

Chapter 3

An American Brat

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3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses about *An American Brat* written by Bapsi Sidhwa- an internationally acclaimed author of Pakistani origin. Prior to 1947, Pakistan was part of undivided India. After getting freedom from the British rule, it came into existence as a separate nation in 1947. There are many writers of Pakistani origin who have written in Urdu as well as in English. Shahid Suhrawardy, Ahmed Ali, Alamgir Hashmi, etc. have contributed in English poetry. Ahmed Ali and Zulfikar Ghose are well known prose writers. Mohsin Hamid, Nadeem Aslam, Mohammed Hanif have contributed a lot in novel genre. Bapsi Sidhwa is an internationally acclaimed Parsee novelist of Pakistani origin. Hanif Kureishi's novel *The Buddha of Suburbia* won the Whitbread Award.

3.2. Life and works of Bapsi Sidhwa

Bapsi Sidhwa was born on August 11, 1938 in Karachi in Pakistan, to Zoroastrian parents Peshotan and Tehmina Bhandara and later moved with her family to Lahore. She was educated in Lahore and now a resident of the USA. She was the only child of the family so felt lonely. Her sense of isolation was accentuated by polio that struck her when she was just two years old and so she was advised to study at home only. Polio has affected her throughout her life. She was nine years old in 1947 at the time of partition of India and Pakistan. She received her BA from Kinnaird College for Women

in Lahore in 1957. In the same year she was married to Gustad Kermani, a businessman in Bombay. She lived with him for five years bore two children and went back to Pakistan after her divorce. In 1963, she remarried Noshirwan Sidhwa in Lahore. Later on she started writing. Her personal experiences of partition and stay in Mumbai are reflected in her works. She currently resides in Houston, Texas, US. One of her children, Mohur Sidhwa, is active in the politics of Arizona State, US.

Bapsi Sidhwa is Pakistan's leading diasporic writer. She describes herself as a "Punjabi-Parsee-Pakistani". She has produced several novels in English that reflect her personal experience of the Indian subcontinent's partition, abuse against women, immigration to the US, and membership in the Parsee community. Sidhwa is Pakistan's one of the best novelists. Bapsi Sidhwa has won international acclaim for her work. She won many prestigious awards which include the Lila Wallace –Readers' Digest Writers' Award for 1993, the Liberaturepreis from Germany and the Sitara-i-Imtiaz Award of Pakistan for her unique contribution in the field of art in Pakistan. She has made immense contribution to Pakistan's identity in the creative world. Her novels viz., *The Pakistani Bride*, *The Crow Eaters*, *An American Brat*, *Ice Candy Man* -published as *Cracking India* in the USA, and *Water: A Novel* have been translated and published in several languages. Her anthology: *City of Sin and Splendour: Writings on Lahore*, was published in 2006. *Their Language of Love* is a collection of short stories published in 2013. *The Jungle Wala Sahib* is an Urdu translation of *The Crow Eaters*.

I. *The Pakistani Bride*

The Pakistani Bride, Sidhwa's debut novel, is based on an actual incident involving a Pakistani girl who becomes Zaitoon, the sixteen years old protagonist, in the novel. This real story was narrated to Sidhwa when she went to a remote army camp in the Karakoram mountains and there she heard the story of a fine Punjabi girl who had run away from her tribal husband. Zaitoon loses her parents at the time of partition. Qasim, a tribal man, adopts her. He takes an orphaned girl for his daughter and brings her to the city of Lahore. As the years pass, Qasim grows nostalgic about his life in the mountains while Zaitoon is brought up well in Lahore. Qasim promises his daughter to marry a tribesman, but Zaitoon's fantasy soon becomes a grim reality of unquestioning obedience and unending labor. Qasim arranges the marriage of Zaitoon with Sakhi, a tribal man.

Zaitoon's marriage fails because of cultural disharmony between the tribal husband and a Lahore based girl. Later, her husband killed her. Like Zaitoon, the marriage of Carol, an American woman, is not at all happy with her Indian husband Farrukh. The major theme of the novel is the marriage in which the fusion of two totally different cultures is quite difficult. Sidhwa also focuses on treatment of women in Pakistan and on the harsh lives of the tribal people in Karakoram. (Laskey)

II. *The Crow Eaters*

The Crow Eaters, Sidhwa's second novel, is a lively and humorous story about the Parsee community of Pakistan. The title of the book is translation of a derogatory term used for Parsees who are stereotyped as being excessively loud and talkative. The novel depicts the Parsee mind, their social behavior, their customs and traditions. Though Sidhwa has made hard labour in writing the novel because of deep rooted admiration for her diminishing community, yet she has to encounter her own community's hostility.

Fareed Junglewala, nicknamed as Freddy, comes to Lahore with his wife Putali, daughter and mother-in-law-Jerbanoo as a penniless man. He becomes a successful businessman. His mother-in-law, Jerbanoo, is constant source of worry for him. The novel captures the quintessential Parsee ethos and diaspora. The novel describes the social mobility of a Parsee family and the generation gap between Fareed, his wife Putali, son Behram and daughter-in-law Tanya. (Dodiya)

III. *Cracking India*

Cracking India is originally published as *Ice Candy Man*. The novel focuses on the traumatic experiences of people at the time of partition. This third novel earned an international acclaim and Sidhwa received acceptance as one of the most promising English novelists from South Asia, placing her among the lines of Khushwant Singh, Anita Desai and R.K.Narayan.

The novel is depicted from the perspectives of a child from the Parsee community of Lahore. The novel presents the bloody partition and Hindu-Muslim riots from a neutral perspective. All of Sidhwa's work has some autobiographical elements. In the novel, the child protagonist, Lenny, is a reminiscent of Sidhwa's own childhood. Like Lenny, Sidhwa too suffered from polio as a child due to which she was not sent to school and had frequent visits to the hospital. The characters include Slave sister, Electric Aunt, Old

Husband, Godmother, Ayah and a Muslim street vendor- Ice-Candy-man. Sidhwa draws out the most damaging effect of the partition, the symbolic desecration of women on both sides of the conflict. A cinematic adaptation is filmed in Deepa Mehta's film *Earth*. (Dodiya)

IV. *An American Brat*

An American Brat is a story of a young Pakistani Parsee girl Feroza. The conservative attitude of Feroza in Pakistan creates tension to her mother Zareen and father Cyrus. Cyrus decides to send Feroza to the USA for holiday which may broaden her outlook. Sidhwa narrates the experiences of expatriate in the USA. At the end Feroza's love affair with David, a Jew fails because of interference of her mother. She decides to struggle for freedom and self-fulfillment in the USA instead of settling in Lahore with her parents. In the novel Sidhwa sensitizes the issues of inter-community marriage in the Parsee, their traditional different attitudes towards males and females for marriage in the Parsee community and the issues of expatriates.

