

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

FREEDOM VS SOCIAL DECADENCE IN BAPSI SIDHWA'S AN AMERICAN BRAT

Mr. Irfan Ullah Khan¹, Beenish Naz², Mubashir Ahmad³

¹Assistant Professor in English at Edwardes College Peshawar

²M.Phil English literature, Qurtuba University Peshawar.

³PhD English, Lincoln University College (Lincoln University) Malaysia. Lecturer in English
at Edwardes College Peshawar.

E.mail: irfanecp1980@gmail.com

**Mr. Irfan Ullah Khan, Beenish Naz, Mubashir Ahmad. Freedom Vs Social Decadence
In Bapsi Sidhwa's An American Brat-- PalArch's Journal Of Archaeology Of
Egypt/Egyptology 19(4), 1028-1044. ISSN 1567-214x**

ABSTRACT

Bapsi Sidhwa's *An American Brat* is a post-colonial study of a young Parsee-Pakistani guy who goes to the United States to explore his hidden skills and find sanctuary from his repressive upbringing in the conventional norms of his own country. This book illustrates how individuals of many races and faiths adhere to vastly different cultural and religious conventions. In addition, the purpose of this research is to depart from the standard interpretation and application of freedom in a social context. It has difficulty outlining the fundamentals that must be considered in the liberation context. This inquiry focuses mostly on the repercussions of liberty and its influence on social norms. Using Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity and Joel Feinberg's theory of freedom, all such issues pertaining to diaspora freedom may be resolved by examining the personalities of all major individuals and using Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity. According to qualitative study based on a thorough reading of the selected work, the protagonist's retreat from her origins caused her to lose contact with her culture and values, putting her in a condition of suspended tension. When it comes to homophobia and xenophobia, Feroza has difficulty relating to either her home country or the nation where she has decided to seek asylum. She has abandoned the values of her country in favour of a foreign culture. At the conclusion of the narrative, we witness how individual decadence reflects and contributes to social degradation.

INTRODUCTION

Culture is an umbrella term with several connotations, but its significance in preserving social stability is widely acknowledged. According to Cole (2019), culture consists of both visible and invisible characteristics of human

interaction. She adds that culture encompasses both intangibles and tangibles, such as a society's values, beliefs, language, and traditions, as well as its art, clothes, and architecture. Hofstede et al. (1997) make a similar point when they say, "Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people through individual and collective striving over the course of generations" (p. 1). According to Rossi (2017), as cited in Zimmermann, K. A. (2017), "culture encompasses religion, food, what we eat, how we eat it, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet guests, how we treat our loved ones, and a million other things." Our culture impacts and pervades every element of our lives and society. Culture seems to be a social norming system that determines how individuals behave.

Each civilisation has its own distinctive culture. In more open societies, individuals tend to respect individualism, but in more closed cultures, collectivism is more prevalent. Individualism, according to Hofstede et al. (2005), "refers to cultures in which links between people are loose: everyone is expected to take care of themselves and their immediate family." The polar opposite of individualism is collectivism, which is characterised by cultures in which people are fostered and nurtured inside closely knit in-groups that give continual support and protection in exchange for steadfast commitment (p.4). Even if liberals and conservatives have different perspectives on a number of subjects, cultural differences do not make one culture superior or worse to another.

The transmission of cultural elements from one generation to the next is a continuous and universal process. Nevertheless, a member of the extraterrestrial culture first misinterprets everything. The hosts also misunderstand him or her. Bourrelle (2017) asserts that individuals on both sides see new cultural activities through the prism of their own traditions. Their perception of the environment is determined by the filters in their brain. By altering one's viewpoint, it is possible to modify not just how one's brain understands and reacts to other people's actions and behaviours, but also how one responds to and interacts with cultural differences. In other words, what matters is how individuals perceive what they observe.

Consequently, a person experiences culture shock while migrating to a new society and feeling suddenly cut off and alienated from their previous culture. As a consequence of diaspora, persons who relocate to a new culture face a loss of identity, a blending of cultures, and a sense of displacement, according to Kumar (2016). *An American Brat*, a postcolonial novel by the renowned Pakistani novelist Bapsi Sidhwa, is replete with the same themes. Sidhwa's book discusses the cultures of Pakistan, Iran (Persia), and the United States (USA). And despite the fact that she is a Parsee, there is no indication in the narrative that she is biased in this area. She compares Parsee cultural norms and values to those of Pakistanis and Americans.

Thus, when a person travels to a new culture, he or she experiences cultural shock owing to the sudden sensation of estrangement from his or her own culture. As a consequence of diaspora, persons who relocate to a new culture face a loss of identity, a blending of cultures, and a sense of displacement, according to Kumar (2016). The postcolonial novel *An American Brat* by the internationally acclaimed Pakistani novelist Bapsi Sidhwa has the same topics. Sidhwa's book discusses the cultures of Pakistan, Iran (Persia), and the United States (USA). And despite the fact that she is a member of the Parsee religion, she is never portrayed as biased in this area. She compares Parsee cultural norms and values to those of Pakistanis and Americans.

