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THE LAST WHITE MAN OF HAMID

Reyhan ÖZER TANIYAN*

Abstract

"One morning Anders, a white man, woke up to find he had turned a deep and undeniable brown ...". Thus starts Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man* (2022). He portrays a dark brown/white man who is going through nightmarish days just after his metamorphosis. This sudden metamorphosis thrusts Anders into a period of self-imposed isolation, during which he witnesses widespread similar transformations, often accompanied by societal upheaval and tragic events. The novel swiftly exposes the fragility of societal morality and intimate relationships under duress, foregrounding an eternal return of racism and discrimination, particularly resonant with post-9/11 xenophobia. This paper argues that Hamid's novel serves as a powerful metaphorical analogy for the xenophobic reflections of the 21st century, drawing parallels with contemporary crises such as the Refugee Crisis, Black Lives Matter, and the COVID-19 pandemic. By echoing Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, Hamid interrogates the problematized 'Otherness' and the privileged status of 'whiteness.' Ultimately, this analysis will explore how *The Last White Man* illuminates the resurfacing of long-dormant xenophobia amidst polarizing national definitions, the assertion of Global North superiority, pandemic-related conspiracy theories, and persistent cultural prejudices.

Keywords: Mohsin Hamid, *The Last White Man*, Racism, Whiteness, Xenophobia.

HAMİD'İN SON BEYAZ ADAMI

Öz

"Bir sabah beyaz bir adam olan Anders uyandığında koyu ve inkâr edilemez bir kahverengiye dönüştüğünü fark eder...". Mohsin Hamid'in *Son Beyaz Adam*'ı (2022) böyle başlar. Metamorfozunun hemen ardından kabus dolu günler geçiren koyu kahverengi/beyaz bir adamın portresini çiziyor. Bu ani metamorfoz, Anders'i, genellikle toplumsal çalkantı ve trajik olayların eşlik ettiği yaygın benzer dönüşümlere tanık olduğu, kendi kendine empoze ettiği bir izolasyon dönemine iter. Roman, toplumsal ahlakın ve baskı altındaki yakın ilişkilerin kırılganlığını hızlı bir şekilde ortaya koyarken, özellikle 11 Eylül sonrası yabancı düşmanlığıyla yankılanan ırkçılık ve ayrımcılığın ebedi dönüşünü ön plana çıkarıyor. Bu makale, Hamid'in romanının 21. yüzyılın yabancı düşmanı yansımaları için güçlü bir metaforik benzetme işlevi gördüğünü ve mülteci krizi, Black Lives Matter ve COVID-19 salgını gibi çağdaş krizlerle paralellikler kurduğunu savunmaktadır. Franz Kafka'nın *Metamorfoz*'unu yankılayan Hamid, sorunsallaştırılmış 'ötekiliği' ve 'beyazlığın' ayrıcalıklı statüsünü sorguluyor. Nihayetinde bu analiz, Son Beyaz Adam'ın kutuplaştırıcı ulusal tanımlar, Küresel Kuzey'in üstünlüğü iddiası, salgınla ilgili komplo teorileri ve ısrarcı kültürel önyargılar arasında uzun süredir uykuda olan yabancı düşmanlığının yeniden ortaya çıkışını nasıl aydınlatıldığını keşfedecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Mohsin Hamid, *Son Beyaz Adam*, Irkçılık, Beyazlık, Yabancı Düşmanlığı.

*Assist. Prof. Dr., Pamukkale University, Department of English Language and Literature, DENİZLİ
e-posta: rotaniyan@pau.edu.tr, (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0285-1787>)

1. INTRODUCTION

In an age marked by heightened racial anxieties, the resurgence of xenophobia, and the global contestation of white normativity, Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man* (2022) emerges as a provocative allegory that interrogates the fragility and privileges of whiteness. Drawing from a surreal narrative premise—a white man waking up in a dark-skinned body—Hamid dramatizes the psychological, social, and cultural ruptures that accompany racial reidentification. This paper argues that *The Last White Man* critiques the enduring structures of racial categorization and exclusion by staging a speculative metamorphosis that compels the reader to confront the constructed nature of whiteness and its embedded supremacy in the social imaginary.

