

## **“Clashes Of Culture In The Selected Novels Of Bapsi Sidhwa”**

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan is a multilingual and multicultural country and Pakistani culture has constantly assumed a critical job in the life of Pakistanis and Pakistani diaspora is no exemption. Culture of a country is the fundamental wellspring of personality for the individuals of that country and diasporic individuals are increasingly cognizant about their cultural character so they proactively attempt to keep up this wellspring of character. Diasporic individuals bring their religious ceremonies, social traditions, and traditional practices with them and attempt to live in a situation which was impassive, outsider and unpleasant to them. Culture conflict becomes an inevitable and a challenging task in the life of an individual. Every woman lives under the strict social and religious custom in a multicultural society. The social, cultural and religious system of a patriarchal society imposes restriction on woman. The whole of nation's culture is pluralistic and hegemonic. In recent times, the advancement of science and technology has shrunk the world as a global village and the monolithic society becomes the salad bowl of multicultural society. This event triggers the cultural related emotional and intellectual problems.

**Key words:** multilingual, diaspora, multicultural, patriarchal, pluralistic, monolithic, emotional.

The term 'Culture' has multifaceted implications, being an incorporated and useful asset of human presence. Culture is a challenged wonder and it implies various things for various gatherings. It is the encapsulation of the lifestyle one lives, the nourishment one eats, the garments one wears, the language one talks and the God one adores. It comprises of shared convictions, values, traditions, information, social and cultural practices and skills which

bolster conduct and action by individuals from a specific social gathering at a specific time. It is additionally about the tradition and qualities that one has acquired as individuals from a specific society. Workmanship, music, literature, design, sculpture, philosophy, religion and science can be viewed as different highlights of culture. In this manner, it very well may be said that culture alludes to a man-made condition that incorporates all the physical and nonmaterial objects that can be transmitted starting with one age then onto the next. Culture varies here and there and from country to country. Its development and development depend on the historical procedure working in a regional, nearby or national setting. Truth be told, the material culture of a civilization is the solid type of non-material culture.

The word 'culture' is gotten from the Latin 'cultura' which stems from 'Colere' signifying 'to develop and support'. Culture is appropriately depicted by Edward Burnett Tylor, the nineteenth century British anthropologist, in the accompanying words:

“Culture...is the complex whole, which includes knowledge, art, belief, law, custom, morals, and other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a part of a society.”

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English by A. S. Hornby defines culture as: “advanced development of the human powers, development of the body, mind and spirit by training and experience; all the arts, beliefs, social institutions, characteristics of a community, race, etc.”

T. S. Eliot, one of the most prominent scholars of the modernist movement, has given the most far reaching translation of the term 'culture' in his treatise Notes Towards the Definition of Culture. "culture can be depicted essentially as that which makes life worth living."

Eliot perspectives culture as the lifestyle, as one which influences us and is influenced, thusly, by our conduct and exercises. He imagines that culture is in a perfect world an entire lifestyle, lived normally and differently by an entire people. N.A. Nikam cites a deciphered refrain from Katha Upanised to characterize culture: "In the mission of the perpetual (The great) that one picks in his culture." Thus, as per Nikam, Culture is a journey for the great however it isn't great if the mission is certifiably not a free choice. The mission and the choice are, in this way, the two elements of a culture, and the tradition is framed by the perfection of hundreds of years of history, or a tradition might be characterized as an 'entry'

in which there is both diligence and recharging. Along these lines, cultural ideas are both antiquated and contemporary, traditional just as present day.

Culturally diverse transaction is an intuitive and imparting process. It is a two way process which includes complex arrangement and trade. At the point when networks from various countries and cultures interact with one another, it changes the cultural examples of at least one of the groups. To leave one's own motherland and to move to another land, frequently brings partition from family, network, religious and social traditions and cultural practices. Vagrants abandon their countries and enter an outskirts zone of twin subjectivity, where they need to comply with the culture of host lands. They are impacted by more than one spot, and they need to stay in another spot, except if they get acculturated into the host society. They are pulled towards their tradition, traditions and culture, even after they absorb themselves into the host culture. Vagrants make a decent attempt to build a connection that will assist them with crossing the geological and cultural separations, secured by them. Along these lines, they structure another method of connection towards their present and their past. This process of cultural assimilation turns out to be long, intense and excruciating for some outsiders, as they face challenges in modifying and tolerating cultural standards of the new spot. The varieties and changes, experienced by the workers in the process of cultural assimilation, change them into cross breed items. Their intersection the outskirts and tolerating the new life as a changed individual indicates their new ways, to take a gander at themselves. They become a kind of new hybridized, multifaceted and transnational individual in this new environment.