The novel research demonstrates that the Parsees are a reticent community that expects obedience to their cultural standards. Zareen, on the other hand, is a courageous and progressive thinker who wants to adapt to the times. She disregards her mother's advise on correct clothes due to her acute sense of fashion. Concerned about the future of their community, her mother is rather rigid when it comes to obeying cultural and religious norms. In an effort to widen her daughter's viewpoint, the mother chooses to send her to the United States after seeing her daughter's guarded and subdued demeanour. Even though her husband does not share her idea of courage and would rather that her daughter stay close-minded as opposed to acting recklessly, he gives his approval. Khutlibai, the mother of Zareen, is not enthusiastic about her daughter Feroza moving to the United States with Manek. Manek teaches her to American culture and offers guidance on where she should attend college. To fit in with the people, he embraces American practises and culture, including changing his name to Mike instead of Manek. But when he returns home, he marries a woman of the Parsee religion. Feroza, however, becomes courageous, liberal, and modern as a consequence of the ultimate freedom she enjoys in a free society. She enjoys attending social events, conversing with men, and doing odd tasks. She meets a Jewish guy, falls in love with him, and marries him ultimately. Her family tries to dissuade her since interfaith marriage is prohibited in her own country, but she disregards her cultural and religious background in favour of her love inclinations. He's marrying a non-Jew, but she has no reservations about it.

The present research places particular emphasis on the notion of diasporic cultural hybridity and the resulting cultural freedom, which spreads its wings at the expense of anything equally harmful to the precious cultural norms, social mores, and national beliefs held by a particular group or groups of people. Although this research supports the notion of female liberty, it also highlights the negative aspects of this virtue, such as the decentralisation of authority and the deterioration of culture and society, which may have severe repercussions for both people and societies.

This research presents compelling proof that the concept of independence and liberty, which has enabled women over the world to argue for their rights and proclaim their superiority in patriarchal systems, is deserving of the honour and glory that is due to it. In addition, it honours the freedom that has freed women from a society that has historically delivered them nothing but defeat, poverty, and suffering. It also attempts to describe freedom as it is viewed and used in

the contemporary world. In addition, it endeavours to discover the ideal perspective on freedom in order to correctly orient it in every aspect. It has laboured to create the most authentic form of this notion, which enables nations to progress while simultaneously supporting cultural and traditional enrichment. In *An American Brat* by Sidhwa, the protagonist endures a tremendous transformation throughout his stay in the United States. She quits her culture, which lays several limits on her life, and embraces the lifestyle of a people whose culture places fewer such constraints. The study's primary purpose is to deconstruct the protagonist's attempts to leave the cultural conventions of his native country, and its subtextual goal is to explore how the search of freedom could lead to moral deterioration.

LITERATURE

An American Brat is a postcolonial book by renowned Pakistani author Bapsi Sidhwa. The story focuses mostly on the experiences of immigrants in a foreign society. Feroza, the protagonist of the story, is sent to the United States to extend her perspective since her mother is concerned about her daughter's orthodox behaviour and Islamic fanaticism, which have had a devastating effect on her. Feroza, influenced by the new society, discards her puritanical beliefs and embraces the American way of life. Sidhwa illustrates the freedom her protagonist experiences and leaves the repercussions of this on society up to academic discussion. The scholar used Sidhwa's *An American Brat* as a source for literary analysis in order to determine the influence of the protagonist's altered behaviour as a result of her transition from a restrictive culture to a free one. The book illustrates the freedom the protagonist experiences in a foreign country. The novel's textual analysis will aid students of cultural studies and may have a profound effect on the minds of the overwhelming majority of readers.

Cohen (1997) defines diasporas as groups of individuals residing in a single nation who recognise that their former nation will always have a claim on their loyalties and feelings (p. ix as cited in McLeod, J. 2010, p. 207). It suggests that diaspora community is a migrant community having an emotional connection to its original country. Although the children of diasporic families born in host nations are not migrants themselves, they are unable to shed the diaspora identity they inherited from their migratory parents.

According to Brah (n.d.), home is a mythical location of the diasporic imagination. In other terms, it is a no-return zone (as cited in McLeod, J. 2010, p. 209). In other words, diasporic persons begin living in limbo since they do not belong in either their host nation or their place of origin; hence, an identity crisis ensues.

Fareed (2013) contends that Diaspora and identity are interwoven, with one influencing the other. Diasporic persons incessantly attempt to resemble locals and, as a result, want to be linked with them; nonetheless, they are constantly reminded of their dual statuses and otherness. Nonetheless, Diasporic persons experience homesickness for their birthplace, but they eventually accept their new identity and integrate with the locals. Although they adapt the foreign culture and diminish their recollections of the past linked with their native

country, they can never completely eradicate the remembrance of their homeland.

Malik (n.d.) claims that an individual's culture dictates and moulds his or her identity. She states, with reference to *An American Brat*, that the disparity between host and native cultures causes identity crises for many characters. She says that not only Feroza, the heroine of the story, is impacted by crossing borders, but her uncle Manek has also been more influenced by American society.

