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Shades of Postcolonial Marxism and How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia (2013): A Sociological Concern

Rabia Aamir

Abstract

This paper reads the dominant leitmotif of Mohsin Hamid's latest novel, How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia (2013) as a subversion of both the phenomena of colonialism and imperialism. Besides tracing the critique for a derivative aspect of colonialism and imperialism, namely globalization, this paper also studies the subversive rhetoric of this novel which flanks with postcolonial Marxism. Imminent aspects of postcolonialism and those aspects of Marxist approach that adopts a nuanced approach towards imperialism makes postcolonial Marxism an ipso facto critique of globalization, colonialism and imperialism. Therefore, the epithets circumventing and subverting the hegemonies of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization are also studied. This research looks at the possibilities of reorienting the postcolonial paradigms of inquiry and taps into the possibilities of postcolonial Marxism as a sociological concern.

Keywords: Globalization, Postcolonialism, imperialism, Marxism, interpellation, post 9/11, sociological concern

1. Introduction

Unique and daring combinations of ideas and tropes established in the contemporary literary world offer some grounds to understand the rationale for any future praxis concerning human comportment. Sometimes these ideas concur with the existing scenarios and sometimes they generate certain boundaries of understanding impossible to decipher unless their meanings are contextualized in totally new perspectives. Belonging to the genre of Post 9/11 Pakistan's diasporic fiction written in English, Mohsin Hamid's novel *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) can be said to be of one such category.

Mohsin Hamid's novels (Hamid, 2017) can be said to be in a constant state of metamorphosis. His remark that he takes around six or seven years to write really small books (Inskeep, 2013) gets confirmed with a glance at the dates of publications of these novels; *Moth Smoke* (2000), a Betty Trask award winning novel, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), a novel translated in thirty different languages of the world (Khan, 2015), and his penultimate being *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013). Considered as "one of his generation's most inventive and gifted writers" (Inskeep, 2013) by *The New York Times*, Hamid has commanded respect for his standards of authorship by penning three novels of so different genres. *Moth* Smoke (2000), as being an almost linear narrative of the protagonist's willful downfall in an ill-conceived society, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), as written in a style of a dramatic monologue, and *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013), as apparently a self-help book (Poon, 2015), addressing the reader directly in second person narrative, speak volumes for the versatility of this contemporary writer.

A remote parallel of Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) may be drawn with Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988) as both the novels are written in the second person

narrative. However, the similarity between the two works simply ends there as the subject matter of Hamid's novel, is totally different from Kincaid's work. While Kincaid's novel was a complete subversion to the impact of colonialism in her town of Antigua, Hamid's work can be categorized as a "bildungsroman" (Hamid, 2013b: 33). His implicit critique of the imperialistic machinations qualify this work to be a coming of age novel as shall be established shortly.

Critics have viewed *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) in different shades. Some side with the narrator of the novel's view for calling the self-help stance as a misnomer and call it more of a "moral fable and a satire" (Rosefield, 2013: 83+). Others like William Skidelsky (2013), in his article, "One step at a time", see it as a "classic rags-to-riches narrative," (37). Jim Hannan (2013) calls Hamid's style in this novel as "wry, laconic, and detached" (58). While some critics like Jim Higgins (2013) is of the view that this novel would have been an interesting literary novelty if it were only a satire. But Higgins believes that Hamid does much more with his succinct, deft prose and episodic chapters, and unfolds the life stories of the man and his true love (Hamid, 2013b: 33). Others like Claire Chambers (2013), finds Hamid's writing style "influenced by the dizzying extrapolation techniques of Google Earth, zooming out from the city, revealing the systems above the systems, and showing that the self from the self-help book is just a tiny node within a vast constellation of networks" (Chambers, 2013). This novel, therefore is discussed in a number of ways but in this paper a close reading of the text renders it a quality of a very different nature. I argue that this novel incorporates illustrations depicting strong elements of Postcolonial Marxist perspectives subverting the hegemonies of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization, a phenomena that have created thematic binaries of existence.

