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Tale of Individual Triumph, globalization, liberalization and the new woman in ‘*How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*’

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Abstract:

The novel *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* is a tale of hard core realism and individual triumph. This paper would aim at presenting the impact of globalization and modernity on an average asian ambitious person .it would also looks into the liberalization of family structure and the effect of liberalization on women. It is about a male protagonist’s rags to riches story .the current paper would aim at presenting the hero’s rise from poverty and the individual tale as a collective tale of rising Asia .It would portrays the novel as an epic whose theme include the evolution and development and misdts the travails and tribulation of a human beings who overcome all of these and reaches where he intends to reach. it would present the asian sensibilities and globalization and rising Asia.

Keywords: Asia, Mohsin Hamid, You, pretty girl, realism, globalization, epic, bildungsroman.

How To Get Filthy Rich In Rising Asia is the third novel that was published in 2013. it is a gripping tale told in second person perspective. The narrator is a peasant male born in an unspecified corner of rising Asia. There are 12 chapters in it each chapter gives a clue as to how can individual be a rich in rising asia but this is no self help books that are simply patronizing and laying the rules regarding rags to riches. it is about an individual who is at the margin but his sheer hard work and ambitions takes him to the centre of the circle’

The protagonist starts as a delivery boy selling Dvds at ist and then he started selling the expired canned food and finally he owns a business of bottled water. From being born in an unspecified corner of Asia to rising to the centre of Elitist club, the narrator goes through a lot. In a way the novel is a bildungsroman as it traces the

development of the protagonist from his very early life when he is a just a poor village boy born in an unspecified corner of asia, to the time he becomes a millionaire. the journey of narrator from the comforts of his homes to the filth of slums is an individual drives by his ambition to mark his name and earn wealth to become successful. Midst of all this, he undergoes through many travails and tribulation. He has to come face to face with corruption, nepotism and crime but he didn't budge but by the dint of his indomitable spirit and determination, the hero with his entrepreneurial skills and ability works his way out of destitution. He has all what it takes in rising Asia to rise to the top whether it is the cunningness to sell the false date bottled water and calling it a mineral water or giving money to the politician to get his work done.

The narrator is one rogue among many rogues— competitors, police, bureaucrats and politicians. But the unstoppable drive in the narrator let him work his way diligently and emerges as victorious. Sometimes he gets entangled in love also but love is undermined by his economic difficulties. There is precisely no character in the novel who is capable of love for an extended period. The romantic interests are marred by personal experiences. The pretty girl whom the narrator was smitten with but unable to get her out of plethora of reasons. But she pervades in almost the whole of the novel. Basically she becomes the archetypal woman. This impossibility of love as is shown in the novel through the character of pretty girl and the narrator runs through a major chunk of the novel. Love is not realized until the characters are elderly when they don't have any emotions.

In “Love and Ambition in a Cruel New World” in “The New York Times” Michiko Kakutani comments: “Mr. Hamid’s new novel, “How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia,” also tells a compelling story that works on two levels — in this case as a deeply moving and highly

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specific tale of love and ambition, and as a larger, metaphorical look at the mind-boggling social and economic changes sweeping rising Asia”

Sometimes love comes in the way of ambitions but like a hero in epics he fights the mortal flaws and overcomes all as his major purpose is to rise in the ladder of success and wealth. Jim Cullen in the book-review puts in, “It (How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia) is a wonderful love story, an eloquent case study of the pros and cons of family nepotism as a society safety net and a brilliant expose of the inner workings of military/industrial / governmental corruption (Cullen, 2013).”

This novel has some elements of an epic like epic it has a very wider scope right from birth to till the very end and in between the ups , downs , the trials and tribulations he faces .Like an epic hero fights his enemies in the grounds , the protagonist also fought his enemies that include making his way through all the settled elites and other who were his competitors , corruptions and other rogues. Also, the novel; widens its scope by not naming people thus universalizing its appeal .The characters are named either by their pronoun or noun as can be seen in the case of pretty girl or the addressee. This “You” can be anyone among us . It is the story ,aspirations and struggles of every person among us . His struggle to overcome poverty and survive through corruption and nepotism and all the elites and making his way through it is a prototype of what every aspiring and ambitious person would have to go through in rising Asia.

“It is a measure of Mr. Hamid’s audacious talents that he manages to make his protagonist’s story work on so many levels. “You” is, at once, a modern-day Horatio Alger character, representing the desires and frustrations of millions in rising Asia; a bildungsroman hero, by turns knavish and recognizably human, who sallies forth from the provinces to find his destiny; and a nameless but intimately known soul, whose bittersweet romance with the pretty girl possesses a remarkable emotional power. With “How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia” Mr. Hamid reaffirms his place as one of his generation’s most inventive and gifted writers.”(Book Review)”

Like an epic , the novel is also a saga of self struggle and struggle with the outside world . Its scope is vast .The protagonist struggles with the world like the

fights that take place in all the epics of the world. it is a moving and hopeful meditation on morality.