V. *Water*

Water is based on the film of the same name by Deepa Mehta, the well known Indo-Canadian film maker. The novel is about the exploitation of widows in India. The novel is set in 1938, against the backdrop of Gandhi's rise to power. The novel depicts the life of eight-year-old Chuyia, abandoned at a widow's ashram after the death of her elderly husband Hira Lal. There, she is supposed to live in penitence until her death. Unwilling to accept her fate, she becomes a catalyst for change in the widows' lives. When her friend Kalyani, a beautiful widow-prostitute, falls in love with a young, upper-class Gandhian idealist, it creates a great upheaval as it is defiance of Hindu tradition. The novel is about the lives of widows in colonial India narrating a haunting and lyrical story of love, faith, and redemption. (Dodiya)

VI. *Their Language of Love*

Their Language of Love is a collection of short stories. It deals with witty observations on life, marriage, migration, expatriates and on the partition's effect on people. Sidhwa weaves her narratives amid all the familiar tensions that assault south Asian communities — large and demanding families, communitarian tensions, problematic nationalist aspirations and diasporic dilemmas. The stories with different

protagonists are drawn either from autobiographical recollections, or from people encountered here and there during her years in Pakistan and America. 'A Gentlemanly War' is based on her own recollections of the Indo-Pak war of 1965. The atmosphere in Lahore is in the wake of a threatening Indian invasion. Under such circumstances, upper class Parsee family plays out the inner pulls and conflicts of love, attachment to family homes and memories, and proximity to affairs of the state, as might be expected in feudal Pakistan.

'Defend yourself against me', tells the story of Khan- a neighbour of Sidhwa during their childhood in Lahore, all the way to the events that bring him to Houston. Sidhwa relies on memories, both personal and those of people she has met, to give life to her stories in *Their Language of Love*. Her friendship with different American women who lived in Lahore between the 50s and 90s come together to create Ruth, a young, pretty, New England Protestant who moves to Lahore with her husband and finds herself attracted to the dashing Pakistan's federal minister of minorities. She is the protagonist in 'Ruth and the hijackers' and 'Ruth and the Afghan'.

In 'Breaking it up', Zareen, a Parsee mother, flies to the USA on hearing her teenage daughter is intent on marrying a Jew, David. When lecturing and emotional blackmail fails, she manages to scare David witless by enthusiastically chattering about diamonds, saris and Parsee wedding customs. Sidhwa touches upon some interesting truths viz., when people live cheek by jowl with people of other faiths, saints jump boundaries and the barriers of animosity fall; the behaviour of foreigner women in Pakistan is usually condoned and indulged in, and religious antagonisms and obligatory reserve of Pakistani women in the presence of men dissipates when they are abroad. ("Book Review")

VII. *City of Sin and Splendour: Writings on Lahore*

This anthology is a collection of short stories, excerpts from novels and non-fiction compiled with the common appreciation for the ancient city of Lahore. It seems as though all Lahoris share a common culture and that was apparent when many of the authors reiterated common cultural nuances of the people, sites to visit, foods, and famous artists. This book gives idea about cultural significance of this ancient city. The old city of Lahore which is fortified by the Mughal is depicted as the heart of the city and

where to this day craftsmen practice their craft that has been passed on since the Mughal Empire. Bapsi Sidhwa has separated the collection into sections, it is a quintessential Lahori, and contains articles from many very prominent Lahoris. (Miller)

3.3. *An American Brat: An Introduction*

An American Brat chronicles the adventure of a young Pakistani Parsee girl Feroza. The conservative attitude of Feroza in Pakistan creates tension to her mother Zareen and father Cyrus. In the novel Sidhwa sensitizes the issues of inter-community marriage in the Parsee, their traditional different attitudes towards males and females for marriage in their community and the issues of expatriates. In an interview to Naila Hussain, Bapsi Sidhwa says about her novel *An American Brat* that “the book deals with the subject of the ‘culture shock’ young people from the subcontinent have to content with when they choose to study abroad. It also delineates the clashes the divergent cultures generate between the families ‘back home’ and their transformed and transgressing progeny bravely grooping their way in the New World.”(Singh 65)

An American Brat is set partly in the USA and partly in Pakistan. The time is the late seventies. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is in Jail and Islamic fundamentalism is growing in Pakistan. Feroza, the protagonist of the novel, is a sixteen year-old girl brought up in the Parsee family in Lahore. Zareen- the mother of Feroza, though being a girl child, spent her childhood with liberty. Whereas Feroza is influenced by the Muslim government and becomes more and more backward every day. Feroza has become a stubborn child and she has become anti social also. Feroza has stopped answering the phone because “What if it’s someone I don’t know” (10). Feroza objects her mother to wear a modern dress.

Zareen protests against the code of conducts for women. Things have changed in Pakistan. The claustrophobic atmosphere of Zia’s Islamization is quite alarming. The *mullahs* ask girls to cover their head. Zareen and Cyrus talk that in Pakistan, politics with its special brew of martial law and religion influenced every aspect of day-to-day living. Zareen feels that Feroza should go to the USA during the summer vacation where her brother Manek, a graduate student at M.I.T., can look after her. “Travel will broaden her outlook, get this puritanical rubbish out of her head” (14). Feroza has not travelled beyond Bombay, so the family thinks that the decision to send her to the US quite

audacious. But Cyrus accepts it because he knows that Feroza is very timid and may not dare even to talk with males.

Feroza's feels extremely happy that she is going to America. Until now she heard about America as "...the land of glossy magazines, of 'Bewitched' and 'Star Trek', of rock stars and jeans..." (27). Feroza's grandmothers instruct her not to get spoiled in America and follow the Parsee values. There is a family gathering at her home to bid her farewell. Feroza becomes conscious of the gravitational pull of the country she is leaving behind. Throughout her journey, Feroza behaves as instructed by the elders but as soon as she reaches America she is a changed person. As the plane lands at Kennedy Airport, Feroza is triumphant and glowing. She is dazzled by the orderly traffic of rushing people, the bright lights and warmed air, the extraordinary cleanliness and sheen of floors and furnishings, the audacious immensity of the glass and steel enclosed spaces.

