ANALYZING THE CONFLUENCE OF PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY AND POSTCOLONIAL IDENTITY IN SELECTED CONTEMPORARY PAKISTANI FICTION

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Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis ***Analyzing the Confluence of Psychogeography and Postcolonial Identity in Selected Contemporary Pakistani Fiction*** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Analyzing the Confluence of Psychogeography and Postcolonial Identity in Selected Contemporary Pakistani Fiction

The purpose of conducting this research is to analyze the influence of colonial past on contemporary Pakistani society and to explore the psychological effects of urban environments, particularly those shaped by colonial legacies, on the identities of individuals living in postcolonial Pakistani cities. Researcher has selected three novels *Karachi You're Killing Me, Moth Smoke* and *The Spinner's Tale* from three renowned writers of Pakistani English literature namely, Saba Imtiaz, Mohsin Hamid and Omer Shahid Hamid respectively to analyze the psychological effects of urban environments on the human emotions and behaviours through the lens of psycho-geography and how the colonial past continues to shape the postcolonial urban environment of Pakistan using the theory of post-colonialism. The study undergoes through the theoretical framework of Michel de Certeau's theory of psycho-geography and Stuart Hall's theory of post-colonialism. Combination of the two theories make the analysis more clear to understand how the remnants of colonial legacies in contemporary Pakistani society are affecting its political structure, economic strategies and their effects on everyday life of its residents. The study is confined to two major metropolises of Pakistan, *Karachi* and *Lahore* due to their cultural and ethnic diversities, modern practices and political importance. Political and social disruption, economic crisis and its impact in the shape of social hierarchies and personal alienation, chaos and uncertainty is reflected in the selected novels. Authors have portrayed everyday struggles of the characters and their experiences which shape their identities and influence their life decisions which unfortunately lead to destruction. Mohsin Hamid in *Moth Smoke* represents Pakistan from late 90s, social inequalities and economic disparities lead the protagonist to decline and he ends up in prison. Omer Shahid Hamid in his novel *The Spinner's Tale* has represented Pakistan in the early 2000s. A brilliant student ends up as a terrorist due to the economic crisis. Social and political influence also plays a crucial role in shaping his perceptions and identity. Saba Imtiaz presents Pakistan after 2010, the uncertainty, chaos and criminality remains the same but the writer provides some hopeful ending by portraying a strong resilient attitude of the protagonist Ayesha.

Keywords: *Psycho-geography, urban environments, postcolonial identity, socioeconomic conditions, socio-political influence*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Modern Pakistan's sense of identity is reflected almost explicitly in its literature as a result of the influence of colonialism through themes of alienation, cultural hybridity and quest for personal identity. Writers like Mohsin Hamid, Saba Imtiaz and Omar Shahid Hamid address the complexities of postcolonial identity, looking at how the impact of colonial legacies continue to shape the people's feelings of belonging and alienation even in contemporary Pakistani urban environments. Psycho-geography has been used by these writers to describe the connections between residents and their living environments. The researcher has chosen novels by Mohsin Hamid, Saba Imtiaz and Omar Shahid Hamid to explore the fragmented identities and local disputes, reflecting the socio-political landscape of Pakistan.

Class disparities, corruption and a sense of existential despair in postcolonial Pakistan are major themes explored in Hamid's novel, *Moth Smoke*. Hamid portrays a disillusioned character, Dara Shikoh Shehzad, who works in a bank and navigates the moral decay of Lahore providing a critical commentary on socio-economic divides and effects of political instability.

The Spinner's Tale is an exciting story that deals with the topic of terrorism and radicalization. The novel narrates the story of Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi, who transforms from a brilliant student to a terrorist. S. Hamid highlights how socio-political influence shapes individuals' identities in Pakistan.

Saba Imtiaz portrays Pakistani culture in a lighter yet equally critical way, through the eyes of journalist Ayesha, as shown in *Karachi You're Killing Me.* The novel uses satirical yet poignant criticism to present urban chaos, violence and crimes in postcolonial Karachi.

Putting together, these novels provide a rich tapestry of themes that reflect how post colonial Pakistan's social, political, cultural and personal landscapes are developed. By considering urban alienation, postcolonial identity, social and political issues and ethical problems, these novels provide valuable insights into the living experiences and struggles of their protagonists, as well as broader societal issues.

Psycho-geography helps to investigate the emotional and psychological effects of urban environments on individuals' experiences and behaviors. This reveals how people feel about specific locations, whether they are public or private and how this affects their movement and search for identity. By using this approach, we can understand how individuals demonstrate and shape their identities within the context of geographical environments.

Psycho-geography can improve the study of postcolonial identity within Pakistani English literature. It focuses on how people develop their identity in relation to their surroundings and the manner in which they interact with these urban environments. Traces of historical events and colonialism can be explored with the help of psychogeography, which maps cultural memory in the landscapes, which influence people's everyday experience and behaviors. Writers make the characters walk through different urban spaces to experience various traits of postcolonial identity, including struggle, resistance or partial adaptations (hybridity). This literary approach illustrates both the sense of alienation or belonging to the urban environments.

1.1 Objectives of Research

The study seeks to understand the connection between psycho-geography and postcolonial identity in contemporary Pakistani novels. The research examines the ways in which urban environments and geographical spaces affect the identities of the characters. The way postcolonial cities in Pakistan were formed through the remaining influence of colonial structures. The researcher examines how selected authors depict the impact of colonial legacies on the development of urban environments in the cities of Pakistan, particularly Karachi and Lahore. The concept of psychogeography is now commonly used in Pakistani literature to describe the nuanced understanding of the emotional and psychological effects of urban spaces on the residents of the cities. Through the collective analysis of the novels, the researcher aims to clarify how the authors, Mohsin Hamid, Saba Imtiaz and Omar Shahid Hamid employ psychogeography in their novels to reflect the relationship between postcolonial identity and geographical spaces of the cities of Karachi and Lahore. The study analyses the effects of colonial history and its remnants on the physical environment and social structures in contemporary Pakistan. Consequently, the urban environment in each place shapes the psychological and emotional behaviours of the residents which contributes to shaping their experiences and perceptions of the cities, which develop

their personalities. Therefore, the research explores the themes of class disparities, corruption, political instability, urban crime and violence. The main purpose of this research is to offer a comprehensive analysis of psychogeography as a literary device in Pakistani English novels to examine the effects of colonialism on regional and cultural identities of the characters, providing insights into the intersection of the urban landscapes and postcolonial identity.

1.2 Thesis Statement

This study focuses on examining how the study of psycho-geography helps explain issues of postcolonial identity in recent Pakistani English novels by writers Saba Imtiaz, Mohsin Hamid and Omer Shahid Hamid. By analyzing the role of postcolonial influences on cities and their inhabitants, it becomes clear that psycho-geography explores these effects and discovers their impact on people's personal and social identities. Because the novels are set in Karachi and Lahore, the study points out how cities' physical environments are related and impacted by events after independence.

Surroundings shape the everyday lives of people and help mold their individual character as well as the overall postcolonial sense of identity. This study shows how individuals within postcolonial urban environments respond to problems in cities by analyzing three different fictions. It explains the importance of exploring psycho-geography through literature when discussing the relationships between identity, authority and place and space in Pakistan.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How do the physical landscapes of Karachi and Lahore shape postcolonial identity in works by Mohsin Hamid, Saba Imtiaz and Omar Shahid Hamid?
2. How do these writers depict urban crime and violence as revealing connections between psycho-geography, identity, and social structures in postcolonial Lahore and Karachi?
3. How do psycho-geographic representations in Pakistani writers' works relate to broader discussions in postcolonial and urban studies?

1.4 Rationale

Analyzing psycho-geography and postcolonial identity together offers an in-depth understanding of how the postcolonial cities are imagined and portrayed in literature. Recent developments in literary studies highlight the importance of interdisciplinary approaches, like the integration of cultural studies and postcolonial theories. There has been a notable increase in the interest in spatial theory and psycho-geography in literary studies. For this reason, studying psycho-geography in Pakistani English literature today is particularly valuable and significant. Psycho-geography looks at the way surroundings influence people's emotions and behaviors which ultimately create their unique personalities and national identities. Pakistani English writers often depict a postcolonial identity by describing problems from colonial times such as cultural hybridity, national identity, how people resist slavery and how poverty spreads among different classes, all of which help build the society in Pakistan. Characters in novels can be influenced by the postcolonial environments they experience, whether in cities, countryside or among historical sites. These novels depict social and political conditions in Pakistan that involve instability, corruption, economic regime, inequality between classes, terrorism, societal disagreements and issues with culture which influence how main characters experience urban areas.

This research analysis mainly looks at the transformation of urban spaces after colonization and their impact on the personal identities of the characters. The discipline explores how cities are connected to memories, resistance and sense of identity. This explains how the various groups in Pakistan interact with each other. It brings attention to how marginalized people use the environment in Pakistani fiction to weave their stories. Towards a wider appreciation of what postcolonial literature is, the selected novels can be useful resources for studying this subject.

If researchers use psycho-geography in postcolonial studies, they can discover unexplored views on portrayals of place, travel and self in pieces of writing. Using this strategy, researchers learn how memory, resistance and cultural identity of a nation can be influenced by its location and space. It also helps us realize how the layout and structure of spaces in postcolonial regions reflect people's cultural and personal identities. This approach makes it clear that place, identity and history influence each other. The knowledge gained through this approach helps to explain the struggles and changes in post-colonial identities of today's globalized and urbanized people. It helps

increase our awareness of what colonialism meant for Pakistan. By studying how location and setting influence the character's sense of self, researchers can learn about the effects these aspects have on cultural and national identity, memories and resistance in Pakistan.

1.5 Research Gap

The contemporary Pakistani English writers are increasingly incorporating psycho-geography as a literary and cultural phenomenon to portray the complex social and cultural dynamics within the societies, and there is considerable work done in the field of postcolonial identities, but there is lack of amalgamation of these two theories to analyse Pakistani English literature. There exists a gap in examining how contemporary socio-political transformations in Pakistan, including urbanization, hybridity, and geopolitical upheavals are reflected in literature through the lens of psycho-geography and postcolonial identity. This deficiency is particularly concerning in the literary analysis of Pakistan's two largest and most diverse cities Karachi and Lahore, to explore the role of urban landscapes in shaping and negotiating postcolonial identities. Through an analysis of the works of Mohsin Hamid, Saba Imtiaz, and Omar Shahid Hamid, this study endeavors to fill this void by examining how psycho-geography is used as a literary method to depict postcolonial identity in these metropolitan centers.

This research aims to provide new insights into the construction and contestation of postcolonial identities in urban settings by scrutinizing the intricate interplay between the physical environment and the psycho-geographies of the city's inhabitants. This will improve our understanding of the function of psycho-geography in contemporary Pakistani literature. This study addresses gaps in understanding the ways in which these identities interact with the forces of modern globalization and technology, which have changed literary techniques and narratives. There is a need for more focused studies that bridge these two theoretical frameworks because the previous research often overlooks the unique sociocultural contexts of Pakistani literature. Addressing these gaps by offering a more holistic understanding of the interaction between space, identity, and postcolonial narratives in Pakistani English literature, can make a substantial contribution to literary studies.

1.6 Delimitation

Only three novels *Karachi You're Killing Me, Moth Smoke* and *The Spinner's Tale,* are taken in consideration to analyse the confluence of psycho-geography and postcolonial identity in Pakistani English literature.

The primary focus is only on the cities of Lahore and Karachi, because of their cultural diversity and metropolitan environments.

Furthermore, the main focus is to explore the consequences and effects of socio-political and socioeconomic conditions on the lives of residents, rather than analyzing historical or political contexts that influence postcolonial identities in Pakistan, concentrating solely on their literary portrayal.

1.7 Chapters Breakdown

Chapter 1: Introduction

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the study, covering: Background of the Study, Objectives of the Research, Research Inquiries, Delimitation, Rationale of the Study and Research Gap.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will illuminate existing empirical research relevant to the unexplored topic. It will be divided into three sections. A concise summary will wrap up this chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The methodological approach to the researched issue will be expounded upon in this section.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

This chapter will involve the analysis of data. The researcher will explicate the findings in light of the proposed theory.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter will offer a succinct conclusion, findings, discussion, and summary. It will also provide research recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review incorporates psycho-geography, and postcolonial identity, as its two main research focuses. Other major themes and key concepts from selected fictions are also discussed in literature review. Reviewing important ideas and discussions in each of these fields, this thesis emphasizes how pertinent these topics are to the study of psycho-geography and postcolonial identity in Pakistani literature.

The literature review draws on three main areas of research:

The research discusses psycho-geography as a literary and cultural phenomena in the first portion of the literature survey. This portion narrates previous research done to explain how psycho-geography is used as a literary method to examine the nuanced link between urban place and personal experience by drawing on the writings of Michel de Certeau. The researcher has also taken in account the possible limitations of psycho-geography as a literary device, especially when it comes to postcolonial identities and experiences.

Second part of the literature review discusses Stuart Hall's theory of post-colonialism. In the second phase of literature review some previous researches are referred to which explore how postcolonial identities are constructed and negotiated in Pakistan by examining how the legacy of colonialism and ongoing globalization processes have affected the development of these identities. Some of its possible limitations and challenges are highlighted in the literature review of postcolonial theory in the context of modern Pakistan.

Third part of the literature review addresses other crucial concepts and significant issues included in the chosen novels. This dissertation delves into the ways in which these three writers represent the challenges and advantages of Pakistani civilizations and culture. Understanding and exploring how the physical environment and cultural and religious identities shape people's experiences within cities, as well as how urban space can be used to represent the complex dynamics of power, identity, and social relations, are made easier by the differences in how these authors portray their cities and characters. Here, I discuss the postcolonial influence on Pakistani societies and culture.

Postcolonial identity and psycho-geography in Pakistani literature are studied through the guidance of key theoretical ideas included in the literature review.

2.1 Psycho-Geography as a Literary and Cultural Phenomenon

Psycho-geography is a literary and cultural study that concentrates on humans' engagement with urban places. Experts in this branch connect psychology and geography to examine the relationship between surroundings and people's moods and behaviors. The researcher has investigated previous studies that discuss psycho-geography as a literary and cultural matter.

In his book *Guy Debord and The Situationist International,* Tom Mc Donough uncovers the ideas of Guy Debord, a renowned leader of the group. According to Mc Donough, Situationist International, formed in the 1950s and 60s, was made up of activists, thinkers and artists, all aiming to develop a revolutionary counterculture to capitalism. The most notable of the group's members was Guy Debord, who wrote the now-classic book *The Society of the Spectacle,* which is considered a main piece of Marxist thought. McDonough provides a detailed look at Debord's theories and how they affect the present day. It explores the major changes in radical politics from the years after World War II and also considers the history of the Situationist International. Mc Donough portrays the movement in detail with its impact on modern activists and thinkers, using research, assessments and interviews with people from the group. Overall, this book makes a valuable contribution to the study of cultural philosophy and radical politics.

According to Alexander Bridger in his paper *Psycho-geographical Counter-tour guiding: Theory and practice,* early works in psycho-geography consisted of narratives that featured poetry and photographs. Ideas of inclusion and exclusion, as well as public areas as consumer spaces, were used to inform the walk's narrative in the Manchester psycho-geography project, which investigated issues of privacy, a culture of consumption watchfulness, and control. Bridger also highlights the necessity to critically evaluate neoliberal environments, linking political science to social action and political practice, and concentrate on political analyses of environments. He also explores the consequences of psycho-geographical counter-tour guiding. According to J. Bridger future research in this area could be intriguing and relevant. The author proposes that psycho geography, counter-tour guiding, and participatory methodologies

can establish pertinent links for tourism studies. But these ideas and methods must be re-theorized in order to conform to the political system of today. The author stresses the significance of carrying on with psycho-geographical counter-tour guiding events and writing and organizing courses, as well as consultation processes that let communities imagine the kinds of landscapes they would like to live in. A recent instance of such an endeavour is the redesign of Stockholm using the computer game Minecraft. The author makes the case that it is critical to think about the kinds of places we desire to reside, work, and entertain in as well as what we hope tourism studies can do for us.

Amber Kamran and Harmain Rukh's study, “Cognitive Mapping and Class Consciousness: A Comparative Analysis of Saba Imtiaz’s *Karachi, You’re Killing Me!* and Kamila Shamsie’s *Kartography*" delves at the relationship between cognitive mapping and class consciousness via literary works. The study looks at how the characters' mental maps in the two novels are shaped by their class standing using Fredric Jameson's theory of cognitive mapping. It emphasizes how the social status of the protagonists affects how Karachi is portrayed, resulting in skewed and incomplete images of the city.

Raheen from *Kartography* and Ayesha from *Karachi You're Killing Me*! offer shattered perspectives of Karachi, influenced by their individual encounters and social status. Although the study suggests making an interactive map, it contends that this wouldn't adequately convey the richness of the everyday realities of the city. The study highlights a gap in the literature by pointing out that these publications did not thoroughly address how class influences cognitive mapping. It recommends that literature should include perspectives from different social strata in order to generate a more critical and objective vision of cities. This would enable a more comprehensive and representative mapping of common places.