Hamid's novel, echoing Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915), traces Anders's transformation from a white man into a person of colour and the subsequent unraveling of his selfhood and social belonging. Yet unlike Kafka's existential absurdism, Hamid's racial metamorphosis engages directly with the political legacies of colonialism, post-9/11 xenophobia, and the intensification of "othering" in the 21st century. By drawing on Frantz Fanon's theories of racial alienation and sociogeny, this study reads *The Last White Man* as a critical intervention into contemporary discourses of race, nationalism, and dehumanization.

In doing so, the analysis situates Hamid's novel within a broader postcolonial framework, exploring how speculative fiction operates as a space for rethinking racial identity, bodily visibility, and the mechanisms through which whiteness asserts normative control. It examines how the transformation of Anders allegorizes the collapse of racial hierarchies and, simultaneously, exposes the violent undercurrents that sustain them. Through an interdisciplinary lens that incorporates F. Fanon, Paul Gilroy, and critical whiteness studies, the paper seeks to illuminate how Hamid's fiction dismantles the illusion of racial permanence and invites a reimagining of shared humanity.

2. UNBEARABLE WHITENESS OF BEING?¹

What does it mean to call someone "white"? How do we make that determination, and what does it signify in society? What, moreover, does it feel like to be judged as "not white enough"? These seemingly simple but deeply ideological questions lie at the heart of contemporary debates about identity, belonging, and exclusion. For those who are marked as "non-white" or as culturally incompatible with whiteness, the answers are painfully clear: whiteness functions both as a norm and as a measure of human value, while its others are stigmatized as deficient, deviant, or dangerous.

It is within this matrix of racial anxiety that Mohsin Hamid situates his fiction. As a Pakistani diasporic writer, Hamid has consistently explored the experience of being a racialized foreigner in predominantly white contexts, beginning with his short story *A Face in the Mirror* (2022) and culminating in his most recent novel, *The Last White Man* (2022), where a white British man undergoes a metamorphosis into a man of colour. This imaginative transformation foregrounds not only the constructedness of race but also the xenophobic practices of neo-colonial societies that continue to regulate belonging through skin colour. The aim of this study is to examine Hamid's representation of race and identity in *The Last White Man*, situating it within wider discourses of xenophobia, stereotyping, and post-9/11 anxieties.

As Jacques Derrida observed in his reflections on the aftermath of 9/11, the political climate of the twenty-first century is marked by a fusion of "politicking rhetoric, media powers, spontaneous or organized trends of opinion" with "capitalistic speculation, perversion of religious or nationalistic influence, [and] sovereignist fantasy" (2002, 51). His warning remains relevant today: Imperialist hubris and unjust wars, often waged in the name of justice or freedom, continue to erode civil liberties while fueling new forms of racial profiling and xenophobic discourse. Immigrants and minorities, in particular, are subjected to reductive stereotypes that portray them as perpetual outsiders, threats, or enemies:

"9/11 introduces a deconstructive critique that is sober, alert, vigilant, attentive to everything that, through the best-substantiated strategy, the most justified politicking rhetoric, media powers, spontaneous or organized

¹ This is an allusion to *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (Czech: *Nesnesitelná lehkost bytí*), 1984, a novel by Milan Kundera.

trends of opinion welds the political to the metaphysical, to capitalistic speculation to perversion of religious or nationalistic influence, to sovereignist fantasy..." (Derrida, 2002: 51).

Stereotyping, as Richard Dyer and Michael Pickering remind us, involves producing standardized images of groups through exaggerated, reductive, and often offensive representations. Crucially, the question remains: "who speaks for whom and with what consequences?" (Pickering 2001, xiv). Since 9/11, xenophobia has become increasingly entangled with patriotism, religion, and security rhetoric, reinscribing orientalist stereotypes and "atavistic images of historical enemies" that, as Christopher Allen observes, were "deeply embedded in the culture of various races, nationalities and communities" but reinvigorated by contemporary events (2010, 7).