The redress of the idea of globalization, as theorized by Zygmunt Bauman in his book *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (1998), and Postcolonial Marxist approach as constructed by Crystal Bartolovich and Neil Lazarus, constitute the basic premise of inquiry for this paper. In the introductory chapter of their book, *Marxism, Modernity, and Postcolonial Studies* (2004), Bartolovich believes that "Marxism and postcolonial studies have something to say to each other—and that there might be more productive ways of dealing with their differences [because t]he contest of cultures with which postcolonial studies has been so preoccupied, [...] simply cannot be divorced from rigorous critique of the imbalances of global political economy" (Bartolovich, 2004: 1,12). Besides asserting that postcolonialism should not only be considered as a cultural critique only, Bartolovich also advocates that the modern trends point to visible and strong Marxist postcolonial studies and emphasizes upon the need to explore this dimension of both Marxism and Postcolonial.

In principle, like Bartolovich, but unlike her in treating the subject of postcolonial Marxism, Robert J C Young has used the term "tricontinental theory as theory" (Young, 2004/1994: 5), for building a rationale to appropriate Marxism with a versatility of non-European situatedness. He believes that Marxism was put to use when the non-Europeans "took critical elements of Western radical discourse, and combined it with a dissidence of their own" (Young, 2004/1994: 7). In his book, *White Mythologies* (1994, 2004), Young has extended the boundaries of Marxism or MAMA, an acronym he uses for male Anglo-Saxon Marxist academia, by opening up "MAMA to the discourses of those who had always been relegated to the status of Europe's 'others'" (Young, 2004/1994: 4). Young is convinced that these others or subalterns were never bereft of articulating their concerns but "rather that the dominant would not listen" (Young, 2004/1994: 5). According

to Young, this initiated a whole movement of dissident radicals who emphasized upon "the best elements of Marxism and new ideas" (Young, 2004/1994: 13), a movement to bring into the limelight the various grass root factions of various societies. Issues like rights of women, immigration policies, and anticolonial struggles among many other were never major concerns because "any 'Third-World' input into Western knowledge or politics is typically suppressed, and quickly forgotten" (Young, 2004/1994: 15). While discussing many revolutions in the postcolonial world, for instance, Mao's Cultural Revolution and the like, Young has highlighted the significance of postcolonial enquiries by using a number of terms as "Third-World Marxism, Third-World anti-imperialist Marxism, ...transculturated Marxism, [or] Tricontinental postcolonialism" (Young, 2004/1994: 15,30-1). Young, therefore, has substantially established the importance of the need to counter the mechanistic forces and "hegemony of bourgeois ideolog[ies]" (Young, 2004/1994: 19) that have had devastating effects in the postcolonial world.

While, Aijaz Ahmad, in his book, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (1992, 2000), views the issues of "colony and empire" (Ahmad, 2000/1992: 7), as an aporia. He objects to deeming the subject of colonies' "nations, nationalism and the Third World" separate from the "prior political histories" (Ahmad, 2000/1992: 7) because, according to him they "routinely appropriate discrete Marxist positions and authorial names while explicitly debunking the theory and history of Marxism as such" (Ahmad, 2000/1992: 5). Ahmad's conviction for this impasse of reductionist strategy of treating Marxism as an element among other elements is further based on the premise that the third world has tabled their issues "in unsystematic ways" (Ahmad, 2000/1992: 7) into the ambit of literary theory. However Young's stand point may be quoted here which answers this concern of Ahmad to a considerable extent that though Marxism "regularly expressed sympathy and solidarity with the struggles of peoples outside the West, this was never accommodated within its own political thinking *at a theoretical or philosophical level*" (Young, 2004/1994: 5).

It follows, therefore, that though the standpoint maintained by Bartolovich, Young, and Ahmad may be different in their treatment concerning postcolonialism and Marxism but nonetheless they have pivoted their discussions around the basic issues of postcolonialism and Marxism. The selected text of Hamid's novel supports this circumlocution of postcolonial Marxism as one of its major concerns and will be duly investigated accordingly.