The research article "It's Karachi, It's Where Life and Love Come to Die": Representing Gender, Space, and Identity in *Karachi You’re Killing Me*” written by Khamsa Qasim. In her article Khamsa explores the relationship between metropolitan spaces and feminine bodies in *Karachi, You're Killing Me* by Saba. According to conventional urban theories, space is an immutable physical reality that has a significant impact on its people. The conventional gendered understanding of space and corporeality is questioned by feminist urban theorists. Investigate how a woman renegotiates her identity in patriarchal urban environments by drawing on Elizabeth

Grosz's concept of bodies as both spectator and spectacle. Assuming that it explores the important role of female bodies in the construction of urban corporeality, this research contends that Grosz's idea of bodies-cities represents a significant intervention in our understanding of spatial politics in postcolonial locations. Her groundbreaking feminist work provides a fresh perspective on the relationship between the city and the individual and aids in addressing problems like urban violence, gender inequality, and prejudice. Imtiaz offers us a thorough understanding of the city's many facets. It seems to be a living thing that is producing forces that are pro-life, but it also seems to be a malevolent entity that is enslaving its people and widening the gaps between them. The legend, dreams, and memories of Karachi's people are all wrapped up in it. The reader is also given the chance to view the city in a new perspective by the unfavourable literary representations of it. As a wasteland full of cunning, deceit, and intrigue, Karachi is portrayed in the story. So, the portrayal of modern Karachi raises a crucial query for the reader: How can the city foster progressive social ideals that would enable the shift to a more compassionate society? How can a city develop the additional institutional and physical space needed to represent a progressive culture?

2.2 Effects of Colonial Legacies and Globalization on Postcolonial Identity in Pakistan

The complicated interaction between colonial legacies and current globalization has shaped Pakistan's postcolonial identity. Globalization is constantly reshaping the persisting structural and cultural imprints that the colonial era has left behind in various and perhaps contradictory ways. To solve current problems and find a way to develop a unified national identity, it is essential to comprehend this contradictory effect. The following literature review helps to understand the issue of colonial legacies and rapid globalization.

The paper "State formation and the postcolonial decay in Pakistan", by Raja Qaisar Ahmed and Maryum Tamoor examines the structural transformation in postcolonial states, focusing on Pakistan. It analyses the deterioration of Pakistan's state structure and governance, highlighting the failure of indigenization, institutional modus operandi, and postcolonial political trends. The Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 established the world's current nation-state structure, influenced by liberal ideas of democracy and a free market economy. During colonialism, capitalism had effects on

many civilization overseas. Instead of holding power through armed fighters, the leaders of the Indian subcontinent's regions now worked within a military and administration system introduced by the British. Consequently, a group of Indians with Western backgrounds emerged as a connection between their ancestral religious system and the British government. Pakistan discovered an elite group, a model of ruling from above and indigenous appreciation of Western values when the British left the Indian subcontinent. Even after colonialism, Pakistan kept the colonial leadership and charm, along with their cultural traditions and adopted values and methods that came from the colonists. It is important to understand how Pakistan exists partly as a colony and partly as an independent country to understand its social life, politics and how it developed various traditions.

Martin Sōkefeld explores in his research article, "From colonialism to postcolonial colonialism: changing modes of domination in the Northern areas of Pakistan." the changes that have taken place in the Northern Areas of Pakistan since British colonial times. While British rule through the Gilgit Scouts was only partial, it did not stop the local people from occasionally rebelling. Once the British departed, the Kashmiris were not able to succeed in Gilgit by becoming the main power there. Initially, the Pakistani government had unity and relied on older colonial traditions and institutions. Nonetheless, increasing opposition prompted the birth of a group seeking independence from Pakistan. The British method of minimizing force and creating power methods led to a partial hegemony, making it difficult to draw a clear distinction between those who possessed power and those under its influence. The current political climate in Gilgit is different, as the nationalist movement highlights the distinctions between the Pakistani government and the local population, supporting the latter's identification as a colonial institution. This discursive production of a majority also produces new minorities, such as the Kashmiri community, who are considered to be from a "lower" qo¯m (ethnic group). Postcolonial studies revolve around the paradox that colonialism did not stop with independence, and the political situation in Pakistan's northern regions is characterized by ambivalence and multivocality.

Dryland and Syed's article "A postcolonial perspective on cultural identity: the Balti people" highlights the challenges faced by the Balti people in Pakistan, including their unique status, legal emphasis on territorial sovereignty, and focus on religious and ethnic identity protection. The Balti people face challenges in maintaining their cultural

identity amidst political and economic challenges, and achieving independence and economic well-being. The paper highlights the loss of culture and postcolonial authority of Pakistan's Balti people, the importance of understanding processes of domination and selective incorporation, and the diverse Baltis' approach to preserving culture. The Balti people's identity is hybrid and fluid, with many migrating to urban areas like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. The emerging Renaissance movement in Baltistan is influenced by class and cultural politics, and the Pakistan Government's administration of the Northern Areas remains "colonial" and marginalized.

In connection to Noelle Neumann's notion of the spiral of silence, Salma Khatoon and Nosheen Fatima, in their article *"*Spiral of Fear and Silence in Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist",* analyse the concepts of violence and quiet in Mohsin Hamid's books Moth Smoke and The Reluctant Fundamentalist. The downward spiral movement of silence is sparked by disparate ideological, socioeconomic, and psychological factors operating in a coercive society. In light of Hamid's news piece titled *"Fear and Silence,"* the article also explores Hamid's idea of fear and silence. In his paper, he examines how the coercive systems of silence and fear operate in such a culture to exert pressure on people and those around them, ultimately leading to the silencing of their unusual voices. As a result, the pressure people experience to hide their opinions when they think they are in the minority breeds prejudice and fear, which in turn leads to acts of hostility. Fear and the silence that follows also lead to a disordered psychological behaviour in intellectuals, who, lacking a legitimate outlet for their creative impulses, resort to alcoholism and criminal activity. In addition, the paper investigates the characters' criminal psychology in the context of John Dollard's frustrated aggressiveness theory as a result of their silence. The hierarchy of division and suppression gets more pronounced in today's authoritarian society, when fear and quiet stifle initiative and self-confidence.

*"*Self-Othering in the novel *Karachi You Are Killing Me*", colonialist language interprets the dichotomy of self/Other in politics in order to maintain colonized people's dominance. Different inscriptions of the same dichotomy can be found in post-colonial discourse. Re-orientalism is the term Lisa Lu gave. By using manufactured imperialist ideology, Saba Imtiaz's *Karachi you're killing Me* tinkers with the Orientalist formula. In an effort to validate the situation and misconceptions connected to Karachi in particular and Pakistan in general, this story uses a variety of ironic levels. The current

study examined how the novel handles the Orients' repackaging for global consumption. Re-Orientalizing, by using re-Orientalizing techniques, led to the exoticism of popular cultural ideals and the self-othering. In summary, the novel perpetuates common misconceptions about Orients. Re-Orientalism, according to Bhabha, is a tactic that portrays stereotypes in an ambivalent and nervous way. While the Otherness is acknowledged as a negative repulsion and is presented as a threat to the self in the post-colonial literature, the colonial Gothic also offers the possibility of transcendence among Others (Khair, Levinas). You are opportunistically using terrorism to draw in readers from the West, and as *Karachi, You're Killing Me.* In this instance, "marginality is chic," as this product is unusual in the cultural market and harmless for distant spectacle because the issue is comfortably removed from the West (Mukherjee). Therefore, the continuous employment of caustic and ironic words, supported by a monophonic tone, leads to the abstract usage of colonialism. The author of the book mentioned that the West still seeks to rule over the next generation of nations. This is the means by which the East and the West can become each other. This is achieved by favouring the nebulous discourses generated by the East. The concept of division is constructed as a result of the diversity of citizens and their hybrid activities. Lastly, by highlighting the ambiguity of the situation, this book satisfies the needs of readers who are foreigners.

2.3 Other Researches done on Selected Fictions

“Emergent Sexualities and Intimacies in Contemporary Pakistani Women’s Fiction: A Post-feminist Reading” written by Dr. Muhammad Abdullah. This essay reads works of literature written by modern Pakistani women, highlighting how they handle intimacy and sex-related themes. The argument that Pakistani women writers celebrate the intimate aspects of their lives has been placed in context by using thematic presentation of textual nuances. These ladies are nurturing and providing spaces for them to breathe without betraying religion or regional values. Two modern Pakistani women writers, Maha Khan Phillips' *Beautiful from this Angle* and Saba Imtiaz's *Karachi you're Killing Me,* provide the study's data. These passages from modern Pakistani chick fiction refute popular beliefs about Muslim women as victims. Examples of Muslim women enjoying their rights in the past and in modern literature would not exist if everything had been sexist and depressing. Both inside and between cultures, there are differences in the definitions of modesty and freedom. The modernity

and social development that are occurring all around them are equally accessible to Pakistani women who follow Islam. They are truly trying to get there, even if they are not totally successful, and their fight deserves recognition instead of giving disproportionate weight to politically motivated Western discourses that objectify them. Pakistani women are sensitive beings who understand the importance of closeness, passion, and feelings. They also love to be loved. They enjoy showing off their beauty and take pride in it. Their preference for male attention surpasses their incessant complaints about being stared at by men. They recognize that there are cultural and religious norms that they should follow, but they also feel free to interpret or disregard them as they see fit. Religion is not something that should be shared; rather, it should be a question of personal choice and freedom. Pakistani women have been and are learning to lead happy personal lives while adhering to their own moral philosophies and not disrespecting the local religion. If the dissenting voices are marginalized or repressed, a pluralistic Pakistan is unattainable.

Portrayal of Religious Identities in the Contemporary Pakistani Fiction: People's lives, both individually and collectively, are significantly impacted by religion. Those who practise religion to bring peace to their lives and the lives of others, and those who use religion to further their own agendas, are the two main groups of religious individuals. The function of religious identities and how they have been portrayed in modern Pakistani fiction is briefly covered in this article. The 2015 book *The Spinner's Tale* by Omar Shahid Hamid has been chosen as a representative work of Pakistani fiction. It illustrates various religious identities and the ways in which they impact society as a whole when a religious person or group uses their religious identity to bring about chaos (knowingly or unknowingly) by attempting to obtain benefits of petty nature, rather than to find peace with themselves or the universe. This article aims to highlight the ways in which religious identity has been misrepresented in a selection of contemporary works of fiction and to provide a workable solution to stop this practice. The purpose of this effort is to shed light on one of the reasons behind the failure of a world that is already collapsing. Each religion possesses unique doctrines and traits of its own. In a similar vein, each religion has unique beliefs about the human being and the societies it seeks to create. Religion as a whole has a profound impact on its adherents in a variety of ways. These impacts are undeniable, and as members of a society, we are all aware of their existence. Even so, we cannot confine a religion and

its doctrines to the deeds and accomplishments of its adherents. Sometimes, adherents behave according to the religion's real principles, but they also may intentionally or unintentionally transgress such principles. It's probably the main reason, if not the only one, why we tend to blame religion for wrongdoing rather than offending the person. Ultimately, we see that the novelist has, in this instance, misinterpreted Muslims' religious identities. The real identities of Muslims as defined by Islam do not correspond with the identities of the fictional characters shown in the chosen works of literature. It is incorrect to see the isolated deeds of a small number of people as representing Islam. Given that the actions of so-called Muslims do not accurately reflect the actual Islamic worldview, it is imperative that we draw a clear distinction between the true spirit of any religion, in this case Islam. When determining a person's religious identity, we should focus on the fundamental teachings of the religion rather than on their daily activities. This is because, if individuals are behaving in accordance with a religion's fundamental teachings, their deeds do provide support for the claim that they belong to a specific religion. However, using religion as a cover, people frequently act contrary to its precepts. Differentiating between things as they are requires discernment. Muslim or Christian terrorism does not exist. Any religion does not condone or support terrorism; terrorism is terrorism regardless of who does it.

Subjectivity and Ideological Interpellation: An Investigation of Omar Shahid Hamid's The Spinner's Tale: By internalising cultural ideas and ideology, people become subjects through a process known as "interpellation," according to Louis Althusser. According to Althusser, ideology is a society's belief system in which hierarchies are established by ideological forces through discrimination based on cultural conditioning and reinforcement of existing hierarchies. Via ideological state apparatuses, these agencies operate. These ideological organizations aid in the social construction of personal identity. Repressive political ambitions are supported by the undesirable ideologies. As a natural way of viewing culture and society, people absorb the non-repressive beliefs. Through the prism of Althusser's ideology and interpellation, this study aims to examine Omar Shahid Hamid's book The Spinners Tales. The characters in Shahid's work are the subjects of this study, which looks at how they absorb ideology. The purpose of this study is to examine The Spinners Tales by Omar Shahid Hamid via the prism of Althusser's ideology and interpellation. This paper investigates the ways in which the characters in Shahid's book absorb ideology and

become its subjects. In addition, this study highlights the concerning consequences of cultural hegemony, which include the establishment of class hierarchies and cultural infidelity between the bourgeois and proletariat. The Spinner's Tale demonstrates how crucial roles that ISAs and RSAs play in creating unique identities, both positive and bad. A majority of the time, RSAs are ineffective and generate risky subjects who occasionally turn into terrorists and criminals. The interests of institutions, the wealthy, and the powerful are typically served by ideology, which upholds the status quo. Extremist organizations utilize religion as a tool for brainwashing and fantasizing people. With the help of this book, we may look more closely at the characteristics of terrorist violence. Through the employment of state machinery against common people, the aristocratic elite in the novel attempts to oppress the lower classes. The protagonist of the book, Sheikh Ahmed Uzair, engages in violent acts against the government while interpellating the ideological views of a religious jihadi group. By joining the jihadi group, he has gained access to power and authority that he deems appropriate for a terrorist. But ultimately, he came to understand that the group had only exploited him to further its terrorist goals against the government of Pakistan. After turning into a monster and attempting to end the world, he ended up ruining both his own life and the lives of those who were connected to him by committing these heinous acts of terrorism. Along with creating a jail escape plan, he also attempts to mislead investigators through his letters. This study also shows how Ausi's interpellation of ideology and Althusser's theory of ideology and interpellation are related.It is also connected to the idea that a state's social construction is a complicated phenomena, consisting of a relationship between interdependent practices that shape society without the agency of any one person. Rather, the lives of those activities shape the state. As a result, the concept of a free and independent subject is seen ambiguous since society does not recognise the existence of such a person. With the aid of narrative inquiry, the novel can be further examined. It is the best illustration of Althusser's ideology and interpellation model.

"Glocalism, disguised oppression and parochialism: a Study of *Karachi You're Killing Me*", the essay, authored by Samar Zakki and Nighat Ahmad, talks about Imtiaz's novel "KYKM," which illustrates globalization by presenting a local city, nation, people, and culture while being published by an international publishing house. The story seems to be centred on the local, which offers a new interpretation of the local that differs from the colonisers' general episteme. The paper contends, however, that

the emphasis on local affairs is a covert form of tyranny because it is explained from a narrow viewpoint that highlights all of its drawbacks and exposes the ideologies of the colonizers.The article mentions that the novel has been written in English and is primarily meant for an international readership, even though it is thought of as a satire on the Pakistani people at large. Furthermore, it is argued in the article that Imtiaz creates a sense of inferiority in the public by emphasizing all the bad aspects of the nation, society, and fellow people. It's improbable that the novel was primarily intended for the local population,because according to the report Pakistan has a low literacy rate of 60% and fewer women who can read English. According to the essay, Imtiaz may be producing satire in her book for two reasons: either to expose social injustices or to make fun of how the West views her nation.But the author contends that Imtiaz's colonial perspective shapes her understanding of the nation and its inhabitants. The novel's unfavourable depiction of events and individuals may also have an impact on readers' empathy.This sentence raises two probable reasons for Imtiaz's satirical writing in her novel: either to expose social injustices or to make fun of Western perceptions of the nation. But the author contends that Imtiaz's colonial perspective shapes her understanding of the nation and its inhabitants. The novel's unfavourable depiction of events and individuals may also have an impact on readers' empathy.

Drawing upon theories pertaining to extremism, violence, terrorism, the mapping of terrorism, and the formation of terrorist organizations, this study explores the biography of Omer Shahid Hamid's "*The Spinner's Tale*" protagonist, Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi. Sadia Nazeer, Mohammad Muazzam, Mutuahira Yousaf, Gul e Rana and Kiran Qamar in their article *"*Violence, Extremism, And Terrorism: A Critique On Omer Shahid Hamid's *The Spinner's Tale"* explore the story of a young, innocent child who loves cricket and joins the student wing of an ethnic party to become a jihadi. Novel is examined through a close examination of this fictional character. Numerous young, educated Pakistani students from middle-class households are drawn to violence and militancy due to many events and conditions that can be studied through the lens of Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi's character. According to the text, political exploitation, authoritarian regimes, and corrupt political systems all play a big role in this radicalization. An assessment of the atmosphere that these systems produce, which encourages and shields criminals and extremists, is also provided. Two features are recognized as universal to all definitions of terrorism: (1) acts of aggression directed

towards civilian targets; and (2) the goal of terrorist acts is to sway the opinions of a target audience and change their behaviour in order to further the goals of the terrorists. According to Martha Crenshaw, a person cannot be rationally deemed to be an attacker of innocent civilians because the purposes of terrorists are frequently not met by their activities, making their behaviour mysterious. Sheikh Ahmad Uzair is portrayed as being similarly illogical: he prepares to carry out other acts of violence, such as the assassination of police officer Shahab, believes his small son would soon forget him, and kills his friend. He also abandons his family to pursue terrorism:

> "I don't think I'm scared of dying," he muses, thinking on his fear of dying alone despite his isolation from the outside world. Death is nothing to be afraid of, after all, for a man like me who has so many times avoided it. My fear is of dying alone myself" (p. 214).