Writers like Hamid, whose identity as a Muslim Pakistani is often conflated with orientalist and Islamophobic stereotypes, have responded to this climate through acts of narrative clarification and counter-representation. **The Reluctant Fundamentalist** (2007) exemplifies this strategy by reversing the gaze and interrogating the assumptions that equate brown bodies with terrorism. As Edward Said notes, such strategies of a "*re-representation and a reactive counter-response*"² (1997: 55) offer critical interventions against dominant discourses. Hamid's later works continue this trajectory: **Exit West** (2017) addresses the plight of refugees and the persistence of colonial discourses of exclusion, while **The Last White Man** radicalizes the inquiry by staging a metaphysical metamorphosis that forces readers to confront the instability of racial categories themselves.

Critics have emphasized the contemporary relevance of Hamid's latest novel. Henry Louis Gates Jr. describes it as a fiction that "destabilis[es] the collective imaginings we inherit and reproduce" (2022), while Ron Charles reads it as a "fantastical exploration of race and privilege" that alludes ironically to Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (2022). Colson Whitehead highlights its urgency for our time: the novel, he argues, insists upon "the possibility of overcoming racial differences and relishing our shared humanity" (2022). In this way, **The Last White Man** offers not a utopian erasure of race but a profound meditation on the persistence of racial hierarchies and the existential necessity of rethinking what it means to be human.

2. 1. Invisible White Shield

The novel opens with the transformation of the main character Anders, echoing Gregor Samsa, who "awoke one morning from a troubled dream, he found himself changed in his bed to some monstrous kind of vermin" (Kafka, 1999: 3). The same scenario but a different existential crisis is given in the novel with the exact words of Kafka but pointing to a different version of estrangement: "One morning Anders, a white man, woke up to find he had turned a deep and undeniable brown" (Hamid, 2022: 9). These transformations are unacceptable by the truths of the masses. "The recognition of the same truths and the acceptance of the same rule" are the norms of the discourse in which there is seen the hierarchy of the doctrines that "stand[s] as the sign, manifestation and instrument of a prior adherence to a class, a social status, a race, a nationality, an interest, a revolt, a resistance or an acceptance". This means individuals are subjected to the doctrine's discourse, and the discourse is tied to the group that claims it. "Doctrine binds individuals to certain types of enunciation and consequently forbids them all others; but it uses, in return, certain types of enunciation to bind individuals amongst themselves, and to differentiate them by that very fact from all others" (Foucault, 1970: 12). Gregor Samsa's transformation into a giant insect, the physical change, pushes him outside the *acceptable* human category. Like someone whose speech violates a doctrine, Gregor's new form makes him socially unassimilable. He is excluded from the shared "human" discourse of family, work, and normal life. In this example, the *doctrine* is the unspoken societal rule of human identity. In order to belong to the majority, one must fit certain physical and functional norms. Once Gregor's altered body no longer matches those norms, both he and his being are rejected.

Likewise, in the version of Hamid, Anders and in the following part of the novel, the masses are turning into brown. This bodily transformation changes how they are perceived and treated, even if they themselves remain the same in thought and feeling. The *doctrine* here is racial identity. Society holds an unspoken set of beliefs and narratives about race, which dictate how people "should" look and what that means about their place in the social order. When Anders's appearance changes, he effectively violates that doctrine. His body becomes a "statement" that the dominant group finds unassimilable, and so his identity is renegotiated through exclusion,

² Italicised by the writer of the text.

suspicion, and shifting allegiances. Like in Foucault's account, the *speaker* (the person) and the *statement* (their body or way of speaking/appearing) are judged together. Foucault's account of doctrine as a system that judges both the statement and the speaker illuminates the exclusionary dynamics in these novels, where sudden transformations render the protagonists' bodies "unassimilable" to the unspoken doctrines of humanity and racial identity. In each case, the change not only alters how the characters are perceived but also invalidates their capacity to participate in the shared discourse of their community, producing a double subjection in which identity both limits expression and dictates the interpretation of all expressions. Such a case is definitely the cause and effect of "a massive psycho-existential complex" (Fanon, 2008: 18). With the shock, Anders "wanted to kill the coloured man who confronted him here in his home, to extinguish the life animating this other's body, to leave nothing standing but himself, as he was before" (Hamid, 2022: 10). He feels unassimilable because of self-strangeness and being alienated from his dark body.