Feroza is subjected to a rather inhumane treatment by the custom officials. There is a moment of confusion as her Pakistani passport opens from the wrong end. Unlike English, Urdu is written from right to left. And then there is a barrage of questions-how long she would stay, where she would stay, who would support her, how old was her uncle, what did he do, was he a US citizen, resident or visitor. Feroza's answers do not seem satisfactory to the hostile officer and she is directed to go in for secondary inspection after collecting her luggage. Feroza's interrogation starts with a simple query: "Are you a student?"(59) However, Feroza is so nervous by then that her answer does not reach the inspector who gets impatient and feels irritated at her response. The officials ask Feroza to tell the truth only. Otherwise she can be fined two thousand dollars or imprisoned for not more than five years or both. This is followed by routine questions about her name, address, date of birth etc. till the officer comes to the crucial question: "How long do you wish to stay in the United States?" (60) Feroza's answer "Two or three months" does not satisfy him and he wants her to be more specific. It is at this moment that Feroza blurts out that she will stay with her uncle who is a student. But he also works at two other jobs to make extra money. Evidently, she does not know that it is crime for foreign student to work. She is told that her uncle would be hauled before immigration judge and most likely deported. She too would have to go back on the next available flight. He accuses her of being a liar –she has no uncle in America and her so-called

uncle is actually her fiancé. The officials inspect each and every item in her bags- the shoes, the toiletries, the underwear, a sanitary pad. The officer holds up between his fingers a lacy pink nylon nightie he has fished out of the bag and triumphantly announces: “Ah-ha! ...The wedding negligee!” Both immigration officers leered at the nightgown as if it was an incriminating weapon discovered at the scene of a crime”(64). He comments, “It's no use, your lying. Here's the evidence!”(64) At this moment Feroza feels humiliated and shouts: “To hell with you and your damn country. I'll go back!”(64) Later on Manek has been called and he assures the officer that he indeed is Feroza's uncle, studying chemical engineering at M.I.T. and receives enough money from home for his education and living expenses. The odd jobs he does are for the university which permitted. He accepts Manek's guarantee that the girl will go back at the end of three months or whenever her visa expires and asks Manek to provide proof of his assertions as soon as possible.

Feroza tries to cope with the different life-style of the Americans and the modern technology used by them. Feroza is quite unfamiliar with the moving staircase, the escalator. The people around her are busy with their own concerns; none of them has even bothered to glance her way or stare at her as they would have in Pakistan. Bapsi Sidhwa describes vividly the impressions a new arrival has of the modern America. The novel is a sensitive portrayal of how America appears to a new arrival. Feroza is so excited to see the lights in Manhattan and says in Punjabi: “*Vekh! Vekh! Sher-di-batian!*”(67) means look, look, the lights of the city. Feroza visits the statue of liberty, the Empire State Building and the twin World Trade towers. She is surprised by the window displays of dresses, shoes, sportswear and jewelley on Fifth Avenue and Madison. At McDonald's, Feroza is struck with wonder at the quick service. Feroza's journey from Lahore to New York has led her to the next century. Feroza has also seen the ugly side of New York viz., video parlours flashing lewd advertisements, pawn shops, cheap hotels, bars, male prostitutes, and poverty etc. She realizes that “America is not all Saks and skyscrapers” (81). Feroza has unpleasant experience with a sex maniac at the YMCA bathroom and she has a horrifying experience when she is locked out in the YMCA fire-stairs.

Feroza succumbs to America's charms and decides to stay on as a student in a college. She finds the joys and freedom of American life here. Under the influence of her roommate Jo, she adapts American life style. She talks, dresses and acts like an American. The conservative, shy and stubborn Feroza has been transformed into a confident and self –assertive girl under the American environment. She joins hotel management course at the University of Denver and there she flirts with an Indian student Shashi. Later on she falls in love with a handsome young American Jew David Press.

Manek goes to Pakistan and marries a Parsee girl but Feroza is determined to marry David- a Jew. When Zareen hears this, she immediately rushes to Feroza to convince her to marry a Parsee as she feels that Feroza's marriage to a non- Parsee would be a cultural suicide. Conversion is not permitted among Parsees and a Parsee girl marrying outside the faith is expelled from the Zoroastrian religious community. However, the same law does not apply to Parsee men.

When Feroza refuses Zareen's argument to marry a Parsee only, Zareen says angrily: "I should never have let you go so far away. Look what it's done to you- you've become an American brat!" (279) There is a sweep change in the attitude of Feroza who has been an orthodox and conservative earlier in Pakistan, instructing her mother not to be so modern. Now she considers her own faith as narrow minded, "This mindless current of fundamentalism sweeping the world like a plague had spared no religion, not even their microscopic community of 120 thousand " (305-6).

Zareen is assured that it would be futile task to convince a spoiled child not to marry a Non-Parsee, so she plays a new trick. She frightens David away from Feroza by emphasizing the cultural difference between the Zoroastrian and the Jewish. To which Davis argues: "I belong to an old tradition, too" (298). Zareen pretends to agree to the marriage but emphasizes on the rituals and ceremonies of Parsees' to be followed to which David disagrees. Zareen succeeds in her mission and David leaves Denver and Feroza for a job elsewhere.

Zareen thinks that the defiance of an immigrant i.e. her daughter's oppose will convert into consent to marry a Parsee boy. But Feroza has experienced freedom in America and she thinks it would not be possible for her to go back to Pakistan now. She

decides to live in America and adjust herself well to a different culture and if not David, anyone else may be there for her in America whosoever he is, Parsee or non Parsee.

3.4. Critical study of parameters

The researcher has carried out extensive narrative analysis to study various parameters to understand the elements of diaspora in the novel. The same are discussed as under.

I. Time and type of migration

In the novel, different characters migrate at different places at different times under different circumstances. The protagonist of the novel, Feroza is a young girl living in Lahore, Pakistan. Under the rule of General Zia, Pakistani religious fundamentalists have made strict rules for women. There are different codes of conduct for men and women. Men have more liberty as compared to women. Zareen thinks that her daughter has become more orthodox under the influence of Islamic fundamentalist. When Zareen goes to take her at school, Feroza says, “Mummy, Please don’t come to school dressed like that” (10). The reason for migration of the protagonist is to get rid of the religious conservatism in the contemporary politics of Pakistan, to which the progressive Parsee family in Pakistan believes that it will spoil Feroza. Her migration to America may be considered as non-voluntary because of non-favorable socio-political circumstances of the homeland. When Zareen’s mother objects of sending Feroza to America, Zareen explains her reason for sending Feroza, “You’ve no idea how difficult Feroza’s been of late. All this talk about Islam, and how women should dress, and how women should behave, is turning her quite strange. And you know how Bhutto’s trail is getting to her” (30). So, initially, the migration from the third world country to a developed country for Feroza is a desire of her parents that she has to obey. But she feels enthusiastic about visiting the developed country. The migration for the protagonist Feroza is not voluntary on her part initially. Feroza’s parents think that she is depressed because of the politics of Pakistan and she may go to America for a short holiday at her maternal uncle’s place for three or four months after her metric examination. The aim of her parents is “Travel will broaden her outlook, get this puritanical rubbish out of her head” (14). Later on Feroza likes the country starts her study there and makes efforts for getting settled there only.