Conclusion

After going through the previous studies and literature review, I come to the conclusion that these researches examine a range of facets of Pakistani society, examining the impact of religious dogma and violence on communities as well as showcasing cultural diversity. To foster unity in the face of variety, they stress the significance of understanding, cultural sensitivity, and clear communication. The research delves into the intricacies of societal frameworks, concentrating on matters such as marginalization, oppression, and power relations. It emphasizes the necessity of interacting critically with conventional norms and acknowledging individual agency in contesting prevailing narratives. The articles also look at Pakistan's postcolonial dynamics, highlighting the difficulties that various ethnic groups confront as well as the structural adjustments and historical legacies they must deal with. They talk about how state creation, government, and cultural identity are still shaped by colonial processes. Pakistan's political and social milieu is still influenced by its inherited hybrid state structure, even with efforts at indigenization. The Northern Areas' colonial past represents changing forms of resistance and control and adds to an intricate political environment. Similar difficulties arise in maintaining cultural identity in the face of political and economic pressures for the Balti people's mixed identity, which has been shaped by migration and urbanization. These works draw attention to Pakistan's postcolonial statehood's continuous battles for democratic government and a cohesive national identity.

CHARTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

After a detailed literature review related to the theories of postcolonial identity and psycho-geography, plus relevant perspectives to thematic analysis of the use of psycho-geography and postcolonial Identity in contemporary Pakistani fiction, this chapter deals with the kind of methodology and methods required to be used for the analysis and interpretation of postcolonial identity and influence of urban spaces on cities of Karachi and Lahore portrayed in selected fictions namely *Moth Smoke, Karachi, You're Killing Me* and *The Spinner's Tale*.

An introduction and explanation of the theoretical and critical perspectives employed in this work are given in this chapter. This chapter describes the research methods after the theoretical framework.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The portrayal of psycho-geography and postcolonial identity in Pakistani literature is examined in this study using two theoretical frameworks. Drawing on Michel de Certeau's research, the dissertation first addresses psycho-geography as a literary and cultural phenomenon. It investigates the link between being in a modern city and personal experiences, additionally covers the role of psycho-geography in portraying the feelings of people with postcolonial backgrounds in selected works. The research investigates the creation and discussion of postcolonial identities in Pakistan, using postcolonial theory, through Stuart Hall's concepts. The study looks at how language, power and cultural representation are related and how colonialism and today's globalization affect those relationships.

The researcher combined Michel de Certeau's concept of psycho-geography with Stuart Hall's views on postcolonial identity to study the link between Karachi's and Lahore's past, their urban areas and their infrastructure. The following key components are involved in a study:

3.1.1 Colonial Legacies and Urban Spaces

Stuart Hall and Michel de Certeau offer frameworks that can help reveal rich meanings of postcolonial identity and spatial patterns associated with buildings and cities in Pakistan. The shapes of cities in former colonies have largely been influenced by colonial legacies. Pakistan's identity after colonialism is greatly shaped by its past and by globalization which influences its entire structure.

Hall argues that the effects of colonization still affect the identity and culture of present-day communities. Said explains that aspects of identity are created through culture and history, meaning postcolonial identities develop from memories and experiences in urban spaces. Hall notes that what people experienced in the colonial period has strongly shaped their identities, mainly in societies that existed after colonialism due to ongoing problems with racism and discrimination. He points out how the past experiences of colonization continue to influence who we are now. By referring to Hall's theories, we can understand how the former British rule affects the representation of cities and their people in Pakistani culture. The idea of *"cultural hybridity*" by Hall helps explain how urban life in Pakistani literature often shapes the work of Pakistani writers, mixing roots from their colonial heritage with those of their own background.

According to De Certeau's psycho-geography, cities are affected and shaped by the daily actions and methods of their people, so the environment of the city changes and affects how residents feel and think emotionally and psychologically. According to De Certeau, both the population and the city's structures help to create one another. Some books use details about Karachi and Lahore to portray and explore the postcolonial condition. In these selected fictions, writers portray how urban landscapes are shaped by postcolonial identities in Pakistan. These novels present the sociopolitical and socioeconomic environment of Pakistan as a major influence on the plot and the lives of the characters.

3.1.2 Psycho-geographical Analysis

Michel de Certeau's psycho-geography concept lays a lot of focus on investigating cities and the emotions they evoke. It focuses on how each person has a unique and subjective relationship with their environment. His theory's main ideas are as follows:

(i) Everyday Practices

Psycho-geography, a concept developed by Michel de Certeau, examines the way in which individuals move through and engage with urban environments. The regular ways that people engage with and interpret their surroundings are referred to under this concept as "everyday practices". Their perspective of the city is shaped in part by these everyday activities, such as talking, strolling, shopping, and other activities. De Certeau contends that these behaviors in which people adapt to and criticize the design of their urban environment are not only unconscious acts but rather exhibit creativity and agency.

(ii) Spatial Stories

Michel de Certeau's idea of spatial stories in the framework of psycho-geography emphasizes how individuals move through and engage with urban environments. These are the stories that individuals create about the places they visit, telling and receiving stories about the social dynamics, architectural design, and historical significance of certain locales. They highlight the tensions that exist between authority and agency, creativity and conformity, and the daily routines and struggles of the common people living in the city's regulated regions.

(iii) Tactics and Strategies

Psycho-geography, as proposed by Michel de Certeau, divides urban behaviour into two categories: tactics and strategies. Well-thought-out, organized approaches to managing and organizing space are found in the design of cities and corporate branding, two examples of influential organizations. On the other hand, tactics are the consistent and creative acts that people or marginalized groups do in those situations. These are the ways in which people avoid, question, and resist the dominant strategies, usually by executing small, impulsive acts. Strategies set the context for people to create their own geographical histories using the power of every day actions.

(iv) Walking as Resistance

In Michel de Certeau’s view of psycho-geography, when people walk in a city in an unconventional manner, they are using this activity as resistance against the usual urban conventions and powers. To do it, people walk in their neighborhoods, wander from their usual paths and create daily activities that go against the city’s regular order.

Walking in the streets is a way for some to resist the rules and agencies that manage their town and assert their freedom.

(v) Psycho-geographic Mapping

Michel de Certeau developed a psycho-geography theory about how space, place and humans are related, through the influence of the Situationist International. Through psycho-geographic mapping, people's perceptions, emotions and actions are observed as they go around a city. It explains that social, cultural and psychological aspects matter in addition to the physical aspects of a place. Insights into the daily life and influences in cities can be gained from psycho-geographic mapping, as it shows things that other conventional maps may miss from their analysis.

(vi) Urban Exploration

Michel de Certeau said in his psycho-geography theory that to dig into urban exploration, it's necessary to study common actions and habits of people living in cities. Roving around parts of the city that are usually off-limits is called a "tactical" activity by de Certeau. These involve creative methods that let the people interact with their environment by ignoring rules and laws. For this reason, urban exploration can be seen as challenging urban society and allowing people to redefine and use public areas for their own purposes.

(vii) Heterotopias

For Michel de Certeau, heterotopias are areas that enforce different traditions and rules but do not belong to the main culture. They work to disrupt the usual while providing a variety of thoughts and depictions for people. They also point out the various types of urban environments and explain how people respond to them using psycho-geography.

3.1.3 Cultural Hybridity and Resistance

When two or more cultures combine to create something new, it is known as cultural hybridity. According to philosophers, culture cannot be considered constant and the same everywhere, as this assumption reflects. In fact, it points out that cultures are not fixed or static.

As a concept, cultural hybridity tells us that cultures do not exist as clear or separate categories. They keep changing over time because of interactions with other

groups. From this perspective, many scholars agree that achieving flexible and multiple identities is preferable to simply having a single, fixed identity.

The epistemological perspective on hybridity indicates that culture and identity should be understood by considering their complexities and diversity. It fights against the idea of "us" versus "them," and teaches that identity comes from various factors.

It is clear that cultural hybridity can assist in questioning the hierarchies that are built into how culture is presented. Because of hybridity, it becomes apparent that cultural traditions are often mixed and that dominant groups can borrow ideas from other cultures.

Hall explains that marginalized communities use their cultures as a means to confront and challenge existing power systems. It examines popular culture and underlines ways for people and communities to resist the rules they are given. It is in line with the idea found in praxis theories that humans take action to transform the world they live in. Agency and structure working together reveal that there is space to make changes in power organizations.

The central idea driving Hall's concept of cultural resistance is found in Antonino Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Opposing the mainstream cultural code can be done by acting in ways that conflict with those standards. For philosophers, this involves turning things around and choosing a new position in the culture.

Through a dialectical approach, we can see that resistance of one culture manifests in the emergence of new types of culture as a reaction to influencing or governing cultures. It shows us that when one culture clashes with another, it leads to changes in people's cultural understandings.

Hall links his concept of resistance to notions of cultural hybridity. Resistance involves making choices about cultural power, while hybridity brings attention to how people change their own cultural identities. In philosophy, these ideas argue that culture involves continual debates and new developments, leading to the constant transformation of identities in society.

Thanks to Stuart Hall, we now understand that culture keeps changing and dealing with confrontations and mixing which allows for the creation and reshaping of identities. Because of this, people are urged to actively respond to the established powers and to remain involved in all aspects of the culture.

3.1.4 Language, Representation and Place

The way people experience place and space is shaped by language and representation in the postcolonial urban environment. They shape how individuals look at, make sense of and enjoy spaces. In cities, the main colonial narratives typically make some views and values stand out while ignoring competing viewpoints. But approaches such as drifting and dérive help challenge usual stories and assist in recovering voices that have been ignored.

Even in the postcolonial period, the marks of colonialism are regularly present in cities. Over time, colonial powers have controlled urban life using language and images which neglected indigenous traditions and gave more power to the colonizers. Many street names, the designs of public spaces and legends about these places reflect the influences of earlier colonial thinking.

An effort by colonial officials was to change the original place names, taking away both the native word and its meaning. People's understanding of space was changed through renaming which reflected the beliefs and histories of colonial times. It was a form of powerful behavior.

The lavish and monumental architecture of the colonial times regularly reflects power and influence. Such architecture and buildings can preserve ideas of local marginalization and colonial rule.

Accounts from the colonial period usually portray metropolitan areas as more important than the nearby regions where these accounts took place. Describing certain areas as not civilized or unenlightened is an example of this which was believed around colonial times and kept colonial authorities in charge.

In psycho-geography, people's feelings and emotions are examined based on their experience in cities. Both drifting and dérive allow individuals to encounter and make sense of urban spaces by challenging standard views and established narratives. It lets people find their own paths around the city, unaffected by the main trends set by city planning. With dérive, people are able to challenge how colonialism shaped their city and discover details and histories hidden beneath the main narratives. In the journey, Dérive deliberately acts contrary to the familiar way cities are explored. Things feel more natural and intimate due to the abolishment of colonial design which preferred a calculated, practical approach to space.

Both drifting and dérive allow for a flexible and open exploration of cities. It focuses a lot on always being active and being aware of your surroundings. Drifting can cause people to doubt the tough, divided view of the city created by colonial history. Through drifting, some are stimulated to look into the city's poor areas which usually get unfair notice in the media's main stories. By being involved, you may help others overcome wrong ideas and notice the exciting life in urban areas.Those who join can introduce new versions of reality for urban space that challenge colonial explanations, while exploring the heart of the city. Storytelling, creative expression, and other kinds of representation that emphasise the viewpoints and backgrounds of marginalized communities can be a part of this.

Psycho-geography helps marginalized people regain control of their identities by engaging them with space differently. They open space for fresh views and explain the presence and roles of various groups by challenging the main narratives from colonial history. This might help to cancel out the way these groups are often left out of official documents and history.

Often, psycho-geography interacts with art to reclaim urban areas through infrastructure, performing events and showcasing various creative works. These approaches can pay tribute to the past and present of different areas when citizens look closely at symbols linked to colonization and come up with fresh ways to explain them. These actions can help the development of a more diverse and fair urban environment by recognizing underappreciated places and stories that are often overlooked.

Words and images in the postcolonial city have a big impact on how people experience place and space. Using psycho-geographical approaches, activities like dérive and drift can replace the main colonial narratives and help bring hidden voices into view. Through these activities, people can learn about unexpected moments in the city's past, consider the place from new perspectives and weave accounts reflecting the richness and diversity of urban society.

3.1.5 Globalization and Transnationalism

Modern world dynamics can only be grasped if we understand trans-nationalism and globalization. The idea of globalization centers on how countries, societies, cultures and businesses are connected and interact on a global scale. By contrast, trans-nationalism focuses on the many different and flexible ways people and communities

connect across nations; these connections, networks and activities are rarely limited to a single nation-state.

With globalization, postcolonial theory explains the rise of conflicts and the combination of different cultures, economies and politics. According to Hall, developing new ethnic identities and forms of resistance is as important to globalization as creating a single, uniform world is.

Globalization brings different political, economic and cultural systems together and frequently increases both rivalries and combining elements which are important in postcolonial theory. Hall points out that with globalization, a new set of identities and forms of resistance also takes place, just like standardization.

For Hall, globalization is neither unbiased nor distributed fairly among all groups. It’s about relationships of power that regularly result in inequality between the Global North and the Global South. Because global capitalism affects worldwide movements of people, information and culture, some cultures have more impact on others.

Hall points out that similar to diaspora communities, those living in other countries are still attached to their homelands. They give great insight into the process of creating and negotiating identities with others across the world. He believes diaspora is a place where ethnic groups and identity are built through interactions between local and foreign influences.

Hall studies the effects of globalization on both identity politics and culture. He points out that international media tends to ignore or change the cultural features of regions. He promotes depictions that are more varied, equal, and mindful of cultural differences.

The emphasis on how global tendencies are experienced and opposed in everyday life, psycho-geography allows us to recognize how the global and local connect. By dealing with and adding worldwide effects to their daily spaces, individuals create different cultural and spatial meanings, as illustrated by De Certeau's concepts. As trans-nationalism focuses on how identities and surroundings can change across nations, it fits with what Hall and de Certeau argue. It applies Hall's view that "routes" are more important than "roots" by looking at how people overseas and abroad influence nations even when they are not citizens.

De Certeau's analysis of actions at the neighborhood level can help us see how transnational actors influence cities. They make cities important places for international engagements by regularly moving around and building relationships.

Comparisons between trans-nationalism and globalization give a better explanation of today's urban and cultural processes. Both Michel de Certeau and Stuart Hall describe similar ways in which people in different social settings continue to look at and work out the meaning of their identities and environments. Such theory helps us understand the ways in which pressures from across the globe and history can affect the world we live in.

Conclusion

This intertwined framework of theories of psycho-geography and postcolonial identity, delivers important knowledge about the socio-political and cultural aspects that affect Pakistani literature. These frameworks are particularly useful for analysing selected fictions.

De Certeau's theory of psychogeography enables scholars to investigate how Pakistani writers depict the real and imagined landscapes of their nation. This framework explains how stories and individuals relate to their environment, showing the difficulties related to resisting pressure, finding an identity and a sense of belonging in Pakistan's cities and towns. Psycho-geography reveals how emotions about place and movements through space are found in selected novels and what this means for their context.

Additionally, Stuart Hall describes ways in which colonial influences still show in Pakistani culture and literature to this day. Examining how Saba Imtiaz, Mohsin Hamid and Omar Shahid Hamid dealt with questions of colonial history, national identity and cultural shift is straightforward when using Hall's focus on cultural identity, hybridity and the continual processes of negotiation and resistance. With this approach, you can see more easily how writers describe clashes between traditional ways and new modern culture, native customs and those of the colonists and the world close to home and beyond.

When applied together, these theories explain Pakistani fiction from many viewpoints. Post-colonialism gives the context needed to see the full impact of the plots and psycho-geography lets us examine the spaces and feelings experienced by the

characters. When researchers use different tools and perspectives, they can undermine common views about Pakistani writers and look closer at how they describe their experiences. For that reason, the ideas of De Certeau and Hall are vital for exploring how power, identity and place interact in chosen texts.

Conclusively, the theoretical framework discussion plays a crucial role in endorsing primary text analysis and organizing arguments. It is important to emphasize that the researcher has taken an inclusive rather than an overly rigorous perspective to the theoretical framework. Instead of relying only on these theories, a researcher uses them to help her gain better insight and understanding. With these theories, this analysis builds a firm and open-minded structure for making arguments in the dissertation.

3.2 Research Method

3.2.1 Research Approach and Design

The study uses a qualitative research method, which is most appropriate for exploring the subjective, symbolic, and thematic dimensions of literature. The main purpose is to explore how Pakistani literature depicts psycho-geography and postcolonial identity in selected works of contemporary Pakistani fiction, particularly in the urban landscapes of Karachi and Lahore. The qualitative method allows for in-depth textual interpretation, enabling the researcher to investigate how the psycho-geographical environments of these cities influence the identities, experiences, and transformations of fictional characters.

The analysis is guided by three core investigations :

- To analyze the influence of physical landscapes of Karachi and Lahore in shaping postcolonial identity in works by Mohsin Hamid, Saba Imtiaz, and Omar Shahid Hamid.
- To examine the writers’ depictions of urban crime and violence as revealing connections between psycho-geography, identity, and social structures in postcolonial Lahore and Karachi.
- To analyze the psycho-geographic representations in Pakistani writers' works related to broader discussions in postcolonial and urban studies.

To answer these queries, the research design integrates textual analysis, character analysis, thematic analysis, and relevant theoretical frameworks. This multi-layered approach ensures a rich and contextualized interpretation of the texts.

3.2.2 Textual Corpus and Selection Criteria

Our main sources come from literary books by Mohsin Hamid, known for exploring postcolonial themes through globally conscious narratives. Saba Imtiaz, whose fiction offers a female-centered perspective on urban life in Karachi and Omar Shahid Hamid, a former police officer whose novels vividly portray crime, politics, and violence in urban Pakistan. In addition, the researcher makes use of postcolonial theory, theories of psycho-geography and literary criticism to guide the study. Examining how psycho-geography and postcolonial identity are present in the texts is the major component of the data analysis process.

