

Since Independence in 1947, Pakistan, as a nation and state, has been grappling with socio-political and economic problems, the issue of national identity and even an existential dilemma. Its postcolonial existence has also been threatened by the failure of its leadership that lacked imagination and vision. Therefore, questions like "Can Pakistan survive?" have often been posed by the political pundits. The subject of this research is how Pakistan's national texts, particularly creative writings in English, reflect socio-cultural and political transformations since Independence. Ethnically and linguistically, Pakistan is a pluralistic, society, but the state has pursued centrist and unitary policies. Islam has been (ab) used to justify the unitary character of the state.

Thus state and 'ideological state apparatuses' have been in collision with the natural pluralism of its society. Therefore, various conflicts have been raging and boiling over to shake the foundations of the state and the society. The response of Pakistan's creative writers, with few exceptions, has been ambivalent towards these issues, until a new generation of young writers since early 1990s began to respond more openly and critically. In 1967, Zulfikar Ghose, with the advantage of geographical distance, gave a powerful critique of Pakistan's new ruling elite in his novel *The Murder of Aziz Khan*.

The same sentiments are expressed by Mohsin Hamid in his 2000 novel *Moth Smoke*. By analyzing these texts I have tried to show how Pakistan is frozen in time: its socio-political problems still persist with the same frequency and intensity. While analyzing Pakistan's texts in English, I have tried to make use of the theoretical frameworks expounded by such social theorists as Michael Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser as well as the theoretical underpinnings of larger postcolonial theory. The study has a topical significance as Pakistani writers in English, in my view, after a long period of marginalization, are registering a strong presence in the global academia. This dissertation aims at contributing to the growing field of Pakistani literary studies and the wider English Studies.