In addition to grief and a feeling of loss, according to Fareed (2013), diaspora also results in the worldwide absorption of culture. Gul (2013) writes, in reference to Feroza, the protagonist of *An American Brat*, that unhomeliness, ambivalence, and imitation are the three traits of hybridity that require Feroza to remain in the host country permanently. According to Zubair (2012), diasporic persons have an identity crisis, yet they seem content with their newly formed identities. Diasporic people are mostly explored in terms of hybridity and identity. Similarly, Feroza, a diasporic person, seemed really pleased with her new identity. It indicates that identity crises and hybridity, which are characteristic of diaspora, result in change and integration.

Migration, according to Kani (2013), is a rebirth in a new society that necessitates new changes. She seemed to view migration from a third-world nation to a first-world one as a renaissance, as one of life's natural cycles in which the losses it incurs are compensated for by self-awareness gains. Referring to the heroine of *An American Brat*, Kani (2013) states that Feroza's self-discovery makes her devoted and ready to take advantage of the many options available in the host nation, and she completely changes into a fearless contemporary woman.

In his study paper titled 'Cultural Divergence in Bapsi Sidhwa's *An American Brat*,' Kumar (2016) discusses the immigrant's change, stating that Feroza learns to speak language like locals and embraces American ways of life such as drinking, dancing, and smoking. She even begins to flirt with males. Kumar adds that he believes her smoking is a blatant breach of her religious convictions since, as a Parsee, she reveres fire. But she is indifferent. Even still, she chooses to marry David, a non-Jew. Her cultural shift causes her to marry across castes. Her mother also begins to speak out against the norm of interfaith marriage. It means that, like other diasporic persons, Feroza imitates the indigenous and adopts their way of thinking about life and religion so that she may be linked with the natives; yet, her inescapable connection to her own country and her family's criticism cause her distress. Consequently, she is suspended in between. In his 1994 collection of articles titled 'The Location of Culture,' Homi K. Bhabha advances the concept of cultural hybridity. According to Bhabha, culture is not a static thing; it cannot be fixed in time or place. On the contrary, according to Bhabha, culture is something that is fluid and in constant flux. It is a melting pot of various ingredients that are continuously introduced and modify our cultural identities on a regular basis. In other words, the concept of unadulterated culture is a fallacy. All civilizations are characterised by the hybridity that Bhabha refers to as hybridity.

The mere notion of addressing and engaging with a culture that is completely locked off and isolated must be ruled out if Bhabha's remarks concerning cultural hybridity are accurate. Since individuals are gaining access to foreign cultures, impressing and being impressed by them, and reporting their experiences, it appears implausible that a cultural landscape is fully sealed and isolated. Bhabha proposes as an alternative to the concept of a static culture the notion of culture as a continually expanding process; rather than being characterised by an unchanging essence, culture is characterised by change, advancement, and transformation. This cultural contact between diasporic people and indigenous results in the formation of a new culture that combines the host and home cultures. Bhabha uses the word hybridity to describe this cultural combination.

According to Feinberg (1973, p. 2), freedom is the lack of restraint. In other words, a free man might do anything he pleases. Specifically, he is free if he has the freedom to live anywhere he chooses, the freedom to pick a woman or a man, the freedom to read any literature or the freedom not to read a poetry. The Western notion of freedom requires its unshakeable place in the contemporary day. It is often held and accepted that freedom encompasses a person's individual liberty. Currently, it is the uncontested ultimate value of the Western world. This kind of liberty does not want or accept any religious, societal, or governmental limitations. Individuals who refuse to give up their independence become a perpetual source of problems for modern society.

According to Feinberg (1973), restrictions may be both internal and external. Likewise, limitations may be both positive and negative. Therefore, there are four types of constraints: positive internal, negative internal, positive external, and negative external. The existence of some sicknesses and other internal barriers in a person, such as headaches and obsessive thoughts, are characterised as internal positive constraints, while the lack of physical or mental strength and inadequacies in abilities are ascribed to internal negative limitations. Similarly, the existence of external restrictions such as a pointed gun or a closed door is classified as external positive constraints, whereas the absence of external constraints such as a lack of resources is classified as external negative constraints (p. 12). Mentioning several forms of limitations, the author exhaustively classifies them into four categories, which seem to be all-inclusive. Referring to the personal space, Berlin (1969) states, "Social peace and development were consistent with retaining a broad region for private life, upon which neither the state nor any other authority must be permitted to intrude" (p. 371). Every individual desires their own personal space, which varies across individuals and civilizations. Therefore, if one attempts to invade someone's personal space, he feels agitated. He would see a freedom violation. The only freedom that warrants the term is the freedom to pursue our own good in our own manner, according to Berlin (1969, p. 371). As a result, freedom has varying connotations for many people, whose choices vary widely.

Sen (1999) contends that growth, from both a technical and a social standpoint, is crucial to the spread of freedom. He adds, however, that the origins of unfreedom may also be eliminated. The author believes that the expansion of

health and education facilities, the increase of individual earnings and the national gross domestic product, and the eradication of poverty and social deprivation are significant drivers of freedom (p. 3). The author asserts that freedom and progress go hand in hand. Development, mostly from a social standpoint, ensures the entire liberty of people.