3.2.3 Character Analysis

The Researcher intends to investigate the impact of the cities of Lahore and Karachi on the characters in these authors' works by analyzing the characters and main themes within the books. The study of the traits, purposes and transformation of a figure in a story, regardless of its form, is called character analysis. We do this analysis to understand why the characters act the way they do, how they relate to one another, what tensions arise and how they grow and change. Understanding the story and the people behind it is much easier through analysis of the characters.

Character analysis helps address the first research question by uncovering how the protagonists interact with and are affected by the cities they inhabit. The study examines their:

- Personal histories and backgrounds
- Social positions and relationships
- Emotional and psychological responses to the city.
- Conflicts and transformations over time.

The researcher has done character analysis to figure out how postcolonial identities are developed in the protagonists of selected novels as they navigate through the urban landscape of the cities of Karachi and Lahore.

3.2.4 Thematic Analysis

To address the second and third research questions, the study employs thematic analysis. This method involves identifying recurring ideas, patterns, and motifs in the texts, especially those related to:

Urban crime and violence.

Urban chaos and uncertainty.

Social fragmentation and class divides.

Resistance, mobility, and survival in the city.

Thematic analysis enables the researcher to draw connections between narrative content and broader theoretical concerns in psycho-geography and postcolonial urbanism. The technique helps reveal how characters' experiences reflect larger structural and historical dynamics, such as colonial legacies, neoliberal development, and socio-spatial marginalization.

3.2.5 Methodological Justification

This methodological approach is well-suited to the objectives of the research. Qualitative analysis, when applied to literature, allows the researcher to explore layered meanings, symbolic representations, and subjective experiences in ways that quantitative methods cannot. The integration of character analysis and thematic coding offers both depth and breadth, enabling the study to remain grounded in the texts while engaging with theoretical questions.By focusing on how characters move through, resist, and are shaped by urban spaces, this study aims to uncover how Lahore and Karachi operate not just as backdrops, but as active forces in shaping postcolonial subjectivities. This methodological framework supports a dynamic and reflective understanding of Pakistani urban fiction and contributes to wider debates in postcolonial and urban literary studies.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Pakistani literature explores the interconnection of psycho-geography and postcolonial identity because it links cities, history and personal memories. The idea of psycho-geography is to see how surroundings impact our feelings and actions. It examines how British colonialism influenced former colonized countries and the constant struggle for cultural, political and religious identity. When talking about Pakistani English writers, many describe both urban and rural places and the ways colonialism influenced Pakistan's architecture and culture. Writers in these contexts usually explore the quest for identity, mixed heritage and disorientation.

A country's social and economic context is very important in molding its society. It is necessary to study psycho-geography and postcolonial identity to learn about Pakistan's present social, political and economic life. These frameworks particularly reveal the impact of recent histories on the identities and ways spaces are described in postcolonial countries. Given the story's setting, this study carefully analyses Pakistan's social and economic situation. It provides a better insight into the influence of cities, politics and the country's colonial background on contemporary Pakistan. The researcher looks at the impact of postcolonial identity on psycho-geography in today's Pakistan. In *"Moth Smoke, The Spinner's Tale* and *Karachi You're Killing Me,"* the authors show how the setting of the cities and the thoughts and feelings of its people relate to postcolonial identities in Karachi and Lahore.

It examines how identities form and encounter difficulties in cultures that have become rapidly urbanized through a detailed analysis of literary and crime fiction. It deals with the significance of literary descriptions of psycho-geography and how authority, identity and space are related in Pakistan. The works of fiction under examination closely examine how psycho-geography and postcolonial identity are linked within Pakistani culture. This literary investigation looks at how people and communities in Pakistan experience their surroundings and emotions because of their recent postcolonial past and current political situation.

British colonization greatly influenced the identity found in Pakistani English literature after independence. Pakistani literature covers what happens when countries

continue to feel the effects of colonial influence, including hybridity, cultural disruptions and many types of identity crises. Often, these authors highlight the difficulties experienced by people who live at the boundary between their past colonial heritage and the challenges of a new, postcolonial world, as they try to define themselves.

Modern Pakistani writings can also be understood through the approach of psycho-geography. Authors try to find how physical spaces, metropolitan surroundings, and rural landscapes influence the psychological conditions and identities of their characters.

The intersection of postcolonial identity and psychogeography in selected novels helps to reveal the profound interconnectedness between place and self. The political, cultural, and historical importance of the urban settings in these novels influences the identities and experiences of the characters. The way that location and identity interact highlights how colonial history still has an impact on Pakistani culture today. *Karachi You're Killing Me, Moth Smoke* and *The Spinner's Tale* all explore the link that exists between postcolonial identity and psycho-geography in a variety of ways. The authors highlight the ways that both Pakistan's colonial past and modern urban environments influence people and communities' identity, all the while describing characters and sites in detail.

Moth Smoke is a novel by Mohsin Hamid about Lahore in Pakistan during the 1990s. Story starts with Dara Shikoh Shahzad's being unfairly fired from his bank job, just because the influence of a corrupt landlord. Because of his misfortune and tough financial conditions Daru chose the path of crimes and drug dealing. He also got into an affair with Mumtaz, who is Aurangzeb's wife. As a result of his bad decisions and bad luck, he goes into disaster. Social inequality, corruption, resistance as revenge, and moral decay against the backdrop of Pakistan's socio-political landscape during its nuclear tests are the narratives explored.

The Spinner's Tale explains that the city's wide-spread violence and political disputes heavily influence Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi (Ausi) to join terrorism. The area around Karachi shows the city's way of life and government and has a major impact on its identity after colonial rule. Since the British withdrew, both Pakistan's security and its sense of self have become difficult to manage. Social and political factors turn Ausi

from a member of the middle class into a suspect for terrorism. The novel narrates political difficulties and corruption found in Karachi. Through the character of Ausi, S. Hamid explains how a young nation can be shaped by the difficulties it experiences in postcolonial hybrid environments. An important feature of these writings is that, as a postcolonial center, Karachi is often affected by hardships that come to life through different scenes in the city. Ausi's identity has formed due to Karachi's political, religious and cultural background.

With similar wit and insight, Saba Imtiaz tackles contemporary living in Karachi in *Karachi You're Killing Me.* The fiction humorously and thoughtfully presents life in Karachi after colonial rule. She uses sarcasm to express the issues of Karachi. We get to experience Ayesha's life in the city which makes the novel a useful tool for studying the urban life of a journalist. Imtiaz removes misconceptions about Pakistan from the story, but does so without lowering anyone, as she highlights the legacy of colonialism on Karachi's culture, leadership and spirit. The book highlights daily life in Karachi and examines how class differences, cultural clashes, political scandals, crime and various social problems are part of postcolonial city's living. The reasearcher uses Karachi's challenging environment to explore what it's like to live in one of the most difficult cities and for Ayesha to define herself as the world around her keeps evolving. Because of its tricky wit and sarcastic humour, the novel reveals the painful truths and the ridiculous side of having so much wealthy and poor, so much trauma and corruption, in one city. Imtiaz uses a modern perspective and humor to talk about the impact of colonialism in today's Pakistan. Ayesha often feels the city's bustle and excitement affecting her own everyday experiences and way of thinking. The book skillfully reveals the unstable yet intriguing mix between Karachi's old and new features, both colonial and modern. De Certeau's perspective permits us to study how the protagonist deals with everyday life in the city, exploring how she confronts the rules from the past. Moreover, this analysis advances postcolonial discussions about power, identity, space and cultural memory in Pakistan. It helps us better understand what Pakistan is like after being colonized. How the novels are set in this background makes their plots complex and helps explain the characters' motivations and their resolutions. Study conclusions are made more accurate through character and thematic analysis of the dissertation.

4.1 Colonial Legacies and Urban Spaces

Mohsin Hamid shows in *Moth Smoke* how Lahore's urban environment reflects traces of British colonial rule from the past. The novel studies the many social and economic divisions brought by colonialism, shown in the city's structure, how the rich live and the influence of colonial institutions.

> "Tonight's venue is a mansion with marble floors and twenty-foot ceilings. Rumor has it that the owner made his fortune as a smuggler, which is probably true but could also be social retribution for his recent ascent to wealth". (Hamid, p 31).

This lavish space reflects how colonial aesthetics still shape urban identity and class structures in postcolonial societies. The mansion echoes the grandeur of colonial architecture, its excessive scale and imported luxury materials resembling the residences of British elites during the Raj. Now, these spatial markers have been adopted by the new Pakistani elite, many of whom have acquired wealth through informal or ambiguous means, like the "rumored" smuggler in this scene.

Hall reminds us that identity in postcolonial contexts is not fixed but constructed through representation and historical memory. Here, the suspicion about the owner's fortune, whether he is truly respectable or just recently rich, reveals the deep unease with social mobility in a society still haunted by colonial class hierarchies. Wealth alone doesn't grant legitimacy; one must also perform a certain kind of inherited, culturally validated elite identity.

So, this moment in *Moth Smoke* reveals much more than a party. It uncovers how Lahore's urban spaces are still shaped by colonial remnants, how class identity is deeply tied to spatial aesthetics, and how individuals constantly perform and adjust themselves to navigate these exclusive worlds. It's a scene where space, history, and identity intersect and where the personal becomes political in the most ordinary of settings.

In comparison to the earlier setting, Hamid paints the life of common people in Lahore as "Stepping out into the hot day, I shiver at the sudden change in temperature…… his tail moving rapidly from side to side as he sucks the last drops of life out of her. Paying up, I drive off." (Hamid p 113-114).

Daru's pause at Liberty Market, described through sensory impressions of parched grass, oppressive heat, and the tense stillness of passers-by, functions as more than a moment of casual observation. Reading through de Certeau's psychogeographical lens, this scene demonstrates how urban spaces in postcolonial contexts operate as layered palimpsests, where the visible geography is inseparable from political history and class stratification. Liberty Market, a colonial-era commercial node repurposed for the post-independence elite, becomes an arena where geopolitical unease "this nuclear thing" and environmental decay coexist, shaping the affective texture of the city (Certeau 91). Daru's embodied engagement with the space, lingering for pomegranate juice, scanning the street, produces a micro-map of Lahore's postcolonial condition, revealing how urban environments are experienced differently depending on social and economic positioning.

The striking image of the emaciated bitch and her healthy pup serves as a compressed allegory for Pakistan's postcolonial political economy. The skeletal mother, drained to the "last drops of life" by the vigorous pup, encapsulates the exploitative neo-colonial class structure Hall identifies, wherein the postcolonial state and its working classes continue to be depleted by an elite inheriting and adapting the extractive logic of colonial rule (Hall, The West and the Rest 284). Here, the mother dog's inert body mirrors the exhausted infrastructure and citizenry of the city, while the thriving pup embodies the elite class, nourished by the labour and suffering of the majority. The fact that this spectacle unfolds within a prestigious market space underscores the spatial cohabitation of privilege and deprivation, a legacy of colonial urban planning that, while physically proximate, maintains sharp social divisions.

The oppressive heat, cracked dividers, and uneasy social interactions operate not merely as descriptive backdrop but as material signs of systemic imbalance, reinforcing Hall's observation that postcolonial identities are forged in the tension between symbolic assertions of power (e.g., nuclear capability) and the ongoing lived reality of scarcity and inequality (Cultural Identity and Diaspora 225). Through this scene, Moth Smoke fuses the material and metaphorical geographies of Lahore, revealing how postcolonial urban spaces remain haunted by the extractive, hierarchical logics embedded during colonial modernity.

The Spinner's Tale brings together what Pakistan is like today and the effects of colonialism from its past. Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi is the main character, showing how

socio-economic and socio-political influence can cause a young person to become radicalized. Hall would say that changes in identity result from the effects of present-day social and political situations as well as trauma. It explains how the injustices caused by colonialism still affect those on the fringes of Pakistan today. Michel de Certeau says that psycho-geography studies how people move about and experience cities. Because of its complex environment, Karachi affects the experiences described by the characters in *The Spinner's Tale.* The setting itself is both the actual buildings and a place of mental strife. One such example of colonial legacy in *The Spinner's Tale* is the continued presence of colonial-era architecture amidst modern urban chaos. The CID building is described as:

> "The CID building, or Bhoot Bangla as it was commonly called, was a dilapidated colonial-era structure, surrounded by tall glass and concrete monstrosities that Karachi's builders were so fond of calling 'Plazas', and which had been liberally peppered all over the city over the past thirty years like smallpox scars on a handsome face" (Hamid 53).

This passage engages with the layered spatial and cultural identity of postcolonial Karachi. Hall's concept of identity as a fluid, evolving process shaped by history and representation is reflected in the portrayal of the CID building. Once a symbol of colonial power, now decayed and renamed *Bhoot Bangla* (ghost house), the structure embodies the ambivalence of postcolonial identity: suspended between erasure and remembrance, rejection and inheritance. Its physical deterioration mirrors the inner fragmentation of a society grappling with the remnants of colonial rule.

This contrast between the decaying colonial architecture and the unsightly modern construction highlights a fractured urban identity. The colonial building, still functioning and central to state power, represents the residue of British control over surveillance and order. Stuart Hall argues that identity is not fixed but constructed through history and representation (*Cultural Identity* 223). The persistence of colonial architecture acts as a visual and psychological representation of power that continues to frame the Pakistani identity, still operating within the structures inherited from colonial governance.

Simultaneously, de Certeau's theory reveals how this building, surrounded by modern "glass and concrete monstrosities," resists erasure through its continued

symbolic presence. The grotesque imagery “smallpox scars on a handsome face” underscores the violence of unregulated capitalist urbanization that disfigures both memory and landscape. The narrative’s recognition of the building becomes a psychogeographic act of resistance, reclaiming space by re-inscribing history and emotion onto the urban fabric.

In short, this passage explores how postcolonial urban identity is shaped by conflicting forces of memory, modernity, and space. The CID building emerges as a powerful metaphor for Karachi’s contested self—caught between colonial hauntings and neoliberal transformations.

The novel also portrays elite educational institutions as colonial inheritances, perpetuating class divides and producing subjects who are aligned with Western ideals. In one passage it is described as:

> “the people who go to The School are from the elite class. They go abroad to study and end up as doctors, lawyers, big shot corporate types. How would someone like him have even gotten into a place like that?” (Hamid, 62).

Here, “The School” clearly references institutions modeled on British schooling systems, accessible only to a select few. These institutions produce a Westernized elite disconnected from the local masses. Hall argues that colonialism imposed a "hegemonic" cultural model that still governs how individuals see themselves (Hall, “The West and the Rest” 185). The character’s alienation from such institutions is rooted in this colonial model of stratification, where identity is shaped by proximity to Western education and privilege. Also there is an obsession with *English language and Western culture* in the novel, where people are judged on how good they are at spoken *English* and the students from “The School” travel abroad for higher studies where they try to adopt an English identity.

The tale proves how people in large cities can become tied to cycles of cruelty and denial, much like de Certeau claimed that daily behaviors highlight larger social traits. Being part of violence and corruption leads to Ausi’s radicalization, representing the kind of trouble encountered in this struggle.

4.2 Role of Physical Landscapes

According to De Certeau, moving through a city helps to define people and their cities since they both interact and affect each other. He considers the city an object that can be explored on foot and his notion of "drift" means walking without a plan to feel its atmosphere. Here, the way a city is experienced and shaped creates hidden meanings. Just as Stuart Hall views, this concept links cities with cultural and personal identity through colonial legacies. Hall points out that colonial pasts influence how cities have evolved and their sense of identity which change over time. The way colonizers and colonized people relate to each other creates mixed identities that showcase earlier and current cultural mingling.

Depiction of Karachi and Lahore in these novels is significant to explore the postcolonial identity. In addition to serving as backdrops, the physical locations have historical, cultural, and socioeconomic significance that influences the experiences of the characters and the central themes of the stories. What happens in each city's history and current society, along with its struggles, give rise to the stories and characters found in the novels. These novels prove that understanding postcolonial identity in Pakistan depends greatly on urban spaces.

Moth Smoke revolves around the metropolitan setting of Lahore, which helps illustrate what postcolonial identity means and what colonialism left behind. Apart from serving as backgrounds, the real places in the novel have history, culture and economic issues that matter to the characters and to the story's main themes. The difference between social classes is clear, with many poor and dirty areas and many rich, glamorous ones as well. Much like Dara's move from being rich to being dirty poor, Lahore serves as a symbol for the city's moral decline and increasing distress. Lahore changes characters and makes them feel imprisoned and sad. Hamid reflects Pakistan's troubles in the late 1990s by using the city and its people. We can understand Daru's tie to Lahore by using Michel de Certeau's idea from psycho-geography that people shape and mold urban surroundings. His wandering through the city reflects the bigger struggle people have to find who they are and what is important after colonial rule ended.

The Lahore Canal in the city separates the people who have everything from those who do not. It represents the flow of life in Lahore, but also the division and distance between different social classes. As it is quoted,

> There are trees by the side of the road, but only on one side, and it's the wrong side, so their shadows run away from me in long smiles that jump over boundary walls and grin at each other while I bake in my car like a snail on hot asphalt. (Hamid p. 9).