In one of the interviews of Mohsin Hamid, Sophie Elmhirst suggested that his authorship bears the semblance of "channeling the politics of a continent into the mind of an individual" (2013: 131). The storyline revolves around an unnamed individual, the protagonist, and addressee of this novel, *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013), who is shown to be a bearer of the politics of Asia in his mind. The narrator gives this nameless protagonist, in an unspecified part of Asia, a set of satirical, albeit implicit, instructions in order to climb the ladder of success. It is a story of making progress with a strong undercurrent of irony. In a very conversational tone, Hamid chalks out the two corresponding facts of 'how to get filthy rich' and, that too, in the milieu of 'rising Asia'. Therefore, the apparently, upward journey is established right at the beginning of the book. Borrowing the term from science, it may be seen that, ostensibly, the two facts of getting rich and the protagonist being placed in an indefinite part of rising Asia are shown as directly proportional rather than inversely proportional, as far as the themes of the two journeys are concerned. One journey is of the individual and the other being of the whole continent. The novel can loosely be divided into three kinds of instructions given to the addressee by the narrator:

- In the first kind of instructions, Hamid, using his narrator to serve as his mouth piece, gives the protagonist the directions of moving to the city, getting an education without falling in love or falling for leanings towards the leftist wings of idealism in an educational institution.
- In the second set of instructions he exhorts his addressee to learn the tricks of the trade from a master, work for himself even if he has to use violence; befriend a bureaucrat and even patronize the veterans of war, all to be accomplished applying a Machiavellian approach.
- In the final stage of instructions he exposes the ugly realities of life as coming round to full circle from where it had started. In this stage of instructions the unnamed addressee is asked to dally with the debts that he has to face and therefore the narrator asks him to focus on the fundamentals before the protagonist is advised to apply the metaphorical exit strategy from the stage of life.

All the instructions, thus given by the narrator, regarding the broad and loose division of three stages mentioned above exhibit features of a typical postcolonial narrative in a post 9/11 world; a world, which is a natural import of the phenomenon of globalization. The second and the third stages, in addition to carrying impacts of globalization, exhibit a strong undercurrent of Marxist approach too. The narrative of this novel provides the rationale of overlapping of these, apparently paradoxical approaches of globalization, postcolonialism, and Marxism.

These manifested features exhibited in this novel engage the theory of Crystal Bartolovich, and Neil Lazarus that may be drawn from their book, *Cultural Margins: Marxism, Modernity and Post-Colonial Studies* (2004); a book which was written after a panel discussion of a conference titled 'Rethinking Marxism', a conference that "advocate[d for] a strong and visible *Marxist* postcolonial studies" (Bartolovich, 2004: 1). Bartolovich, in her introductory essay of this book, has built an argument as to why it is important to consider Marxism "as a living *project,* [not only as a] discourse or a body of (academic) knowledge [but also as]… the most fruitful path to take in understanding both the colonial past and the contemporary world order" (Bartolovich, 2004: 16). She believes that both, postcolonialism and Marxism, have issues with the legacies and policies of colonialism and imperialism and existing leanings of globalization, and therefore, they do not need to eye each other with hostility. As the justification of her argument, she draws our attention to the fact that "Marxists have been working in a number of ways from the start on the very issues and concerns – such as imperialism, nationalism, racism, subalternity, and so on – which have become central to postcolonial studies" (Bartolovich, 2004: 3). In order to strengthen her argument she quotes other major critics like Ania Loomba who believes that "if postcolonial studies is to survive in any meaningful way, it needs to absorb itself far more deeply with the contemporary world, and with the local circumstances within which colonial institutions and ideas are being moulded into the disparate cultural and socioeconomic practices which define our contemporary 'globality'" (Bartolovich, 2004: 2). In the light of this quote and the aforementioned quotes of Robert Young and Aijaz Ahmad it may be averred that the lines of postcolonial studies, globalization and Marxism are bound to intersect, the example of which may be seen in the text of this novel as manifested in the coming textual illustrations.

There is a direct addressee in *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013), as was there in Hamid's earlier novel, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) with a definite shift in the balance. For, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) was the life story of its narrator whereas *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) "is the story of the addressee" (Rosefield, 2013). This addressee

is instructed to move to the city. Taking into consideration, the broad division of the three set of instructions it may be seen that the instruction of moving to the city in the first stage of the novel has an economic imperative as its background. This instruction is coupled with the instruction of getting an education, but the condition attached to it says that this education should not have any idealistic approach and folly of falling in love with a generic "pretty girl" (Hamid, 2013a: 38). This instruction is something which, besides being implicitly satirical, has a definite bend toward the swiftly growing trend of globalization which is currently "on everybody's lips; a fad word fast turning into a shibboleth, a magic incantation, a pass-key meant to unlock the gates to all present and future mysteries" (Bauman, 1998: 1). Moving to a city, therefore, a change in the superstructure, to borrow Marxist term, is considered as the key to success in the paradigm of globalization.

