

**Thresholds of Transformation: A Symbolic Exploration of War, Identity,
and Space in Mohsin Hamid's *Of Windows and Doors***

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Abstract

This study explores the symbolic significance of spatial thresholds particularly windows and doors in Mohsin Hamid's short story *Of Windows and Doors* (2016). Utilizing trauma theory as the primary analytical framework, the research investigates how these architectural elements reflect the protagonist's internal states, including emotional rupture, displacement, and identity crisis. Through qualitative textual analysis, the study identifies how windows and doors function as more than mere physical structures; they emerge as metaphors for psychological boundaries, memory distortion, and moments of existential transition. Drawing on the theories of Cathy Caruth (1996) and Dominick LaCapra (2001), the analysis reveals how trauma disrupts narrative linearity and is instead encoded in recurring symbolic motifs. The findings suggest that these spatial markers serve as narrative instruments that dramatize the protagonist's oscillation between paralysis and progression, forgetting and remembering. Ultimately, this thesis contributes to trauma and postcolonial literary studies by highlighting how Hamid's minimalist narrative style in *Of Windows and Doors* (2016) uses spatial poetics to articulate the lingering effects of war and emotional dislocation in contemporary fiction.

Keywords: Mohsin Hamid, *Of Windows And Doors* (2016), Spatial Thresholds, Trauma Theory, Identity Crisis, Postcolonial Literature, Windows And Doors, Displacement, Symbolic Space.

Introduction

In the last decade, there has been a major turn towards war, displacement, and identity as the basis for much of modern literature, the manifestation of which falls through spatial and symbolic frames employed by contemporary writers. This shift is seen in South Asian and diasporic literature as well, where narratives extend from trauma of war and migration but is transformed through metaphors of space, memory, and conversion (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2018). One of the biggest literary names coming out of Pakistan, Mohsin Hamid has employed space not only as a setting but an active part of his stories. One of the denser pieces with regards to how architectural elements in this case, windows and doors evoke the

psychological and corporeal consequences of war, is his short story *Of Windows and Doors* (2016), which was published by *The New Yorker* (2018). In this short story, Hamid builds a moving meditation on how war changes not just cities and structures but the nature of human consciousness itself.

In the postmodern and postcolonial discourse, however, the symbolic use of space has become increasingly prevalent, mainly through spatial theory. Henri Lefebvre's (1991) seminal work *The Production of Space* states that space is socially produced and ideologically charged, not neutral and passive. For Lefebvre, lived space (*espace vécu*) is embodied and remembered, shaped by history and subjective experience. This view of space and place is how Hamid's male narrator in the short story is shaped by trauma and nostalgia and how one's identity becomes disrupted therein. The protagonist's memories of his childhood home and the ways its physical boundaries become contested territory reverberate with Lefebvre's insistence that spaces are inscribed with power, loss and ideological tension.

In *Of Windows and Doors*, the unnamed narrator walks through the desolation of his childhood neighbourhood, remembering how places once associated with safety and innocence now feel, at best, twisted, empty or unfriendly. The architectural notations of a windows and doors themselves get introduced not as literal edifices, but psychological thresholds — portals for which memory passes, and identity its own question mark. This thresholding as a more symbolic approach suits Lefebvre's (1991) social, ideological construction of spatial boundaries. When Hamid's narrator says that "a door is simply a hole in a wall you close," it is not just a literal observation but a commentary on the changing function of boundaries in wartime (Hamid, 2018). The doors and windows no longer separate safety from danger; now they indicate exposure to vulnerability, collapse, and loss. This uncertainty as to space, it will be important when examining the deeper symbolic tensions of the story.