Important postcolonial ideas such as diaspora, immigration, unhomeliness, identity crisis, hybridity, and cultural liberation are analysed using numerous sources. Diaspora refers not just to a migratory population or a person in a foreign culture with an indivisible connection to the nation of origin, but also to sentiments of separation, rootlessness, grief, and homesickness. Individuals who are diasporic belong nowhere, and their home becomes simply a mental idea. All of these experiences ultimately result in identity crises, hybridity, and metamorphosis. Similarly, several thinkers have defined liberty differently. Therefore, it is thought that freedom varies across ethical communities. Moreover, freedom has several facets, not all of which can be applicable to every culture. It may lead to societal decadence if undertaken. The scholar is responsible for analysing Feroza's character in Sidhwa's *An American Brat* in order to demonstrate that freedom leads to societal degradation.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

It is qualitative research in which textual data serve as a replacement for hypotheses to lead the investigation. Qualitative research is a method for the systematic collecting, organising, and analysis of textual data. In other words, qualitative research is strategic in nature, which implies that qualitative research questions are formulated with consideration for context and the relative advantages and disadvantages of a qualitative technique. It is also systematic, meaning that it is not ad hoc; rather, it is based on a set of recognised, well-defined, articulated techniques for the collection, organisation, and analysis of qualitative data. Utilizing qualitative methods is mostly motivated by a desire to get a full understanding of a topic. Text is utilised as data in the current research, and an inductive methodology is used.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

As this is qualitative research, text is used as qualitative data. This research explores the chosen book extensively and critically, focusing on the physical description, actions, inner thoughts, responses, and conversations of the major characters in order to get a comprehensive knowledge of the influence of their freedom on society. Both primary and secondary sources are used for this purpose. The novel *An American Brat* is the major source, while the secondary sources include books, articles, journals, online sites, publications, and research papers.

An in-depth analysis of the chosen book *An American Brat* is conducted. Based on a careful reading, information about the novel's principal characters is picked based on what they say, feel, and do, as well as what the narrator and other characters say, feel, and respond to about them. After the first marking of text, which identifies significant quotations and phrases, the data is appropriately sorted, completely evaluated, and displayed with care. The study of data

pertaining to the novel's primary characters emphasises the desire for independence that eventually results in societal decay.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research examines Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity and Joel Feinberg's idea of freedom in relation to Sidhwa's *An American Brat*, which discusses freedom in the context of culture that leads to social decadence.

Mizutani (2009) argues that Bhabha's (1994) theory of cultural hybridity is complex (p. 16). Bhabha believes that culture is always evolving. The adaptability and permanence of culture enable it to absorb and replace outdated behaviours. Culture is merely change. Culture may merge with other cultures to form a new culture. Bhabha refers to this as hybridity. Mixture, not pure culture. Han (2012) states that Bhabha's concept of hybridity dispels the idea of pure culture (p. 371). The purity of culture is an illusion. According to Bhabha, civilizations are characterised by change, flux, and hybridity.

Bhabha believes that pure, uncontaminated culture is an illusion. If a culture is closed off and isolated, it is difficult to engage with it. Due to the fact that people are accessing different cultures, impressing and being impressed by them, and reporting their experiences, it is inaccurate to assume that the cultural landscape is completely closed. Bhabha proposes, in place of a culture that is static, a culture that is a dynamic process characterised by change, flux, and transformation. This sensation of interconnection is termed hybridity by Bhabha.

Postcolonial hybridity is best characterised by the term diaspora. Cohen (1997) defines diasporas as groups of people living in one nation who exhibit loyalty to their previous homeland (p. ix as cited in McLeod, J. 2010, p. 207). Diaspora is a migrating group that maintains ties to its home nation. Home, according to Brah (n.d.), is a diasporic myth. This is a no-reentry zone (as cited in McLeod, J. 2010, p. 209). They do not belong anywhere. They reside between nations since they do not belong in either. In the contact zone, hybrid cultures emerge. According to Feinberg (1973), freedom is the absence of restrictions. Free men may act as they like. He is free if he may live anywhere he chooses, choose a woman or a guy, and read any literature or none at all. Today, the Western concept of freedom merits an unshakable stance. Freedom sometimes involves an individual's liberty. It is the greatest value in the Western world. This kind of liberty neither desires nor accepts religious, social, or governmental restrictions. Individuals who refuse to give up their independence provide a continual dilemma for contemporary civilization.