Another character Manek is depicted as an immigrant who has gone to America for studying chemical engineering from MIT and he has F-1 visa. As per law, he is not permitted to work, but he works in the university cafeteria and at other odd jobs. Manek assimilates with the culture and economy, life style of America, later on marries a Parsee girl from Pakistan, settles in America with her, studies further and gets job in NASA. He is a perfect example how an immigrant gets settled permanently. Sidhwa gives idea about migration of many young students from developing countries to America for their bright future. Aban, the wife of Manek, who is born and brought up in Pakistan, migrates to America after her marriage. Her migration is a permanent after marriage and may be non-voluntary in a patriarchal system.

Further, Sidhwa gives idea about migration of people during the partition of India and many families have migrated from India to Pakistan as well as from Pakistan to India, for the sake of preserving their religious identity. There is a forced migration because of political reason. Zareen goes to visit America just to convince her daughter not to marry David a non Parsee. Her travel to America is just a visit.

II. Glimpses of homeland in the novels under study -its geography, polity, economy and locale

Sidhwa narrates the socio-political conditions of her own homeland which is the homeland of the protagonist Feroza, a Parsee girl. The period of the novel is early seventies. It starts with life of Parsee family of Zareen Ginwala and her husband Cyrus, residing in Lahore. Zareen is worried about Feroza-their daughter.

Sidhwa has described the geographical location of her homeland, especially the city of Lahore. "It had been a typically gorgeous winter's day, bracing, bright, and windless- except for an occasional breeze that sighed through the chrysanthemums in their neighbourhood and masked the reek of exhaust fumes from the buses and rickshaws on the road"(10). The ancestors of Zareen came from a village in Central India to Lahore. The city of Lahore is full of traffic and cars. The newly moneyed people show off their riches by making shrill noise of their cars on the streets of the city. The condition of any religious place is almost same, overcrowded and full go beggars asking for alms. Feroza and Zareen find the same situation at the shrine that they visit after the metric examination of Feroza. Sidhwa mentions that in Parsee, the *atash* – the consecrated fire

in the *agryari*, is never permitted to go out. The holy fire had been moved about before two years near the fashionable Liberty Market in Gulberg as the old location behind the Small-Causes Court had become congested. The family background of Zareen is mentioned with their ancestral home in Lahore. Zareen feels uncomfortable at her mother's residence on Punj-Mahal Road, as it is old bungalow, with tall walls and gloominess. Khutalibai and Sorabji Junglewalla, parents of Zareen went into this house immediately after their marriage and honeymoon in Kashmir in 1940.

Politics has always remained a talk for every citizen in any country, but the contemporary political condition of Pakistan has become everyone's talk which is narrated, "In Pakistan, politics, with its special brew of martial law and religion, influenced every aspect of day-to-day living" (11). Zareen talks about Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and election in Pakistan. Bhutto criticized about the gender segregation practiced by his volatile tribal supports in North-West frontier. Cyrus speaks bitterly about the political development in Pakistan and reflects the sense of betrayal that straddled the country. Pakistan bottled up for 13 years of martial law. The return to democracy has made Pakistanis feel proud again, a part of the modern world community. Sidhwa mentions an incident that when Zareen goes at the shrine, the sister of jailed Prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto comes for prayer at the same place. The crowd gathered there, criticize Bhutto's promises which he did not fulfill for providing *roti, kapra and makan*- bread, clothes and shelter. At the same time some people shouted, "Bhutto Zindabad! Long live Bhutto!" (21) They pray for Bhutto's freedom from jail. Sidhwa mentions about the political upheaval in Pakistan on the issue of hanging Bhutto. Khushwant Singh comes to Pakistan to meet General Zia. Sidhwa mentions about Bhutto's deeds and misdeeds during his prime minister ship, the Islamization of state institutions by General Zia, and death sentence to Bhutto. There is a general talk on Pakistan's politics on Bhutto to be hanged. At one early morning Bhutto was hanged in the Rawalpindi jail and All India radio announced the news. There were appeals from Amnesty International. Other human rights all over the world. The novel mentions the political events of India as a neighbouring country. Two Indian aircraft have been hijacked by the Sikh separatists in the past few months.

Sidhwa, as a writer of diaspora, writes about the economy of Pakistan. Cyrus doubted economic policies of Bhutto. He opines that Bhutto is inviting martial law in Pakistan. Bhutto nationalizes the cotton gins and thereby he is ruining the economy of Pakistan. Cyrus criticized Bhutto's ban on drinking in clubs. It is mentioned that secondhand American garments come in bulk in Lahore every winter. Trunk call is difficult in Pakistan and Cyrus has to lie to get an urgent call to Manek. He justifies his lying to Zareen thus, "Do you want the call, or not? You have to be smart, that's all" (25). The contemporary communication system has been nicely informed to the reader by the novelist. Now in the era of IT, one may not be required to wait for a couple of seconds but in early seventies, one needs to get registered for international call and there was a long waiting.

Food has always remained an identity of culture and tradition. The novelist gives idea about culture of food and eating habits of people in the homeland, here, in Pakistan at the auspicious occasion of farewell of Feroza.

It was the usual auspicious-occasion fare: sweet vermicelli sprinkled with fried raisins and almonds, thick slices of spicy fried salmon, and fruit. Round stainless steel platters contained yogurt as firm as jelly, upon which a thick skin of clotted cream had formed. The yogurt had been sweetened and set the night before and strewn with red rose petals just before the dish was carried out. Deep silver dishes heaped with plain white rice and the special –occasion yellow pureed lentil-the combination known as *dhan-dar*-formed the main course. The aroma of the fried fish and spices hung in the scented air, whetting appetites. (44)

The religion of Pakistan is Islam and on Friday, they announce prayer from the mosque in a loud noise. The condition of kids in Pakistan is narrated in the announcement made by *mullahs* before prayer that many small kids are missing. The Parsee religious and cultural traditions are narrated at the time of departure of Feroza and marriage of Manek.

III. Glimpses of hostland in the novels under study -its geography, polity, economy and locale

Bapsi Sidhwa, who lives in America now, portrays the hostland through her characters. The landscape, political condition and economy of America are mentioned in the novel.

