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## Critical Analysis of Zoomorphism Narrative Language Technique: Little Bird Moth's attributes in the Characters of *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid

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**Abstract:** Zoomorphism is the literary Greek language term used for animal characteristics in people, divine creatures, and lifeless things that are not animals but act like animals. This research paper deeply analyzes the text of "Moth Smoke" which is written by Mohsin Hamid. The present research aims to explore how Zoomorphistic interpretations are created in literary content. The study uncovered the secret nature which is hidden in the habits, manners, and attitudes of the characters which whom they work in the story. The complete text of Mohsin Hamid's novel, "Moth Smoke" (MS), is the primary data analysis source. The researchers investigated the flying little bird Moth's attributes which exist in the various characters of the novel as applied to "humanized" animals. The present study presumes that the zoomorphism strategy can work as an analytical tool in the linguistics analysis of literary text which also can work as a useful systematic analytical tool for the consideration of a scholarly text of the novel's characters in *Moth Smoke* with the instinct of Moth.

**Key Words:** Zoomorphism Narrative Technique, Greek Literary Term, Animal-Like Quality, Humanized Animal, Little Bird Moth

## Introduction

The literary narrative technique, zoomorphism has a significant place in a wide range of fields of study, for example, mythology, old stories, religion, traditional writing, classical narration, sort fiction, sci-fi, dreams, and funny books, which applies the animal qualities to human beings, to more readily pick up an enhanced knowledge of that being (Aspden, 2011). Zoomorphism aims for a profound understanding of animal qualities in human practices,

behaviours, mentalities, and feelings. It is the opposite of anthropomorphism, which involves identifying human qualities of animals or gods, whereas anthropomorphism identifies animal characteristics in people. Several spiritual creatures are depicted in animal practices in several different religions, such as the elephant-headed god Ganesha in Hinduism or the dove-headed Holy Spirit in Christianity (Augustine, 2019). The moths represent night-time creatures that have intellectual visualization of the other world, knowledge, mystic vision, and

determination. They are profoundly reliant on sensory perception, which is vulnerable and powerless because they do their daily activities in utter darkness. They explore the night's flames by utilizing their mindfulness and internal intuition (Bailey, 2015). For people, the moth bird is an indication to perceive vulnerabilities, impulses, and instincts, instead of depending entirely on the concrete things which they find in the sunlight. The moth is a soul healer and focuses on the imagery in fantasies and dreams, obviously during depressed and troublesome times. These attributes of the Moth are dealing with the masking frame of mind of the characters from their surroundings and environment, and also reveal the living styles of individual's life (Hamid, 2008). "In Hamid's imaginary world, when characters are compelled to stifle their complicated situations, then they, subsequently, suffer tension which as indicated by John Dollard, who prompts aggressively" (Yaqoob, 2018). The central essence of this study is to observe and find out the moth's characteristics in the protagonist of the novel, Daru in the theme of zoomorphic premise. The animal-like quality exists in the manners of Daru which depends on the superstructure of senses and this superstructure is the shade of a Moth. Darashikoh (Daru), Aurangzeb (Ozi), and Mumtaz are three important personalities in the Mughal Empire of India. Mumtaz is an admirer of one and the life partner of the other, whereas Daru and Ozi were childhood companions. Mohsin Hamid has created a confusing novel of insatiability, infection, and social maltreatment that keeps readers thinking about the characters, their feelings of insecurity, pride in having a place, and their awful actions (Yaqoob, 2018). As a result, he has attempted to investigate the nature of the human considering Moth's manners, which reside on the outskirts of extremism but dominate its monetary lifeline through power, lust, greed, and a variety of other concerns. Mohsin Hamid clarifies the

short existence of a moth's life relating to the genuine idea of life and death. In this novel, he puts the moth in a job that represents life; the moth's body during the burning death is eye-catching. Smoke explores the nothingness, carelessness, and purposelessness of life (Perveen & Awan, 2017). The essence of true life is energy but when the moth intentionally comes near the smoke, he died by himself. Likewise, every one of the characters in this novel comes nearer to the terrible things and destined themselves by their very own doings and happenings. Mohsin Hamid profoundly compares the entire existence of the moth with smoke to the fundamental characters of the novel like Daru, Ozi, and Mumtaz.

