

Psycholinguistic Analysis Of Darashikoh's Character-Building In Moth Smoke By Mohsin Hamid

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ABSTRACT

Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Comparison is the thief of joy." This literature analysis aims to analyze the psychological characterization of Darashikoh, one of the characters in Mohsin Hamid's novel Moth Smoke, to address how unnecessary comparison negatively affects one's mental health. This article described characterization and psychological conflict using the literary psychology approach based on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, in line with the characterization theory proposed by Nurgiyantoro (2007). Psychoanalytic theory is a staple theory of human personality that is often used in the world of literature, which is divided into three structures of human nature, i.e., id, ego, and superego. The analysis involved several steps, such as categorization, tabulation, interpretation, inference, and validity of the data. The results of the study revealed that Darashikoh's personality in the Moth Smoke novel is stubborn, spiteful and bad-tempered. This present article also found the psychological conflict experienced by Darashikoh includes emotions such as anger, anxiety, fear, regret, pressure, and resentment. These kinds of psychological conflict have changed his personality to be an inclusive person. The study reflects the outcomes of psychological analysis on Darashikoh's character to raise public awareness regarding importance of noticing people's mental health and to diminish the spread of hate comments and harmful speech to others.

Keywords: Literature, Mental Health, Hamid Novel, Psycholinguistic Analysis.

Introduction

Literature is the product of one's thoughts and ideas expressed in such a manner that it has significance for everyone who reads it. Literary works can be categorised according to type into prose (fiction), drama, and poetry. The author solely concentrates on fiction writing out of the three forms of literature. Characterization is one of numerous key components in writing, particularly novels, that may decide either a piece is good or not. Characterization is the process through which an author depicts a character so that the reader may understand their qualities and personality (Hawa, 2020).

In this case, characterization has had a significant impact on the story's substance since readers can appreciate how the author develops the characters in each occurrence. When a novel talks about character figures, it only has the capacity to influence the entire plot, regardless if the author is successful in developing a strong character or even seems unappealing to the readers since it is perceived as illogical. The author may make the character overcome several obstacles and issues in a variety of circumstances. Not just that, but the character may serve as a conduit for the author to deliver messages and elicit either sad or happy responses from readers.

Literary psychology is a field of study in literature. A literary work can be evaluated by using literary psychology. Studying literature as a psychological activity is known as literary psychology (Endaswara, 2011). The link among psychology and literature may be understood in three different ways: by examining the psychology of the author as a writer, that of the fictitious characters, and that of the audience (Ratna, 2009). Thus, this research of literary psychology might be interpreted as a research that concentrated on the psychology of literary characters, writers, and even readers of literary works. The author describes the character Darashikoh from Mohsin Hamid's novel *Moth Smoke* using a literary psychology method while evaluating the psychology of the characters in this book. This descriptive analysis-based study draws on two theories: Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory and Nurgiyantoro's characterization theory.

According to psychoanalytic theory, Freud (1971) distinguished three different types of personality structures. Id, ego, and superego exist. Darashikoh's character will be covered by Nurgiyantoro's characterization theory in the meantime. If he plays the protagonist or antagonist, secondary character, neutral figure, simple figure, round figure, static figure, evolving figure, or supplementary figure.

The internal social structure of Pakistani society, and particularly the very Lahori way of life, is being projected through *Moth Smoke*. Here, Darashikoh serves as the main protagonist. Darashikoh's upbringing took place outside of the privileged class. But he struggled with a lack of powerful contacts for a successful profession and higher social standing. He discovers a widening gap between the wealthy and the poor. It is paradoxical that his love of all luxury contrasts with a job profile with limited resources, which worsens his situation. The loss of his work hastened the progression of his degeneration. He no longer hangs out with the wealthy people that

he would otherwise take pride in. Here, the author of the story advises shedding light on how the wealthy are only responsive to the wealthy, and those who go through a crisis or end up in destitute areas are no longer accepted within the wealthy circles.