Feinberg (1973) introduces the possibility of internal limits. There are both positive and negative restrictions. Internal positive, internal negative, external positive, external negative. Positive internal restraints include headaches and obsessive thoughts, while negative internal constraints include a lack of physical or mental strength and ability. Positive external limitations include a pointed gun or locked door; negative external constraints include a lack of resources (p. 12). Positive vs negative and internal versus external constraints are classified. Positive restrictions are common. Negative restrictions lack

anything necessary. The second component is whether the constraint is internal (such as mental illness) or external. These two dimensions provide four sorts of constraints. Traditional negative liberty addresses only positive external constraints (such as being shackled), ignoring the other three-quarters of the problem. We need a definition of freedom that incorporates these constraints. "Liberty from" restraints can only guarantee "freedom to" accomplish our goals. A guy without fear is dignified and can look any man in the eye when he is free (Feinberg, 1973, p. 1). The quotation illustrates the traits of the free man. A free man is fearless, independent, and goal-oriented. In addition to legal status and opportunities, a free individual also has some ideals.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

An American Brat is a postcolonial book written in English by Sidhwa that was published for the first time in 1993 and achieved international acclaim. The research examines the primary factors of a society's adoption of an anti-freedom attitude. It also analyses the conditions necessary to restrict freedom within the parameters of acceptable personal, societal, and national ideals. In addition, it assesses how freedom contributes to societal decay. Khutlibai, Zareen's mother, disapproves of her daughter's choice to expose her abdomen between the ribcage and hip, particularly her navel.

Zareen believes that freedom can and should take the shape required to satisfy the current objectives of the race for development, but her mother want to prevent her from attaining total independence. Both characters' limits and adaptations to freedom are clearly shown by their distinct ways. The Parsee community adheres to collectivism, in which the freedom of the individual is constrained to serve the collective's goals. Zareen's courage and independence lead her to shape the character and upbringing of her lone child, Feroza Jinglewalla. She believes that by being courageous, she is advancing in life, but by adhering to established customs, she is going backwards into ignorance and defeat.

Zareen feels that a free man is brave, courageous, and independent; he follows through with his intentions, looks people in the eyes, and freely communicates his innermost feelings. She also feels that confidence is a product of audacity, modernity, and independence; the more one disregards his or her traditions and national and moral principles, the more certain one gets. Zareen thinks that freedom encompasses all of a person's own liberty, and that such freedom does not want or accept any religious, societal, or legal limits. This delicate line between freedom and audacity is very difficult to describe, and thus, it is often misunderstood and extensively manipulated. It implies that she spares no one, even her mother and spouse.

Zareen reminisces about a time when she could wear dresses, go cycling, and have sittings with males, but today women are required to cover their whole bodies and girls are prohibited from doing outside sports (Sidhwa, 1993, pp. 2–3). She laments the restrictions on women's independence and refers to their social deprivation, discrimination, and marginalisation. Cyrus, the spouse of Zareen, views liberty as a virtue closer to decency and consistent with the principle of moderation. Cyrus is the sort of guy that offers his wife Zareen

entire freedom and does not put their relationship at risk; nonetheless, he does not want his daughter Feroza to participate in the government college play. Sidhwa (1993) explains, "He could not let his daughter to flirt with Muslim lads or any boys" (p. 9).

He realises that independence beyond a certain point may lead to an individual's preoccupation and societal degeneration. In the 1993 film Sidhwa, Zareen's husband Cyrus is worried about his daughter, but not about his wife Feroza's freedom. He is unaware of the potential repercussions if she follows in his footsteps in terms of liberty. According to Khutlibai, he allows his daughter to travel the globe at her leisure. He has no more direction or sense than a Ping-Pong ball (Sidhwa, 1993).

Cyrus believes in freedom that allows people and society to grow without sacrificing their creativity, morals, and values. Khutlibai's sense of freedom has confined her to the realm of the past, and she has no desire to emerge from her shell. Her mindset prevents her from advancing in life and adopting new practises, even if they are moral and socially acceptable. Zareen is on one end of the spectrum while Khut Libai is on the other. Both extremes are awful and detrimental in their own way!

Manek is one of those who are given the chance to live in America and successfully adjust to American culture. According to Bhabha (1994), the coloniser wants the colonised to imitate him, but he never expects them to catch up. In his imitation, Manek seeks to integrate the foreign culture. Manek, a diasporic man, adopts the indigenous' way of life and way of thinking and instructs his cousin to do the same. The freedom in a free society has such a profound effect on him that he feels no guilt while discussing premarital sex with his niece.

In a sense, Manek combines foreign culture with his own culture, and Bhabha (1994) refers to this cultural hybridity. In his 1993 book Sidhwa, Cyrus Parsee demonstrates a comprehensive awareness of Western culture. He is aware of the conditions that must be met in order to restrict freedom within the parameters of acceptable personal, societal, and national values and standards. He is aware that marrying an American girl would increase the generational gap between his family, culture, and religion. He wants to preserve a portion of his genuine, unique self.

Cyrus is fully aware of his wife Zareen's libertarian inclination and her propensity for female independence. Feroza observes this disparity in her parents' perspectives on the notion of liberation. This dual mentality in her household makes her feel restrained and constrained. She exhibits impudence on occasion. Feroza slammed bedroom doors, opened vehicle doors, and smashed shuttlecocks across the net at her surprised opponents, according to Sidhwa (1993).

Zareen, Feroza's mother, sends her to the United States to "broaden her perspective" and instil in her a feeling of independence. She sees just one facet of freedom, and its radiance prevents her from contemplating the other facets of

this liberal journey. Would he ask his own sister to perform in front of that group of sex-hungry thugs? asks Sidhwa (1993). In her own country, Feroza feels constricted and imprisoned, but in America she experiences complete freedom. Sidhwa (1993) states that she normally locks her door at night, but after learning of her departure to a free country, she leaves it open (Sidhwa, 1993, p. 19).