### The objective of the study

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- To analyze the text of the novel in the light of the Zoomorphism Narrative technique to identify the behaviour of humans to shape-shift into an animal and the attribution of animal-like characteristics to humans
- To examine the main characters Daru, Ozi, and Mumtaz with the nature of the small little bird Moths
- To understand the skill of Mohsin Hamid's representation of the Zoomorphism literary device in "Moth Smoke"

### Research Questions

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- 1) How does the behaviour of human beings act animal-like with a moth and smoke?
- 2) How do the main characters represent the true nature of Moth with Smoke in the novel?
- 3) How does Mohsin Hamid represent Moth attributes in all characters and setting with the help of the Zoomorphic technique?

### Review of the Literature

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There has been a lot of work done with

literary devices in *Moth Smoke*, as well as a lot of ideas created around it. Moreover, numerous studies have examined the hero of Mohsin Hamid's work *Moth Smoke* using allegorical and figurative language analysis; however, the exploration of the Zoomorphism narrative technique is one of a unique and distinctive feature on these grounds that it is exceedingly rare in writing (Aspden, 2011). It is a literary device that is normally found in short stories and used adequate descriptions and depictions of the characters in stories. According to the previous study, it has been utilized as a literary device from the time of the ancient Romans and Greeks. It is a highly effective method for depicting different people from the perspective of animal quality. The core purpose for utilizing this technique is to develop a literary language and furnish the story with the primary character of the novel the little bird Moth (Augustine, 2019). Daru is entirely a proficient male rival of the elite class and his association with Ozi and Mumtaz has been talked about in the guise of Moth and Smoke. With critical observation, there are wide ranges of common features of daily day-to-day which take on animal features (Costin, 2005). This zoomorphic idea is flourishing in making the buildings and construction of urban areas which are made as animals, for example, the Elephant Hotel on Coney Island, or the city of Juba in South Sudan intended to be built as a rhinoceros (Bailey, 2015).

The primary concern of Hamid is to investigate and demonstrate the destruction of man in the light of bird Moths and dust of Smoke. The zoomorphic narrative method has been applied to the characters and setting of the novel and it is perfectly appropriate for this research. In literature, pathetic fallacy is used which is also a poetic convention. It is a natural phenomenon in which feelings and emotions are expressed from human perspectives. In some contexts, the writers could apply the illustration of anthropomorphism's attributions and

representation just as zoomorphism. The pathetic fallacy is regularly portrayed as far as human feelings (Perveen & Awan, 2017). Here is an example, the "rain clouds weeping" is a pathetic fallacy connected to human feelings which is also an embodiment of personification, yet certain animals weep too, so the attribution of sobbing and weeping to a lifeless thing like a cloud could be in a case of zoomorphism (Hamid, 2008). So, the term zoomorphism would function admirably for depicting people in animal terms. Many superheroes nowadays are examples of zoomorphism, and their superpowers are animal-like, such as Spiderman, Ant-Man, Cat Woman, Black Panther, and others. In literature, the most notorious evil character is Iago in William Shakespeare who is also famous for the catastrophe of Othello and does a lot to finish Othello's character. In Yann Martel's novel "Life of Pi", the vital successful character Pi is wrecked and stuck on a vessel with a tiger which had names, Richard Parker. After quite a while, living with the tiger on the same boat, Pi finds that he turns out to be more animal-like, his eating, behaviour, and sleeping manners were like Richard Parker did. In J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter novel series, there are a few characters that can shape-move into an animal's capacity which is known as their entropy. In *Barn Burning* by William Faulkner, Bovines are dairy animals (Perveen & Awan, 2017). They are seen regularly as slow, moderate, moronic, and apathetic creatures that do not argue with their lords. Then again, wolves are fierce predators. In The Holy Bible, Psalms are composed by Multiple Authors, in which God is spoken to as a winged creature like a bird. The bird's shape and god's wings are associated with the comfort, well-being, and safe house which God provides for His creature. The most famous movie, *Twilight*, is a series created considering the Stephanie Meyer novel, which was executed by Catherine Hardwicke. She utilizes her extraordinary revelation on wolf's attributes