A jail guard gives a letter to a prisoner to start this non-linear story. The setting changes to a courtroom with a judge presiding. Darashikoh Shezad, the defendant, is charged with murdering a kid.

The setting shifts once again. Darashikoh, the main narrator, pays a visit to Aurangzeb, who is now a married man with a young child. After Aurangzeb's three-year stay in America, they spend the evening drinking and catching up. Police intercept Darashikoh while she is returning home. They observe that he has consumed alcohol, but Darashikoh avoids penalty by paying off one of the officers. Darashikoh gets let go from his position in finance the next day.

From his companion Murad Badshah, Darashikoh buys marijuana. Darashikoh later consents when Mumtaz asks him to go on an errand with her. Mumtaz discusses her covert journalism career with Darashikoh, where she goes by the alias Zulfikar Manto. When they get there, Mumtaz interviews the madam at the brothel that was his original stop. Murad Badshah identifies himself as the narrator and describes himself as an intelligent rickshaw driver. He acknowledges collaborating with Darashikoh in illegal behavior.

After Darashikoh leaves the brothel, the story picks up where it left off in a linear way. Darashikoh discovers his electricity is off the next day. Khurram Shah, who he sees, offers Darashikoh assistance in finding job. Following their encounter, Darashikoh discovers Aurangzeb upstairs. He wasn't invited to the party that was going on right now.

Darashikoh receives word from Aurangzeb about a nuclear test that took place close to the border. He also acknowledges having marital issues. Darashikoh notices a decline in their friendship. Another day, Aurangzeb is also driving when Darashikoh is on his way home. While Aurangzeb disobeys the red light, Darashikoh witnesses his friend's automobile crash with a boy who was crossing the street, killing him. Aurangzeb keeps driving as he tries to get away. The wounded youngster is taken to the hospital by Darashikoh. More nuclear testing take place the next day.

The scenario changes once again when the judge (in the second chapter from the courtroom) asks about the significance of the trial's air conditioning. There is discussion of a work by Julius Superb that examines the connection among air conditioning and social class. The report alleges that Darashikoh had psychological harm when he lost the ability to pay for air conditioning.

Mumtaz discovers Darashikoh without power as she pays him a visit at home. She requests that he instruct her in boxing. Darashikoh afterwards hears loud sounds coming from outside. The explosive from Lahore has been successfully tested. The following day, Mumtaz brings Darashikoh to see a palmist who just informs him that she has "bad news" for him and refuses to clarify what she looks at (137).

Murad gives Darashikoh some substantial hash (to sell to a companion), and suggests that Darashikoh give his customers some heroin in exchange. A companion receives the hash from Darashikoh, and they decide to trade again. Darashikoh discovers his housekeeper Manucci observing a moth circle a candle's flame. They observe the moth approach the flame and catch fire. After few days, Aurangzeb approaches Darashikoh as they are sitting on his roof and asks

if he has informed anybody about the child he killed. Darashikoh pledges to keep everything private to his companion.

Murad sells additional hash to Darashikoh, who then purchases it and resells it for a profit. Afterwards, when they have sex, he starts a real relationship with Mumtaz.

1. Method

In this research, Mohsin Hamid's novel *Moth Smoke*'s character Darashikoh is defined using a literary psychology technique. In order to provide a more thorough explanation, analysis based on this descriptive statistic of characterization draws on two theories, Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and Nurgiyantoro's characterization theory. There are several phases involved in gathering data for analysis, including classifying, tabulating, analyzing, inferring, and validating data. Categorization is the process of grouping or categorizing data based on specified categories in accordance with the analysis's goals, the characters' personalities, and the psychological problems that Darashikoh encounters in the book *Moth Smoke*. Tabulation is the presenting of facts as a summary table that gives a general idea of the issue being studied. The characterization theory of Nurgiyantoro and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory are used in the literary psychology approach to interpretation. The process of data analysis ends with the inference. It will be more pleasant to read this data if it is translated from Indonesian to English. Making decisions based on the findings of the analysis and debate comes next. Reading the novel several times ensures the authenticity of the data used in this research, making the earlier data more reliable.