GLOBALIZATION AND LIBERALIZATION

The novel implicitly mentions the impact of globalization on Asia and the ensuing progress because of globalization . The economic boom and the progress in Asia that is shown in the novel is apparent in the character of the person who has seen an opportunity to become rich. The rising Asia is taking huge leaps in the ladder of progress and the narrator takes this opportunity to go side by side along this economic progress. on the one hand you will see the poverty and slums while on the other hand you will get to see the urban sprawl. In Globalization people are migrating to the urban spaces for better opportunities because under globalization cities emerged as a site of plethora of economic possibilities but for the narrator to prove his mettle in the city , he requires good education , a yes man attitude, starting his own venture , etc.The city is a specific mode of production and culture and a metaphor for globalization . Cities become an accelerated centre of globalization due to industrialization and globalized economy but cities , as per hamid , are not conducive for the pursuit of happiness. He also critiques the romantic notion of countryside. Nothing remains uncontaminated by the sweeps of globalization. Hamid himself is the product of globalization having spent his time in The US and Pakistan, he knows it well that the promises of globalization are false .his writings reflected the multidimensional pers[pectives of globalization.the advantages of globalization are surpassed by the systematic violence it causes. Also, the advantages are ethereal.

This urge to get rich often confronts his romantic pursuits but globalization does not promise the smooth sail to the narrator.

According to Manfred B steger Globalization is “ “the intensification and stretching of economic connections across the globe” (2013: 37).

Angelia Poon’s argues that the novel involves “capitalist realism” and “reflects upon what it means to live in the present historical moment of globalization and neoliberalism” (2015: 11)

But as per Liliana M. Naydan in *Beyond economic globalization in Mohsin Hamid’s How to Get Filthy Rich*

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in Rising Asia: The false promise of self-help and possibilities through reading with a creative mind

“Hamid suggests that the experience of reading literature with a creative mind instead of looking to the cheap solutions of self-help books provides his readers with opportunities for spiritual wealth as Sufis might conceptualize it. It also provides them with opportunities for transcendence — opportunities that easily surpass those provided by economic globalization and mass-marketed self-help books”[...Liliana M. Naydan]

FAMILY STRUCTURE, NEW WOMAN AND LIBERALIZATION

Due to liberalization of economies there is a general boom in the market that opened up multitude of opportunities for the women. There is new investment in Asia and other places. The cultural influences the globalization has brought in are apparent in Mohsin Hamid’s fiction implicitly. Due to the impact of western cultures and the liberalisation inroad in Asia, women are no longer docile as they were previously under the suppression of patriarchal attitude. Previously the women were dependant on their male counter parts for the trivial of things but now the new scenarios and new opportunities have opened the door for them and they are no longer the docile or homily entities designed for home making and doing chores. Women under these new avenues are not solely meant for maintaining the family values or honour.

Under the patriarchal framework women were merely treated as objects to be commoditized and sexualized. Gone are the times when women have to behave like ideal women or daughters. Women are now exposed to global culture because of globalization and liberalization. Due to increased interaction, interrelations of east and the west, of global with local, coming of media, social media, outsourcing and migration, the traditional gender roles got disrupted. Also, the inroad of western culture to the eastern one leads to the cultural shifts in the eastern culture. Now due to global interconnectivity and changed socio-economic status of women. This recent shift let women to come from margin to to the centres. Now women are carving their own paths

The text *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* portrays the notion of an independent woman as can be seen in the character of the pretty girl. She is a new woman who is not dependent on any male for her survival or

anything. She doesn't sacrifice her own happiness and fits into the roles set up by males. She defies the odds and chooses her own role for herself irrespective of what social institutions made it mandatory for her to choose. She pursues her own modeling career and earns as much as any male counterpart of hers does.

She watches movies and interacts with those who have western cultures understanding and knowledge. The sole reason for her befriending the narrator is that the latter would give her free access to movies, him being a dvd saler. She does sex outside marriage and is financially independent. She discusses about tabooed topic like sex with others also, for the pretty girl marriage is suffocating while the sex outside marriage is liberating. She interacts with males outside marriage freely which is not accepted in conservative societies of Asia. The more she enters in liberal circle, the more liberals she becomes in thoughts. In asserting her identity and individualism, she was exploited also.

Due to the exposure to westernization by the dint of globalization, the women reclaim their liberty and it often leads to clashes with the patriarchal set ups. Now the individual pleasure and satisfaction matter more than the collectives. The wife of the protagonist divorces her due to sexual dissatisfaction. A woman divorcing her husband or displaying her sexual desire is not appreciated in morality driven patriarchal society. But all this is apparent in the novel *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* which is basically opposite to what the patriarchal society expect the woman to follow. This concept of new women is a dominant theme in the novel.

CONCLUSION

The work under study significantly concludes that both globalization and liberal concepts have bloomed in our society through the rise of decades. This very perspective achieves the study of human existence on a much deeper and broader level. This appeals to the combination of how the the world has been changing. The novel exactly captures and reminds us of the nuances of life which liberates our thoughts and actions as well. The psychology of human triumph also shows how we are both a part of virtues and vices. It demonstrates on appealing to the roots that how society has contributed towards the very freedom of women despite the deep rooted satirical angles that provide biasedness. Amidst many areas of study and

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research, Mohsin Hamid launches into the world that despite shortcomings and rampant corruption there's a realistic state that is born out of every individual. If in this regard we study the psychological aspect of the woman character we understand how she comes out from the clutches of a male dominated society and thrives to live a life on her own terms. The modernization aspect and urbanisation truly plays a significant role in this novel giving the readers a wide spectrum of individualism and choices.

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