

Cultural Conflict and Fusion: An Analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa's "An American Brat"

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Abstract

Culture encompasses all life and social experiences. Culture evolves. English colonisation changed Subcontinental culture. Post-colonial literature is named after this. Post-colonial thought includes cross-culturalism. It analyses the morphological organisation that leads to conception. Culturalism is the capacity to perceive and respond to verbal and written signals. Cross-culturalism is bridging the slightest obstacles between cultures. It shows boundaries expanding. Migrants adopt the culture of their new home but struggle with language and culture. Considering Sidhwa's "An American Brat" the study seeks to demonstrate cross-cultural experiences. Feroza, in Sidhwa (1994), contrasts East and West civilizations. Pakistani Feroza lives in America. Her native culture differs from American culture. Feroza represents cultural heterogeneity and hybridity in this study.

Keywords: *Culture, Morphological Organisation, Postcolonialism, Differences, Jurisdiction, Culturalism, Boundaries*

Introduction

Throughout human history, culture has improved civilizations and their people. It drives war and peace. Its dynamism inspires good and evil. It fosters personal dedication and fidelity. When a person sees another person of a certain culture speaking his language and intonation, he is drawn to him and feels a feeling of connection. Shenkar (2008) claims that cultures may be bridged, but not threatened. Culture also shapes individuals. Its dominance affects everyone, everywhere.

Cultures mould individuals better than any other force. It effectively passes on one generation's beliefs, customs, and values, making it more potent than regular schooling. To comprehend their duties, individuals must understand culture. Because civilizations develop and share culture, there is a complicated relationship between them. Isolated people cannot create civilizations. Cultures are created by people working and communicating. Speech and politics are meaningless without people.

Everyone has a culture. Culture is described in numerous ways because people see it differently. Hofstede believes that culture may divide communities via mental conditioning. Culture represents global ideals and human achievement. It encompasses mental and creative effort that elaborates people's thoughts and experiences. Culture describes a life's way, which is expressed in learning, art, institutions, and common behaviour. A culture that encompasses life and society is a way of living. People impact and create civilizations. People transform civilizations. The English colonised the subcontinent, changing its culture. After independence from the English, the locals retain colonial culture and authority.

Colonialism influences politics, business, culture, and the global market. Said claims that imperialism persists in culture, politics, philosophy, economics, and social traditions where it dominated. Thus, culture's linguistic dominance allows imperialism to exist beyond a territory, reinforcing the image of the settlement without might.

Lineal imperial meddling is one of several factors of cultural change. Post-colonial societies struggle with cross-culturalism, hybridity, identity crises, and alienation. Post-colonialism emphasises cross-culturality. Culturalism is the ability to recognise and respond to verbal and non-lexical cues. Cross-culturalism is crossing one person's excessive barriers for another. It indicates boundary expansion. Zubair (2012) finds that immigrants only face hybridity and identity issues. Especially immigrants from colonised countries endure Diaspora, but Feroza enjoys this modern country and its freedom and liberal culture, which is not permitted in her origin community.

Interaction or conversation crosses views and thinking, showing that culture is fluid. New transcultural patterns promote hybridity in the contact zone, according to Ashcroft et al. In a varied society, various cultures communicate their issues in different ways.

Language is inseparable from culture. It follows culturally-influenced language and social norms. Language and non-linguistic acts that generate discursive context need good perception. Common understanding may maintain cross-cultural awareness. Several authors articulate such discourse. Cross-culture covers more than language. Living in another culture may inspire someone. He/she adapts to that culture by forgetting his/her own culture. Thus, this study explores Sidhwa's 'An American Brat'. Famous Pakistani writer.

'Culture' may mean several things. Matsumoto (1996) defines culture as the mix of behaviours, customs, ideas, and norms that a community shares yet is distinct for everyone, passed down from generation to generation. Some say admiring excellent music, cuisine, literature, and art shows culture. Biologists believe culture is bacterial settlement. Anthropologists and other behaviourists believe culture is knowing human behaviour, practises, and understanding. Culture and tradition define a society. Italy, Samoa, and Japan share cultures, beliefs, and language that keep them apart. Culture unites and distinguishes communities. Eliot (1948) proposes three ways to examine culture: individual, class, and society. He argues that a group's culture relies on its members and the society to which it belongs. Thus, society's culture is essential.