2. Results and Discussion

One of the intrinsic aspects is the characterization, which is the main focus of this paper's actual analysis. The persona that the

author, either directly or indirectly, attempts to convey (Sehandi, 2014). It speaks of the personalities and dispositions of the characters. The writer might present figures or people both outside and inside. It may be explained from the perspective of his life, his behavior, attitude, beliefs, etc. in its inner form (Sehandi, 2014).

Its characters and the way problems emerge may have an impact on how each character's personality is examined. A literary work will explore the literary psychology, which combines the sciences of literature and psychology. Three methods can be used in literary psychology. There is the textual method, which is regarded as examining the psychology of the story's characters. The receptive-pragmatic method explores the psychology of readers, followed by the expressive approach, which investigates the creator of literature (Pronina et. al., 2021).

By using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory (1856–1939), a theory that is frequently used as a research to analyze the psychological elements of the characters in literary works, the

author seeks to analyze the psychology of the characters in the novel *Moth Smoke* via the psychology literary approach. The id, ego, and superego are the three structures of human psyche that make up psychoanalytic theory. As the moment of birth, the id has been the most fundamental component of human nature. The ego and superego will emerge from this id. The id, a psychological component of personality that emerges from consciousness and decision-making regarding human behavior, transforms into the ego. The superego, which develops from the human ego, is the last. The superego reflects societal ideals and awakens people to moral obligations.

The author of the *Moth Smoke* novel describes the character of Darashikoh through speech, behavior, and his interactions with other characters in the narrative and conversation sections. Darashikoh exhibits traits including drug addiction, stubbornness, sensitivity, vindictiveness, and terrible temper in the *Moth Smoke* book.

Table 1. Darashikoh 's Characteristics

Characteristics	Personality Structure Types	Page Number(s)
Stubborn	Id	290
Sensitive		121
Bad-tempered		311-312
Critical	Ego	26,53
Vindictive		88, 92-93
Drug Addict	Superego	91
Attentive		43

The book starts at the very finish, with a scene in a prison. Our main character is behind bars. At his trial, Daru's "suppliers" of friendship/influence (Ozi), love (Mumtaz), and narcotics (Murad) take on the roles of co-defendants. The events that follow already occurred, and the location is

Pakistan's Lahore. We quickly learn about the affluent and glitzy life in Lahore via Ozi, the less glitzy life through Murad, and the unique and romantically-obsessed life through Mumtaz. Our main character starts off in one state, but ends up in another. Daru, who is never seen to be anything

other than his mediocre, failing self, is forced to turn to his wealthy friends and his extended but equally poor family for advice and assistance at first after losing his position at the bank. Daru conceals behind the facade of normality in the capitalist world since he can no longer sustain himself. He also has a deep relationship with a lady who does not conform to the stereotype of a wife and mother. *Moth Smoke* is in some ways also a story about a gang of Pakistani "misfits"; it's only that some of them manage to conceal their eccentricities better than others. Daru questions the basic basis of his prior existence as his life spirals out of control, including his close connection with Ozi and his increasing love for a woman he cannot have.

Daru, on the other hand, is only tenuously connected to the aristocracy. He received financial assistance from Ozi's father ("Khurram uncle"), a military comrade of his own father when he lost his dad in the war of 1971. The latter's particular role is never made clear, but we are informed that Ozi returned from the US to "guard his holdings" (MS 194), suggesting that he has now assimilated into the corrupt ruling elite. The objective for the protagonists appears to be joining the youthful clique and the events that occur in remote homes, and this haughty affluent elite continues uncontested all through the narrative. In spite of the fact that it alternately excludes and admits people, the zamindari system acts as the core for the characters (Cilano 2013). The story uses a lot of spatial imagery to convey the strong grasp that this "core" has. For example, Ozi invokes the Pakistani state while outlining his account of the occasions that culminated to Daru's conviction.

