters of novel to social discrimination as well as societal rejection which brings identity crisis for them. Power hierarchies are destabilized due to panic and violence among people that is majorly brought by identity shift. So, this theory brings into view the inequalities and hierarchies of the society and by criticizing them shows the need to dismantle such things to bring equality.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this paper show how multi-faceted and complex issues of identity, race, and power are inquired in the novel, *The Last White Man* by using theoretical frameworks of Critical Social Theory and Magical Realism. It shows how dark-skinned people suffer issues of identity crisis and discrimination in their own society. Magical realism gave this speculative event an ordinary color, challenging readers to understand the marginalization and oppression of black people under white privilege. Through blending boundaries of real and unreal, Magical realism enables readers to see how deeply these social categorizations are embedded in social consciousness of people. Meanwhile, critical social theory exposes the power dynamics and superiority of whiteness as proven by a major character of the novel ‘Ander’ who faces social rejection and identity crisis. It uncovers that identity is not just a biological construct but it is a social construct that is upheld by power relations. Overall, this study concludes that the theories, Magical Realism and Critical Social Theory not only enriches the aesthetic beauty of the novel but also deepens the social critique of race, power and identity, highlighting the urgency to

rethink about these social hierarchies and power dynamics. The future researches can use the other theories such as deconstruction theory, psychoanalysis and post-colonial framework to enhance the further interpretation of the novel. Future studies can also compare this novel with other contemporary novels to see marginalization of black people and social inequality due to white privilege.

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