When F. Fanon scrutinises the Black- White relationship in his book *Black Skin White Masks*, he opens the discussion with the fact that "some Whites consider themselves superior to Blacks." Fanon then elaborates the discussion of inferiority complex by referring to Freud: "Freud demanded that the individual factor be considered in psychoanalysis. He replaced the phylogenetic theory by an ontogenetic approach." Fanon, however, clarifies that "the alienation of the black man is not an individual question. Alongside phylogeny and ontogeny, there is also sociogeny," because "Man is what brings society into being" (Fanon, 2008: 66). Fanon notes that Freud insisted on considering the individual in psychoanalysis, shifting focus from humanity's collective evolutionary development (phylogeny) to the individual's personal development (ontogeny). However, Fanon argues that for the Black person under colonialism, alienation cannot be understood purely in individual psychological terms. In addition to biological evolution and personal life history, there is also *sociogeny* — the shaping of identity and psyche by the social structures, histories, and cultural narratives of a given society. Human beings, Fanon insists, are not merely products of biology or personal experience; they are also formed through the societies they themselves create and inhabit.

Foucault's account of doctrine as a structure that simultaneously disciplines discourse and polices identity finds resonance in Fanon's theory of sociogeny, which insists that alienation is not merely an individual or biological matter but is produced and sustained by social structures. Both thinkers foreground how belonging is governed by socially constructed rules of recognition that bind individuals to certain identities while excluding others. Gregor's insect transformation violates the implicit "doctrine" of humanity, making him socially unassimilable and therefore alienated — an alienation enforced not by biology alone, but by the human community's shared discourse about what counts as a "person." Likewise, Anders's change in skin colour ruptures the racial doctrine that underpins his society's hierarchy; the shift in how others see and treat him demonstrates Fanon's point that identity is socially authored, not simply an individual essence. In both novels, transformation triggers a double subjection: the altered body constrains expression, while the community's doctrine — rooted in sociogenic structures — dictates how every expression is interpreted. The result is an exclusion that is less about the physical change itself and more about the societal systems that determine who can speak, be heard, and belong.

Fanon observes that skin colour is one of the most immediate and visible markers by which human beings are categorised, with whiteness historically positioned as the default standard of intellect, sophistication, and civilisation. "The white man considers himself superior" (Fanon, 1993: 3), and nonwhite identities are consequently defined in opposition to this standard, burdened with what Fanon calls a "massive psycho-existential complex" (1993: 5). In this racialised order, nonwhite people exist as "subjects in relation to white society" (Carmichael and Charks, 1992: 5), often reduced to a catalogue of derogatory associations. Whiteness is standardised as the measure of humanity, while darker skin is positioned as its negation, producing a social structure in which belonging and recognition are determined through visible conformity to this racial norm.

Anders [...] realized that he had been robbed, that he was the victim of a crime, the horror of which only grew, a crime that had taken everything from him, that had taken him from him, for how could he say he was Anders now, be Anders now, with this other man staring him down, on his phone, in the mirror, and he tried not to keep checking, but every so often he would check again, and see the theft again, and when he was not checking there was no escaping the sight of his arms and his hands, dark, moreover frightening, for while they were under

his control, there was no guarantee they would remain so, and he did not know if the idea of being throttled, which kept popping into his head like a bad memory, was something he feared or what he most wanted to do (Hamid, 2022:11)

Anders remains in profound doubt about his existence and the new self he now embodies, so alien and hostile to his former identity. He feels robbed, a victim, because for a white man to perceive himself as a person of colour can only seem like a nightmare or a cruel joke. This experience reflects the pervasive xenophobic discourse in society. As Paul Gilroy observes, contemporary individuals exist between “two great cultural assemblages, both of which have mutated through the course of the modern world that formed them and assumed new configurations. They remain locked in an antagonistic relationship marked out by the symbolism of colours” (Gilroy, 1993:1). Racial divisions are socially constructed, “narrowed down to fit specific political purposes” (Benthencourt, 2013:31), and whiteness occupies a central role in defining humanity in the 21st century.