This quote illustrates how the intersection of physical environment, social inequalities, and personal experiences of Dara Shikoh affected him psychologically. de Certeau focuses on how people experience and navigate urban spaces, which are often shaped by power dynamics and social structures. This quote highlights spatial inequality in Lahore, where the urban landscape reflects class distinctions. The placement of the trees suggests that shade and comfort are privileges that are not fairly distributed, signifying how the layout of the city protects certain or wealthy neighbourhoods while leaving others exposed to the struggles. The "shadows" personify relief and comfort, but their distance and inaccessibility explain Daru's alienation. The picture reveals that Lahore tends to support some parts of the community and ignore others. How dissatisfied Dara reveals how weak his sense of old identity has become in the city. The city's walls, separating its social groups, make the theme of isolation and separation more obvious. Along with other things, these walls show the unequal access to travel and place perception caused by differences in wealth. Daru feels his mind and life trapped in overpowering heat, likewise, the surroundings torture him with their hot weather. Dara sees the harsh city with heat, pavement and few trees as a reminder of his social situation. He feels cut off from the rest of society because he does not have the use of expensive things. The constant challenges and pain of his life are compared to those of a snail, living very slow and without point in a massive city. What he sees around him makes his loneliness worse, making supposed safe places into sources of stress. It describes how the landscape of Lahore shows both personal separation and differences in status. The journey Dara makes through the city explores his emotional journey as well as his sense of being on the fringes. How he deals with the local scenery demonstrates his struggle to fit into either world.

> "I imagine Lahore as a city with bullets streaking into the air, tracers like fireworks, bright lines soaring into the night, slowing, falling back on

> themselves, a pavilion collapsing, the last dance of a fire before its fuel is consumed. And I lie on a field in the centre of town, on grass fenced in by buildings, looking up at the stars with a sweet stem in my mouth, watching the brilliant arcs descending toward me." (Hamid p 129).

Daru's recurring vision of Lahore as "a city with bullets streaking into the air… slowing, falling back on themselves" acquires a haunting significance when read against the backdrop of his mother's death from a stray bullet. The cityscape he imagines is not a neutral backdrop but a lived, affective map shaped by personal trauma. As Michel de Certeau argues, urban spaces are constructed through the "memories and dreams" of those who traverse them, producing a psychogeography where each location carries its own emotional topography (de Certeau 108). In Dara's case, the "field in the centre of town… fenced in by buildings" becomes a symbolic site of stillness and vulnerability, framed by the unpredictable arcs of violence descending from the night sky. The open expanse and enclosing architecture together inscribe a sense of both freedom and entrapment. From Stuart Hall's postcolonial perspective, this vision also reflects the fractured urban condition of post-independence Lahore, where imported technologies such as firearms and electrical grids coexist with traditional practices like rooftop sleeping, yet without the civic infrastructure to prevent their lethal intersections (Hall 277). The celebratory gunfire, whether for a wedding, a kite victory, or the assertion of masculine dominance, embodies what Hall calls the "disjunctures" of postcolonial identity, in which the residues of colonial governance and indigenous cultural habits produce spaces of simultaneous intimacy and threat. Thus, Lahore's physical landscape operates as both witness and participant in Dara's psychic formation, its beauty inseparable from the violence that defines his lived experience.

The Spinner's Tale addresses the difficult issues of postcolonial identity by using the setting of Karachi. It sets the city up as a place where people's private grudges, political games and extremism clash. Both the main character's growth and the aim to show social problems in Pakistani life are expressed by choosing places ranging from the city's slums to its expensive neighborhoods. The novel paints the impact of living in cities on developing identity, growing radicals and dealing with power. Seen in its surroundings, the contrasts between secularism and fundamentalism, modern times and tradition greatly affect who each character becomes and how they end up. The author uses Karachi which shows many contradictions, as both a backdrop and a main figure

in the novel. By highlighting Karachi's urban environment, the novel allows us to look closely at the interactions among space, identity and power after colonialism. Karachi's surroundings are seamlessly included in the novel, following de Certeau's thinking about psycho-geography. The hypothesis suggests that our surroundings in cities influence our habits, identity and social network. In *The Spinner's Tale,* Karachi forms the backdrop, leaving a strong mark on what happens to the protagonists. These stories start in a world filled with social and financial inequality and tension. The book reveals that places we visit in these stories are not only setting; they also influence what's happening within the main characters' minds. Because he goes to a prestigious school "The School", Ausi is shown experiencing affluence highlighting the differences in Karachi's social ranks. His life journey from a brilliant student to a militant reflects the influence of places in which he stayed. Due to his father's financial status Ausi could not retain the same standards of his life as his friends from "The School". Ausi got admitted into a government college where the young students were manipulated and used for political benefits. From here his journey to the terrorism starts. When walking in a metropolitan area, you discover stories and power systems, just as is shown in S. Hamid's portrait of Karachi. As our protagonists move between neighborhoods, from soft countryside to tough streets, we notice how their challenges and social boundaries affect them. As Ausi gets older and his ideas change, the environment around him also has an impact on his mood and sense of who he is.

Imtiaz shows that Karachi is important for understanding who Ayesha becomes. Because of the city's crowded marketplaces, traffic and street criminals, the main character feels discontent with where she lives and works. During the day, she looks for stories and strives to manage the way her work and life are regularly influenced by the city's different areas. Simply staying away from hazardous areas, bypassing checkpoints and getting through traffic jams have become part of her daily routine. Her frustration with infrastructure and the constant tension from violence hints at the city's plan to manipulate its residents, as de Certeau explained. Ayesha explains that she has to consider new risks for traveling, due to recent changes in crime or politics which underscores the influence of power over movement. We can see by her story how facing constant dangers and expectations in the city have affected her growth and work life. Ayesha, the main character, must traverse a violent and socially fragmented Karachi,

which affects her emotional condition and social connections. It is evident through this quote:

> "Where am I ever going to find a guy in the wasteland that is Karachi where it's easier to hire an assassin than meet an attractive, intelligent, normal single man?" (Imtiaz 17).

This illustrates how her everyday life impacts her identity and perspective and showcasing her effort to find purpose in a turbulent environment. According to Michel de Certeau, a city's physical surroundings influence its residents' ideas, feelings, and behaviors. This quote demonstrates how Karachi's chaotic atmosphere has a significant impact on Ayesha's psychological state. The city's fragmented and unpredictable nature leads Ayesha to feel isolated and desperate in her search for a "normal" life. Her larger need for peace and stability is symbolized by her inability to make meaningful connections in a 20 million-person city. To Ayesha, the city is a desolate place because the tight rules keep her from living the way she wants and direct how she views both herself and others, especially when looking for love. Ayesha points out that, unlike in other places, it's often easier in Karachi to arrange for an assassination than to find someone to date. Her job as a reporter, dealing with routine dates and dangerous incidents, is shown by this irony. Post-colonial identity issues are seen in her failure to identify a standard kind of man. According to De Certeau, the organization of the city affects its citizens and given Karachi's dangerous streets, his grandmother is prevented from practicing her own ways. The idea from Stuart Hall's theory that postcolonial identities are mixed and somewhat fragmented helps us understand Ayesha's situation in Karachi. Her shaky social position and difficult associations are the result of both Karachi's colonial history and today's political environment. With the city's violent and unsettled past, she is less able to keep up traditional beliefs while reaching for contemporary targets. In a divided postcolonial society, Ayesha's quest for "an attractive, intelligent, normal" person actually represents her quest to unite her sense of self. The concept of colonial legacies in Hall's theory backs de Certeau's opinion that people's own narratives are a part of the city's development. Political and social events in Karachi shape the daily habits of its residents and vice versa, since its residents influence the environment with what they do. De Certeau distinguishes in "*The Practice of Everyday Life"* how people experience things differently than the city is designed and promoted to them. Ayesha's personal stories in Karachi exemplify de Certeau's

concept of "spatial stories," since her travels give the city memory and significance. Her experiences in various neighborhoods provide a counter-narrative to the institutionalized image of the city, emphasizing the interaction between her identity and the urban landscape. Ayesha's psycho-geographic experience also reflects the intersection of her personal and public life, illustrating how the city both shapes and is shaped by its inhabitants. Ayesha's statement, “It’s Karachi. It’s where life and love come to die. It has nothing.” (Imtiaz 154). reflects the deep hopelessness tied to Karachi's socio-political instability. It portrays the city as a place where dreams, love, and life are stifled due to the constant turmoil. Imtiaz's depiction emphasizes how the instability in Karachi overshadows personal aspirations and relationships, leading to resignation and despair among its inhabitants. Stuart Hall's notion of colonial legacies is reflected in Ayesha's interactions with the socio-political dynamics of Karachi. The city is portrayed as a character in itself, with its historical complexities influencing Ayesha’s identity. She expresses a love-hate relationship with Karachi, stating, “I hate living in Karachi, but it can be so heart breakingly beautiful when it sets its mind to it”. (Imtiaz. p. 44). This ambivalence mirrors the colonial past, where the remnants of power dynamics and cultural conflicts continue to affect contemporary life. Ayesha's life as a journalist involves navigating the city's dangers, bomb blasts, political unrest, and societal chaos while simultaneously finding beauty in its culture, resilience, and the everyday moments that bring joy. Despite the city's difficulties, the term "heartbreakingly beautiful" implies that there are times of great beauty and connection that make it worthwhile to live there. While looking for love in the busy city of Karachi, she encounters both happy and sad moments and both gladness and sorrow. The book explores this duality in detail throughout its chapters. Ayesha demonstrates how one’s identity can be shaped by the effects of European colonies and cities. The book features Ayesha because her experiences reflect the challenges and memorable side of city life which are important issues today. As violence, economic imbalance and identity problems affect the city, it changes the lives of people living there. The book questions common stories and what society expects by telling of Ayesha’s struggles with modernization and its effects.

4.3 Social Disparities

Moth Smoke clearly demonstrates the gap between rich and poor in Lahore. Wealthy neighbour-hoods such as Gulberg and Defence symbolize privilege and

Western influence, while the older, deteriorating areas, like the Walled City, are characterized by congestion, neglect, and poverty. These divisions underscore the social and economic disparities that shape postcolonial identity. The elite reside in gated communities, insulated from the city's chaos, exemplifying a postcolonial hierarchy where wealth and power are concentrated among a select few, relegating the majority to the margins.

> "There are two social classes in Pakistan,' Professor Superb said to his unsuspecting audience,…….. which they hope will gain them admittance to an air-conditioned heaven, or, at the very least, a long, cool drink during a fiery day in hell.' (Hamid p 122-123).

This passage from the novel sums up the stark contrast between two classes of Lahore. Lahore is characterized as a city sharply divided by class, where the affluent elite benefit from luxury homes, expensive cars, and air conditioning, in contrast to the impoverished classes who endure poverty, power outages, and harsh living conditions.

The narrative explores the entrenched social inequalities in Pakistani society, emphasizing the decadence and corruption that permeates into the privileged class in Lahore. It addresses issues including tax evasion, the misuse of public facilities, and the political connections between landowners and the ruling class. Describing the ways in which Pakistan's political system is still shaped by inequalities from colonial days, these themes follow Stuart Hall's belief in colonial legacies. This background which results in a situation where some have power and resources while others do not, upholds a state of lawlessness and widens social inequality. As the story shows, there is much corruption and wide financial gaps and this is seen clearly in Darashikoh Shehzad's role as he experiences the unfair privileges of the elite and deals with little money for himself. How Daru and his friend Ozi live proves how common these differences are.

> "She does. It's a solitaire diamond, simple and probably worth almost a year of my salary at the bank, when the bank paid me a salary. She puts it down on the bench behind her." (Hamid p 135).

This quote reflects the enduring legacies of colonialism embedded in class structure and wealth distribution. The diamond is not just jewelry, it is a relic of inherited privilege. The fact that it's "probably worth almost a year of my salary at the bank" reminds us that wealth in postcolonial societies like Pakistan is often concentrated among a few

families whose elite status was secured or even enhanced during colonial rule. This wealth gap is not natural but historically produced, shaped by colonial systems of administration, land ownership, and economic exclusion. Hall argues that identity and class consciousness are not fixed but are constructed within cultural and historical narratives. Here, the diamond is a signifier in that narrative, reflecting how postcolonial elites continue to perform wealth as a natural entitlement, while the formerly colonized remain trapped in economic insecurity.

From Michel de Certeau's theory of everyday practices, the moment when she "puts it down on the bench behind her" is a subtle yet powerful act that illustrates how the elite inhabit space and material objects differently. De Certeau emphasizes how everyday gestures reflect broader social hierarchies and negotiations of power. To Mumtaz, the diamond is casual, just something to place down without worry. But for Daru, who represents the lower-middle class trying to climb an elitist social ladder, this casual gesture is almost incomprehensible. The act of placing an object of immense value so carelessly becomes a practice of privilege, showing how the elite navigate daily life with an unconscious sense of security and entitlement that those beneath them can neither afford nor imagine.

In short, this moment is not just about a ring, it encapsulates a deep class divide, shaped by colonial pasts and reproduced through everyday actions. Daru's economic vulnerability contrasts sharply with Mumtaz's casual display of wealth, laying bare the psychological and social distances between their worlds. This is precisely where Hall and de Certeau intersect: identity and social relations are lived, embodied, and performed in everyday moments, carrying the weight of history and inequality into the now.

The lives of Daru and Murad Badshah are struggling, while Ozi and Mumtaz represent the wealthy and powerful. To display wider social and economic divisions in Pakistan, the author shows the city of Lahore divided into various regions based on how wealthy families are. Because there is not much money to go around, this division increases tension and resentment which can make some people turn to crime for survival. The effect of both division and poverty at the community level is seen in Daru's journey towards addiction and crime. Class, place and life experience are connected in the novel and the city's geography is proof of social injustice and people's difficulties.

In *The Spinner's Tale,* ASP Omar Abbasi and Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi (Ausi), the two major characters, eloquently depict social inequalities. Both characters come from low-income families and attend prestigious universities, which emphasizes their outsider status. Their ongoing struggle to define themselves in a culture that values connections and money over ability makes this alienation a major issue. Their psychological states and decisions are influenced by the physical landscape of Karachi, which is characterized by sharp contrasts between wealthy neighbourhoods and destitute ones: "They may have shared a bench with him in school, but for them he would always be the village schoolmaster's son" (Hamid 7). This quote reflects the colonial-era mindsets of people who are divided into social stratification based on their economic conditions. The quote reflects the attitude of SP Omer Abbasi's batchmates towards him. Though he is a brilliant student, his rich classmates keep a discriminative behavior with him because of his village background. De Certeau's theory that urban settings influence people's experiences and actions is shown in this. As they traverse various environments, the characters demonstrate their battles against structural injustices that shape their decisions in life. As it is evident through this quote from the text:

> "Sohail can't help us because he died trying to uphold some stupid ideal of the Party that never existed in the first place. They fucked Sohail for years, but he never got any benefit out of it for himself. The only difference between me and him is that I know how to get something back for myself after being fucked."(Hamid 102).

The quote reflects how class disparities and political corruption shape individual fates in The Spinner's Tale. Sohail is portrayed as an idealist who is exploited by the political system and gains nothing in return, highlighting how those from lower social classes are used but never rewarded. In contrast, Ausi embraces cynicism and manipulates the system for personal gain, showing that survival in a corrupt society often requires abandoning principles. The quote ultimately critiques how political ideals become meaningless for the powerless and how class influences who benefits from political structures. The interpretation is further enhanced by Stuart Hall's post-colonialist philosophy. It explores the way in which colonialism makes class conflicts and identities in Pakistani society more severe. Because they feel marginalized and the impact of earlier persecution remains, some people might become radical. In his

opinion, our identity could change based on different historical circumstances which we notice in these observations. We see in the novel that people from underprivileged classes face obstacles in their identities due to the continued practices of established institutions. Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi's life focuses to show that social and political unfairness often turns young people towards terrorism. The text discusses how disparities in society and the economy in Pakistan lead to leaders who misuse their power and who are linked with acts of terror. At the time, many young men who had been educated fell under radical influence and as the protagonist is young and educated, he joins this trend. Social injustice plays a major role in changing both the actions of the characters and the main story in *The Spinner's Tale.* It helps us see why an individual like Ausi is radicalized due to the numerous issues and unfairness in society. Once the main character experiences political injustice, unequal treatment in money matters and social loneliness, he takes a harder approach. Many people end up feeling discouraged and acting violently, so it's obvious that tackling what causes extremism is necessary. Different kinds of social injustice exist. Because Ausi's father cannot not pay for his airfare, the protagonist cannot continue his higher education as his friends continued. From here Ausi's journey of struggles started, which led him to the unfair political influence in his college days, eventually ending up being a terrorist. The novel reveals that corruption in government bodies leads to justice being denied and makes people feel dejected. When someone's socioeconomic standing makes them feel apart from society, it fuels anger, estrangement and renews extremism and violence.

In the novel *Karachi You're Killing Me*, the city of Karachi like many postcolonial places, is divided by vast social differences and the influence of power. Ayesha's character is formed by these opposing influences. The author highlights the big differences between the rich and poor people in the city. The writer uses Ayesha's meetings with people from various social positions to highlight matters of privilege, corruption and social injustice. Inequality in both wealth and opportunities frequently appears as a key topic in stories about Karachi. The mix of rich and conflict-hit neighbourhoods in Karachi results in an interesting variety of visual scenes. Ayesha pointed out that certain affluent neighborhoods in Karachi such as Clifton and Defence, look like sealed-off bubbles because they do not connect with other parts of the city. Because these areas have towering walls, gated access and their own security, they seem exclusive and special. According to Ayesha, many wealthy individuals often meet in

these areas to participate in social events and parties to network. Saba Imtiaz's work illustrates the socioeconomic inequalities in Karachi by contrasting the wealth of elite mansions with the poverty of squatter settlements. The protagonist's journey through these diverse urban spaces underscores the deep economic divides that define the city's landscape. Imtiaz describes the spatial differences as:

> "He's pointing to a massive three-storey mansion just behind the roadblock that looks like a copy of an ancient Greek temple. There are towering columns, more white marble than in the Taj Mahal, and the boundary walls are layered with barbed wire." (Imtiaz. 11).