Sidhwa explores cultural tensions. 'An American Brat' is about cultural shock, according to Sidhwa. In "An American Brat," Hussain discusses cultural shock. She adds subcontinental students in western nations experience culture shock. Culture conflicts create hybridity. Imtiaz explains that Diasporic societies strive to share and distinguish from their host cultures. It causes hybridity and syncretism. South Asian students and workers in the West experience cultural shock. Bhaba examines the cultural differences that create hybridity as "in-between" or "interspaces".

This tale shows how Western culture and traditions differ from Eastern culture. Khan considers multiculturalism nonexistent. Asians are considered ignorant and backward. When these individuals come to Western nations, they have two options: stay ignorant or modernise by adopting western culture. The narrative follows a little girl who encounters three cultures: Parsi, her community's culture, Pakistani Muslim, her home nation, and American, where she goes to school. Kumar (2016) discusses "An American Brat" and thinks that cultural difference is the writing's curse, which skillfully differentiates Parsee and Jewish civilizations. He depicts Feroza's witting shift from traditional to international and from religious clannishness to the belief that everyone would be rescued.

Feroza, a young Parsi girl, knows various cultures in An American Brat. The book focuses on her travel to the US, her schooling, and her maturation. Mishra claims that cultural conflicts cause identity crisis, displacement, hybridity, and other challenges among a small group of individuals regardless of where they reside. The tale shows Feroza's life changes in the US.

The study shows East-West contrasts. In a globalised world, all cultures, languages, fashions, and civilizations influence one other. Hybridity follows. The researcher studies hybridity's issues.

Everyone has a culture. Culture impacts home-preserved people. After moving, individuals must adapt to a new culture. Acclimatisation creates hybridity. Transcultural hybridity creates unique people. They create hybrid identities. Jackson finds that hybridity notions illuminate cultural derivation. Crossbred people must blend in and recognise the varied cultural institutions where they

operate, yet they often accidentally adopt cultural features that form part of their hybrid identity.

Hybrid identity may affect immigrants' first and second generations differently. Because the second generation is more influenced by new culture, the first generation acquires more ancient culture. Cultural diversity may cause conflict. Immigrants encounter foreign customs and culture, according to Nedumchira. Here, they risk losing themselves. Globalisation has popularised cultural conflict and hybridity. Globalisation, a fast-growing network of linkages and interdependencies, represents contemporary social life, according to Tomlinson (1999). Many post-colonial writers depict mixed identities and cultural tensions. Most post-colonial authors address this issue.

Pakistani writer Hamid. He studied in America after graduating from Lahore, Pakistan. Princeton University graduate and consultant. He writes. He wrote several novels. He has struggled in America as a foreigner. He writes on these issues. "The Reluctant Fundamentalist" (2007) addresses cultural conflict and hybridity. Hamid (2007) elegantly addresses cultural conflict and hybridity.

Hamid uses neo-colonialism to show American-Pakistani connections. After independence, emerging countries are continually impacted by American neo-colonialism, which impacts their people, traditions, and identities. He represents civilizations and cultures with people. Hamid (2007) uses Changez to illustrate cultural conflict and hybridity. Pakistani Muslim Changez studies in America. He totally immerses himself in American neo-colonial society. His attempts to absorb American culture fail because he cannot become an American. He loves Erica, a white woman who still mourns Chris. His death impacts Erica's identity. Erica wearing her deceased boyfriend's T-shirt displays the deep cultural bond. Erica and her parents reject Changez as a boyfriend because of his culture.

He examines East-West cultural tensions. He thinks Changez and Erica's relationship fails because they're different ethnicities and cultures. Culture divides them. Changez attempts to woo her. Quitting his name, culture, and identity makes him Chris. The white woman accepts him when he acts like Chris. Hamid (2007) implies that Americans welcome non-Americans only if they give up

their culture and identity and embrace American culture as better.