All migrants need to watch the traditions and obligations of another culture, for picking up worthiness and to look after associations. The process of cultural assimilation is restricted uniquely up to gaining their vocation for the original settlers. The process of Deculturation occurs in second era foreigners, when they contradict the watched standards and traditions at home. They favor standards and traditions of the received country; need to seem as though them. This Second era migrants create hostility and disdain towards their local culture. They face multifaceted hole which they can't cross. In any case, the original settlers stay committed to their motherland and local culture.

The thoughts of the cultural assimilation of the second-age workers pursue the idea of 'blend', which spotlights on the alteration and assimilation into the host culture for making an incorporated culture. The Second-age migrants effectively experience the process of deculturation by dismissing the traditions, traditions and estimations of their motherland and making strides towards the blending with the standard. Be that as it may, in the later phases of their lives, they experience a feeling of misfortune and in-between's and attempt to keep up balance between their twin personalities. Their biculturalism mirrors their double awareness and reality. Cultural assimilation is a cultural change of an individual, gathering, or individuals by embracing or acquiring characteristics from another culture. It advances the development of people with double cultural personality created by the interaction of at least two cultures and where people adapt new standpoints, conduct and other cultural highlights of the ethnic groups. As indicated by Redfield, Acculturation grasps those marvels which result when groups of people sharing various cultures come into nonstop direct contact, with ensuing changes in the original culture examples of either or the two groups.

Cultural assimilation can be comprehended as the process of cultural transmission. It is a long haul process as it influences different ages moreover. It doesn't occur deliberately; it is so steady process that the workers living in the host country don't understand when they have embraced and moved toward becoming piece of the host culture. The workers understand the adjustment in them, just when they come back to their countries in the wake of having carried on various years in the host country.

The impacts of cultural assimilation can be seen at numerous levels in mixing cultures. There are four phases of cultural assimilation: 'euphoria', 'culture shock', 'anomie' and 'assimilation' or 'adoption'. These are where outsiders are looked with two focal issues. They need to choose which cultural estimations of their source they need to keep or desert and which cultural estimations of the new culture they need to embrace or not to receive. Their choices while confronting these issues decide their cultural assimilation attitude. At the individual level, cultural assimilation alludes to the process of socialization by which outside conceived individuals acknowledge and receive the standards, attitudes, qualities, practices and traditions of the host culture. It is the subsequent socialization process of a person. This process is connected to change in day by day conduct, just as a few changes in physical and mental prosperity. In spite of the fact that these adjustments in culture may seem

straightforward, the consolidated outcomes are both mind boggling and incredible affecting the two people and groups from the host culture and original culture. True culture is characterized as the capacity and aptitude to value the other culture.

Culture conflict becomes an inevitable and a challenging task in the life of an individual.. Bapsi Sidhwa presents women as the protagonists of her novels “The Pakistani Bride” and “An American Brat”. Pakistan consists of the majority of the population as Muslims but there exists an internal sub division among them. There are varieties of tribal groups found in the mountains of Pakistan. The difference in their custom prevents the person to mingle with one another. The cultural differences the gender and racial differences have led to perpetual culture conflict. The Pakistani Bride is mainly a story of two brides Zaitoon and Carol. Zaitoon a young Punjabi girl, who loses her parents during the partition of India and Pakistan, is adopted by a hill tribal called Qasim. Qasim devotedly raises her but to keep his honour he marries her to a man from kohistani hills. The poor girl struggles a lot to live with her husband Sakhi as he is very Jealous. Finally she escapes from the torture of her husband and runs away from her husband which is regarded as a punishable act according to the tribal custom. In ‘Pakistani Bride’, there is another young American girl Carol, who marries a rich young Pakistani Farukh. Her husband is always jealous, yet gives her financial and social security. To take revenge on her husband, she permits herself to fall in love with her husband friend Major Mustaq. To the pity of Carol, he too is not faithful to her, but only takes advantage of their marriage as a husband’s friend. Zaitoon and Carol find themselves in the same predicament as they are suffering a lot in their groom’s place. The adjusting between two different cultures brings bitter experience to the two brides. These women are subjugated by men irrespective of their location. In hills there is strict condition imposed on woman and the rigid code of conduct is created by man in order to control the life of women. The men Qasim and Nikha who restrict their woman by their tribal laws are ready to strip off the dress of other woman as an act of chauvinism. Law should be equal to all, in order to be true but, the so called custom, culture and tradition victimize women or worth again the liberation of women. It is a patriarchal society in which male acts as chauvinist. In phallogocentric society it is men who fix standards and norms for the women to follow. Usually they expect women to do only the traditional role assigned to them (i.e. Homemaker) but men follow a different yardstick. Men never hesitate to violate the moral code of conduct when it comes for pleasure seeking activities. Zaitoon is marooned by the closed world of mountain. She pleads to Qasim