The mansion, resembling an ancient Greek temple with excessive marble, towering columns, and barbed wire, symbolizes wealth, power, and exclusivity. The grandeur and fortified boundaries highlight the social elite's desire to separate themselves from society. The use of Greek architecture, reflecting Western classical antiquity, further shows the elite's alignment with Western ideals, distancing themselves from local culture. Furthermore "We pass by similar mansions, each one's walls higher than the next." (Imtiaz 12). The mention of similar mansions, each with higher walls, reinforces the idea of socio-economic disparity. These physical barriers not only separate the wealthy from the poor but also highlight the social and psychological distance between these groups. The higher the walls, the more significant the exclusion, as the rich retreat into their enclaves, away from the problems of the city.

On the other hand, Ayesha also observes the crowded and chaotic streets of Karachi's low-income neighbourhood, such as Lyari and Orangi. These neighbourhood are characterized by their narrow alleys, open drains, and makeshift homes, which create a sense of claustrophobia and desperation. Ayesha notes that these neighborhoods are often the site of gang violence, drug trafficking, and other criminal activities. Through Ayesha's experiences and observations, the novel explores the relationship between the physical environment of Karachi and the emotions and behaviors of its inhabitants.

> "We're speeding through a maze of small houses on what used to be railway tracks, land that people have been squatting on for decades now. The cab splashes through a stream of muddy water and drives through a patch of bushes". (Imtiaz. 191).

The small houses on former railway tracks, where people have squatted for decades, symbolize the marginalized sections of society. These cramped, chaotic spaces, lacking basic amenities and surrounded by neglect, sharply contrast with the polished, fortified mansions of the wealthy. This juxtaposition highlights the growing divide between the affluent elite, who protect their wealth with barriers, and the poor, who struggle in dilapidated environments. The fragmented, unequal nature of Karachi as depicted in the novel reflects Hall's view of postcolonial identity as shaped by power relations and uneven development. The novel also highlights how Karachi's infrastructure, politics, and social dynamics create a sense of "ordered disorder" that Ayesha must constantly navigate. The frequent power outages, traffic jams, and security threats transform the city into a labyrinth that Ayesha must skillfully manoeuvre, often relying on her wit and resourcefulness.

4.4 Socio-political and Socio-economic Conditions

Pakistan's sociopolitical situation offers an excellent framework for researching postcolonial identity and psychogeography in Pakistani literature. These novels explore Pakistan's metropolitan environments and sociopolitical context, highlighting the intricate relationships between location, identity, and power. The urban experiences portrayed in these works are greatly influenced by the contemporary socio-political milieu in Pakistan, which is marked by political instability, economic difficulties, and social tensions.The unstable socio-political and socio-economic status of the country leads to inflation and unemployment, which then leads to rise in crimes.

In *Moth Smoke*, Hamid captures Lahore simmering with both literal heat and political tension, set against the backdrop of Pakistan’s emergence as a nuclear power in the late 1990s. The narrative unfolds in a moment when the country’s nuclear tests have stirred nationalist pride abroad but intensified economic strain at home, as international sanctions deepen inflation and widen class divisions.

> “My bad one won’t double the price of petrol. It won’t send tomatoes to a hundred rupees a kilo…… You boys think we’ve done a great thing. But you’ll see. Difficult times are ahead.” (Hamid 159-160).

In this passage Hamid places us inside the cramped, sweaty space of a rickshaw depot, where national pride over Pakistan’s nuclear tests collides with the harsh arithmetic of daily survival. On the surface, the banter between “Sindhi cap,” “sweaty nose,” and

Murad Badshah feels like casual tea-stall conversation, borrowed political slogans, telling a portrait of postcolonial Pakistan's socio-political and socio-economic reality.

Through Hall's lens of postcolonial identity, the exchange captures how national selfhood in a postcolonial state is not fixed but constantly negotiated. For Sindhi cap and sweaty nose, the nuclear bomb is more than a weapon, it is a symbolic restoration of dignity in a world where, as they point out, "the Christians… the Jews… the Hindus" already possess it. In their eyes, to have "the Muslim bomb" is to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other global powers, erasing the historical sense of vulnerability inherited from colonial subjugation. This pride, however, comes with an unspoken bargain: the poor will tighten their belts, "eat half as much," even "eat grass" if necessary. Hall reminds us that such identities are always shaped by power here, the discourse of sovereignty is constructed in a way that normalises sacrifice from those with the least to give.

Murad Badshah's response breaks that nationalistic rhythm. He shifts the focus from symbolic victory to the concrete needs of survival: the cost of petrol, the price of tomatoes, rent for the depot. His insistence that "my roof protects me, my full belly protects me" reframes security in human and material terms, not in military abstractions. Hall's idea of identity as "a matter of becoming as well as being" is visible here. Murad refuses to become a passive participant in a national identity built on hardship for the poor.

de Certeau's theory explains how large-scale political acts reshape the lived experience of urban space. For the rickshaw drivers, nuclear tests are not just historical events; they ripple through the streets of Lahore, altering the mental and emotional map of the city. If petrol prices rise and markets like Lakshmi Chowk are reduced to selling only "boiled onions," the drivers' tactics, longer hours, different routes, and mechanical improvisations must change. Where the state's "strategy" is to project power on a global stage ("shake mountains"), the drivers' "tactics" operate on the ground, ensuring daily survival in a city whose geography is quietly but relentlessly transformed by political decisions.

Hamid situates his characters within this volatile socio-political climate, where the state projects strength through nuclear capability while its citizens navigate crumbling infrastructure, unreliable electricity, and shrinking economic opportunities.

4.5 Corruption

Corruption leads a nation into struggles and frowns on its economy due to higher poverty and inequality among citizens. Corruption is portrayed in *Moth Smoke* as a structural problem that is intricately linked to power relations in Pakistani society. The story depicts a society in which wealth determines moral and legal results by showing how the wealthy, represented by figures like Khurram Shah, use institutions to avoid justice. The struggle of the main character, Dara Shikoh Shehzad, is intricately linked to both structural and personal corruption, illustrating how the elite in postcolonial Pakistan consolidates control. Daru's journey of decline and self-destruction starts when he loses his job at a bank because of a corrupt feudal lord Malik Jiwan, he becomes isolated and marginalized by his wealthy friends. The elite, like his friend Ozi, are part of a corrupt system that benefits from inherited power, wealth, and connections, an extension of the colonial legacy where the ruling class remains in control of resources and influence.

From Hall's perspective, corruption in Moth Smoke can be seen as an outcome of colonial social hierarchies that have not been dismantled but repurposed by a local elite. Hall argues that post-colonial societies grapple with internalized colonial legacies, leading to a reconfiguration of social hierarchies and moral ambiguities. Ozi and other wealthy characters exploit their power through patron-client relationships, cronyism, and political ties. In Ozi's words " Some say my dad's corrupt and I'm his money launderer. Well, it's true enough…… He wanted his piece. And I want mine". (Hamid 218). This passage illustrates that Ozi justifies his father's corruption in the backdrop of systemic corruption in society, and it also results from corrupt political policies which made Khurram Shah to indulge into unfair means.

In this light, Dara's descent into crime, such as drug dealing and theft, can be seen as a byproduct of his exclusion from the corrupt but thriving upper-class system. His frustration and inability to navigate these power dynamics reflect the postcolonial struggle for identity and survival in a world that continues to prioritize the elite over the disenfranchised.

The novel portrays corruption as a tool of the elite to maintain their power and privilege. This is evident in the novel as "You have to have money these days. The roads are falling apart,..... so if you love your family, you'd better take your piece

now, while there's still some left. That's what I'm doing". (Hamid 218). Corruption is depicted as a mechanism that perpetuates economic inequality. The novel emphasizes how politicians and corporations take advantage of the poor and disenfranchised by giving them bribes and other illicit advantages. The novel demonstrates the pervasiveness of corruption in institutions, which impacts not only people but also the social fabric. This is demonstrated by Ozi's character, who endures hardships as a result of Daru's disdain and social pressure, highlighting the effects of institutional corruption on both people and society at large. Characters in the text represent this battle, showing how corruption is a structural result of past exploitation and neocolonial dependencies rather than just an external problem. This viewpoint demonstrates the ways in which identity, social standards, and the legacy of colonialism are all related to corruption. Because of these postcolonial power systems, a small number of people hold the majority of the wealth and privileges, leaving others like Dara who are unable to enter these networks at risk of moral and financial degradation.

In *The Spinner's Tale*, S. Hamid presents corruption not as a mere backdrop but as a central force shaping Karachi's political and social realities. The novel reveals a city where political parties, law enforcement, and militant groups are enmeshed in a web of mutual benefit, each exploiting the other's weaknesses. This systemic corruption erodes justice, deepens social inequality, and leaves ordinary citizens disillusioned and vulnerable.

"And I am sure, knowing our wonderful department, that everyone else must have washed their hands off you." (Hamid 57). This quote offers a sharp, almost weary observation on the entrenched culture of corruption within Pakistan's institutional machinery. The speaker's irony in calling it a "wonderful department" is not meant as praise but as a knowing jab at a system whose inefficiency and moral decay are so familiar that they are no longer shocking. In saying that "everyone else must have washed their hands off you," the remark lays bare how state officials routinely distance themselves from responsibility when a case becomes politically inconvenient, personally risky, or simply too much trouble.

Here, corruption is not limited to the taking of bribes or the manipulation of records; it is a deeper root of institutional apathy. This is a form of corruption that operates through inaction, through the quiet decision to do nothing, thereby allowing

injustice to fester. It reflects a cynical understanding among those inside the system: survival and self-preservation outweigh duty, truth, or justice.

In the novel's broader context, such evasion of responsibility is not benign neglect; it is a complicity that enables violence, militancy, and political manipulation to flourish. By showing how easily officials *"wash their hands"* of their obligations, S.Hamid reveals a state apparatus where corruption has become an accepted operating mode, woven into the everyday logic of governance. It is precisely this culture of disengagement that feeds the lawlessness and radicalisation central to the novel's urban landscape.

Through the character of Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi, S.Hamid illustrates how corrupt systems enable the rise of extremism. Sufi's journey from a promising, educated youth to a hardened militant is inseparable from the failures of political institutions, the police, and the judiciary. In this world, religious ideals are manipulated for personal gain, and moral values are bent to serve the ambitions of the powerful.

Corruption in the novel is therefore both structural and moral,it distorts governance, cripples the justice system, and warps religion into a tool for control. Hamid's portrayal makes it clear that such conditions do not merely allow militancy to thrive; they actively cultivate it, turning personal grievances into fuel for organized violence.

4.6 Urban Crime, Violence and Insecurity

The novel Moth Smoke critiques the impact of neoliberal policies on the marginalized, highlighting how these factors contribute to a cycle of violence and moral decay in contemporary Pakistani society. "Your pores will get out of shape if you rely on ACs for your cooling,...……. and he embraced Dara Shikoh as a partner when the latter fell from cooling." (Hamid 124). This passage highlights the urban crime and violence in the backdrop of social stratification, systematic injustice, and animosity in postcolonial Pakistan. Hamid explores the reasons underlying criminal behaviour while criticizing the urban elite's privileges by focusing on the beliefs and deeds of Murad Badshah.

The division of the "cooled" elite and "uncooled" underprivileged represents the widespread socioeconomic gap in cities. Murad Badshah disdains the rich because he thinks their luxury is undeserved and sustained at the expense of the less privileged.

His joy at seeing the rich suffer during load shedding is a manifestation of class resentment, which fuels his justification for committing crimes. The passage criticizes "hereditary entitlements" that perpetuate urban violence by fostering structural inequity. Murad's question, "Why should you be cooled?" draws attention to the arbitrariness of privilege and the exclusion of the majority from resources like air conditioning and electricity, which are necessary for survival in Pakistan's harsh urban climate.

The recurring theme of load-shedding represents the failure of infrastructure in urban Pakistan. It symbolizes the systemic neglect of the lower classes while also being a rare equalizer when the wealthy experience discomfort. Murad's delight in the wealthy's momentary suffering underscores the frustration of those perpetually oppressed by systemic inequities. Murad defends his illegal activities, such as his "piracy campaign against yellow cabs," as an example of vigilante justice. He opposes ingrained systems of privilege and entitlement that marginalize the masses and sees crime as a tool for wealth redistribution. This reflects how urban crime can arise as a reaction to systemic inequalities in cities, as it is evident through another quote:

> The marauding yellow cabs had devastated the rickshaw industry, so I conducted a little redistribution of wealth on my own. Robbing yellow cab drivers as they slept put my finances back in the black." (Hamid 74).

Murad's actions against air-conditioned yellow cabs are a manifestation of his opposition to the unbridled modernization of metropolitan areas, which enriches the rich while excluding the poor. His opposition to air conditioning serves as a metaphor for his disapproval of a system that puts luxury ahead of equity. For people disenfranchised by the city's power systems, his pirate campaign and partnership with Darashikoh are instances of agency. In this situation, urban violence turns into a means for the marginalized to assert themselves and challenge the status quo.

> "You see, it is my passionately held belief that the right to possess property is at best a contingent one…….. for history has shown that the inaction of the working classes perpetuates their subjugation." (Hamid 76).

The statement, "the very poor have a duty to… steal from the very rich" turns urban crime from a legal offence into a form of active retaliation within the volatile social fabric of postcolonial Lahore. It presents theft not as an isolated criminal act but as part

of a larger cycle of urban violence born from inequality. Through Stuart Hall's lens, this view dismantles the moral legitimacy of property rights, arguing that in contexts of extreme disparity, the ethical claim to survival outweighs the law's defence of wealth. Resistance here is sharpened into confrontation: the poor are not merely avoiding starvation, they are striking back at the structures that keep them oppressed. Michel de Certeau's theory of everyday practices helps frame these actions as tactical disruptions within the city's spatial order, petty thefts and acts of violence become guerrilla strategies against the dominance of the elite. In Lahore's compressed urban geography, where luxury enclaves stand beside crumbling neighbourhoods, the city itself becomes a breeding ground for revenge. Crime in this context is inseparable from violence, it is a statement of defiance etched into the city's streets.

Imtiaz's novel illuminates the chaotic and frequently hazardous urban atmosphere of Karachi through a darkly humorous portrayal of the life of Ayesha, a journalist working there. According to Ayesha, Karachi is a metropolis on the verge of collapse where political unrest and daily bloodshed are commonplace. Ayesha's personality and her sceptical yet resolute attitude on life are shaped by the city's landscape, which is characterized by bombings, riots, and regular crime. From terrorist attacks to street crime, Karachi is seen as a violent city. The story is infused with a persistent sense of danger, mirroring the actual struggles that Karachi's citizens experience. This theme underscores the resilience required to live in such an environment and the impact of chronic insecurity on daily life. The quote "The juice guy has a security guard, for the love of god, because he's scared someone will make off with his day's earnings and the canned pineapples."(Imtiaz 158) humorously highlights the absurdity and resilience of life in Karachi. It displays a humorous coping strategy while simultaneously acknowledging the city's hazards in a sardonic manner. "For the love of god" highlights how absurd it is to require security for something as commonplace as selling juice. This dramatization highlights the absurdities Karachi inhabitants deal with on a daily basis and implies that comedy may be a survival tactic even in the most terrible circumstances. This quotation captures the psychological effects of residing in a setting where even routine tasks carry a high risk. It depicts Karachi citizens' daily lives, where they must continuously deal with the fear of crime and violence.

The novel depicts Karachi as a city plagued by a lack of law and order, where the financially powerful can dictate the actions of law enforcement. Ayesha navigates the city's dangerous streets, constantly worried about muggings and other threats to her safety.The novel highlights the traumatic effects of urban violence on its characters, particularly the protagonist Ayesha. The constant exposure to violence and the threat of violence creates a sense of perpetual fear and anxiety, which affects her mental health and well-being. Ayesha shows her concern about Saad in the words “But you know I’m perpetually worried and tense living in Karachi and I just don’t want to have to worry about you as well.”. (Imtiaz 158). This quote reflects the intense anxiety and constant state of vigilance that comes with living in Karachi, a city marked by instability, violence, and crime. Ayesha's exhaustion from worrying not only about themselves but also about those she cares about highlights the heavy emotional weight carried by Karachi's residents. It also suggests a desire for some relief or a sense of security, which seems unattainable in the current circumstances.

In *The Spinner’s Tale,* the theme of urban crime and violence emerges through its portrayal of Karachi as a city where political instability, corruption, and militant extremism intertwine. S. Hamid depicts a landscape where crime is not random but embedded within the city’s socio-political fabric, militant groups, criminal gangs, and corrupt officials operate in collusion, blurring the lines between state authority and lawlessness. Violence becomes both a survival strategy and a tool of power, shaping the identities of individuals like Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi, whose radicalization is tied to the city’s fractured order. The novel presents urban crime not merely as an outcome of poverty or lawlessness, but as a symptom of deeper systemic decay, where the city’s geography, politics, and history feed a cycle of unrest and brutality.

> “The rest of the entry dealt with the Sheikh’s known career, how he had been trained in Afghanistan, gained notoriety in Kashmir by kidnapping western tourists, and, of course, his infamous cases, the murder of the journalist and the attacks on the President” (S. Hamid 13-14).

This quoted passage detailing Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi’s militant trajectory encapsulates how urban crime and violence are not isolated acts but deeply interwoven with the socio-political and spatial fabric of postcolonial Pakistan. Stuart Hall’s post-colonial theory provides a lens to understand how the Sheikh’s identity is shaped within the legacies of colonial power, foreign interventions, and fractured national narratives.