in person, Nikki Reed, in the role of the delightful and charming Rosalie Hale. Ted Hughes, a standout amongst the most creative artists of twentieth-century English verses, has composed countless verses and poetry on the different topics of animals. His animal poetry is his best verse and his distinguishing features (Costin, 2005). His animal imagery has earned him worldwide distinction. The Death of the Moth, a famous piece of writing which is written by Virginia Woolf, is a story where she explores the pathetic, wretched, and miserable moth's demise. The paper symbolizes the short existence of the moth that compares with the real idea of life and death. Mohsin Hamid's tale "Moth Smoke" has depicted culture, class distinction, and the dissatisfaction of the character, anger, compassion, sympathy, and hardship of essential needs of life (Hamid, 2008). The article's core aim is to focus on the zoomorphic narrative technique to explain the attributes of the little flying bird Moth like psychic abilities, wisdom, attraction, faith, determination, secrets, fragility, and the idea of having and have not, all these attributes exist in human instinct too which the writer depicts skillfully in the characters of the novel and its arrangement of events and setting. This article is an effort to investigate the possibility of animal-quality in human instinct and this manner of inquiry about how Hamid has depicted it in his story Moth's Smoke.

### Research Methodology

The data is analyzed using the qualitative research method; this is a methodological approach that is used to investigate the capacities and nature of characters in a narrative and descriptive manner considering animalistic characteristics in humans. For this article, the researcher used primary source information from the text of the novel "Moth Smoke." Secondary data is also employed, which can be found in books, research journals, magazines, and study papers, among other places. To study and

explore the chosen data, the researcher used the well-known linguistics domain of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Under the special aim and quality of judgment, CDA focuses on the "Zoomorphism" implications and impacts on the characters' conduct, manners, and living styles in Mohsin Hamid's novel "Moth Smoke." Mohsin Hamid's characters in Moth Smoke are the genuine portrayal of Zoomorphism. The procedure of text analysis has highlighted the substance, in which the hero Daru can be accessed and investigated using the zoomorphic storytelling style in Mohsin Hamid's novel Moth Smoke. The researcher has chosen the following themes from the novel from the perspective of Moth and Smoke for the zoomorphic narrative technique. The researcher broke down these themes in the zoomorphism perspectives of the selected novel. The little bird moth symbolizes various things, moods, and manners. It symbolizes attraction, charm, darkness/night, desires, dreams, obsessive love, temptation, assurance, determination, light, instinct, mystic mindfulness, wisdom, attraction towards the light, spiritual transformation, mystery learning, and truth.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

Mohsin Hamid's "Moth Smoke" is an extraordinarily impressive piece of work. Moth Smoke is a splendid story that invented the zoomorphism narrative technique for the first time in Urdu novel. The moth is a little bird that has exceptional qualities, yet he vanished himself with his obsessive passion of love and adoration towards smoke and light. The authentic depiction of characters with the idea of the moth and the novel's setting as indicated by the moth in this book is just brilliant. This is a story that circles the three primary characters, the focused person is Darashikoh Shezad (Daru), then Aurangzeb (Ozi) Shah, and the beautiful lady that comes between them Mumtaz, the closet journalist "Zulfikar Manto". However, the readers can't ignore Murad Badshah and

Manucci in the story also shadows of life, delicacy, weakness, change, attraction, concealment, confusion, worldliness, faith, determination, power, greed and lust, power of suggestion, psychic awareness, secret knowledge, self-destruction, fragility, fatal fascination, subtlety, vulnerability, reflection, observation, mimics and camouflaged quality, Micro-Lepidoptera (colours, measure, physical highlights, appearances, and voices) and so on.