On arriving in America, Feroza finds cleanliness and discipline at New York airport. "The orderly traffic of rushing people, the bright lights and warmed air, the extraordinary cleanliness and sheen on floors and furnishings, the audacious immensity of the glass-and-steel enclosed spaces dazzled her"(54). The locale of New York is vividly described by Sidhwa. Manek takes Feroza on a tour of New York. They ride the ferry to the Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building, and the twin World Trade towers at the tip of the island. They visit the zoo at Central Park, Manhattan. The novel as a diaspora text gives us glimpse about multi-ethnic America. The vastness of the country and abundance of places of tourist interest are mentioned. They visit museums in New York, Museo el Barrio, devoted to Hispanic –American art, and the Jewish Museum in the Warburg Mansion, the Egyptian and African sections in the magnificent Metropolitan Museum of Art. Manek and Feroza pass through a street with shops, cheap hotels, and bars. Manek cautions her to keep her belongings properly from being theft. They find male prostitute, eunuchs (*heejras*) and transvestites, as well as drug dealers. Feroza is used to the dirt and garbage in Pakistan but here on 42nd street she finds poverty stricken people and foul smelling garbage. So Manek comments, "So you have seen now, America is not all Saks and skyscrapers" (81). People are selling stolen goods and they find cinema marquees advertising of adult and porn movies. Thus Sidhwa has portrayed dark side of America also.

Sidhwa mentions about free environment at colleges in America where usually drinks and dating are common but at Idaho, coke and beer are forbidden and the state is governed by Mormon faith who support puritanical laws. Manek says about the Brigham Young University in Salt Lake City where one would not be allowed to drink or indulge in premarital sex, one has to pledge to abide by the college dress and conduct codes. Manek warns Feroza, "you wouldn't be allowed to wear shorts or bikinis. And if you were a boy, you'd be allowed to wear a beard or keep your hair long" (138).

There is a major difference between the exchange rate of currency of America and that of Pakistan. It is general tendency that the immigrants ask for the items at cheaper rate as in the hostland the currency of the developed countries may be very costly for them. Manek asks Feroza to buy a cassette player and a camera for him from Dubai as he likes them. The economic development of America is explained by Manek. Wall Street is considered to be the hub of business of the world. Manek says to Feroza, “Do you know, more money changes hands here in one hour than in a whole year in Pakistan?”(72) It is common in India or Pakistan to bribe a police for breaching traffic rules but in America when the police ticket tucked under the wiper of one’s car, there is no possibility of getting rescue from the fine just by paying bribe to the police authorities.

The native as well as immigrant people in America are more concerned about their jobs and so less involved in political gossips as it is found common in everyday talk between Zareen and Cyrus in Lahore. During her stay at various colleges and her friendship with David, and Luis, Feroza visits cosmopolitan America. Sidhwa has brought the contemporary economic issue of the developed countries. During the last two decades many young students have migrated to developed countries especially in Germany, the UK, Australia, Canada and the US for their Masters Degree course. There they have to pay high fees and as on F 1 students visa, they cannot do full time job. Thus Sidhwa has depicted the condition of hostland America, its economy and locale.

IV. Attitude of the diaspora group towards other migrants and homeland

As a diaspora novel *An American Brat* enumerates incidences of attitude of Manek, Feroza, Zareen etc. towards the other immigrants and their homeland.

When Zareen decides to send Feroza to America, Manek has been living there since three years. On trunk call Feroza says, “We are sending Feroza to you”(25). Manek innocently asks “why” to which Zareen replies “What d’you mean ‘why’! For a holiday ... Will you look after her?”(25). Manek feels awkward at such an unexpected call and so initially he could not reply in affirmative enthusiastically. Zareen feels that just three years in the new world has changed him. This kind of criticism is very common to all immigrants that the people in the homeland consider them as changed. The immigrants in the developed countries consider their relatives in homeland as unaware about

technology. When Feroza shouts enthusiastically, Manek comments, “Don’t yell. You’re puncturing my eardrum. Why do you Third World Pakis shout so much? Everybody’s not deaf” (26).

As Manek has come three years earlier to Feroza, he informs her about the life style of people in America. When Feroza talks Manek about her insult at the Kennedy Airport, there is a discussion between them. Manek says her to learn a lot of things in this world. He informs her that here in America, there is no one who could bail her out and at the same time no one bothers about any one in America. Manek smells a *desi* and it is Feroza’s red coat lay on a stack of marked- dean purses on a table to which Manek asks, “Don’t you use deodorant?”(74) After arriving in a developed country, it is general tendency of the immigrant to criticize the life style and behaviour of his/her native people. Here, Manek is the best example of this attitude. He criticizes on the comment of Feroza that he never sweat saying, “That’s a trouble with you *desis*. You don’t even know what a deodorant is, and you want to make as an atom bomb!” (74) Such kind of derogatory remark by immigrants hurts the homeland people. Further, Manek remarks about value Americans placed on time, “Why is Pakistan so backward?” “Are we stuck in the Middle ages because we were colonized? Because we are illiterate? Because we don’t have enough technology to make atom bombs?”(76) Sidhwa makes Manek a mouth piece of talking about development of America as they valued time. He says, “It’s because we squander time! It is the single most precious commodity besides money, and we act as if we are millionaires in eternity. But time is running out... and time will catch up with you. Then you’ll say ...” (77). Manek makes a derogatory remark about the people from the Third world countries that they could not progress like America because they wasted time. Manek says the comparative life in America and Pakistan.

The first lesson you learn in America is ‘You don’t get something for nothing,’ ... nobody works in Pakistan. Not your father, your grandfathers, or your uncles. They think they work, but compared to America, everyday’s Sunday....If you want to be independent and enjoy the good life, you have to get into the habit of working. (123-124)

In spite of such kind of comparison and derogatory remarks, the general attitude of the immigrants towards other immigrants and for their homeland is friendly. Here, Manek

helps in finding appropriate course for further study of Feroza and he also helps in arranging her stay at the college. The novel narrates incidents where there is a clash between Manek and Feroza, because of ego of both. Manek considers that Feroza needs to learn how to assimilate in the culture of America; her manners should be proper. Whenever he makes an effort to improve Feroza, Feroza considers him to be so called Americanized. Thus through the interaction of Feroza and Manek, Sidhwa gives idea about the attitude of immigrants towards the other immigrants and the homeland.

V. Attitude of diaspora group towards other migrants and hostland

Sidhwa has depicted the attitude of migrants with the people of the hostland. Manek is an immigrant from Pakistan. During his initial stay at America he feels the queer attitude of people around him. He has to struggle financially, as he could not get money from homeland and at the same time as he has student visa, could not do job outside the college campus. America is a cosmopolitan country where people from various countries settled. Feroza lives in the hostel with people from different origin.