In a sense, her feeling of independence in the other society frees her from the constraints of conformity. A guy who is free is brave, courageous, and independent, and he acts in accordance with his plans. In Sidhwa (1993), while recounting her astonishment, Feroza provides an almost unconscious panorama of the influence freedom has on Western culture's inhabitants. She feels as liberated as a bird that flies further and deeper into a strange civilization with the intention of achieving independence. The innate impulse to adhere to social, community, and national standards and beliefs is replaced with an intense yearning to be liberated from all constraints.

According to Bhabha (1993), cultures are characterised by change, flux, and hybridity. A parent who cannot allow his daughter to "mess about with any males" (Sidhwa, 1993, p. 9) would never let a culture where the virginity of young girls is gravely endangered to develop. In the current day, these are the harsh realities linked with freedom that are often disregarded. As a diasporic individual, she seeks to integrate the foreign culture, and, to use Bhabha's (1994) terminology, she becomes a hybrid. Due to the fact that the girls and boys reside in different apartments away from one another and their parents are not around to supervise them, they are free to behave as they like. Feroza values her independence and does not want anybody to invade or interfere with her personal space.

Her mother, seeing her timidity, reticence, and backwardness, urges her to interact with men and behave like a contemporary woman. When she falls in love with a Jewish guy called David, she experiences the joy described by Sidhwa (1993) as if she had crossed a cultural divide. Change is the only thing that is permanent in terms of culture. According to Bhabha (1994), culture is a dynamic process characterised by change, flux, and transformation. Feroza undergoes a metamorphosis because she embraces a Western style of thinking and disregards the social and religious traditions of her own country. Sidhwa (1993) states, "Mixed marriages threatened the very existence of the whole Parsee society."

Every character in "An American Brat" believes in freedom, although their interpretations of it vary. Zareen, one of the novel's major characters, seems to be quite liberal and contemporary and desires to adapt with the times. She thinks that a free man is confident, courageous, and self-reliant, acts in accordance with his goals, looks directly into the eyes of others, and freely shares his innermost feelings. She is worried by the rising fundamentalism in Zia's government and reminisces about a time when she could wear frocks, go riding, and sit with males; however, women are now required to cover their whole bodies, and girls are prohibited from playing outdoor activities. Cyrus, who disapproves of his wife's independence, interprets freedom differently.

He seems to believe in the freedom that allows people to grow within predetermined constraints. Cyrus is the sort of guy that allows his wife entire freedom and does not jeopardise his connection with her; nonetheless, he places restrictions on his sexually mature daughter. He is savvy enough to see that independence beyond a certain point may lead to an individual's preoccupation and societal decadence.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of Sidhwa's *An American Brat* is to address the question, "How far can freedom actually go in a society's functioning?" By evaluating the potentially damaging effects of unrestricted freedom on time-honored cultural, social, and traditional values. The study also aims to determine the circumstances that must be maintained with the highest attention in order to restrict individual liberty to the acceptable limits of individual, social, and national norms. As part of this qualitative study, the researcher examines how characters' various views of freedom impact society norms and values. Character analysis demonstrates that in a multicultural society, the liberalism of the elder generation filters down to the younger generation and ultimately penetrates the community's core roots. Consequently, the study demonstrates that complete freedom is related with a deterioration in moral standards, cultural norms, and social mores.

The word "diaspora" is often used to refer to a group of persons who have immigrated to another country but maintain a strong emotional connection to their original land. Due to the fact that they do not formally belong anywhere, persons in the diaspora often feel an identity crisis as a consequence of this situation of continual change. They are now in a perilous predicament. They endure shame and disgrace as they strive to fit in with the locals by adopting characteristics of both their own and the host culture, therefore becoming culturally hybrid. Therefore, an individual's identity is defined and moulded by his or her culture, which is in a permanent state of flux.

People in the diaspora often sense disillusionment in their religion and culture as a result of being exposed to the contemporary concepts and aspirations of the industrialised world and comparing them to their own traditional beliefs. They are deliberately attempting to abandon their preconceived notions. And as they struggle for survival, they begin to depart from the central tenets of their religion and culture and adopt new practises. As a result of this cultural transformation, they have become significantly different individuals, and their national, social, and cultural values have suffered.

However, the multiculturalism-introduced hundreds of new values, ideas, concepts, and convictions make newcomers confused about their own long-held customs and beliefs. However, this permits youngsters to question the beliefs held by their parents and grandparents. And it provides them the opportunity to test these cutting-edge innovations.