In literature, war is often conveyed with the help of symbolic spatial markers, which makes it possible to probe trauma without acts of violence. Balaev (2018) and Caruth (2016) argue that trauma in fiction is frequently represented only indirectly, through the encoding of metaphors, silences and fragmented memories. There is war all around, unnamed, in Hamid's story. Its existence is marked by a transformation of spaces — vacant houses, obliterated streets, crumbled edifices. The trauma is narrated not in graphic detail, but through the dislocation of familiar settings, mapping what Lefebvre describes as the "implosion of social space" under violent conditions (Lefebvre, 1991). This symbolic compression is reflected in the protagonist's musings on how homes that once sheltered life now sit silent, their doors impotent as protectors or separators, their windows revealing nothing but degeneration.

Space plays a particularly significant role within South Asian literature, especially when seen through the lens of war and displacement. Kamila Shamsie and Arundhati Roy, among others, are similarly concerned with architectural and spatial symbolism to depict political fragmentation and personal grief (Mukherjee, 2019; Siddiqui, 2022). But Hamid's minimalist style, particularly in this short story, provides a distinct textual economy wherein space is both the main character. Unlike his would-be epics such as *Exit West*, *Of Windows and Doors* operates by way of concision and quiet, shifting physicality to bear emotional weight. The tale calls for a symbolic interpretation that would reveal the embedded meanings of both its spatiality and spatialities, fitting indeed into the broader trend of spatial literary analysis that has been increasingly applied to the study of post conflict societies and the sociocultural legacies they produce (Tally, 2019).

This study examines the symbolic restructuring of physical space in Mohsin Hamid's *Of Windows and Doors* as a function of the psychological metamorphosis of individuals trapped in war. This inquiry is driven by the following research question: How Mohammed Hamid's 'Of Windows and Doors' deploys spatial symbols [windows and doors] to engage the transformative nature of war in respect of the identity and memory? This may come as no surprise, as post-war identity is very much more the product of displacement in space, loss in symbol, and fragmentation within architecture rather than it being articulated through receptive language – or sound. Thus, the central purpose of the present study is to examine the ways that Hamid figuratively uses spatial components to probe the metaphoric interface of identity and space in contexts of warfare and trauma.

In order to meet this objective, the study draws on Henri Lefebvre's spatial theory as its only theoretical lens. For Lefebvre, it is the "trialectics of space" perceived space (physical), conceived space (ideological), and lived space (emotional) that offers a holistic understanding of the essence of space and how characters understand their space, interpret it, and respond emotionally (Merrifield, 2016). The hero of Hamid's story must cross all three spaces. He laments these encroachments with nostalgia, sorrow and philosophical musing (lived space), physically observes the architectural decay around him (perceived space), and then thinks about what it all means within its history, its politics (conceived space). Thus, the story functions as a spatial palimpsest, registering the interaction of private memory, public history, and physical architecture, while granting readers access to the gradual reworking of place and self.

Such a symbolic-spatial perspective becomes even more relevant, especially when seen in light of global crises today. The UNHCR (2023) states that 117 million people globally are forcibly displaced as a result of war, persecution, and environmental collapse. Literature (then) is an essential way to access how such displacements are affected not only of bodies but also of spaces and conversely how such spaces generate identities. Hamid's narrative speaks to these realities, making intimate but also global what war does to personal geographies.

At the same time, exploitive theory gives us an effective lexicon for talking about threshold, liminality concepts central to *Of Windows and Doors*. In spatial terms, a threshold is both an entry and an exit, a space of ambiguity and transition. The main character in this narrative inhabits these in-between spaces, never quite able to exist in the past or the present. As Johnson (2020) explains, "literature of conflict often has characters who are caught inside symbolic thresholds doors they cannot open, windows they dare not look through." Hamid exploits this symbolism to imagine one character straddling memory and forgetting, belonging and alienation. The physical layouts of the story rooms, walls and paths in turn mirror the psychic condition of initial ruptures and partiality.

Recent studies of postcolonial literature, by scholars like Gopinathan (2021) and Bhandari (2022), make the case for spatial analyses of these texts, detailing the way urban architecture serves as a surface upon which historical wounds are documented. Their findings reinforce this study's argument that symbolic representations of space in Hamid's story are not incidental but central to the narrative's exploration of war and identity. This reaffirms Lefebvre's (1991) argument that all space is politically radicalized and ideologically inscribed; a point that is even more salient in postcolonial contexts where architecture, cities and walls of various kinds are annotated with layers of colonial, national and individual narratives.