When Feroza goes back to Pakistan for a short visit, she talks about the condition of blacks and Hispanics, the poverty and the job insecurity prevailing among the whites in America, her family and friends look at her with surprise. Sidhwa also depicts the condition of immigrants in America from several countries. Though, they are poor in America, they have electricity, running water, a fridge and a car whereas in Pakistan and other developed countries, the poor people do not have bathrooms, electricity etc. A car in America does not signify riches.

Feroza finds that the habit of advice to kids by the parents is common in any community viz., Muslim, Parsee, Hindu or Sikh in Pakistan which is not the case in America. The novelist has mentioned the general craze of the immigrant to get settled in the developed America and for that how much struggle that they endure. Shashi's brother Deepak and sister-in-law Mala came to Shashi's place. Mala is going to deliver a baby in a month at Denver so that baby gets coveted U.S. citizenship. She says, "God knows what things will be like in India by the time he grows up, and it's getting harder and harder to get American citizenship... Once the child is eighteen he can sponsor his

parents, too. It's good to have some family in America anyway, 'specially for businessmen" (243).

Bapsi Sidhwa describes vividly the impressions a new arrival has of the modern America. Adam L. Penenberg rightly calls the novel "a sensitive portrait of how America appears to a new arrival." (Bala 78) Sidhwa has also mentioned that at an initial stage, on the air port, Feroza has hostile attitude for the people of America but gradually, she gets acquainted with the lifestyle of America and her attitude changes.

VI. Search for identity and feelings of alienation

The novel gives idea about the concern for identity among the immigrants. Feroza being the only child of her parents feels lonely especially when at the dinner time or evening family gathering, the members talk about the politics of Pakistan. The sense of alienation of Feroza in Pakistan is not for her search for identity, but the religious and political turmoil in the state. When Zareen asks her to join for dinner, she denies "I don't want to see their faces!"(22) As a child Feroza is stubborn and anti-social. Feroza spends the weekends at her grandmother's and most evenings at the houses of her classmates. She spends more and more time sulking and reading romances and detective stories in her room when she is at home.

The text narrates the feelings of an immigrant while leaving homeland. The departure for America makes Feroza emotional and longing for her identity. Feroza feels that she would miss Lahore and her family.

Sudden tears welled in Feroza's eyes. She brushed them away impatiently....it struck her that she was going far from Lahore, from the sights, the sounds, and the fragrances that were dear to her, from the people she loved and had taken for granted. Her vision grew inward and, in a strange dreamlike way, expanded to accommodate a kaleidoscope of images of the entire city and its surrounding green fields. (47)

In America, though with Manek, Feroza misses her country, people and finds alien in white dominated society. She finds queer at the university and with her roommates. Torn between the free life style of America and the conservative society of Pakistan that she has seen, Feroza becomes more aloof. Initially, Manek also experienced

the same when he came to America. Later on Manek marries a Parsee woman Aban from India. Aban feels more alien in America than other characters.

In an online interview to her Pakistani friend, Sadia Rehman, in August 2012 she said, “Feroza is closest to me and my views” about the identity issues of Pakistani Parsee immigrants to the US, their life-styles and their culture” (“Bapsi Sidhwa”). Thus through the immigrant’s crisis for identity in the novel, Sidhwa conveys the feelings of alienation of immigrants in general.

VII. Nostalgia and Memory and their role in the present

The novel depicts the feelings of nostalgia and its role in the present life among the immigrants. Before partition, the people of all religions were living with harmony and respect other religions. Zareen remembers people of various faith visit fifteenth-century shrine from all over Pakistan, and before partition they came from all over northern India. When Sikh and Hindu pilgrims from across the border in India visit the temples and *gurudwaras* in Pakistan, they never fail to “pay their respects” to the Muslim mystic known for his miraculous power to grant wishes.

Longing for homeland and relatives is very common among the diaspora. Here when Manek listens on phone that Feroza is coming, he gets excited to see someone from his family. Sidhwa writes about the predicament of an immigrant thus: “Having been away almost three years, Manek was eager to see anyone from home” (26). Feeling of nostalgia and memories of homeland is a key feature in diaspora text and from the beginning of Feroza’s journey to America she feels it. Feroza becomes conscious of the gravitational pull of the country she was leaving behind. Her sense of self, enlarged by the osmosis of identity with her community and with her group of school friends, stayed with her like permanence. Feroza remembers her school days in Lahore. After school Feroza used to sit glumly in front of the TV nursing her broken heart paper, and her empty lap and thinking about home. She misses her grandmothers, her parents, their friends, her friends, her ayah, the incessant chatter of her cousins, and even the raucous chorus of the Main Market mullahs on Friday afternoons. She becomes homesick and finds it impossible to work on her term paper. In Pakistan there is no dating with the male classmates. So it becomes very difficult for her at an initial stage how to behave even

with her girl classmates who believe in free sex and love making during college days and her stay at the hostel.

When Manek goes to Pakistan in search of wife for him, there is a great Parsee gathering at Lahore. Zareen misses this gathering and she feels nostalgia and remembers Parsee rituals of marriage, even Khutlibai's letters mentioning this celebration make her nostalgic. During her vacation, she decides to go to Lahore and meet her relatives. She gets excited to meet Khutlibai, Cyrus and Zareen, her relatives and friends. The feeling of nostalgia makes Manek and Zareen eager to go to Lahore and meet relatives. Sidhwa also mentions that nostalgia is experienced by these characters not only in physical sense, but it is a psychological condition also. The characters become nostalgic even for food and celebration of Parsee rituals and gatherings.

VIII. Issues related to alien language, social mobility and politics of struggle for survival in the hostland

For the immigrants foreign language becomes a barrier to express self and so they feel more isolated in the hostland. Language expresses one's culture. Historically the Parsee community is an immigrant in India and as their ancestors landed at the port in Gujarat, they adopted Gujarati language. Their accents are different from Gujarati language. Language of Parsee is Gujarati. When alone, Zareen and Cyrus converse mostly in Gujarati. At the time of departure of Feroza from Lahore, schoolmates of Feroza speak in Urdu, their official language as well as language of conversation. They use the words "Alllll-aj!" or "Hai Allah!" Sidhwa mentions that they speak in Urdu, with the odd word or sentence in English blended with the rhythm and consonants of Urdu.

Mother tongue has equal attachment like the attachment with people. Here, Sidhwa narrates the incidence of affinity of Parsees with Gujarati language and history of Parsee religion. Manek could not speak in Gujarati since his arrival in America. When Feroza comes, he speaks in Gujarati. Manek had not spoken Gujarati in so long. Manek uses an archaic Gujarati word *boochimai* means "little girl" for Feroza. In every diaspora text we find that immigrants like to retain their mother tongue which makes them feel less alien.