He knows they must domesticate and incorporate their colonial heritage into their culture. According to Kane (2004), cultural confrontations promote variety, which is witnessed worldwide. African novelist Kane argues today's globe is separated into tribes. Modern and traditional groups exist. The extremist group believes in cultural conflicts, whereas the contemporary group believes in universality. He discovers that variety is natural and true.

It is stated that no society's culture is pure and the globe is growing multicultural. Despite their cultural differences, individuals go to other countries and live there. Varner and Beamer argue that culture is a group's wealth and ownership as well as its qualities. Culture shapes society. Life events and their interpretation influence it. Culture examines mental reality. It teaches us about diverse concerns from childhood and advises us on which to adopt. Society creates culture and gives it meaning.

When a person moves from one nation or culture to another, Yoseph (2005) states that it is not only a physical but also a mental difficulty. Different settings and experiences create unique memories. Remembrance helps establish uniqueness. Migration creates cultural hybridization.

In "An American Brat," Sidhwa contrasts Pakistani with American culture and civilisation. Feroza is the novel's main character, while Manek is her uncle. Zareen's short US visit highlights cultural disparities. Sidhwa (1994) describes the cultures of both nations and how they collide. Today, the globe is borderless and enlarged. Globalisation has increased migration. Language, culture, and lineage are causing migration. Literature is used to examine these people's hardships in the context of the modern world. Literature depicts their struggles and how they choose their homeland and host country. Sidhwa (1994) examined immigration issues using the same method. Her art brilliantly depicts hybridity and cultural tensions. Feroza leads this book. This book contrasts eastern and western civilizations. Feroza straddles two civilizations.

Sidhwa examines Pakistani culture. The book takes place in Pakistan and America. Pakistan is growing Islamic

fanaticism and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is in jail. Feroza's mother wishes to avoid Islamic influences. Zia Islamized Feroza. She worries about her middle-class Parsee mother's clothes. Feroza is a conservative adolescent. Her backwardness stems from Pakistan's Islamic regime. Feroza's backwardness makes her not answer the phone. Her mother's fashion irks her. Muslim women dress modestly. Feroza's mother dresses like her culture. She adores her old-fashioned grandma and advises her mother to wear the outfit more modestly. Feroza strongly opposes to her mother's attire when she picks her up from school and begs her to dress properly. She protests to her mother's sleeveless sari-blouse, but her mother is surprised and claims they are Parsee and everyone knows they dress differently. This shows that every religion and caste has its own culture and traditions. Zareen worries about Feroza's backwardness in criticising her mother's clothes.

Due to her third-world status, she is harassed at the airport. She's new and dislikes this place. As a third-world citizen, she is humiliated at the airport and degraded. She cries "To hell with you and your damn country" in disbelief. "I'll go back." (58 1994). Her parents send her to her uncle, Manek, who is studying in America. He knows America and its culture well and guides her niece based on his experiment. As a third-world citizen, he faces humiliation and disgrace in America. His constant comments about Feroza's "desi behaviour and third world attitude" show this.

"He had weathered the trauma of cultural shock after cultural shock, the new world had buffeted him with emerged toughness." (119, 1994)

Sidhwa (1994) argues that the family system is very influential in Pakistani culture and civilization and parents' orders are considered to be authorized and children are bound to obey their parents. Zareen is answerable in front of her mother Kuttibai regarding her decision to send Feroza abroad. She enquires Zareen about her decision in a very satirical manner. Kuttibai is against sending her USA and she gets angry with Zareen about this matter. She says that she does not bother to consult with other relatives and elders. But now nothing can be done. So, she instructs Feroza how to behave in America. Feroza is

advised by Kuttibai to follow the values of the Parsee community strictly and never get corrupted in the USA. Feroza acts upon the instruction of her grandmother during traveling but her personality is altered inwardly and outwardly as her feet touch the land of opportunity. When she arrives at Kennedy Airport, she feels herself successful and her face glows with happiness. By seeing the organized flow of traffic, the crowd of people, the lights, gigantic building, outstanding neat and clean environment, and well-polished floors, she becomes astounded.