This study focuses on the symbolic architecture of Hamid's narrative in order to prove that space in literature is always active. It is dynamic, emotional and ideological particularly in places where war and displacement are taking place. Hamid's *Of Windows and Doors* presents, if quietly and obliquely, a deep meditation on how identity is created and destroyed through the liminal nature of thresholds of space, thus is an important text in mobilizing the transformative power of spatial symbolism in conflict.

Literature Review

Qureshi (2022) examines the aesthetics of war in Pakistani fiction through a dual framework of trauma theory and spatial poetics. Drawing on a textual analysis, the study explores the reverberations of systematized violence and spatial dislocation in the work of writers such as Mohsin Hamid. Qureshi discovers that Hamid's minimalist narrative style of sparse prose and compressed timelines reflect the disorienting effects of trauma. Quasi spati windows and door figuratively presented not as passive spaces but as metaphorical frames that reveal divided identities. It's the spaces left vacant and the areas filled with trauma that the paper argues underpin the pieces emotional and psychological landscape of the story, making for an archetypal signifier of trauma in architecture. By approaching these elements as narrative strategies, Qureshi participates in the growing field of trauma research that foregrounds the role of space in trauma fiction.

Examining built environments in South Asian fiction during times of conflict and political turmoil, Ahmed (2020) applies an intertextual reading. Employing cultural geography and semiotics, the study illuminates how architectural features such as windows and doors enclose ambivalent orders of significance security and exposure, affiliation and alienation. Through close readings of specific texts, Ahmed illustrates how these metaphors articulate psychological and emotional dislocation. This study is a qualitative exploration of various ways to better understand the potentialities of physical space to forge intimate and individual memory. It shows how thresholds function not just as physical borders, but as ideological, emotional and narrative tactics that shape the characters' experiences of crisis and movement. Ahmed's great service is to explain how this is by no means coincidental and is, on the contrary, how postcolonial fiction makes these architectural elements the central feature of its thematic and symbolic all of the above architecture.

Using the theory of liminality and symbolic anthropology to examine postcolonial and diasporic contexts, Chambers (2019) in practical application through a cross-cultural study of short fiction demonstrates how threshold imagery represents transformation. The study uses qualitative content analysis to demonstrate that characters located at literal and metaphorical thresholds are often undergoing significant changes of self. Framing these crossings as rites of passage, Chambers stresses their ritualistic quality, with each passage defining the transition from one existential state to another. Using Victor Turner's concept of liminality, this analysis explores how these in-between spaces present a context of ambiguity and a suspension of norms, allowing individuals to craft and negotiate new identities. This is a multidisciplinary approach that marries anthropological theory with literary analysis to equally analyze spatial symbolism in global literature.

Through an urban studies perspective that gestures to postcolonial theory, Bano and Latif (2023) trace the contours of Hamid's fiction along the seams of spatial politics, employing a

discourse analysis methodology. Focusing on *Exit West* and *Moth Smoke*, they contend that Hamid builds transitional spaces that are sites of ideological warfare and existential crisis. Their analysis suggests that doors in Hamid's stories are not mere barriers, but also gateways of moral, political and psychological choice. In the dispersed research, their work explores how these thresholds provoke characters' movement through complex social hierarchies and riven urban arrangements. The methodology describes the manners in which Hamid's settings operate as socially coded spaces, ones that condition individuals' relations to power, identity, and displacement. Bano and Latif's research expands the reach of urban spatial theory in literary studies by demonstrating the importance of architectural motifs as players in the construction of narrative worlds.