"People are pulling their pieces out of the pie, and the pie is getting smaller, 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. And

if anyone isn't doing it, it's because they're locked out of the kitchen. (MS 231)"

The main terms with *Moth Smoke* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* are "provoking" and "controversial" In *Moth Smoke*, Hamid is not afraid to cross the moral bounds of Pakistan, a traditional Muslim nation. If *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* touches on the extremely delicate topic of 9/11 and the world after it, he does the same in *Moth Smoke*. Hamid provides oblique remarks about the characters' extravagant lifestyles in Lahore, particularly their use of alcohol and drugs as well as about the city's class disparities, pervasive corruption, and extramarital affairs. Hamid is also not averse to testing the moral bounds of a conventional Pakistani family, revealing its flaw-ridden core. The battle between the east and the west, as well as the collision of civilizations and cultural interests, are also addressed in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Hamid, and all through the book, there is a similar sense of disenchantment with the west, as shown when he contrasts New York with Lahore.

Moth Smoke centers on the morality debate, and Hamid contextualizes horrific crimes in order to explore if assigning culpability alters if the surroundings or context is changed. Daru's gradual moral decline is unsettling to think about, but it is undeniably fascinating to read about. Thus, few readers can withstand a literary device that brings a wealthy character to ruin; see *The Bonfire of the Vanities* [1987]. Just for that reason, *Moth Smoke* is attractive. So far beyond that, Hamid goes. Daru adopts the perspective of a good person who has fallen on bad times, and the author cleverly manipulates this scenario to produce unexpected effects. When one is convinced that a certain criminal conduct "will be the last" or "is merely for the pain," it becomes simple to lapse into illegality. The Ozi narrative goes: "guilt isn't a problem...once you've started there is no way to

stop, so there's nothing to be guilty about" [Mohsin Hamid, 2000: 231]. The Daru narrative also states: "I wait for regret and guilt to come, but they don't show up" [2000: 170]. Each of the four unreliable narrators is attempting to persuade us of the morality of their actions by urging us to put ourselves in their position. Even though people have many flaws and irrational tendencies, they are still who they are, and "truth" does not occur in a vacuum.

An old myth and symbolism are woven into the story of *Moth Smoke*. Moths (a sign) and young boys are recurring elements in the book, and both might symbolize different things. "The poets say some moths will do anything out of love for a flame" [Mohsin Hamid, 2000: 171], says Manucci, Daru's boy servant. Somewhere there is also the theme of air-conditioning (AC), an object that implicitly divides the rich and the poor, with the rich living in "an air-conditioned haven" [2000: 126]. "The distinction between members of these two groups is made on the basis of control of an important resource: air conditioning" [2000: 102], a source for an article in the book claims. In a similar vein, a character's preference for or opposition to air conditioning is likewise pertinent to the matter of whose side of the moral play they are on.

The majority of the characters in *Moth Smoke* are uninteresting, but that's okay since the author wants to highlight their flaws rather than downplay them. Manucci, Daru's kid servant, is likely the only one who is likeable, which is paradoxical considering that he is meant to be the one we would despise (the boy was previously involved in thieving). Hamid "borrows" the narrative from Kipling's *Kim* [1901] to describe Manucci:

"if one had asked Manucci during his days as a street urchin, as he sat, in defiance of municipal

orders, astride the gun Zam-Zammah, Manucci would probably have said that ACs are hot" [Mohsin Hamid, 2000: 134].

You cannot help but smile at this description.

Although I adored *Moth Smoke*, I did not give it a perfect five stars. It had too much conversation, in my opinion, for my tastes. The primary flaw, though, is that Hamid makes little effort to endear his protagonist to us by the book's conclusion. I think he might have rendered his novel more affecting and quietly compelling by altering several important scenes in the plot.

The astounding debut *Moth Smoke* features a daring experimental approach and structure. It is a work that encompasses a wide range of ideas, which makes it surprisingly effective. By digging deeper into the motivations of four different main protagonists and impliedly philosophical musings on morality, the gap among the poor and the rich, and the assessment of criminal guilt, this book offers a unique perspective on modern Pakistani life if you can keep putting up with the book's unlikable characters.

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