His path from militant training in Afghanistan to acts of high-profile violence in Kashmir and Karachi reflects a postcolonial condition where inherited state structures and geopolitical pressures create fertile ground for violent actors to emerge as both products and agents of instability. The Sheikh's career becomes a form of counter-narrative to state authority, positioning him simultaneously as a figure of fear and resistance in the urban imagination.

de Certeau's theory reveals how the Sheikh's violent acts reconfigure urban space. His kidnappings, assassinations, and attacks not only disrupt the physical rhythms of the city but also inscribe fear, power, and surveillance into Karachi's geography. Public squares, presidential compounds, and journalistic hubs, spaces once associated with civic life, are transformed into contested zones, charged with political symbolism and memories of violence. These acts alter the mental maps of the city's inhabitants, forcing them to navigate spaces that are no longer neutral but marked by the shadow of militancy.

4.7 Cultural Fragmentation in Karachi You're Killing Me

Karachi is displayed as divided into segments based on race, religion and ethnicity. The way that Ayesha moves around the city demonstrates how space is divided and how these divides affect social interactions. Her understanding of the city and her position within it is impacted by this fragmentation. The shattered identity of a postcolonial country is reflected in Karachi's cultural dispersion. The postcolonial desire for self-definition in a society influenced by colonial history is similar to Ayesha's effort to define herself in the face of these divisions. In the story, Karachi is portrayed as a multicultural metropolis with a fascinating population mix. Contradictions are a result of this diversity, though. This quote: "He tells me about his nephew who was shot in broad daylight when a thug from an anti-Pashtun political party heard the Pashto song that was his phone's ringtone". (Imtiaz 19). illustrates how intersectionality is evident in the context of Karachi, shaping the everyday life of its residents and their experiences according to violence, power, and ethnicity. This quotation alludes to the ethnic disputes and tensions that exist in Karachi, a busy metropolis. Similar to the post-colonial fight of different ethnic groups in Pakistan for their representation of power, this reference to Pashto songs and anti-Pashtun political parties highlights ethnic identity-based tensions and conflicts in Karachi. It shows violence in which a person is shot because of their ethnicity. This violence is a prime

example of how oppression and power relations interact with ethnicity and other identity markers to produce violent acts as a form of control or dominance.

Sipah-e-Sahaba protests, with young men screaming “Death to Shias,” are a clear sign of the uncertainty and division of religious beliefs mentioned in the book. Because of sectarian conflict, the community’s diverse population suffers from a lack of common identity, leading to deaths and increasing hatred between ethnic and religious groups. Those suffering from insecurity and constant danger in their surroundings are likely to develop psychological problems, a result of sectarian divisions in their city.

Karachi’s tumultuous situation puts Ayesha in a constant state of exploration of who she is. Her experiences of violence, societal disagreements and unstable surroundings are a result of trying to fit in with a split group. All these painfully familiar problems, like power failures, bad traffic and security stops, mirror Ayesha’s sense of confusion and lack of control. Sometimes she describes how she feels like she doesn’t have power, with the city seeming to break down around her. In places where colonial history lingers after independence, people’s identity can break apart much like how Karachi is slowly falling apart. The author outlines that Karachi is characterized by political ruckus, frequent bloodshed and struggles with money. Such unrest comes from the larger state that still holds colonial legacies, as seen in how people in society are still divided. Her time spent in areas threatened by violence shows the typical hardships faced by postcolonial residents as they try to make sense of their past and present. As a result of blending diverse elements like postmodernism, tradition, violence and fear, the novel reveals the city’s conflict as it tries to unite its many often conflicting characters.

4.8 Hybridity and Cultural Negotiation

History, culture and the way power is organized shape a person’s identity and according to Stuart Hall, this shape can change. Lahore in Moth Smoke is portrayed as a city navigating its colonial past and modern influences. It is a city of contrasts where the elite enjoy Westernized luxuries while the poor struggle in a postcolonial, feudal system. The elites have adopted ideas from the West, consumption habits and popular ways of life. Imported products and Western culture obsessions by the upper classes

reflect that they are not connected to the poor. The characters go back and forth between Asian traditions and West-style living, struggling to unite their identity.

Shuja's house is a powerful example of cultural identity and hybridity from the text, as Hamid writes “When I arrive at Shuja’s family’s compound, I notice the boundary wall is topped with jagged glass……as if it’s uncertain whether it wants to be the Taj Mahal or the Acropolis when it grows up.” (Hamid 215).

Hamid offers more than just a visual description of Shuja’s family home. He constructs a symbolic space where the complexities of cultural identity and hybridity are laid bare. The house, described as “gaudy, huge and white, with massive columns and pediments and domes and even a fake minaret,” appears architecturally confused, as if caught in a crisis of self-definition. Hamid’s satirical remark that it is “uncertain whether it wants to be the Taj Mahal or the Acropolis when it grows up” draws attention to the deeper cultural ambiguity embedded in postcolonial identity. This house is not simply a residence, it is a manifestation of a hybrid identity shaped by colonial histories and modern aspirations.

Stuart Hall’s theory of cultural identity helps us unpack this hybridity. Hall argues that identity is not a static essence inherited from the past; rather, it is a positioning, a product of history, culture, and representation. Identity is always in flux, constructed through ongoing dialogues between the colonial past and the postcolonial present. In this context, the architectural clash of Mughal-inspired domes and colonial-era pediments becomes emblematic of a fractured identity, one that borrows from competing cultural legacies but lacks an authentic center. The hybridity on display here is not harmonious; it is marked by contradiction and excess. The fake minaret standing alongside Greco-Roman features suggests not cultural fusion, but confusion. A forced attempt to reconcile Eastern heritage with Western grandeur. The result is a performance of status rooted in mimicry, where symbols are emptied of cultural meaning and used instead as tools of elitist display.

This is further complicated by the socio-political markers surrounding the home. The presence of armed guards “men with serious mustaches and shotguns” evokes a feudal order that persists beneath the surface of urban modernity. Shuja, despite his Westernized persona, is revealed to be the product of a powerful landowning class. This clash between outward cosmopolitanism and inherited feudalism illustrates Hall’s idea

of the hybrid postcolonial subject, one who inhabits multiple cultural spaces but belongs fully to none.

Thus this passage exposes how the urban elite in postcolonial Pakistan construct identity not through rooted cultural narratives, but through assemblages of borrowed grandeur and historical residue. The house becomes a metaphor for postcolonial cultural identity, a site of hybridity, shaped by mimicry, anxiety, and historical contradiction. Through Hall's lens, we come to see that identity in the postcolonial city is always contingent, always performed, and always haunted by what it seeks to transcend.

The private parties and modern homes in upper-class neighborhoods show how some postcolonial elite groups choose Western style while retaining their privileges. Daru, who used to belong to this world, now finds himself apart, giving even more prominence to his mixed sense of identity. As his social position decreases, he moves through the dirty alleys, drug houses and very hot places in Lahore. In these intermediate places, he begins to suffer from mental health issues, just as his identity has become broken. In Lahore, since Daru is searching for peace, the packed and hot streets stand for the troubles following colonialism. Daru is both literally and figuratively confined, in contrast to Ozi, who enjoys the luxury of freedom from this discomfort (air-conditioned cars and apartments). Dara's separation from the world represents the identity confusion happening in society at the time.

Karachi You're Killing Me examines the intricacies of identity, culture, and belonging in a city that is changing quickly like Karachi, frequently returns to the idea of hybridity. Ayesha, the main character, strives to situate herself in a world that is a fusion of East and West, traditional and modern, wealthy and impoverished. Ayesha blends traditions from Pakistan and trends and cultures from the wider world. Her process of selecting friends, deciding on a career and living her life reflects a large variety of cultural traditions. According to Hall, Traveller stands up for herself without breaking the rules of her culture. The city's cultural mix also demonstrates another form of hybridity. It is featured as a place where different traditions, languages, religions and modern-day living mix. Afterwards, when she heads out to the bars with some men from her office, she reveals her other aspect. Ayesha feels torn between modern Western perspectives and her country's traditions. Partying helps her balance all her different parts. Hall felt that self-understanding changes with every cultural interaction

and this idea is linked to hybridity. Going from the grand parties to the crowded streets in Karachi proves that Ayesha's sense of self is very broad. A traditional country influences a modern woman to explore who she is by visiting many places and engaging in society. The city helps show the author's view of both calmness and chaos, while the parties Ayesha attends show how Western ideas affect her society. Sending foreign correspondents and trying to get work with global media are other ways colonialism has shaped Ayesha. It connects to Hall's approach to diaspora and the identity found in postcolonial cultures.

4.9 Alienation and Betrayal

Hall argues that colonial legacies have created class gaps which is depicted in *Moth Smoke* by the isolation of Daru from his social circle. He can't find peace with his conflicting sense of self. The character of Lahore becomes an instrument that indicates the city splits society into rich and poor, socially and economically. After the colonial era, people in these countries have a combined or challenged identity that carries on due to its colonial past. Because of the gulf between social classes, Darashikoh Shehzad (Daru), feels disconnected.

> "The driveway, made of brick and in better condition than most roads in the city, purrs under my tires. We park near the farmhouse, big and low, with wide verandas, and I notice the difference in the sounds of slamming car doors: the deep thuds of the Pajero and Land Cruiser, the nervous cough of my Suzuki. (Hamid 96).

This quote draws attention to the subtle yet deeply alienating experience of class difference through the sensory imagery of sound and space. The protagonist, Daru, notices how "the driveway, made of brick and in better condition than most roads in the city, purrs under my tires," immediately marking the entrance into a world of privilege. It's not just the visual contrast between the rich farmhouse and the dilapidated city, it's how this elite space feels and sounds that disorients him. The line about the difference in car door sounds "the deep thuds of the Pajero and Land Cruiser, the nervous cough of my Suzuki" is particularly poignant. Here, Stuart Hall's concept of alienation helps us understand the psychological rupture Daru is undergoing. Hall suggests that in postcolonial societies, identity is not unified or fixed; it is fragmented, shaped through processes of exclusion and inequality.

Daru's observation reflects more than envy; it captures a moment of self-awareness where his class position is not only externally marked but internally felt. The "nervous cough" of his Suzuki becomes a symbol of his unease, his discomfort, and his awareness of not quite belonging. What's striking is that this alienation is not imposed by others in this moment, it's internal. Daru is alienated not just from the elite, but from himself, as he momentarily sees himself through their eyes. The physical space, the pristine driveway, the grand farmhouse is saturated with meanings inherited from colonial and postcolonial power structures, spaces where certain people belong naturally and others only enter as visitors or impostors. Through Hall's lens, this moment in the novel captures the quiet violence of class stratification in postcolonial Pakistan. The passage doesn't dramatize conflict; instead, it humanizes the quiet dislocation of a man caught between the aspiration for inclusion and the sharp awareness of exclusion. Alienation here is not abstract, it is immediate, personal, and deeply felt.

Daru's drop into crime and loneliness is due to his moral decisions, the influence of society and the lack of support from friends. Losing his job means Daru, a banker, moves apart from the rich society he used to live in due to sharing a relationship with Ozi. Since his finances have declined, he has departed from the group that profits from colonial wealth and its advantages. As a result of this fragmentation, Hall shows how in post-colonial places, colonial ideas still sustain social class differences.

> "I have arrived at a full-fledged invitational dinner only semi-invited…… of a presence to indicate that Ozi has been granted a trial membership in their crowd" (Hamid 89).

This passage quietly captures a profound moment of alienation and betrayal in Daru's journey. Arriving "semi-invited" to a dinner where the main event, a luxurious, imported meal, is already over, Daru instantly senses the social distancing at play. His exclusion is subtle but deliberate, revealing a shift in his relationship with Ozi, and more deeply, a shift in his place within Lahore's elite circles. Daru, who once stood on equal footing with Ozi, is now being edged out of a space that once gave him a sense of belonging. Stuart Hall suggests that alienation occurs when individuals feel detached from the cultural frameworks that help define them. For Daru, this exclusion from a formerly intimate social setting signals that he is no longer part of the world he once

moved comfortably within. His identity, in a sense, is being denied recognition by that world.

De Certeau reminds us that spaces are not neutral; they are produced, structured, and inhabited differently depending on one's social position. The dinner party becomes a space that Daru no longer knows how to navigate. The polished elegance of the guests, their body language, their insider status, all of this transforms the room into a territory where Daru feels displaced. He is physically present, but psychogeographically pushed to the margins. The space that once felt accessible now operates under new codes of power and privilege, reinforcing his sense of exclusion. This moment, then, is not just about being left out of a meal it is about the painful realization that social mobility has turned one friend into a gatekeeper and the other into an outsider. Ozi's betrayal is not loud or cruel; it is performed through the quiet rituals of elitism and new alliances. For Daru, this is not merely a personal loss. It is a loss of place, of identity, and of belonging within the very city that raised him.

Omar Shahid Hamid's *The Spinner's Tale* intricately explores the theme of alienation as both a psychological condition and a sociopolitical phenomenon. Rooted in the intersecting legacies of postcolonial dislocation, religious extremism, and class stratification, the novel positions alienation not as a peripheral concern but as a central motif that drives character development, narrative tension, and ideological critique.

> "The people who go to The School are from the elite class. They go abroad to study and end up as doctors, lawyers, big shot corporate types. How would someone like him have even gotten into a place like that?" (S. Hamid 62).

This encapsulates the complex interplay of spatial exclusion, class stratification, and identity politics. "The School" emerges not merely as an educational institution, but as a site of cultural hegemony, embodying postcolonial aspirations shaped by the legacy of colonial modernity. The reference to students who "go abroad to study and end up as doctors, lawyers, big shot corporate types" reveals a class of individuals whose identities are shaped in alignment with Western paradigms of success. These elites, in Hall's terms, are engaged in a process of subject formation that privileges assimilation into the global capitalist order while marginalizing those whose backgrounds fall outside its acceptable narratives. The incredulous question "How would someone like him have even gotten into a place like that?" thus performs an act of othering,

suggesting that certain bodies do not belong within the imagined geography of privilege. The speaker reinforces a binary between the “us” of the elite and the “them” of the socio-politically excluded, highlighting the fractured nature of postcolonial identity, where access to prestige and legitimacy remains unequally distributed. The quote gestures toward the cultural dislocation experienced by those who manage to enter such elite spaces, only to encounter a subtle but persistent erasure of their identity and history a key concern in Hall’s theorization of diasporic and marginal subjectivities.

For de Certeau, institutional spaces such as elite schools, are not neutral containers of activity but are strategically organized to produce and maintain hierarchical orders. “The School” functions as a strategized place, a controlled environment designed to replicate the dominant class’s values and perpetuate their social reproduction. Access to such spaces is tightly regulated, not merely through academic merit, but through the spatial codification of class and privilege .The surprise that “someone like him” could have breached this spatial boundary highlights the tactical act of subversion embedded in his presence. De Certeau distinguishes between “strategies” employed by institutions to consolidate control and “tactics” used by individuals to navigate and occasionally resist those imposed structures. The character’s entry into the school becomes a tactical intrusion an act of psychogeographic transgression that unsettles the assumed order of the space. His very presence destabilizes the socio-spatial logic that governs who is permitted to occupy prestigious institutional spaces, thereby exposing the ideological underpinnings of spatial exclusion.

4.10 Resistance and Identity Formation

Karachi You’re Killing Me shows that despite everything that makes Karachi hard to navigate, Ayesha still acts with independence. According to Michel de Certeau, those who negotiate urban space constraints are considered to be “walking as resistance.” In the novel protagonist Ayesha rejects societal and city pressures that try to stop her from following her goals. Ayesha’s way of resisting the city’s oppressive structures is through her journalism and her humor. De Certeau’s idea of “tactics” as small acts of resistance is evident in how Ayesha uses her writing to expose corruption and absurdities in Karachi. Her witty commentary on the city’s dysfunctions is a form of resistance against the power structures that seek to control the narrative.

Stuart Hall's theory focuses on the ways individuals manage their identities once colonialism is over. Where politics, culture and tradition from Karachi come together with American journalism, Ayesha discovers who she truly is. Her goal to speak as a journalist reflects her opposition both to colonial legacies and to pressures from society today. Ayesha follows her local traditions and works in a profession that is influenced by the West which makes up her hybrid identity. The way she struggles to fit in a city gripped by colonialism, corruption and criminality, just as women were expected to be traditional, suggests she disfavors being tied to one destiny.

How Ayesha investigates the city on her own after separation shows her yearning for autonomy and control in the face of others. Ayesha deals with harassment in public by acting logically and defiantly, realizing her surroundings are often tough but not letting them influence who she becomes. Her acceptance of every area proves that she is not controlled by the oppressive systems.

In *Moth Smoke,* Hamid weaves a haunting narrative of personal decay, class disillusionment, and silent rebellion within the urban sprawl of postcolonial Lahore. Daru's resistance to social norms becomes the very terrain on which his identity is constructed and ultimately, deconstructed. His struggle isn't loud or revolutionary; rather, it manifests through subtle, deeply personal after getting fired from a prestigious banking job, drifting aimlessly through city streets, refusing to seek redemption, and engaging in relationships that defy class boundaries. When viewed through the lens of Hall's theory of resistance, Daru's journey represents a conscious refusal to internalize the dominant values of the elite class that both excludes and tempts him.

The description, "A man capable of anything and afraid of nothing*"* (Hamid 7), delivered by the prosecutor during Daru's trial, operates as both a legal strategy and a narrative device, framing the protagonist as a dangerous anomaly within Lahore's postcolonial order. Through Stuart Hall's lens, cultural identity is not a fixed essence but "a matter of becoming" shaped through positioning and acts of resistance (Hall, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* 225). In Daru's self-image, this fearlessness and boundless capability signify autonomy, a rejection of the moral, economic, and behavioural codes upheld by the city's elite. However, in the prosecutor's framing, these same traits are recorded as evidence of criminality, reinforcing the hegemonic narrative that deviation from elite norms is synonymous with threat. This rhetorical inversion illustrates Hall's point that power seeks to control identity by defining

resistance as deviance. Michel de Certeau's theory further illuminates how Daru's identity is enacted tactically in the lived space of the city. His mobility between the sweltering, decaying quarters of his own existence and the air-conditioned sanctuaries of the privileged is a form of psychogeographic resistance, crossing boundaries the postcolonial city intends to keep segregated (de Certeau 97). In court, however, these everyday tactics are reframed as calculated transgressions, stripping them of their resistant agency. Thus, the prosecutor's remark encapsulates the contested nature of Daru's identity formation, an identity forged through defiance, yet continuously redefined and criminalised by the structures of postcolonial power.