Bauman considers this concept of globalization as a fad word which has certainly attained the status of a shibboleth, a long standing custom or belief which is seldom questioned, as "[m]obility [has] climb[ed] to the rank of the uppermost among the coveted values" (Bauman, 1998: 2). It may be seen thus that globalization has now become a reality and something which is accepted with an ease since the time *Globalization* was written in 1998. One of the manifestations of this phenomenon of globalization is something which may be seen as the opening chapter of this novel of Hamid with the imperative of moving to the city. The impact of globalization can be seen from the urban settlement of the unnamed protagonist. At this point of the narrative the concept of globalization is seen to be meeting its antithesis, when the much awaited "historical fate of Panopticon" (Bauman, 1998: 4), i.e. the gradual demise of the concept of Panopticon is instead called in question by the narrator's set of instructions to his addressee entailing the coveted move to the urban metropolis. Bauman believes this model of globalization to be a hoax as he unmasks another strategy for "panoptical model of modern power" (Bauman, 1998: 34) which favors the fact that the panoptical strategies of control which were initially suggested by Michel Foucault have not actually died out but have taken different strategic measures. This can be understood as the commodification of the addressee to achieve his class upgradation. Granted, that these strategies of control being not in the hands of panoptical supervisors but nonetheless this imperative of upgradation of status suggest another kind of globalization which may be different from any earlier model but is pointing at the exploitative aspects globalization nonetheless. Moving to the city, besides being due to the impact of globalization as asserted by Bauman also entails another reason for such an imperative. This imperative may not be understood "without the tools of political economy [because] postcolonial studies will never be able to diagnose these conditions and launch effective critiques of them" (Bartolovich, 2004, p. 15). That is how the paths of political economy and postcolonial studies meet inevitably.

The next instruction which Hamid gives to his reader of getting an education is also a kind of a step towards globalization in a postcolonial world as "[w]ealthy neighborhoods are often divided by a single boulevard from factories and markets and graveyards," (Hamid, 2013a: 20). Reducing the disparity between the existing conditions of the addressee who "being local in a globalized world is a sign of social depravation and degradation" (Bauman, 1998: 2) is what this novel aims his addressee to overcome as the first step on the ladder of becoming filthy rich. Thus the postcolonial milieu of the unnamed protagonist of the novel also has a strong leaning of a capitalistic agenda of improving his conditions to move to a better neighborhood of a city.

The next step suggested by the narrator to improve his condition unfolds another aspect of this upward mobility. His getting an education from a place where the profession of teaching is a dilemma because the teacher of this part of the world "did not want to be a teacher. He wanted to be a meter reader [for the single reason that the meter readers] do not have to put up with children…[and naturally] have a greater opportunity for corruption" (Hamid, 2013a: 23). The "falsified results" (Hamid, 2013a: 23) of such a teaching profession besides pointing out the irony of the situation also draws the attention to the cultural consequences of such an education. This form of education with falsified results is the true depiction of what Bauman (1998) has stated to be the real "trouble [of] the contemporary condition of our modern civilization ….[because it has] stopped questioning itself" (5). This lack of the ability of questioning therefore, is a norm, quite commonly observed, in a globalized world.

This globalized world is something which the narrator exhorts the protagonist to achieve by moving to the city and getting an education. The occasional comments about the chauvinistic attitude of the generic father figure of being a "notorious drunk and gambler rarely sighted during the day" (Hamid, 2013a: 41) add an impetus to the already ambitious aspirations of the protagonist to achieve his goals. It also "compresses the time frame needed to leap from my-shit-just-sits-there-until-it-rains poverty to which-of-my-toilets-shall-I-use affluence" (Hamid, 2013a: 78). This disparity which may be traced in the two conditions calls in question the Panopticonic/ globalized version of understanding the motives of getting filthy rich that apparently claims to be aiding this third world citizen belonging to a postcolonial place in rising Asia. However, the actual state of affairs points towards another reality. This reality, "since the end of colonization generations ago" (Hamid, 2013a: 20), illustrates that this indefinite place in the rising Asia still lacks the true governance capable of rooting out the evils of neo liberal policies implemented globally. This lack of governance speaks for the not so panoptical but an alternate mode of hegemonic control over the poor addressee of the narrative of this novel.