White normativity not only positions white people as privileged but also as the standard of humanity. By emphasizing white superiority, it undermines the humanity of others and nourishes xenophobic attitudes. Stereotypes portray nonwhite individuals as weak or less human, while social status and privileges are conferred upon those identified as white, who enjoy “tangible benefits including the best jobs, the best schools and invitations to parties in people’s homes” (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001:17).

These dynamics help explain Anders’ alienation and withdrawal from society. He experiences profound discomfort not only from how others perceive him but also from the persistence of his own internalized prejudices. Anders finds it “almost as disturbing as seeing someone he recognized was the feeling of being recognized by someone he did not, someone dark, waiting at a bus stop or wielding a mop or sitting in a group at the back of a pickup truck, sitting in a group that was, he could not help it, like a group of animals, not like humans... and actually this was more disturbing” (Hamid, 2022:25). Anders’ experience demonstrates that racial alienation operates on both structural and psychological levels, revealing the deep entanglement of societal privilege and internalized bias.

Because whiteness is socially constructed as the neutral or default human identity, the privileges it confers are often invisible. These advantages—access to better employment, education, and social treatment—are experienced not as benefits but as the natural order of things. As Delgado and Stefancic (2001) note, whiteness functions as a baseline against which all other racial identities are measured, implicitly marking non-whiteness as deviation or deficiency. In this sense, white normativity exerts a subtler, more insidious form of control than overt racism, defining what counts as civilized, rational, or fully human while marginalizing those who fall outside its scope. This structural hierarchy becomes painfully evident in *The Last White Man* when Anders, returning to work in his newly racialized body, is told by his employer: “I would have killed myself” (Hamid, 2022:31). The comment shocks Anders not only because of its cruelty but because it exposes how deeply whiteness is intertwined with identity, belonging, and social viability.

Fanon observes that “colour prejudice[...] is nothing more than the unreasoning hatred of one race for another, the contempt of the stronger and richer peoples for those whom they consider inferior to themselves and the bitter resentment of those who are kept in subjection and are so frequently insulted. As colour is the most obvious outward manifestation of race, it has been made the criterion by which men are judged, irrespective of their social or educational attainments. The light-skinned races have come to despise all those of a darker colour, and the dark-skinned peoples will no longer accept without protest the inferior position to which they have been relegated” (Fanon, 2008:118). Anders’ experience reflects this dynamic: being outside the normative system of whiteness and privilege is unbearable because, in his society, the standard of normality is defined by whiteness.

After Anders’ boss shockingly remarks that he “would have killed himself” (Hamid, 2022:31), the local press reports a similar event the following week: a dark-skinned man is shot in front of his house. The report details the scene—his body assumed to be an intruder, the gun, wallet, phone, and wedding ring tallied, and experts concluding that a white man had indeed shot a dark man. Yet, in a disorienting twist, it is revealed that “the dark man and the white man were the same” (Hamid, 2022:39). This episode underscores how racial prejudice not only structures society but also warps perception, creating a world in which Anders’ own shifting identity exposes the deep absurdity and violence of racial categorization.