### **The Zoomorphic Attribute in the title "MothSmoke"**

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For the analysis of the zoomorphic narrative technique, "Moth Smoke", the name of the story is eye-catching, gloomy, and oppressive which had the deep impact of extraordinary tragic progression in the story. The story uncovers the closer view of misery, and sadness, and is confronted with the social surroundings as the moth does with smoke and candlelight. In terms of practical application, the zoomorphic title 'Moth Smoke' is highly iconic and allegorical. The moth is persistently circling the light, putting his life in danger. Smoke is the second allegorical term in the title, indicating the end of a flame, ambiguity, and something abnormal. This blurry eyesight leads to mental illness, bewilderment, pressure, and life difficulties. The title also speaks about the death of mind and body of Daru; however, mental death was more terrifying than physical, at last, Daru meets until the very end of his life; his territory stanching away, and he stays alone with the empty brain, in the state of nothingness.

### **Darkness and Night**

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Moths are normally active during the evening and rest during the day in wooded trees. The very first noticeable attribute of a Moth is to live in darkness and fly in the evenings. Those moths who fly in the daytime, are not

appropriate to be called pure moths; because they are energetic and happy; also have wonderful feelings in the evenings and ivy-bloom shadows of the darkness. The book opens with a description of jail, the dark cell, where a gatekeeper hands a letter to the prisoner. The portrayal of the cell is described along these lines the cell is brimming with dark shadows, the warmth of heat, and dimness prevailing all over. Darashikoh's (Daru) life is spent in darkness throughout the whole story, he had no fruitful future and a decent job in his everyday life. He wastes his energy on drugs and illicit relationships with Mumtaz in the evenings and in darkness. He meets her and develops a sexual connection with her in the evenings.

### **Subtlety**

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The next feature is subtlety which is a significant attribute of appearance in the moth, specifically in the female moth. Commonly, female moths attract the male moth with the subtle exploitation of pheromones. They are confident about their talent to capture the male concern. Naturally, people can take a simple thought in the subtle craft of attraction of moths. Mumtaz's life partner Ozi, with a pleasant, charming, lovely, knowledgeable, and seductive character in the novel. She has a completely appealing nature like a moth with mature thoughts. She is an incomprehensible, sexual, and cliché character who needs to end up with the notion of the class lady of Pakistani culture.

### **Self-Destruction/ Fatal Fascination Toward Death**

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Like the nature of moths which are decayed to smoke because of their deadly interest in light and candle flames, Daru has a passion for self-destruction. In this novel, Daru, the hero is a disturbed and restless, failed banker who

loses his activity and fame because of his ill-nature of lying down with his closest friend's wife and is also involved in crimes and illegal activities which take him to destruction. The moth with the candle and Mumtaz as a flame with Daru have similar attitudes. In the story, the writer takes Ozi as flame, Mumtaz as a moth, and Daru as smoke, this can be justified by the light (Ozi) in which he took his revenge, for being unfair to Daru. The whole story stresses considering the issues tended to in the novel and building up an understanding of the various relationships that occur between 'moth' and 'smoke'.

### Lust, Greed, and Passion

In the book, if someone feels that they do not have energy and passion, then moth is inspiring to search it out to have something out there, however, unfortunately, people do not figure out how to think about passion, desire, and greed not in own heart even not find in moth's life. Mumtaz, the admirer of one and the wife of the other, is the novel's text and in the ending, she becomes the orchestrator. She wanted to spend her time with Daru with dirtied illegal sexual connection rather than her better half. The central purpose of the novel, for all its social greed, is towards mortal tragedy and a story of passion, lust, and desire. All the characters indulged in the adulterated things of their lives and come nearer with the filthy desire for sexual joy and fulfilment like moths. They met on dim nights and in faraway areas from the crowded city areas where they created and associated with various sorts of dirtied activities just like moths travel to faraway areas for the fulfilment of their passion and desire. It is a blunt summing of Mohsin Hamid's concern with the working of obsession and passion, and the desire for greed, sex, and power.