Resultantly the apparently aspired and achieved affluence as a result of having moved to the city and received a Machiavellian kind of education does not provide, in actuality, the means to flourish and grow monetarily despite the hype created by the rhetoric of globalization. The protagonist is seen to have become the embodiment of the menace of globalization that Zygmunt Bauman seems to be asserting in the chapter, "Tourists and Vagabonds", of his book *Globalization* (1998), when he quotes Professor Ricardo Petrella for summing up the peril of "[g]lobalization [which] drags economics toward the production of the ephemeral, the volatile (through a massive and universal reduction of the life span of products and services) and of the precarious (temporary, flexible and part-time jobs)" (78). The satire in the instructions of moving to the city and getting education without aspiring for any idealism speaks for the hoax of the education which is only education in name only. This directive of seeking unidealistic education without any real merit urges the addressee "to stay away, particularly if getting filthy rich tops [his] list of priorities" (Hamid, 2013a: 57). It further stops him from realizing any other priority for his 'to do' list. This constructed rhetoric surrounding the repressive ideologies is the interpellation that prevents him from the real understanding of the repercussions of material and historical conditions in which he is living. Therefore, the interpellative exhortation to the addressee boils down to aspiring only for the cheap pneumatic skills, life styles and possessions, making the chief goal in life as to become only filthy rich.

The second stage of instructions in *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) is a Machiavellian approach which has to be an integral part of this post colonized realm since it is still steeped in the menace of a feudal system where they have to "bring their hands to their foreheads, bend low, and avert their eyes [because m]eeting the gaze of the landlord has been a risky business in these parts for centuries, perhaps since the beginning of history" (Hamid, 2013a: 8). What Hamid is actually asserting is that this holds true for all tabloids, fields and organizations naturally creating environment for globalization. It further leads to a Machiavellian stance because "Nepotism is not [only] restricted to swaggering about in its crudest, give-my-son-what-he-wants form" (Hamid, 2013a: 59) but also because;

> "[y]ou are part of a stupendously corrupt system and you need to play it…"Filthy" describes not so much the quantity of your money as the means by which you will acquire it: selling pirated DVDs, food past its expiry date, fake bottled water. Along the way you bribe officials, fudge your accounts and pay others to kill those who threaten you. You also give generously to less fortunate relatives, care for your sick parents and take seriously your responsibilities as an employer". (Rosefield, 2013)

The Machiavellian approach pointed out in the above quote clearly explains that filthy means acquiring the money by all possible illegal means of selling expired food after repasting the labels, or setting up a fake company to procure, substandard, supposedly mineral water, giving high margin for profit. This dirty game does not end here and the addressee is shown the ugly picture of his heinous deeds when he resorts to equally belligerent means to safeguard his interests of staying in the market by ousting out any contenders that may be there to put him out of this filthy business; all these efforts only to be ultimately playing with the health of human lives. This kind of modus operandi is something for which the way has been paved by this phenomenon of globalization which evokes the imagery of a "dense dark, straggly, 'deregulated' thicket of global competitiveness [of] goods, services and signals [which] must arouse desire,…seduce their prospective consumers and out-seduce their competitors….lest the global chase of profit and ever greater profit (rebaptized as 'economic growth') shall grind to a halt" (Bauman, 1998: 78). Therefore this Machiavellian approach is employed due to the lack of any checks and balances on the economic demon in this globalized realm where the sole purpose is to outdo the other in order to quench the thirst of covetousness of one's hearts desires. This treacherous behavior is gaining strength due to a leaning towards a capitalistic approach which puts everything in the scales of economics. Hamid seems to be doing a Marxist analysis of such a mindset as illustrated through the protagonist.