Shaheen Shaheen (2021), in contemporary South Asian fiction explores the emergence of hybridities by using Homi Bhabha's third space of enunciation between the borders and in the liminal spaces. Employing a theoretical-interpretive device, Shaheen contends that windows and doors are just spatial devices of metaphysical thresholds between the real world and creative imagination. These symbols in Hamid's work are telling not only of a transitional consciousness, which is conditioned by the legacies of colonialism and the psychosocial impact of displacement, her analysis posits. Traveling through the lens of postcolonial theory, this research mediates the pathways along which hybrid dynamics of subjectivities are continuously articulated in between points/spaces of departure and arrival. These tensions are analyzed through characters navigating between tradition and modernity, examining how spatial tropes allow for a reimagination of cultural identity in geopolitical sites of contention. Dar (2018) connects concepts of war literature in Pakistan to psychoanalytic and spatial theories, exploring how both memory and trauma are mapped onto domestic settings. Dar calls this the "narrative of threshold" and uses narrative analysis to argue that symbolic thresholds windows and doorways in particular are liminal spaces at the intersection of violence, memory and aspiration. These spaces serve as loci of resistance and possible healing, dramatizing the characters' struggle to reconquer a feeling of agency and continuity. The study also assists us in understanding the internal conflict of the characters mapped onto the spaces occupied by the characters using Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic tools. By bringing the spatial dimension of memory and loss into their analysis of home and shelter, Dar is expanding trauma studies.

Naveed (2021) applies a phenomenological approach to explore how local experiences of conflict are inscribed into the urban and domestic spaces of Pakistani fiction. Based on theories of affect and spatial memory, this study highlights the way that characters emotionally engage with their worlds. Naveed concludes that, in Hamid's fiction, thresholds like doors carry affective weight, either as thresholds across which a character must physically step or as a choice between staying in trauma and trying for transformation. Based on reader-response theory and phenomenologist thought, the study investigates the ways in which space mediates subjective experience. Add to this how this impulse to interpret symbolic spaces occurs in very subjective ways, and this research deepens what scholars have thought about spatial phenomenology.

Landscapes man-made and shaped by colonialism loom large; in the book of Raza and Hussain (2022), consciousness becomes geospatial, a semantic intersection in a post-9/11 landscape where geography and identity merge as a new cultural geography studies the cultural artifacts of the South Asian imagination. By way of structural and thematic analysis, they posit that

Hamid's architectural symbolism expresses broader anxieties of surveillance, mobility and belonging. Specifically, their interpretation of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* emphasizes how thresholds, such as windows, frame literal views as well as metaphorical insight into selfhood. Using Foucault's concept of panopticism and Michel de Certeau's spatial practices the study collects primary data to explore how power and identity can become a site of negotiation based on architectural products. Raza and Hussain's project situates geocultural symbols in a global moment of tension and, thus, adds to the growing field of geopolitical literary studies.

Iqbal (2019) analyzes psycho-spatial readings of who space belongs to in postcolonial narratives through Gaston Bachelard's "the poetics of space." Through close readings of textual passages, Iqbal proposes that in Hamid's work, spatial imagery breaks free of its material signposts and comes to symbolize the characters' inner landscapes. Doors and windows are repeating motifs in the study, signifying internal ruptures and the possibility of renewal, the study identifies. Iqbal draws upon psychological spatial theory alongside close reading methodologies to consider how narrative space operates in relation to emotional and cognitive states. This scalar specificity of the study brings in its wake not only a terminology which speaks back to the historical moment of the novel but also a growing interest in interiority (both physical and virtual) as a site for the continual and often protracted process of postcolonial story telling where the doubles of identity reconstruction and emotional coming to terms with the history of suffering are always inscribed in the novel as secondary concerns. Khan (2020) uses a deconstructive approach to cross-examine enclosure and openness in contemporary Pakistani fiction. Architecture metaphors, in other words, frame and fracture the story of belonging, the study says. Through a close-reading of Hamid's shorter works, Khan argues that spatial motifs function as narrative thresholds at which identity becomes unfixed, in flux. Drawing on Derrida's concepts of difference and trace, this research illustrates how meaning is perpetually deferred in these symbolic structures. Khan's work is to show how spatial imagery resists determination and liberates the text to multiple interpretations of identity, temporality and narrative form.