The first issue is concerning personal liberty, which is covered in depth in the analysis chapter. Character study reveals how relative freedom is; hence, there is no universal notion of freedom applicable to all cultures. In order to attain its

goal, the Parsee society severely restricts the freedom of its members, while the American government acts with great empathy, enabling its inhabitants to enjoy freedom within reasonable restrictions. In addition, as shown by the assessment of the characters in *An American Brat*, there may be substantial diversity among members of the same group in their understanding of the notion of freedom. Each character in the novel cherishes independence, but interprets it differently. The analysis chapter presents an answer to Question 2, which focuses on the considerations that must be made when placing constraints on individual liberty within the framework of commonly accepted personal, social, and national values and norms. Unrestricted individual liberty degenerates society, causes chaos, and violates the individual freedoms of others. The liberty of others must be safeguarded, shared goals must be sought, and maximum social flourishing must be permitted; hence, there must be some reasonable constraints. Individuals put varied restrictions on freedom due to their diverse conceptions of it. People from the same culture may have dramatically different restrictions on their personal space, freedom of expression, mobility, dress, secrecy, way of life, food, religious views, intimate interactions, real estate choices, professional endeavours, and leisure activities. In multicultural and multiethnic societies, it is necessary to construct well-defined freedom zones so that everyone may live in peace and harmony. Consequently, the misuse of liberty and the rejection of conventional standards may have negative impacts on the common good and result in poor results for society as a whole. However, ideas of the criteria that must be followed in order to restrict liberty vary widely. The degree of a person's cultural independence rests somewhere on a continuum. They are not bound by global cultural standards. Certain sensitive zones, however, must under no circumstances be compromised, since doing so might risk the very life of the whole society and result in social deterioration.

The analytical chapter sheds light on your third question: "How can freedom lead to social decay?" Decadence is seen by Parsees as a break from moral, cultural, and religious standards. The rejection of traditional clothing and the public display of nudity seems atypical, given that the same freedom may be adopted by younger generations. If this tendency is not discouraged and regulated, it might result in significant moral deterioration and social ruin.

This moral deterioration reaches new levels when an uncle recommends a college to his niece solely on the basis that his niece may indulge in premarital sexual activity there. Sexual conduct before marriage is an obvious sign of deviation, and the Parsee community does not allow such behaviour.

Cohabitation is also seen as a deviant behaviour within the context of Parsee society. Similarly, living with lesbians and discussing the flow of their bodily fluids in front of one's mother may look unsettling. The use of such obscene words against a female relative is an indication of very deviant behaviour. This homosexual movement looks to be an assault on conventional family values. In addition, cohabitation between a woman and a man outside of marriage is a kind of deviant behaviour that contributes to social degradation.

Comparatively, confronting one's own religion and criticising its seeming double standard on the topic of interfaith marriages seems to be a kind of

deviance since it might set a precedent that encourages laypeople to criticise religion, which could result in the downfall of a valued faith. Therefore, unrestricted freedom leads to society decline when abused by untrained individuals.

Marriage outside of the faith is the most severe kind of departure for a Parsee household. A Jewish boy finally wins the heart of our heroine, who decides to marry him. By marrying outside the Parsee religion, she rejects her responsibilities to herself, her family, and her community. Such a "criminal, misguided, and disgraced woman" has no place in the Parsee culture, as per her mother's warnings. In the perspective of the High Priest, this woman is an adulteress, and her children are not real. There is an assumption that she no longer identifies as a Parsee-Zoroastrian. In the open-roofed spherical houses, her unclean corpse is left for the vultures to consume. Despite criticism from loved ones, neighbours, and the church, she stays steadfast in her decision. She is utterly captivated by the freedom she feels in the foreign culture, and nothing will sway her decision to marry a non-Palestinian. In our culture, this kind of deviation is the source of all evil.

According to the findings, unrestricted freedom or freedom without responsibilities is related with social deterioration. The research warns against neglecting a community's cultural and social norms for the sake of false autonomy, since this leads to societal decay.

Still, further research is required to identify the relationship between cultural liberty and generation disparities.