This Machiavellian conviction also clearly indicate that the postcolonial studies and Marxism are two approaches that need to be taken into account for the explication of any phenomenon present in the real or the literary world as depicted in this novel under study. In the book, *Marxism, Modernity and Postcolonial Studies* (2004) Crystal Bartolovich asserts that,

> "not only that Marxism is rightfully a matter of fundamental interest to intellectuals who would unsettle Eurocentrism and critique colonialism and its after-effects, as postcolonial studies purport to do, but also that, especially at this moment of capitalist triumphalism, a Marxist critique is unforgoable…. It seems to us that Marxist theorists can and should engage *with* postcolonial studies in mutual sites of concern, and concede to the field the authentic insights and advances that have been generated within it". (Bartolovich, 2004:10)

Bartolovich, therefore, is emphasizing the fact that Marxism cannot be brushed aside by alleging it as only Eurocentric. She maintains that if Marxism is Eurocentric then postcolonialism had also been Eurocentric at one point and time in history. She advocates that if postcolonialism has grown out of the fetters of Eurocentrism then it goes without saying that Marxism needs to be understood as to have crossed all such barriers because "Marxism has indeed served, and served consistently, as an anti-imperialist social project" (Bartolovich, 2004: 15), and should be applied and explicated in the same spirit in contemporary world. The above examples from the text of the novel by Hamid about getting filthy rich has proved this assertion and stance of postcolonial Marxism.

In the third chapter titled, "Marxist Criticism", Lois Tyson, in her book, *Critical Theory Today* (2006) talks about "the real forces that create human experience: the economic systems that structure human societies" (53). Tyson believes that "[f]or Marxism, getting and keeping economic power is the motive behind all social and political activities, including education, philosophy, religion, government, the arts, science, technology, the media, and so on. Thus, economics is the *base* on which the *superstructure* of social/political/ideological realities is built" (54). Adopting a Marxist perspective Hamid, uses the technique of implicit satire and arouses this economic infatuation in the protagonist of his novel under study. This implicit satire gets rancorous when it is coupled with addressee being "bombarded by imagery from television and billboards" (Hamid, 2013a: 38). These phenomena of the bitter economic truths when get accompanied with the sexists comments by Hamid like, "a man of a voracious sexual appetite," (Hamid, 2013a: 5) or unbecoming dialogues for a mother figure that "if it weren't for my tits…everybody would think I'm a frog [or] you listen to an oversexed neighborhood rooster crowing" (Hamid, 2013a: 63, 99) evokes a beastly imagery leaving a bad taste, which, one feels, could have been done away with. But at the same time it also makes one wonders why the writer does frequently alludes to such promiscuous behavior. The explanation of this can partly be sought in the Panopticonic global vision in which even the writer like Hamid finds himself. Even he has to submit to the base of superstructure of ideological reality that Lois Tyson has spoken of and partly due to the Machiavellian economic factors which are working into all the political and social fabrics of society, may that be art in the form of media or technology and science etc. or literature.

A Marxist approach is therefore, something which is seen to have been working in the narrative of *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013). In his earlier novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) Hamid had called "economy an animal [which] evolved [and then it] needed muscle" (Hamid, 2007: 58). Albeit, in a satirical vein only, but *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) is replete with comments and statements marking the economic factor as a necessity for existence. For instance, at several places Hamid remarks:

> "State-subsidized though it may be, your university is exquisitely attuned to money. A small payment and exam invigilators are willing to overlook neighborly cheating,… [or y]our organization is, like all organizations, an economic enterprise. The product it sells is power,…[or] the pretty girl has finally succeeded in securing a place of her own,… [or b]ecoming filthy rich requires a degree of unsqueamishness, whether in rising Asia or anywhere else. For wealth comes from capital, and capital comes from labor, and labor comes from equilibrium,… [or c]ontact between extremes of wealth and poverty fuels such incidents, of course" (Hamid, 2013a: 60-2, 119, 172).