to take her to the plains. She begs him to arrange a man from the plain for her marriage but the tribal custom does not permit. Zaitoon has been brought up in Lahore plains and the ghetto mentality of the tribes terrifies her. “Abba she begged in a fierce whisper, take me back ‘I’ll look after you always . . . . If I must marry; marry me to someone from the plains. that jawan at camp, Abba, I think, he likes me.” (PB 157) But Qasim leaves her and goes back to plains. Sakhi, the jealous husband beats his mother and his wife as if they are animals, beaten because he is the master. Both the animal and the women are treated the same in manner. At last Zaitoon is rescued by Major Mustaq. Regarding her future, major has two options, one Carol will take care of her in Lahore or in America and the other is, Ashiq, the jawan will marry her, after she recovers. Zaitoon has shown her will when she was five and again she proves it. Zaitoon’s ‘Khudi’ (PB 230) ‘will power’ brings a kind of hope to Carol’s disturbed life. In “An American Brat” too the conflict arising out the difference between two cultures can be noticed. Feroza, a sixteen year old Parsi girl, is the protagonist of the novel. The narrow minded Feroza objects her mother’s sleeveless blouse and tells her not to visit her school dressed in this manner. The parents of Feroza - Zareen and Cyrus are afraid that the dogmatic and fundamental nature of Pakistan does not allow the fashionable way of living. They plan to send Feroza to America for four months holiday to her brother Manek, who is a MITT student. They believe that travel will broaden her outlook and change her attitude as an educated modern girl. Feroza’s new American life begins. Manek undertakes the task of preparing Feroza for life in foreign land. He also wants Feroza to pursue her studies in America. He writes a long letter addressed jointly to Khutlibai – Feroza’s grandmother and to her parents Zareen and Cyrus. The parents permit her to study in America. Manek gives instruction and advice to her. The timid Feroza changes herself and absorbs the culture shock. She alters her lifestyle, learns to drive, drink, dance and start using a more direct and less polite form of language. She compares her family behavior to that of her friend Jo’s family. She finds the American way of upbringing entirely different. Feroza spends her winter vacation in Lahore. She observes many changes in her family as well as in her country. Secularism has given way to Islamic fundamentalism. NonMuslims are eyed with suspicion. The gender bias is horrifying and poverty has spread like disease. Feroza feels sorry to discover that she is a misfit in the country in which once she has fitted well. Feroza’s Mother and grandmother are astonished to see the change in her. On her flight to America she opens the envelopes that her uncle and relatives have given. It has more than