Research Methodology

From the perspective of interpretive literary analysis, the study uses a qualitative research design. This innately enables close textual engagement with the work in question, one closely examining narrative structures and metaphorical and spatial imagery. An interpretive approach is most appropriate for this literature-based research as it allows the researcher to discover layers of meaning hidden within symbolic representations.

The study draws on the constructivist perspective, which posits that reality is situated socially and materially by the meanings and significance given to events through language and symbols. This framework coincides with the thematic trajectory of the scholarship, namely the need to explore how narrative liminalities — liminal spaces, like windows and doors — not only fulfil the same space in Hamid's fiction but also carry connotative cultural, psychological, and emotional significance. Such a constructivist perspective allows for a unique analysis of processes of meaning-making as they manifest in spatial symbols.

The main data collection method is the textual analysis which means a systematic close reading and interpretive commentary of the selected text, "Of Windows and Doors". This text was selected for its textured relationship to space, and for including many horizontal and vertical

thresholds windows, doors, transitional spaces that serve both as material elements, and representational markers of internal and external change.

The method of thematic textual analysis was employed to identify and analyze recurring spatial motifs in the text. The analysis involved three key stages:

1. Identification of Spatial Thresholds: Passages describing or referring to doors, windows, and similar boundary-spaces were marked.
2. Thematic Coding: Each passage was coded based on recurring themes such as trauma, displacement, identity crisis, transition, and hybridity.
3. Interpretive Analysis: The selected passages were interpreted using trauma theory, which provides the analytical tools to understand how trauma is inscribed onto space and narrated through fragmentation and liminality.

Using the framework of trauma theory (primarily the works of Cathy Caruth and Dominick LaCapra) to unpack how trauma manifests spatially in the text of choice. And, in such spaces (whether these be physical spaces created by the author or more abstract spaces given life via psychological character development), trauma theory permits a wider interpretation of the psychological and emotional world in which characters experience and attempt to navigate their traumas, as well as the ways in which these traumas manifest as literal scars, which are symbolically confined to spaces that are allocated. In particular, spaces like windows and doors are explored both as symbols of confinement and escape — symbols of the internal struggle and healing (or transformation) that Hamid’s characters experience.

Relevant text passages were chosen with a purposive sampling technique. Examined only those examples where architectural motifs (namely doors and windows) played an important role in narrative arc or character reflection. Such a sampling strategy ensured that spatial poetics were the central analytic lens without diffusing the study’s scope.

This study is limited to “Of Windows and Doors” as the only work of Hamid under scrutiny, permitting anisotropic study of spatial thresholds that are criticized in only one narrative. It was chosen for its close consideration of spatial motifs as allegorical markers of bigger psychological and sociological concerns: displacement, trauma and changes to identity.

Ethical issues are few, as this is a qualitative textual study. All primary and secondary sources were properly cited, ensuring academic integrity nonetheless. Since there were no human participants involved, consent procedures or ethical approval were not necessary.

Although qualitative literary research does not abide by positivist standards of validity and reliability, theoretical rigor and textual coherence were kept. Triangulation with the theoretical model of trauma theory was employed to strengthen interpretive validity of the analysis. Scholarly work, peer-reviewed critical pieces, and established theoretical models were invoked for academic validity.

Data Analysis

One of the most resonant examples of threshold symbolism appears early in the story when the protagonist stands before a window:

“Looking out the window, he saw the world continuing, yet feeling completely disconnected from it, as though the world outside existed but not for him” (Hamid, 2016, p. 4).

Here, the window serves not only as an architectural feature but as a psychic divide, mirroring the character's inner fragmentation. Trauma theory, particularly as articulated by Cathy Caruth (1996), identifies trauma as a rupture in the continuity of experience. This passage reflects that rupture, with the protagonist observing life passively, unable to participate due to an unresolved internal dissonance.