This is precisely what Fanon describes when he observes that “an inferiority complex is connected with the colour of skin” (Fanon, 1993:68). For individuals accustomed to the privileges of whiteness, the loss of this status can be unbearable; living as an Other may seem worse than death, since they “have never felt inferior in any respect” (Fanon, 1993:68). In *The Last White Man*, the sudden loss of whiteness is experienced as profoundly degrading. Oona, first as a young white woman and then as the lover of Anders, experiences this transformation differently from Anders, yet the consequences are equally destabilizing. Her metamorphosis—from a position of normalized whiteness to an altered racial identity—exposes the fragility of social hierarchies and the intensity of racialized fear. Oona’s white mother and all adherents of old colonial ideologies like her interpret these transformations as a deliberate plot against whites: “a plot that had been building for years, for decades, maybe for centuries, the plot against their kind... the only people who could not call themselves a people in this country, and there were not so many of them left, and now it had arrived, and was upon them [...]” (Hamid, 2022:40). Through Oona, Hamid demonstrates how racial transformation affects not only personal identity but also intergenerational anxieties tied to historical privilege and colonial legacies. While Anders internalizes alienation and withdrawal, Oona is positioned within a network of social expectations, familial pressures, and external threats, highlighting the relational and societal dimensions of racialized change. The societal consequences of these transformations are stark. As the number of “white people becoming dark” increases, riots and militant aggression emerge, with bodies turning up in fields “rumoured to be dark, but not exclusively dark, and among the dark ones some who had not always been so” (Hamid, 2022:64). Oona’s experiences emphasize how personal identity becomes a site of social conflict: her very existence challenges the established racial hierarchy and triggers fear and violence. Although white numerical superiority diminishes, the ideology of white normativity persists through the demonization of non-whites, “so that by comparison Whites are deified” (Lopez, 130). Through also with Oona, Hamid exemplifies Fanon’s theory, showing how the destabilization of racial privilege produces both psychological trauma and societal tension, revealing the entangled effects of structural racism and personal alienation. The deaths of those who have undergone these transformations are thus not recognized as human lives but are interpreted as instruments in a perceived strategy to undermine white supremacy.

In *The Last White Man*, Hamid dramatizes the paranoid and conspiratorial rhetoric that sustains racial violence. One character justifies aggression by claiming that “there were paid aggressors on the other side, saboteurs... sometimes killing their own kind, to make us look bad” (Hamid: 2022, 66). Separation is necessary not because of superiority—though he contradictorily asserts, “we were better than them, how could you deny it”—but because “we needed our own places, where we could take care of our own, because our people were in trouble” (ibid). Such discourse, oscillating between denial and affirmation of racial hierarchy, reveals the underlying fear of “conversion” and “eradication,” a fear that transforms coexistence into a zero-sum struggle for survival: “we would not participate in our own eradication, that had to end, and now there was no time to wait, now they were converting us, and lowering us, and that was a sign, a sign that if we did not act in this moment there would be no more moments left and we would be gone (Hamid,2022: 66)

Recalling the ideology of the “*Great Displacement*”³, Hamid’s novel dramatizes the anxiety of whites who fear being overthrown by the racialized Other. This anxiety is inseparable from the logic of white supremacy, which displaces negative qualities onto minorities by defining them as the “wrong” or the “illegal,” thereby dismantling the category of the human itself. As the narrative shows, the “white human began to clear people out, dark people, running them out of town” (Hamid 2022, 68). Yet this violence—the hunt of the so-called “non-human”—ultimately collapses into futility, for when whiteness itself vanishes, “there were just stragglers left, pale people who wandered like ghosts, like they did not belong” (Hamid,2022:98).

The paradox of Hamid’s vision is that even when the racial majority changes, the discourse of dehumanization persists. The newly dominant, now “dark,” population continues to be marked by savagery: “whenever they seized the upper hand... they exemplify the savagery, the savagery of the dark people, how it had been in them from the beginning, and had manifested itself again and again throughout history” (Hamid,2022:110–11). The

³ The French writer and activist Renaud Camus in his *Le Grand Remplacement* (Great Replacement) (2011) argued that as a retaliation for earlier colonising practices of France, Muslim immigrants of France are changing and degenerating the French society and its cultural identity through the replacement of the original population. This conspiracy theory came back on stage with the popular xenophobic topics during the 2010s, especially in America among the right-wing parties, extremists and white supremacists. For details: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/replacement-theory>

superiority of the white human thus remains structurally correlative to the inferiority of the non-white. Even when whiteness disappears demographically, its memory and its stereotypes endure, producing an internalized sense of inferiority among those who now constitute the majority. At the novel's conclusion, despite the death of Anders' father—the last white man in town—the hegemony of whiteness survives in collective memory, testifying to its spectral persistence beyond biological presence.

The superiority of the white human is correlative to the inferiority of the non-white. The general stereotyping of human and non-human is so prevalent that even when the majority are coloured men, they still feel inferior. At the end of the novel, despite the death of Anders' father, the last white man of the town, the hegemony of the white still goes on in the memories.