Hamid's words clearly indicate the menace of a globalized economic power in which to gain more and more capital is the ultimate end of human existence. It is "[s]uch commodification, [which is] an ineluctable consequence of the globality of contemporary capitalism, [and which] goes hand in hand with the greater exploitation, of labor-power and resources, across the international division of labor" (Bartolovich, 2004:14). Besides being extremely ironic about getting the surrogate equilibrium regarding the labor, these words and facts which apparently seem to be exhorting the addressee to adopt a typically Machiavellian approach are actually written to spite the reader and to jolt him out of his reverie for the passive acceptance of the monster of economy. The second set of instructions in the novel, so far, establish that the ills of globalization and Machiavellian approach have demonized the existence of the addressee 'you' in the pursuit of getting filthy rich. Hamid actually is encouraging the reader to go and think much beyond the binaries of "haves and have-nots" (Tyson, 2006: 54). In a way he has exhorted the modern human being to think, if possible, on the horizons beyond the immediate globalized, and hegemonized simple equations.

There is a marked paradigm shift in the third and the last stage of instructions given to the addressee in the novel. Hamid questions this ideology of globalized approach of working for oneself; being belligerent in the cut throat world of business; and the Machiavellian mindset of saluting the rising suns of bureaucracy and the artists of war. It is almost as if Hamid is turning the tables over for the romanticized notions of his earlier exhortations of becoming a globalized and capitalistic hulk of a citizen. After his complete acquiescence to the god of capitalism the addressee is finally asked a thought-provoking question, "Is getting filthy rich still your goal above all goals, your be-all and end-all, the mist-shrouded high-altitude spawning pond of your inner salmon" (Hamid, 2013a: 78)? The tone of this rhetorical question is important. One needs to figure out if it is asked as a way of condemnation or an exhortation for becoming filthy rich in rising Asia. When the allusive imagery of spawning of salmon is taken into account, it points to an important fact of life. For, a salmon swims upstream against the water current to spawn or lay its eggs. Once it has laid its eggs it swims downstream and either has to be fished out or it dies since it has accomplished the task of its life assigned to it by nature. This imagery, on the one hand is satirical and on the other is ironical; satirical, because the supposedly, a very informed addressee cannot fathom his real purpose of life, and ironical, because the neoliberal policies adopted all around the world are rooting out any chances for the generic protagonist of this narrative, for realizing the real aims of life.

Hamid makes his addressee realize the menaces of his supposed upward journey by making him aware of "[t]he drone circl[ing] a few times, its high powered eye unblinking, and fly[ing] observantly on" (Hamid, 2013a: 175). Similarly, the return of the addressee's son "after studying in North America, which, despite Asia's rise, retains some attraction for a young conceptual artist..." (Hamid, 2013a: 179) are examples of invoking a sense of realization in the generic protagonist about the perils of becoming filthy rich. Examples of such nature from the text qualify this novel as a postcolonial text since it is subverting every possible hegemony of a panoptical globalized world by making the addressee cum reader aware of two important facts. One is to make the addressee aware and subvert the panoptical vision of the drone and the other being the fact that America, still or yet, might carry some sort of attraction for the students from a postcolonial land as the rising Asia. This state of affairs has an implicit implication to the fact that North America is not the romanticized land as it used to be. Further the "shady dealings receiving

scandalized attention in newspapers [and the sacrifice of the protagonist] so that the rest of the herd may prance on" (Hamid, 2013a: 190) explain the real reasons of making the protagonist a loser or a scape goat by Hamid. The protagonist is made a sacrificial hero for the benefit of the others who have embarked upon the same journey as the addressee. 'Rest of the herd' or the actual culprits of the 'shady dealings are prancing on and this addressed protagonist seems to be always in a hospital as if he has "never left the hospital, as though the last half decade of [his] life was merely a fantasy," (Hamid, 2013a: 228). These are the ironical elements with a universal appeal to make the reader realize of the actual state of affairs; "the reality that with age things are snatched from a man, often suddenly and without warning" (Hamid, 2013a: 191). Hamid gradually brings his reader to the acceptance modes of these bitter realities; the actual state of affairs when a human is made to realize his true goals in life, here metaphorically expressed in the realm of rising Asia but synecdochically meant to evoke a universal understanding of such a station in life anywhere in this world.