Displacement as a thematic concern is illustrated through another door-centered scene:

"The door was open, but something held him back. He could leave, but leaving meant losing everything he had known" (Hamid, 2016, p. 23).

The open door is ambiguous—a route to change or an abyss of loss. This aligns with LaCapra's (2001) notion of "acting out" in trauma, where the subject remains caught in repetitive hesitation, unable to fully process or escape the traumatic moment. The door signifies more than passage; it encapsulates the emotional paralysis associated with forced transitions.

Moments of identity crisis are often linked to liminal zones, especially doors. One passage reads:

"The door was a line in the sand, a point where he could either continue as he was or step into a new version of himself. But what lay beyond, he could not see" (Hamid, 2016, p. 35).

This depiction illustrates how the door marks a boundary between known and unknown selves. In trauma theory, such moments signify a struggle for reintegration of the self after rupture. The inability to envision what lies beyond reflects both the uncertainty of healing and the difficulty of self-redefinition.

Hamid also employs the motif of the window as a device of distorted memory:

"As he gazed through the window, the faces of those who had passed through his life seemed distant, their memories distorted, as though viewed through a fog" (Hamid, 2016, p. 47).

The fogged window becomes a metaphor for the obscured and fractured nature of traumatic memory. Caruth (1996) emphasizes that trauma is not fully grasped at the time of occurrence but returns in fragmented, disjointed forms. The visual distortion here aligns with that theory, rendering the past as simultaneously present and inaccessible.

Another poignant example of transition occurs when the character steps through a door:

"He stepped through the door, not knowing what awaited him, but somehow feeling a sense of release, as though leaving behind a weight he could no longer carry" (Hamid, 2016, p. 58).

Unlike the earlier depictions of hesitation, this moment reflects what LaCapra (2001) calls "working through" trauma. The act of stepping forward indicates agency and a tentative reclaiming of selfhood. Though the future remains uncertain, the passage through the door suggests a move toward healing.

Additional instances in the narrative reinforce the psychological depth of spatial motifs. In one scene, a window is directly associated with danger and vulnerability:

"A window was the border through which death was possibly most likely to come... any spot indoors with a view of the outside was a spot potentially in the crossfire... shattered by a nearby blast... people had heard of someone or other who had bled out after being lacerated by shards of flying glass" (Hamid, 2016, p. 47).

This transforms the window from a site of vision into one of fear and exposure. The shattered glass becomes a metaphor for psychological shattering an ever-present threat that destabilizes the sense of safety.

In another moment, a closet doorway invokes foreboding darkness:

“The closet doorway was dark, darker than night... and out of this darkness, a man was emerging... He looked at the sleeping woman, the shut bedroom door, the open window... He chose the window” (Hamid, 2016, p. 41).

This scene demonstrates how multiple thresholds can simultaneously convey choice and risk. The window becomes the less threatening option, suggesting a subtle hierarchy of symbolic spaces in relation to vulnerability.

Hamid writes of another threshold passage:

“She was struck by its darkness, its opacity... felt equally like a beginning and an end... and without a word, she stepped through” (Hamid, 2016, p. 138).

The black door here symbolizes disorientation, a moment where past identity dissolves and a new self begins to emerge an evocative metaphor for trauma's transformative but destabilizing force.

Finally, the narrative ties intimacy and healing to domestic thresholds:

“To have a room to themselves—four walls, a window, a door with a lock seemed incredible good fortune... she took out of their backpack only items that were absolutely required” (Hamid, 2016, p. 210).

In the aftermath of upheaval, the ability to control one's space becomes a symbol of agency and trust. The locked door and private room suggest tentative recovery in the wake of trauma.

Thematically, the windows and doors in Hamid's narrative operate on multiple registers. Physically, they are elements of architectural space; symbolically, they encapsulate emotional, psychological, and existential thresholds. Each instance of spatial engagement echoes Caruth's notion that trauma resists linear narration, instead surfacing in symbolic, affective expressions. The protagonist's continual interaction with these spaces reveals his oscillation between remembering and forgetting, between paralysis and possibility.