REFERENCE

- Ashcroft, B. & Gareth, G. (1998). Key concepts in post-colonial studies. Psychology Press.
- Berlin, I. (1969). Two concepts of liberty. *Berlin, I. (1969), i, 118(1969), 172*
- Bernard, H. R., Wutich, A., & Ryan, G. W. (2016). Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches. SAGE publications.
- Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches. SAGE publications.
- Bhatt, S. R. (2018). Freedom and Responsibility. *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 35(3), 585-602.*
- Bourrelle, J. S. (September 2017). Learn a new culture [video]. TEDx Talks. Retrieved from: https://www.ted.com/talks/julien_s_bourrelle_learn_a_new_culture
- Choudhury, B. (2016). Homi K. Bhabha: The Location of Culture. In *Reading Postcolonial Theory* (pp. 191-211). Routledge India.
- Christ, D. M. G., (2003). Language, identity and conflict: A comparative study of language in ethnic conflict in Europe and Eurasia, London: Routledge.
- Clifford, James, E., (1986). Introduction: Partial Truths. In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. J. Clifford and G. Marcus, eds. Pp. 1-26. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Cole, N. L. (2019, August 02). So What Is Culture, Exactly? Retrieved from: <https://www.thoughtco.com/culture-definition-4135409>
- Collingwood, R. G., (1939). *An Autobiography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Collingwood, R. G., (1946). *The Idea of History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Connor, W., (1984). *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy*, Princeton Univ. Press.
- Cowgill, G., (1993). Distinguished Lecture in Archeology: Beyond Criticizing New Archeology. *American Anthropologist* 95:551-573.
- Curry, L. (2015, June 23). Fundamentals of qualitative research methods: What is qualitative research (Module 1). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbdN_sLWl88
- Duranti, A., (1997). *Linguistic anthropology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fareed, D. S. (2013). Sidhwa's *An American Brat*: Cultural Assimilation with transitional identity. *Journal of Higher Education and research Society*, 1. Retrieved from: <http://herso.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/11/03-DR.-SADAF-FAREED.pdf>
- Feinberg, J. (1973). *Social philosophy*. Retrieved from: <https://philpapers.org/rec/FEISP>
- Goodenough, W., (1994). *Toward a Working Theory of Culture*. In *Assessing Cultural Anthropology*. R. Borofsky, ed. Pp. 262-273. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Halliday, H. (2016). *Quantitative, Qualitative, Inductive and Deductive Research*. Retrieved from: <https://www.slideshare.net/hallidayhannah/quantitative-qualitative-inductiveand-deductive-research>
- Hamilton, A. (2020). *Conservatism*. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2020 Edition). Edward N. Zalta (ed.). Retrieved from: <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/conservatism/>.
- Han, J. (2012). Homi K. Bhabha and the mixed blessing of hybridity in biblical hermeneutics. *The Bible and Critical Theory*, 1(4).
- Handler, R., (1991). *An Interview with Clifford Geertz*. *Current Anthropology* 32:603-613.
- Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Johnson, B., (1963). "On Church and Sect." *American Sociological Review* 28: 539-49.
- Harris, M., (1964). *The Nature of Cultural Things*. New York:
- Herbich, I., (1987). *Learning Patterns, Potter Interaction and Ceramic Style among the Luo of Kenya*. *The African Archaeological Review* 5:193-204.
- Hodder, I., (1985). *Postprocessual Archaeology*. In *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory*, Vol. 8. M. Schiffer, ed. Pp. 1-26. New York: Academic Press.

- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (1997). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* McGraw Hill New York. Retrieved from: <http://people.tamu.edu/~i-choudhury/culture.html>
- Hofstede, G. H., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2005). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (Vol. 2). New York: McGraw-hill.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2012). *The location of culture*. routledge. Retrieved from: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/introduction-locations-culture-homibhabha/10.4324/9780203820551-6>
- Jasper, J., (1998). *The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions in and Around Social Movements*. *Sociological Forum* 13: 397–424.
- Kani, A. J. (2013). *Migratory Experiences in Bapsi Sidhwa's Novels: An American Brat and Ice-Candy-Man*. *Language in India*, 1.
- Katzner, K., (2002). *The languages of the world*, New York: Routledge.
- Kumar, M. (2016). *cultural divergence in bapsi sidhwa's 'an american brat'*. *Research Journal of English Language And Literature* 4, 1, 554-557.
- Liu, L., Akhter, S., & Qureshi, A. H. (2020). *Deconstructing Issues of Identity and Cultural Clashes in 'An American Brat' by Sidhwa*. *Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica*, 29(4), 32.
- Ma, R., (1996), *Population and Society of Tibet*. Beijing: Tong-Xin Press.
- Malik, S. (n.d). *Identity Crisis resulting from Hybridity and Diaspora in Bapsi Sidhwa's 'An American Brat'*. Retrieved from: http://www.academia.edu/download/53538501/an_american_brat.docx
- McLeod, J. (2020). *Beginning postcolonialism*. Viva Books New Delhi, India.
- Mizutani, S. (2009). *Hybridity and History: A Critical Reflection on Homi K. Bhabha's 'Post-Historical' Thought*.
- Reams, J. (2015). *Characterization in fiction*. Retrieved from: <https://digital.library.txstate.edu/handle/10877/5627>
- Sen, A. (2001). *Development as freedom*. Oxford Paperbacks. Retrieved from: <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Qm8HtpFHYecC&oi>
- Sen, A. (2014). *Development as freedom* (1999). *The globalization and development reader: Perspectives on development and global change*, 525. Retrieved from: <https://diarium.usal.es/agustinferraro/files/2020/01/Roberts-Hite-and-Chorev-2015-The-Globalization-and-Development-Reader.pdf>
- Shirazi, Q. (2014). *Tradition and modernity in Kamila Shamsie's Salt and Saffron* (2000). *International Journal of Language, Literature and Culture*, 1(2), 23.
- Sidhwa, B. (1993). *An American Brat*. Gulberg 2 Lahore: Ilqa Publications. Edition 2012. ISBN: 978-969-9473-35-7
- Smith, A., (1991). *National Identity*, Reno: Univ. of Nevada Press.
- Worsley, P. (1984) *The three worlds: Culture and world development*, London: Weidenfeld

& Nicolson.

Wright, S ., (2004). Language Policy and Language Planning, Palgrave.

Zimmermann, K. A. (2017, July 13). What Is Culture? Retrieved from:

<https://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html>

Zubair, S. (2012). Crossing Borders, Reinventing Identity (ies): Hybridity in Pakistani English

Fiction. Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS), 32(1).