Towards the end of the narrative, after the addressee is shown to have been shorn of all kinds of abilities of being an economic Bacchus and has become bereft of all mirage like riches, he is exhorted by Hamid to "focus on the fundamentals. Blow through the fluff" (Hamid, 2013a: 201) implying that it had been a futile effort all the time since the,

> "limited savings remain untouched, available for doctor's visits, tests, and medications, and it seems not improbable that in the race between death and destitution, you can look forward to the former emerging victorious… [it was all because while being poor, the faces had been] pressed to that clear window on wealth afforded by ubiquitous television [but now you are] nearly relieved to have been already separated from your fortune" (Hamid, 2013a: 202-6)

Hamid has actually used a very powerful imagery to drive the nail aright in the human psyche. It seems that blowing through the smog of the globalized and Machiavellian approach towards life was the actual goal of the writer. His Marxist analysis makes the reader understand the deception and the false halo created around the genie of wealth by making him aware of the ultimate usage of the acquired wealth for the doctors and the medications etc. Likewise the logical and plausible conclusion, as suggested by some critics, about the addressee being living with the love of his life, the pretty woman towards their end given by Hamid seems to be wanting for something beyond the apparent inference drawn of getting one's love of life besides him.

The plot of this novel, at this point and time, can only be classified as a metaphorical narrative when he leaves the statement about focusing on the fundamentals open to interpretation. The text certainly takes the status of a metanarrative here, since the philosophical intellectual leanings of Mohsin Hamid, seem to be endorsing his view of writing this novel specially the last sentence of this novel when he says, "A lot of thinking went into that sentence,…In some ways, I wanted to write the equivalent of a non-religious Sufi text. That was my thinking behind *How To Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*. … how we can achieve a certain degree of release in this life – by making us less centred in ourselves, and therefore less terrified by the end of ourselves" (Khan, 2015). There are many textual illustrations that support this view of Hamid when he writes, "having less means having less to anesthetize you to your life" (Hamid, 2013a: 191). He actually makes the reader aware of the fact that hording wealth is kind of an addiction which is, as if one is under the effect of anesthesia or what T S Eliot (1915) had expressed as "Like a patient etherized upon a table;" (*I*

3). He emphasizes upon the need to extend the comprehension of borders of fundamentals beyond the immediate and the ordinary. This postcolonial text because of being an implicit critique of the legacies of colonialism and imperialism is negating the silent acceptance of the fact that "capitalism is here to stay" (Žižek qtd. in Bartolovich, 2004: 9).

Besides extending the borders of ones comprehension towards the interpretations of focusing on the fundamentals, the in-depth inquiry of which may be justifiably carried out separately and lies beyond the immediate scope of this paper, this narrative of Hamid makes another connection of understanding. At one place Hamid asserts that "I certainly think there is a post-post-colonial generation. I am sure a lot of voices you are seeing coming out now are people who never had a colonial experience. We do not place a burden of guilt on someone who is no longer there" (Khan, 2015). Hamid's comment about a post-post-colonial generation can be taken as a logical culmination for the entire discussion made in this paper so far which qualifies it in terms of postcolonial Marxist approach exhibited in the text of this novel. According to the assertion of Zygmunt Bauman's (2012) lecture, interregnum, (a state of suspension) regarding the globalization and economic agendas is something which the generations of the twenty first century have to fight with, and they also have to come to grips with the task and means to combat this interregnum (Bauman, 2012). Mohsin Hamid is one such writer of the twenty first century who has certainly risen to the occasion and has endeavored to bring together the features of postcolonial Marxism in a globalized world through his work. There is enough retrospection/discussion on the aimlessness/listlessness of such lives verses a life with a purpose/aim in this Marxist rhetoric of *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) which calls into question the Panopticonic globalization. This Marxist perspective has modeled it as a unique postcolonial text of a post 9/11 genre. Questioning the hegemonies of imbibed conceptual binaries that are exhorting the humanity to tread such paths which, to borrow the terms from postcolonial terminologies, either adopt abrogation or appropriation, Hamid has consequently taken it beyond the fetters of even postcolonial Marxism.

By calling into question the Panopticonic globalization, Mohsin Hamid is one such writer of the twenty first century who has certainly risen to the occasion. Because of enough retrospection/discussion on the aimlessness/listlessness of such lives verses a life with a possible purpose/aim he has endeavored to bring together the features of postcolonial Marxism in a globalized world through his work. Also, by questioning the hegemonies of imbibed conceptual binaries he has consequently taken it beyond the fetters of even postcolonial Marxism.

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