According to Sidhwa, sexual freedom is not allowed in Pakistani culture openly. In Pakistani society, parents want to stay away from their children from sexual perversion. Kuttibai is worried because Feroza is going to a country where sexual freedom is common, and children can enjoy sexual freedom easily. She discusses with Zareen that the USA is a dangerous place for girls as far as their honor and lives are concerned. Girls are killed after molestation. Sidhwa (1994) shares with us many examples of the exploitation of women in a developed country, the USA. Kuttibai wants that parents should get married to their daughter as soon as possible. She is of the view that parents should not focus on the education of their daughter. That is why she is against the decision of sending Feroza to the USA for studying. She expresses her fear that the USA is harmful to girls. She keeps on saying that she will be liberal, bold and may enjoy the company of drunkard, bad persons, and marry any person regardless of religion. The following lines of the text reveal her fear.

According to Sidhwa, Pakistani youngsters must follow their parents and relatives. Children must obey adults. After experiencing American independence, Feroza dislikes Pakistan's family structure and responding to parents and relatives. In Pakistani culture, children are advised whether they are Hindus, Muslims, or Parsees, according to Sidhwa. Feroza closely monitors this and believes American culture is exempt from it.

Pakistani society values religion and governs many aspects of life, whereas Americans are less religious. American religion is private. That's why David's parents let him marry a non-Jewish lady. Their kid marrying a Parsee girl does not bother them. Feroza needs family approval to

marry David. She writes and provides David's picture. Zareen wants her back from the US since her family was bombed. David calls Feroza "ZAP" (Zoroastrians) and she calls him "JAP" (Jewish). Zareen flies to the US to thwart Feroza's marriage to a non-Parsee since her parents won't allow it. Feroza's family reacts erratically to her marriage. David's Jewish marriage upsets Feroza's family in Pakistan. The old react strongly, but the youth attempt to persuade them that it's not a huge deal since conditions have changed. They want their elders will abandon outdated ideas. They urge their elders to let their children marry beyond the caste and religion and discard archaic ideas.

She illuminates Subcontinental women's activities. They must serve their family at home. Feroza and Jo decide to waitress. She altered her lifestyle and became a modernist spokeswoman despite her eastern roots. American families vary from Pakistani ones, according to Sidhwa (1994). Broken families. Families seldom live together. Parental obedience is not required. Miller's family illuminates American families in Sidhwa. Miller fathers Jo. His children live elsewhere, yet he manages a restaurant. Feroza enjoys meeting Miller's family and admires their lifestyle.

When she learns about foresting and childrearing, another cultural conflict arises. It differs from Pakistani. She finds American parenting quite different. She learns that rural farms charge for child care: Sidhwa believes politics affects Americans less than Pakistanis. Pakistani politics affects everyone. Pakistani politics is shaky. Politics don't bother Americans since it's well-run. Feroza notices little change in Jo's life since political change does not effect Americans and they don't care about politics, but she stays informed about Pakistan's politics while in America. Bhutto's hanging shocks her. Her family doesn't inform her about Pakistan's politics, which upsets her. Feroza finds that Americans focus on work rather than politics.

American traditions, morals, fashion, and methods of living, speaking, behaving, and eating vary, according to Sidhwa. Feroza has trouble adapting to American culture. She imitates Americans. She eats like them and interacts with salespeople. After a while, she learns to gaze at the

lovmaking pair. Feroza thoroughly adopts American culture. She dresses, speaks, and acts American. She learns driving, drinking, dancing, and American language. Feroza goes from bashful to forceful. She tells the salesgirl she wants this, but she can't since it's not a charity home. She insists on buying stuff. Decision-making is liberated. No one can influence their choices, not even religion. David marries Parsee Feroza without parental consent or religious advice. Feroza, a Pakistani, needs permission for everything. She eventually grows autonomous and makes her own decisions.