### Optimistic Self- Defence

A very fascinating and attractive attribute of

the moths is how they utilize their wings to fly and protect themselves in the danger zone. This attribute is an essential supporting feature in moths which helps individuals to end up in the role of guardian for the other ones. Moths have another quality which is optimism and self-confidence with endless transformative properties and how to overcome negative energies and annoying behaviours which is helping people to move into their capacity for happiness and satisfaction. This little creature gives the right instruction to the people and continues to achieve their objectives; regardless of the obstacles, they are confronting to achieve their desires. The writer creates the character of Manucci, who is known as Daru's loyal, sincere, optimistic servant who tries to maintain his position in Daru's home apart from this that Daru was not paying him and he was abusive towards him. He has exceptionally good thoughts for Daru and always tries to help him in the dark and bad situations and becomes a protector like a moth to Daru.

### Mimics and Camouflaged Quality

The moths are tricky in changing their faces and movement. They adjust themselves to how to mix into each environment. They are concealing or camouflaging symbols that can be perceived in both positive and negative ways. In the novel, Moth Smoke, the leading woman Mumtaz is a liberated individual in the general public with various confinements and restrictions. She is the prominent character with her mimicry because she has a hidden sexual relationship with Ozi and all the time she pretends herself loyal and honest with her husband. Simultaneously alongside, the second character, Manucci has one of a kind feeling of ethical quality that he always cares for and loves his master Daru; he tries to protect him in unusual ways. The third character is Murad Badshah, the drug dealer, the villain, the survivor, and the clever and cunning person who sparkles in this

book. Male characters like Ozi, and Daru were also hypocrites and had dual faces all the time with increasingly materialistic approaches and verbal conflicts of thoughts while females were drawn as having mental depression and loneliness and having attributes to conceal themselves from others.

### Attraction toward the Light

Moths are always pulled into artificial light, and that is one of their distinctive attributes. They cannot avoid light. Therefore, moths symbolize the attractions and connections with sparking things. These attractions can be good or undesirable. As, in this novel, all the characters are attracted to the glamour and artificiality of life. They had no idea what their future held; to keep his body and soul engaged, Daru turns to crime, enlisting Murad Badshah, a notorious rickshaw driver, and druggist, as his companion. Daru indulges in murder at this time, which he may or may not have committed. He even falls in love with the gorgeous but worried Mumtaz, the wife of his childhood friend and opponent Ozi, to whom he is drawn with the obsessive intensity of a moth circling candlelight.

### Vision/Wisdom / Intuitive Quality

Moths have simple circular eyes with a variety of colours. These eyes are made up of many hexagonal focal points/corneas that focus light from each part of the insect's field of view. They can see the inner wisdom in all its intuitive qualities. They can also observe the imagination of the mind and pick the intention of the other surrounding birds. Darshikoh's mystical and intuitive servant Manucci is genuinely loveable. While watching a moth, he picks up the intuitive vision of the circling of the moth around the candle flame. In South Asian literature, the moth's attraction to fire is frequently used as an emblem of affection. This Junoon of attachment, this attention, this energy,

remains dangerously uncomfortable. Just like Daru feels happiness and pleasure in the relationship with Mumtaz which is surprising wonder throughout everyday life. Daru, like a moth drawn to a flame, physically approaches Mumtaz, who adores him, but in the end, he is consumed by the flame of love. The moth (Daru) in this tale represents the secrets he keeps deep inside his heart about worldly wants, as well as the knowledge and wisdom he has learned through the years.