Even after people of colour become the numerical majority, they remain burdened by the inherited stigma of otherness. The narrative demonstrates how deeply racial inferiority has been internalized: the former majority continues to perceive itself as the universal measure of humanity, while the transformed population remains coded as deviant or savage. The novel's final image—the death of Anders's father, the last white man in town—marks not the end of white hegemony but a moment of elegiac nostalgia. The memory of whiteness continues to shape cultural norms, values, and social perception, underscoring the persistence of racial hierarchy even within a reconfigured society.

Hamid exposes how racial stereotyping desensitizes individuals to the shared humanity of others and themselves, fostering an internalized alienation that fractures both personal identity and collective cohesion. Through the novel's metaphorical images—the ceremonial burial of the last white human, the paranoid discourse of the older generation (such as Oona's mother's belief in the "Great Replacement"), and the lingering yearning for the "white days" of humanity—Hamid dramatizes the enduring power of racial categorization. Even new forms of discrimination emerge, such as the division between the "natural-born" colored and the "transformed." By staging these dynamics, the novel reveals how xenophobic and racist sentiments are fueled by scapegoating mechanisms that blame specific groups, particularly immigrants, for social and economic problems.

The anonymity of Hamid's characters further universalizes this dehumanization. The lack of fixed identities not only underscores the interchangeability of racist ideologies but also presents racial stereotyping as a global and timeless phenomenon. Xenophobic attitudes, human categorization, and scapegoating invite readers to consider an existential axiology: how personal values are forged in moments of death, solitude, and dependence. Ultimately, Hamid gestures toward an existential inquiry into human worth, suggesting that identity and meaning are not determined by racial categories but by lived experience and ethical self-understanding. These values are inherently subjective, grounded in individual perception rather than externally imposed norms, and therefore resist categorization, standardization, and discriminatory hierarchies.

By foregrounding the diversity of human experience, Hamid challenges the ideological systems that attempt to fix identity within rigid boundaries, offering instead a pluralistic and relational understanding of human significance. His novel thus resists stereotyping, articulates an antidote to racial and cultural discrimination, and critiques the practices of xenophobia and Othering. Because the variety of human experience is inexhaustible, Hamid suggests, the axiological picture of the world must remain irreducibly plural.

3. CONCLUSION

In *The Last White Man*, Mohsin Hamid crafts a speculative parable that exposes the psychological violence and social instability embedded within racial hierarchies. By transforming whiteness from an invisible norm into a visible site of loss and anxiety, Hamid destabilizes the very foundations of racial identity. The novel's surreal premise compels both its characters and its readers to confront how deeply whiteness functions not merely as skin colour but as a sociopolitical status—a bearer of unearned privilege and a measure of normative humanity.

Through Anders's metamorphosis, Hamid reanimates Frantz Fanon's insights into racial alienation and the sociogenic construction of identity. The white body's shift into colour becomes not only a personal crisis but also a collective unmasking of the structures that sustain whiteness as invisible, dominant, and universally human.

The racial paranoia, rhetoric of replacement, and violent resistance that follow Anders's transformation echo contemporary anxieties about demographic change and cultural displacement in postcolonial and post-9/11 societies. In dramatizing these tensions, Hamid dismantles the illusion of white exceptionality and gestures toward a post-racial consciousness grounded in vulnerability, reciprocity, and ethical interdependence.

Ultimately, *The Last White Man* contributes to a growing body of literature that interrogates the persistence of racial binaries and the ideological narratives that sustain them. The novel challenges readers to reconsider not only how race is defined but also how human value is distributed unequally along its lines. Rather than offering a reductive resolution, Hamid stages a profound confrontation with the existential implications of racial transformation, suggesting that the path toward a more inclusive future lies in acknowledging both the constructedness and the destructiveness of racial hierarchies. His fiction thus emerges as an act of imaginative resistance—a speculative reckoning with whiteness, otherness, and the fragile architecture of identity itself.

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3. This article was screened for potential plagiarism using a plagiarism screening program (Bu çalışma, intihal tarama programı kullanılarak intihal taramasından geçirilmiştir).

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