Sidhwa feels America offers equal opportunities for success. Nobody denies rights. American culture encourages equitable advancement. America has no suppression or regression. Intelligence may yield money in America. When Feroza visits her family in Pakistan, she tells them about America. She says America has poverty, but it's incredible that impoverished immigrants have electricity, water, and cars. She believes Pakistan's impoverished lack bathrooms. Sidhwa (1994) via Feroza notes that diversity in America gives everyone equal possibilities. Cross-cultural influences make Feroza independent, brave, powerful, and non-religious. Feroza's thinking is changed by two civilizations. She advances liberally. David reflects her freedom and mental growth. David's touch shows her freedom. She often doubts what she's doing, as the novel's ending shows:

"Once when she was sneaking back into her room at three o'clock in the morning with her shoes in her hand, she wondered if she was the same girl who had lived in Lahore and gone to the Convent of the sacred heart." (264, 1994)

She speaks artificially when she first gets in the US. Due to her speech and word choice, some find her weird and unnatural. Her buddy Jo helps her polish her local accent. Jo alters Feroza's mannerisms and accent. Jo guides Feroza's life. Feroza learns "Gimme a lemonade" from Jo. "Gimme a drink" (p.154) instead of "May I have this—may I have that?" (p.154). According to Lacan (1994), copying causes camouflage, hence Feroza is speckled. It opposes dappled light but not background harmony.

Sidhwa portrays Feroza's efforts to blend into American society. She learns American culture through flirting with males. This type of activity on the part of women is unknown in Pakistani culture but is common in American culture. Feroza's endeavor of reconciliation with the background is explored through flirting boys. Bhabha (1994) shows that mimicking reflects rejection's difference.

Conclusion

Sidhwa tries to highlight the differences between Pakistani and American cultures. Zareen's two comments end Sidhwa (1994)'s exploration of different civilizations. Zareen believes that the cultures of Pakistan and America are not perfect and flawless. These cultures show opposition against each other and Feroza's personality is fully transfigured because of this fact as is highlighted by the text:

"I should have listened. I should never have let you go so far away. Look what it's done to you — you've become an American brat!" (279, 1994)

Sidhwa exposes the confusing picture of the cultural mixture by introducing the character of Feroza while staying in the west. In post-colonial discourse, Diaspora and Hybridity are the two main notions that occupy a great place in post-colonial discourse and they also pave the ground for the dilemma of identity in which Sidhwa's (1994) Feroza is suffered. Bhabha (1994) defines hybridity as a "in-between" space between two cultures, which is Feroza's condition because she doesn't belong anywhere.

While living in the USA, she notices changes in her conduct. Her speaking and living style undergoes a great change. She starts drinking and dancing at parties. Feroza starts facing identity issues from the time when she goes to the USA. The two main features of postcolonialism namely hybridity and Diaspora are reflected through her migration. Does she want to keep hold of one identity by losing others or does she satisfy with perplexed identities? It is an important question to investigate. Her resolution of staying in the USA permanently provides the answer to that question. When she comes to Pakistan to meet her family, she feels that she is a misfit in this country and feels herself a stranger in her birth country. Feroza's mother does not allow her to absorb the culture which is

opposite to their culture and religion regardless of the fact; she has sent her USA to stay away from the effects of fundamentalists. Zareen does not assist her daughter when she tries to marry David, a Jewish boy. Finally, Zareen says that she has become 'An American Brat' and she regrets her decision to send her to the USA. In this connection, it is argued that whatever situations experienced by Feroza, Feroza's uncle, Manek, and Zareen reflect the impacts of post-colonialism on the people of South Asia especially on the people of the Subcontinent. It is quite clear that in this global world, the cultural and religious disparity occupy a significant place but for settling in developed countries, it is necessary to throw away the array of narrow-mindedness to be modern and to keep pace with the world.

The present research beautifully describes the issues that are faced by immigrants in Western countries especially the immigrants who belong to third world countries. They find differences in cultures that are different from the culture of their native country. Sidhwa beautifully highlights the culture of America and Pakistan and elaborates on the differences.

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