In Daru's case, his identity is formed by pushing back against expectations placed on him by class, morality, and tradition. He becomes, in a way, a symbol of resistance not by fighting the system head-on, but by refusing to participate in its performance. This resistance unfolds not just in action but in space. Daru's drifting through Lahore on foot, stoned, or on his battered Suzuki marks his refusal to follow the structured paths of elite life. Even Daru's drug use, easily dismissed as self-sabotage, can be read as a final, painful form of resistance. He seeks numbness not as escape, but as rejection of a world that he finds morally bankrupt. Here, resistance becomes internalized; it reshapes his very being, even at the cost of coherence and stability. His breakdown is not just personal, it is political, symbolic of a postcolonial subject caught in the violent contradictions of class mobility and cultural alienation.

> "I don't know what she's used to in Karachi, but here in Lahore going for a drive with a friend's wife when the friend doesn't know about it definitely qualifies as self-destructive behaviour." (Hamid 146).

This quote comes when Darashikoh is reflecting on his risky involvement with Mumtaz, the wife of his wealthy friend Ozi. On the surface, it appears to be about personal recklessness, but under the lens of Stuart Hall's theory of postcolonial identity, it becomes a moment of deliberate resistance and identity redefinition in a deeply stratified, postcolonial Lahore. Daru's choice to engage with Mumtaz, despite knowing the social and moral risks, is not simply an act of desire; it is also a challenge to the elite moral order that has excluded and marginalized him. Ozi, representing the privileged "air-conditioned class," moves freely within a system shaped by colonial legacies of wealth, class segregation, and Westernised privilege. By crossing an

unspoken social boundary, a friend's wife, Daru asserts himself in a space from which he is structurally excluded.

This "self-destructive behaviour" thus becomes a form of symbolic resistance. He undermines the codes of loyalty, honour, and propriety that sustain the elite's cohesion. But because Hall emphasises that identity is a constant interplay of similarity and difference, Daru's act is also self-destructive: it does not dismantle the power structure; rather, it confirms his marginality. His postcolonial subjectivity is being shaped in opposition to the dominant class, yet that opposition is expressed through transgression rather than systemic change, revealing how resistance in a postcolonial urban context can be personal, intimate, and destructive at the same time.

Mumtaz, too, represents a powerful counterpoint in this landscape of resistance. As a woman embedded within elite circles yet secretly writing under the pseudonym Zulfiqar Manto, she performs a double life one that critiques patriarchal and class-based silences. Her resistance is textual, intellectual, and gendered, echoing Hall's notion that identity is also shaped by reclaiming narrative control in a space that denies it: "Manto was my favorite short-story writer.' 'And?' And he wrote about prostitutes, alcohol, sex, Lahore's underbelly." (Hamid 154). Mumtaz's invocation of Manto as her "favorite short-story writer" functions as both a personal declaration and a coded act of resistance. By aligning herself with Manto, a writer who fearlessly explored Lahore's marginal spaces, moral hypocrisies, and taboo subjects, Mumtaz situates her own identity outside the respectable, sanitized femininity expected in her elite, postcolonial milieu.

Her admiration for Manto's engagement with "prostitutes, alcohol, sex, Lahore's underbelly" is not simply literary preference; it is an act of cultural affiliation with narratives that expose the fractures and hypocrisies of a society still shaped by colonial morality and upper-class decorum. In postcolonial terms, Mumtaz resists the dominant discourse that seeks to contain women within controlled, domestic roles, much as the postcolonial state tries to project a "respectable" national image while suppressing uncomfortable social truths.

By adopting "Zulfikar" as her pseudonym merging Manto's rebellious pen with the imagery of a sword she actively forges a hybrid identity, one that draws from transgressive art and her own lived reality. Hall's theory suggests that such identities

are “produced” through acts of cultural negotiation, not inherited. Mumtaz’s work as an undercover journalist in Lahore’s underbelly becomes a performative resistance to the privileged, apolitical sphere she inhabits as Ozi’s wife. Her choice of Manto as a symbolic ancestor signals her refusal to let colonial legacies and patriarchal respectability define her; instead, she claims the right to inhabit and narrate the city’s hidden spaces, just as Manto did.

Through both Daru and Mumtaz, Moth Smoke explores how resistance, however flawed or quiet, becomes a vehicle for identity formation. Whether through the re-appropriation of urban space, the rejection of class expectations, or the struggle for voice and visibility, Hamid’s characters illuminate Hall’s vision of identity as formed "through difference, through rupture" and Certeau’s idea that even the most mundane acts can resist the dominant order.

In *The Spinner’s Tale,* S. Hamid crafts the complex figure of Ausi as a powerful site of resistance, who struggles to construct his identity in a postcolonial Pakistani landscape shaped by elitism, colonial residue, religious ideology, and political influence. Ausi's identity undergoes multiple shifts as he attempts to reconcile his past trauma, religious awakening, class marginalization, and national disillusionment.

Ausi later transforms into radical rejection of the socio-political order through his embrace of extremist ideology. This progression can be seen as what Hall describes as the "politics of difference", where excluded individuals create oppositional identities in response to the dominant discourse.

> "They fucked Sohail for years, but he never got any benefit out of it for himself. The only difference between me and him is that I know how to get something back for myself after being fucked." (Hamid 102).

This quote captures a pivotal moment in Ausi’s psychological transformation and reflects the core of the novel’s theme of resistance and identity formation. At its heart, this line draws a painful comparison between two characters, Sohail, who represents idealism and submission, and Ausi, who embodies rebellion and retaliation. Ausi is speaking from a place of deep disillusionment and anger. His crude language is not just for effect; it reveals a psyche shaped by systemic betrayal of institutions, friendships, and even national narratives. Unlike Sohail, who absorbed the abuse of the system

without retaliation, Ausi chooses to resist. But this resistance isn't romantic or heroic; it's bitter, calculated, and born of emotional rupture.

Through the lens of Hall's theory of postcolonial identity, we can understand Ausi's words as an act of reclaiming the self. For Ausi, identity becomes an act of survival, a way to assert agency in a world that tried to render him invisible. He refuses to be a passive victim like Sohail. His resistance is personal, even if it turns violent later. It's his way of saying: I exist, and I won't be used without consequence.

Moreover, according to de Certeau's theory of psychogeography, Ausi's journey also involves navigating and resisting the power structures embedded in physical and institutional spaces, elite schools, the justice system, and state institutions. These spaces are designed to discipline and contain individuals like him. But Ausi, instead of conforming to their intended purpose, manipulates them for his own ends. He moves tactically, subverting the very structures meant to marginalize him. His life becomes a series of counter-moves, acts of spatial and psychological resistance that carve out a fractured, but empowered identity.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

As a result of our study, we come to the conclusion that Pakistan still feels the effects of its colonial history today. Until recently the Indian subcontinent was run by Britishers, but now Pakistani power authorities rule the country. All three writers, Mohsin Hamid, Saba Imtiaz and Omar Shahid Hamid, have done the best job of describing Pakistan and its people. They have shown how political, social and economic problems in the country cause people psychological stress. Because of the hatred, anger and urge for revenge, the people are helping destroy the whole society.

Moth Smoke uses Lahore's late 1990s political instability, economic disparity, and spatial divisions to reveal how postcolonial legacies continue to shape identity, power, and belonging. Through Daru's movements across the city, from elite, air-conditioned enclaves to congested, impoverished streets, Hamid illustrates how urban space itself becomes a site of exclusion and control. Stuart Hall's framework helps us see Daru's fractured self as emblematic of the postcolonial subject, caught between inherited traditions and the allure of modernity, while Michel de Certeau's psychogeography uncovers how the city's geography both reflects and enforces these social hierarchies. Betrayal, restricted mobility, and alienation are not merely personal misfortunes but consequences of entrenched class structures and spatial politics that persist long after colonial rule. In Hamid's Lahore, identity is inseparable from the spaces one can or cannot access, and the city's physical and social landscapes work in tandem to sustain inequality, fueling cycles of resentment, crime, and disillusionment.

Hamid reflects on Pakistan's social and political problems using themes such as corruption, battling social classes and breaking down social bonds. Lahore's inequality in wealth and dropping morals paint a small version of the social issues and corruption that smooth over today's Pakistan. The author looks at the conflict between the rich and marginalized by using their experiences to highlight how socioeconomic status determines a person's identity and influence. The novel shows that political unrest often leads to major changes in lives and in society and anything affecting our society leaves its mark on individuals' lives.

All in all, *Moth Smoke* highlights urban crime and violence as key to seeing how identity, psycho-geography and societal structures connect in Lahore after colonial rule. The novel illustrates that the tough urban life and social wrongs help shape the main characters, so severe conditions in their lives make them start violating the law through crime and fighting. *Moth Smoke* uses Lahore's surroundings as a way to tie together the novel's themes of money, identity and personal breakdown. Through the city's physical and symbolic spaces, Hamid critiques the socio-economic tensions and moral decay in Pakistan's urban life.

> "My father liked to wonder aloud whether the phoenix was re-created by the fire of its funeral pyre or transformed so that what emerged was a soulless shadow of its former being, identical in appearance but without the joy in life its predecessor had had……or did I believe, rather, that they simply amplified what we already were, in the end making the strong stronger, the weak weaker, and is it dangerous and deadly?" That's it." (Hamid 38).

Moth Smoke uses the personal journey of Daru Shehzad to explore the broader themes of violence and extremism. The novel paints a picture of a society where violence, both personal and structural, is a response to the deep-rooted inequalities and frustrations of postcolonial life. In this light, extremism appears as a response to the widespread feeling of being powerless and treated unfairly, showing the tie between a single person's will and the issues in society.

The psychogeographic representations in *Karachi, You're Killing Me* offer a rich lens through which to explore broader discussions in postcolonial and urban studies. Through Ayesha's navigation of Karachi's chaotic and fragmented spaces, the novel sheds light on the complexities of postcolonial identity, the lingering effects of colonialism on urban development, and the potential for resistance and resilience in the face of these challenges. The city is not just a backdrop for Ayesha's story but an active force that shapes her experiences and reflects the broader struggles of postcolonial societies.

Stuart Hall's ideas on cultural identity intersect with Michel de Certeau's concept of walking the city through the lens of how individuals navigate and reinterpret urban spaces.Hall emphasizes that cultural identity is fluid, shaped by historical contexts and lived experiences, which aligns with de Certeau's assertion that pedestrians

actively create meaning in the city through their movements and interactions. This dynamic interplay suggests that as individuals walk through urban landscapes, they engage in a process of identity formation that reflects both personal and collective histories, allowing for a reimagining of cultural narratives in postcolonial contexts.In line with de Certeau's claim that pedestrians actively generate meaning in the city via their movements and interactions, Hall emphasises the fluidity of cultural identity and how it is moulded by historical circumstances and lived experiences. It is possible to reimagine cultural narratives in postcolonial contexts by means of this dynamic interplay, which implies that people move through urban landscapes engaging in a process of identity creation that reflects both personal and collective histories.Throughout the novel, Imtiaz uses humor and satire to critique the various problems Karachi is facing, including political corruption, violence, and social inequality.

The text offers a fresh and irreverent perspective on a city that is often portrayed in the media as a place of chaos and despair. Karachi is portrayed as a complex, chaotic, and often absurd city, where Ayesha struggles to find stability and normalcy amidst the constant challenges she faces as a young, independent woman. The author uses Ayesha's snarky, tongue-in-cheek perspective to offer a humorous yet incisive commentary on the complexities of life in Karachi, a city that is portrayed as both chaotic and vibrant. Imtiaz's use of humor and sharp social commentary offers a vivid and incisive depiction of life in this vibrant, yet dangerous metropolis. In these novels, Karachi is not merely a backdrop but an active, influential force shaping the narratives and the lives within them. The city’s physical and social landscapes are intricately tied to the characters’ emotional and psychological experiences. Through the lens of psychogeography, these works underscore the profound impact of Karachi’s urban environment on its residents, illustrating the city’s role in shaping identities, influencing behaviours, and determining destinies. The physical landscapes of the selected cities shape postcolonial identity by highlighting the tensions between tradition and modernity, power and inequality, and the personal and political.

The study looked at how postcolonial identity is linked to psycho-geography in Pakistani English literature through readings of Moth Smoke, The Spinner’s Tale and Karachi You're Killing Me. Postcolonial Pakistan shows that the way identity develops,

people experience life and inequality are shaped by cities, colonial heritages and politics.

Michel de Certeau's psycho-geographic approach has helped the study examine how Karachi and Lahore shape the identities, habits and mental states of the novel's characters. The novel depicts Lahore as a city facing moral downfall, a colonial history and inequality which lead to Darashikoh's ruin. Since Karachi is full of political disorder, religious violence and inequality, it greatly affects the main characters in both novels..

Postcolonial identity theory allowed Stuart Hall to point out that colonial impact on Pakistan remains noticeable in problems of identity, mixing cultures and political troubles. The selections highlight how members of the elite use corruption to hold onto control and this happens even as poor individuals work for freedom and survival. Because of his experiences with colonialism, Mohsin Hamid writes about social divisions in *Moth Smoke,* youth radicalisation in *The Spinner's Tale* and the chaos in modern-day Karachi in *Karachi You're Killing Me.*

According to the findings, there is a relationship between power and space in postcolonial Pakistan. The books illustrate that rich people with colonial backgrounds typically hold an advantage when allocating space in political, social or economic matters. The book shows that Lahore's urban districts are divided by the gap between the rich and the poor. Karachi's location in the book serves to illustrate how setting can boost extremist views in identities. From start to finish in Karachi You're Killing Me, the principal character seeks to push boundaries and get used to life in postcolonial Karachi.

The study investigates the ways people react and resist these forms of spatial issues. Women in these novels try to act, believe and appear differently as they face injustices that shape them. You're Killing Me in Karachi shows Ayesha rejecting the restrictions placed on her by society. These books, just as this one, point out that a person's outcome is not completely shaped by injustice in their community.

The analysis of *The Spinner's Tale* reveals that Omar Shahid Hamid constructs Karachi as more than a physical setting, it is a dynamic, contested space where identities are forged, fractured, and radicalized. Through the combined lens of psychogeography and postcolonial identity, the novel demonstrates how the city's geography, layered

with colonial residues and contemporary socio-political fault lines, becomes a catalyst for transformation.

The character of Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi emerges as a pivotal figure in this spatial and ideological landscape. He embodies the convergence of religious authority, political manipulation, and personal ambition, using the city's fractured moral fabric to consolidate power. Sufi's journey illustrates how corruption and ideological rhetoric intertwine, exploiting urban discontent to recruit and radicalize. His presence reinforces the novel's central argument that extremism in Pakistan is less a product of inherent fanaticism and more the result of systemic socio-political engineering within a city marked by inequality and unrest.

The protagonist's trajectory further underlines that radicalization is a constructed response to disenfranchisement, spatial marginalization, and a lack of viable alternatives. De Certeau's psychogeographic mapping reveals how Karachi's streets, neighborhoods, and restricted zones shape these identities, while Stuart Hall's framework explains their fluid, contested, and hybrid nature under postcolonial conditions.

Ultimately, The Spinner's Tale serves as both a critique and a testament: a critique of the entrenched systems that perpetuate cycles of violence and exclusion, and a testament to the way urban spaces and historical legacies continue to shape the identities and destinies of those who inhabit them. By centering figures like Sheikh Ahmed Uzair Sufi, Hamid highlights how leaders can both emerge from and manipulate the city's psychogeographic realities, making Karachi a living archive of power struggles, resistance, and transformation.

Studies of psycho-geography have a strong effect on postcolonial identity. Where the characters live in Lahore and Karachi defines their characters and what they face. In both novels, the rioting and arguments in the city are illustrated through *The Spinner's Tale* and Daru's wearing smog and heat related to city life illustrate his sad predicament in Moth Smoke. The bustling life and various troubles of the city affect Ayesha, though they give her what she needs to handle her place as a Pashtun.

Postcolonial identity and psycho-geography are closely related in Pakistani literature as shown by the study. Examining what these works say about specific locations makes it apparent that colonial history remains important in Pakistan now as

it fuels arguments over identity, mixes cultures and changes how citizens live. They display the challenges of living in cities that are shaped by the past and also by current worldwide tendencies and they sharply criticize the life in postcolonial Pakistan. The research gives insight into what everyday life is like in postcolonial cities and contributes to developing further ideas in the field.

5.1 Recommendations for Future Researchers

Future researchers can expand this area by comparing urban psychogeography and postcolonial identity in Pakistani fiction with literary representations of cities in other postcolonial nations, such as India, Nigeria, or South Africa. This would help in tracing broader postcolonial urban patterns and shared colonial legacies.

While this study focuses on urban environments like Karachi and Lahore, future research can examine how postcolonial identity is shaped differently in rural or semi-urban Pakistani settings. Comparing city narratives with village-based fiction may offer new insights into spatial identity formation.

Building on the theme of urban environments, future work can explore how gender intersects with postcolonial identity and spatial control in Pakistani cities. Analyzing more female-centered narratives or queer perspectives could deepen the understanding of how urban space is experienced differently across identities.

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