Another queer experience that Feroza, as new migrant experiences is the treatment at the air port on arrival in America. Her Pakistani passport opens from the wrong end. Unlike English, Urdu is written from right to left. The custom officials ask her various questions and doubt whether she has come for a temporary stay or permanent. Just at the Air Port, Feroza feels very embarrassing situation when the officials check her luggage and they have made comments on Feroza. At this moment an idea comes to her mind to go back to Pakistan. But Manek handles this tough situation and convince the authority about the genuineness of Feroza. Thus adjustment to an alien land starts in the case of Feroza from her first step in America. Feroza tries to cope up with the different life-style of the Americans and the modern technology used by them. Feroza is quite unfamiliar with the moving staircase, the escalator.

Immigrants endure various hardships and do not inform the same to their relatives in homeland. Manek did not inform an accident that he met with in New York to his relatives. Initially at Kennedy Airport, Feroza thinks that Manek is unchanged. Later on Feroza finds that Manek has struggled a lot to adjust himself in America. "She could only guess at how he had been taught American ways, American manners. He must have endured countless humiliations. And his experiences-the positive and the humiliating-had affected him, changed him not on the surface but fundamentally" (102). She finds Manek was humbler and paradoxically more assured and quietly conceited. She senses that America has tested Manek, challenged him, honed him, and extended his personality. From Manek's attachment to America, Feroza ascertains that Manek would not return to Pakistan. Manek informs Feroza about the difficulties in getting acquainted with the life in America. Through an incidence of difficulty that Manek faced in opening of milk carton, Sidhwa justifies the efforts of Manek in an alien land. Manek says, "Remember this: If you have to struggle to open something in America, you're doing it wrong. They've made everything easy. That's a free economy works" (140). Further, he says he is giving her a crash course. It's the best way to get over culture shock. He asks Feroza not to eat with fingers. He says, "It's all very nice, and cozy to be 'ethnic' when we're together, but those people won't find it 'ethnic', they'll just puke"(145).

With Jo, her roommate, Feroza is surprised by her free life style and gradually she makes efforts to assimilate with the culture of America. There is no such thing like dating

in Pakistan. It was excruciatingly painful for her to be among so many young people and not know how to respond or behave. Feroza likes drink and starts working at college registration office for extra income. One late evening Feroza takes a few puffs from a cigarette, which is against her religion to smoke. To make progress and for better study environment she shifts to the University of Denver. The University of Denver is cosmopolitan. Feroza thinks that it is the right place that her life would develop in unexpected and substantial ways. Now she is in the vicinity of cosmopolitan variety of students-black, Hispanic, Arabic, Irani, Pakistani and Indian.

Feroza's quest for assimilation continues and she moves into an apartment with Rhonda and Gwen, one white and the other black and both are beautiful. Initially Feroza feels shy when Jo used to change her cloths in front of her. Feroza has been living for more than two years now in America and she understood the relationship between men and women in America. Though relation and dating of Gwen and Rhonda are common with their boyfriends in America, Feroza has never swept away by a grand passion. Sidhwa also mentions about how the efforts of Manek become fruitful and he completes his research work and gets good job and citizenship.

Feroza's short visit to Lahore makes her realize that she has changed, her life, friends everything has changed after her stay in America. "Like Manek, she has become used to the seductive entitlements of the First World. Happy Hour, telephones that worked, the surfeit of food, freezers, electricity, and clean and abundant water, the malls, skyscrapers, and highways"(312). She feels relaxed from the orthodox Islamic environment of Pakistan and like free life style of America where no one indulges in private affairs of anyone. Feroza gets admission to University of Arizona's graduate programme in Anthropology. She likes David and wants to marry him but the intervention of her mother and later on cultural disparity comes in her way and David leaves her.

Sidhwa has developed the character of Feroza novel in such a way that from an orthodox girl living in Lahore, Feroza changes drastically to an advanced girl, assimilates in an alien culture and becomes ready to leave aside restriction of marriage of her own faith.

IX. Issues related to religion, racism in homeland and hostland

The novelist narrates how the religious conservative attitude has gained political issue and it has concentrated on the major concern of providing freedom to women in Pakistan- an Islamic country. Zareen mentions that when Bhutto has been elected, Zareen does not find herself as a non-Muslim or a woman. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto has found the fault the gender segregation practiced by his volatile tribal supporters in Northwest Frontier. Sidhwa mentions that at the time of election the attitude of Bhutto was liberal and favouring their freedom but after election he does not look open-minded. Feroza becomes very conservative under Muslim culture of Pakistan under Bhutto.

The racial pride has always been a matter of conflict and the novelist has used a master technique of representing it not through conflict with the people of different race but through the telephonic quarrel of Feroza and Manek. When Manek addresses Feroza as 'Third World Pakis', Feroza replies 'What're you, some snow-white Englishman?'" (26) Manek warns her, "don't bring your *gora* complex with you" to which Feroza responds, "Black, brown, white are all the same to me. We all are God's creatures" (26). At this Manek says, "Stop it. And listen-get rid of your 'white-man' complex before you come to America" (26).

Sidhwa mentions the religious tolerance of her community in Pakistan. Though Zareen is a Parsee, she has faith in Islam. She has faith in Data Gunj Baksh's shrine and she prays to visit the shrine when Cyrus is cured from appendectomy. The community in the novel is Parsee and Sidhwa, being a Parsee, describes various rituals of the community in detail. The Parsee celebrates New Years according to different calendars; on Pateti, which is the last day of the year; and on special occasions, like her impending voyage. There is a mention of the *atash*-the consecrated fire in the *agyari* that is never permitted to go out-had been lovingly tended for eighty years by *mobed* Antia and his son, who was also a *mobed*. The holy fire had been moved from the congested area of Lahore to a new location. Before Feroza goes to America she visits the *agyari*. She recites the prayer in the hallowed Avestan language of the Gathas. Women are not permitted to enter the temple during their period and so Zareen could not accompany Feroza when she goes there before departing for America. The novelist mentions the post death rituals of Parsee. Since Parsees consider earth, water and fire holy, they do not

bury, drown or burn polluted corpses. Instead as a last act of charity, they leave the body exposed to the sun and the birds of prey, mainly vultures, in these open-roofed circular structures. Though in the beginning of the novel, Zareen thinks her community to be a progressive and forward, it is found through her conversation with Cyrus that in Parsee community, there are separate codes of conduct for male and female so far as marriages are concerned. Sidhwa mentions about the religious practice and culture of Jews, about Sabbath meal. The Jewish Americans have sense of nostalgia for the country where they had been born and raised rather than on a mythic homeland in Palestine. This is parallel to East African Indians. The double or triple diasporization of South Asians has been noted in Parsee community. In case of Parsees double diasporization comes about through emigration to the West, and inter marriage may be treated as yet another, third entry into a kind of diaspora. The most significant theme and issue in the novel is inter-community marriage of Parsee and separate codes for male and female for it. Feroza's decision to marry David, Jew, a Non-Parsee has created a great disturbance and debate at her home in Lahore.