### Life and Death

The moth is vibrant and full of life, but it is vulnerable to death's wrath. In reality, the person feels hopeless and powerless, yet it is a fact of nature that death comes to everyone, whether it is a small creature or a massive animal. Mohsin Hamid uses the term death to stress the theme of death and its power in this work. The moth's fight against death is incredibly motivating and leaves a lasting effect on the reader's mind. The Death of the Moth in the *Flames of a Candle* compares a moth's inconsequential short fight and life to the daily challenges of Daru's life. The Moth is a symbol of humanity (Daru) in this story, and it refers to humanity's battle to survive as well as death. As a result, there is no way to avoid death; it is unavoidable. Second, there is a powerful sense of moths in the story, which signifies the need to examine individual weak places as well as regions where one feels nervous about things, as in Daru's life when he repents for his wrongdoing but in vain. In this story, the moth is stronger than the human, yet it focuses on several aspects that are attributed to the way the moth acts at contrasting times, but he will never beat death. There is a lesson that a person learns in his life and attempts to realize his desires, but no one can do anything like Daru when death approaches.

### Spirituality

Transformation of thoughts and mind is another attribute of the moth, which

experiences change on the way toward getting to be grown-up like a human being. They symbolize spirituality with profound advancement and gaining spiritual knowledge in their character, as When Daru considers Manucci's advice, however grim it may be, the moth spiritually aligns itself with positive people who can find the positive aspect in any situation. Its presence motivates him to develop the ability to use his intuition and psychic awareness to find constructive answers in any situation. He pursues his goals, whether they are physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual, yet he is far from the truth, which the moth connotation echoes. It signifies the reality that he cannot see because he is in the dark about Mumtaz's adulterous relationship, but that becomes clear as day once everything else is lighted. Second, the moth in this tale is strong-willed and determined to go close to the candle's flame, and nothing will stop it, even if it means being engulfed by the flames. Daru never feels defeated and maintains contact with him whenever he desires; it is merely his natural gift of attraction that has developed.

### Smoke, Dust, Season, and Setting

Daru, the protagonist of the novel, is constantly sweating, his house is filthy and filthy, stinking, smoky, and dusty dark, his garden is dead and dry, his room is airless, crowded, and dull, the food in his house is "consumed by coloured moulds that spread like cancer" (211), and rotten fruit oozes out of "ruptures in sickly skin" (211). Daru's medical illness, emotional morbidity, and drug addiction are so intelligently and effectively paralleled to his sick body and the dirty environment in which he is living. When the reader begins the story, they will quickly realize that environmental space and the people who dwell in it are inextricably linked (Bates 2000:257). In the novel, all the people and their surroundings are depicted as both agents and victims of the rotten ecological

system, just as moths live in a boring and desk-like environment, oblivious to the greenery and freshness of nature around them. The birds fly from one corner to the other, stopping for a second before flying across to the other. The story exposed these pointless attempts for a time without thinking.

### Conclusion

As a result, morality, legality, and justice are all shades of grey in the post-colonial world, and *Moth Smoke* does an outstanding job of highlighting their numerous complexities. Hamid's protagonists nearly completely dissociate themselves from Islam, instead focusing on more universal themes like wealth, prestige, passion, and pleasure. When reading the vivid, ecstatic sequences of Daru's encounters with ecstasy, marijuana, and heroin, or the visceral, terrible images of sex and violence, it becomes clear that all of these things are there randomly in *Moth's* different types. *Moth Smoke* is an extraordinarily unusual and essential work because of its moral complexity and rejection of Western assumptions of the Middle East. Its zoomorphic narrative strategy, combined with Hamid's distinctive approach to structure and evocative prose makes *Moth Smoke* a dynamic and intriguing novel. The moth depicts people who lust after things that are beyond of reach, but who continue to 'circle' about those desires, eventually burning themselves in the 'candle's' scorching flame, leaving only some smoke, which does not affect the candle, which continues to burn. The writer employs various linguistic approaches to emphasize the voices of the quiet people's hearts, much like Mohsin Hamid employs a zoomorphic narrative technique to show the story's protagonists in the light of a small bird *Moth* and smoke dust. They become reckless in all relationships, as Mumtaz and Daru did, for fear of losing their voice and becoming socially mute members, or they become



psychologically mute by adopting a social character and suffering the consequences silently because a dissident individual knows that they will not be supported by their society.

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