seven hundred dollars. She plans to buy a second hand car with that money. This is again the American influence on Feroza. She asks her friends to suggest and finally fixes an appointment with David Press. She goes to inspect his two year old car but she falls in love with him. It is love at first sight; Feroza is not able to resist the love for David. After all the years that she spent in America, she at last falls in love with David a non-parsi. The Parsi community which takes pride itself for being westernized and liberated is in fact not liberal at all. The novel portrays the dubious nature of Parsi community. It is liberal towards men but imposes too much restriction on women. In the question of marriage man's inter-faith marriage is acceptable but if a woman marries a man from nonparsi community, she is ostracized by the Parsi community. She is disowned and disinherited. Feroza from the childhood is aware of all these strictures of her community but still she challenges her community by falling in love with David. One Sunday evening David takes her to his home in Boulder for Sabbath meal with his parents. When David's mother politely queries her about her religion, Feroza for the first time realizes that David's religion is different from hers. Feroza spends her vacation with her uncle Manek and enjoys her stay there. Later, she tells about David, Manek clearly replies. "It all seem wonderful now, but marriage is something else; our cultures are very different of course, I'm not saying it can't work, but you have to give it time" (AB 263) Manek, Uncle of Feroza, who is educated at MIT and working in America, is not able to accept the love of Feroza. Feroza returns to Denver and moves to live with David in the same house, being shared by two lesbian girls. Living in the same house increases the chances of their intimacy. Feroza decides to get permission from her parents to marry David. She sends a letter along with David's photograph to her mother. The letter creates uproar in the family and the elders are agitated and make hue and cry over this issue. The youngster in the family understands Feroza's feelings and one of the cousins, Bunny reflects, "For God's sake you're crying as if Feroza's dead! She's only getting married, for god's sake" (AB 268). As the representative of younger generation he urges the elders to broaden their views and permit interfaith marriage as it has become inevitable now. Zareen is deeply disturbed by Feroza's decision. She flies to Denver and explains to her daughter the risks of marrying outside her community. Feroza requests her mother to look at things in a different way. The Americans have different culture and are living happily. Zareen becomes furious and regrets for having sent Feroza to America and says that she has become "An American Brat." Ironically Zareen discovers the freedom Feroza enjoys in

America. It almost seems unfair to her that a Parsi man can marry a non-Parsi and remain a Parsi and bring up his children as Zoroastrians where as a Parsi woman cannot. Zareen has been compelled to take steps against her wish. She is afraid of being expelled from the community and so shatters the hope of her loving daughter. Zareen describes the details of the Parsi wedding rituals and customs to David. If he is to marry Feroza it should be the Parsi marriage. David gets offended and explains in anger says that a Jewish wedding too is an elaborate one. Zareen succeeds in her mission of creating a wedge between David and Feroza in the name of their respective religion. David refuses to compromise and so he thinks of going out of her life. Zareen goes back to Lahore and Feroza decides to stay and live in America. Khutlibai, Feroza's grandmother expects that a woman's goal in life is to get married and beget children. Her world centre's on her husband and her children. Women's desire or ambition has no place in her society. It is not expected that the women should the out stretch her boundaries and if they dare to do they are supposed to be treated like the pigeons of Khutlibai's childhood. [Kapadia Novy 51]. She proudly recalls, "If one of the bird's from our loft spent the night on another's roof, we'd have pigeon soup the next day. He'd (Khuthibai's grandfather) have its throat slit" (AB 121). Both Khutibai and Zareen stand against Feroza's decision to choose a non-Parsi life partner. Feroza's is not allowed to choose a life of her own in Parsi society. The traditional values are deep rooted in their psyche and anyone who goes against is mercilessly punished. Feroza has tasted the fruits of freedom and now, she doesn't want to give it up. So, she decides to lead her life the way her heart desires and pursues happiness the way in which her conscience dictates. She likes to marry a man whom she comes to like and love without bothering herself whether he is a Parsi or of different faith. She has learnt a lesson and in future she will not allow anyone peep ones nose in her personal affairs. As far as religion is concerned, she is a Parsi and she will continue to be Parsi but a liberated Parsi. The characters Zaitoon and Feroza are made to suffer on account of cultural practices and traditional norms. The voices of the protagonist Feroza, and female characters like Zareen, Zaitoon and Carol are the voices of marginalized Asian women who protest the narrowness of religious and social attitude towards women and they plead for more liberal and understanding socio-religious communities (Kapadia Novy 68). These women refuse to accept the conventions in the name of culture, traditions and religion. Though they are victimized in various ways by men and the man-made social, religious and cultural norms, they are not ready to surrender or to accept their suffering



without the semblance of fight. They are bold enough to break the shackles of the worthless conventional system to assert their own individuality. The culture may differ from one place to another and there may be similarities and dissimilarities, but one has to mature enough to understand and appreciate the cultural nuances. Moreover, whatever may be the cultural differences, one must learn to treat another individual as human beings. In order to nullify the conflicts arising out of cultural differences, the novels suggest that hope is still possible even though the situation seems to be hopeless.

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