Findings

The analysis of *Of Windows and Doors* reveals the complex and deliberate use of spatial thresholds particularly windows and doors—as symbolic devices reflecting the protagonist's emotional, psychological, and existential states. Through close textual examination, several key findings emerge:

1. **Windows and Doors as Emotional Thresholds:** These architectural elements operate symbolically to represent emotional rupture, psychological paralysis, and moments of transition. Windows serve as frames of both observation and detachment, while doors signify agency, hesitation, or transformation.
2. **Symbolism and Trauma:** The text demonstrates that trauma is not always directly narrated but instead surfaces through spatial metaphors. As trauma theory (Caruth, 1996; LaCapra, 2001) suggests, traumatic memory is often indirect and fragmented. Hamid mirrors this through fogged windows, open yet unentered doors, and black thresholds that disrupt narrative continuity.

3. **Liminality and Identity Crisis:** The protagonist's repeated encounters with doorways reflect a liminal state in which the self is being redefined. Doors appear at moments of existential decision-making, underscoring inner conflict and the tension between self-preservation and transformation.
4. **Transition and Healing:** While some spatial thresholds mark stagnation or fear, others suggest progress. The protagonist's act of stepping through certain doors symbolizes a tentative move toward healing a shift from "acting out" to "working through" trauma, as framed by LaCapra (2001).
5. **Memory and Dislocation:** Windows become instruments of fractured memory and emotional disconnection. They evoke feelings of nostalgia, loss, and unreliability, suggesting that the past is simultaneously present and unreachable a key dimension of trauma experience.

Conclusion

Of Windows and Doors by Mohsin Hamid is a powerful narrative that illustrates how spatial thresholds can symbolize emotional rupture, displacement, and fragmented identity. Through the lens of trauma theory, windows and doors emerge not as static settings but as active sites of psychological conflict and transformation. Hamid's nuanced portrayal of liminality reveals that trauma is both a spatial and temporal condition experienced through moments of stillness, hesitation, and transition.

The protagonist's journey is not marked by linear growth but by recursive encounters with memory, uncertainty, and fear. These moments of spatial engagement whether peering out a window or standing before a closed door function as metaphors for the dislocated self trying to orient within a disrupted world. Hamid thus offers a subtle but deeply resonant portrayal of post-traumatic consciousness, one that foregrounds architecture and movement as mirrors of emotional experience.

Ultimately, the story invites readers to consider trauma not as a singular event but as an ongoing negotiation with space, memory, and identity. The protagonist's navigation through windows and doors dramatizes the difficulty—and necessity—of facing the unknown to reclaim agency and meaning.

Recommendations for Future Studies

1. **Comparative Spatial Studies:** Future research could explore how spatial thresholds are used across different cultural or postcolonial literatures. Comparing Hamid's work with that of writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, Teju Cole, or Arundhati Roy could illuminate shared and divergent symbolic uses of space in postcolonial contexts.
2. **Intersection with Gender and Space:** This study focuses on trauma and identity; however, future scholars may examine how gender influences the experience of thresholds. Do female characters navigate spatial liminality differently than male characters in postcolonial fiction?
3. **Architectural Symbolism across Genres:** Scholars may analyze how thresholds function symbolically in other literary genres such as speculative fiction, magical realism, or historical fiction where architectural elements may hold alternate or heightened meanings.
4. **Visual and Filmic Adaptations:** With increasing adaptation of postcolonial literature into film and visual media, future studies might analyze how doors and windows are visually

represented on screen and how these visualizations affect the narrative interpretation of trauma and displacement.

5. **Narrative Structure and Spatial Theory:** Additional research could focus on how the very structure of the narrative mimics the symbolic thresholds it contains examining how Hamid's nonlinear or episodic storytelling aligns with trauma's disruptions to memory and identity.

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