There was a struggle among the family members at Zareen's home. The youngsters politely informed their parents that times had changed. They urged their uncles and aunts "to enlarge their narrow minds and do the community a favor by pressing the stuffy old trustees in the Zoroastrian *Anjuman* in Karachi and Bombay to move with the times; times that were already sending them to study in the New World, to mingle with strangers in strange lands where mixed marriages were inevitable" (268). Parsee girls are not allowed into the fire temple once they marry out. They discuss the case of Perin Powri who married to Muslim and Roda Kapakia married to a Christian.

When Zareen comes to America to convince her daughter not to marry a non-Parsee, she informs Feroza that if she marries a Parsee boy then it will be a grand celebration and if she marries David she would be alone. Though David is well educated, settled, at the end he could not marry Feroza just because of different religions. Sidhwa brings forward the burning issue of Parsee. Mixed marriages concerned the entire Parsee community and affected its very survival. They are only a hundred and twenty thousand in the whole world. Considering the low birth rate and the rate at which the youngsters

are marrying outside the community-and because of their rigid non-conversion laws they have become a gravely endangered species.

X. Issues of subaltern, especially condition of women in homeland and hostland

Being a female, the novelist has given ample incidences in the novel to give idea about issues of women in Pakistan as well as in America. Zareen believes in equality of sex. Zareen's attitude is such that she wants to equal her husband outwardly also. Zareen always wore high heels "To measure up to my husband" (10).

Bhutto restricted drinking in clubs. Zareen is critical about the separate codes of conduct in Pakistan that man may drink even if it is prohibited whereas the woman can not wear sleeveless cloths. She denies Cyrus to manage his shoes and keep them clean. The aggressive attitude of Zareen is reflected thus: "If you think I'm going to cater this ...this *mullah*-ish mentality of yours, you're mistaken" (13). She further adds, "I'll dress the way my mother dresses, and I'll dress the way my grandmothers dressed! And no one's ever called the Junglewalla women indecent!" (13) Once a man comes to Feroza to act in a play but Cyrus feels uncomfortable that Feroza acts in front of other males. His disapproval is seen through his address to the person who comes at his home and so Feroza denies to act. It seems that under the mask of broaden Parsee community, Cyrus still feels that his daughter should not be exposed in a play in public. Zareen is a symbol of women protesting against the code of conducts for women.

Discussing the issue of sending Feroza to America with Zareen, Khutlibai says that girls are not safe in America and they may be molested and murdered. Bapsi Sidhwa narrates incidence how girls are exploited in America. "The *there* was pregnant with unspeakable knowledge of the sexual license allowed American girls and the perils of drink and drugs. Compounding the danger were vivid images of rapists ooming in dark alleys to entice, molest, and murder young girls" (30). Through the ideas of Khutlibai, it becomes clear that the ultimate aim of parents of a daughter to get married and get rid of daughter. Khutlibai protests sending Feroza for education in America saying it is not good. The girl will mix with drunks, seducers and drug addicts and may not marry a Parsee boy.

Patriarchal tradition in Pakistan and Indian sub continent is narrated when Khutlibai visits Zareen's home. She says "You know it is. It is not good policy to visit a son-in-law's house too often. It is better for all concerned this way. Our elders knew what they were about when they made such traditions. May God never show us the day when we might need to depend on our married daughters and son-in-laws" (33-34). The codes of conduct for marriage in Parsee community are mentioned through notice about Parsee marriage to other.

NOTICE

PLEASE NOTE THAT ACCORDING TO THE PARSEE, ZOROASTRIAN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS PERCEPTS, TENETS, DOCTRINES, HOLY SCRIPTURES, CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS, ONCE A PARSEE-ZOROASTRIAN MARRIES A NON-ZOROASTRIAN, HE OR SHE IS DEEMED TO HAVE RENOUNCED THE FAITH AND CEASES TO BE A PARSEE-ZOROASTRIAN. THE LAWS OF PURITY OF THE ZOROASTRIAN FAITH FORBID INTERMARRIAGES, AS MIXING PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL GENES IS CONSIDERED A CARDINAL CRIME AGAINST NATURE. HENCE, HE OR SHE DOES NOT HAVE ANY COMMUNAL OR RELIGIOUS RIGHTS OR PRIVILEGES. (305)

Zareen considers this to be no less rigid and ignorant than fundos in Pakistan. This religious fundamentalism of Parsees has spread like plague in Parsee. Through the incidence of Mala and Deepak, Sidhwa mentions that birth of a male child is welcome whereas the couple does not spend money to keep the premature baby infant in an incubator. Shahsi, a friend of Feroza in America says, "He gave her away because she's a girl! I bet he'd have gotten the money if she was a boy" (253).

In a review, Edit Villarreal suggests that the coming-of-age theme is closely linked with the theme of immigration in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel: "Coming of age is never easy. Coming of as a woman is even harder. But coming of age as a female immigrant in a foreign country may be the most difficult of all. For any woman born into societies with restrictive social and political codes, however immigration may be the only real way to come of age" (7).

An American Brat is a novel highlighting several issues of women at a global level and provokes to find the solution of it in the modern era of equality of human rights irrespective of gender.

3.5. Conclusion

The novel brings various issue of diaspora viz., reason for migration, depiction of homeland and hostland, attitude of diaspora with homeland and hostland, issues of identity and feelings of nostalgia. Sidhwa, being a Parsee, has given a voice to the issue of females in her community and the discrimination of females on the issue of marrying other than Parsee. As Nilufer Bharucha states:

The charging of cultural territory as pointed out by several postcolonial critics such as Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, involves a repossession of History and its politicization, a remapping at the level of art and culture and literature, an awareness of differences- differences of nations or gender and evolving of a language which can be the voice of postcolonial and through which those marginalized by colonial discourse can speak. (Bhatt 99)

Feroza has really become a brat – a spoiled child who defies her parents on the issue of her marriage. The docile, submissive, orthodox immigrant from a third world country has really become a resisting and arrogant. She may be correct in her decision. In the era of globalization, it seems that difference in culture and religion matters a lot but one should come out of conservative attitude and be liberal if really wants to adjust. Zareen, who was eager to send Feroza to America regrets that her daughter defies her under the glory and freedom of America. Feroza is resisting her family tradition but at the same time she has free will to grow as she has adjusted herself in an alien culture. Sidhwa portrays a positive picture of a sense of loss.

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