

Diaspora Identities: A Comparative Study of Sidhwa's American Brat and Desai's Inheritance of Loss

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Abstract

In this research paper two novels 'Inheritance of loss' by Kiran Desai and 'An American Brat' by Bapsi Sidhwa are analyzed and discussed. Both these novels show the group of middle-class society who has been overlooked when it comes to race and ethnicity. This study is an examination of the ethnic-racial identity formation process from the psychoanalytical perspective under the perception of Sigmund Freud. The text has been analyzed through extensive reading that uses the qualitative method. The study explores that how conflicts of inner being shape an individual's behavior specifically discussing the complexities of the characters of described novels.

Keywords

Identity, conflicts, behavior, Sidhwa, American Brat

Introduction

This paper explores the diaspora identities in Sidhwa's *An American Brat* and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* by the psychoanalytic perspective of Id, Ego, and superego. For few years, there is an expansion of post-colonial work, authors are using the theme of love, desires, and belonging to elaborate on the larger political and cultural issues, especially those works that came from Africa and the Indian sub-Continent. We meet characters who are fighting for their identities in the wake of colonization or facing the conflicts in establishing themselves in another nation. Diaspora is a person's dispersal from his homeland which results in ethnicity and identity problems. The diasporic experience tends to focus on a collective memory of the last homeland, childhood, and cultural identity due to the trauma of forced dispersion. (Naghibi, 58)

So, when a person migrates to another territory whether by his own will or forced, he faces some difficulties to relate himself to the new identity. Uma Parameswaran has defined it as follows;

The first one is nostalgia for the homeland left behind mingled with fear in a strange land. The second is a phase in which one is busy adjusting to the new environment that there is little creative output. The third phase is the shaping of diaspora existence by involving themselves in ethnocultural issues. The fourth is when they have 'arrived' and start participating in the larger world of politics and national issues. (Parameswara, 165)

Freud's Tripartite Model of psychoanalysis

This paper is a psychoanalytic study of diaspora identities in the novels of Sidhwa's *An American Brat* and Desai's *The inheritance of loss*. Psychoanalytic criticism is a form of literary criticism which uses some of the techniques of psychoanalysis, in the interpretation of literature. This structural theory looks closely at the unconscious drives that motivate people to act in certain ways. Freud displayed a basic model of human identity. He contemplated the three noteworthy perspectives that are in charge of making human responses. He categorized human identity into Ego, id, and superego.

Id

People are brought into the world with their id, and it enables them to secure their fundamental needs. Id is straightforwardly identified with joy vital and constrains people to look for whatever feels great at a specific time without thinking about any confinements of the circumstance. Freud trusted that Id has a capacity to impact conscience and can without much of a stretch move human conduct to bring self-delight.

Ego

It realizes that being indiscreet is equivalent to being egotistical and can hurt individuals in some cases. Sense of self conveys an incredible obligation to comprehend the necessities of driving forces while thinking about the circumstance's existence. To say it essentially, Ego's main responsibility is to adjust the superego and id.

Superego

superego is the ethical piece of human identity, speaking to the soul. The advancement of the superego depends on moral and good restrictions put on each person by his/her parental figure. In addition to the fact that it influences human identity, yet in addition directs his/her ethical convictions.

About the author

Pakistani feminist, post-colonial writer, Bapsi Sidhwa (1938) the author of *An American Brat* is widely recognized as one of the most prominent Pakistani-Anglophone novelist(s) writing today. *An American Brat*, written after Sidhwa immigrated to America, follows sixteen years. Old Parsi girl named Feroza Ginwalla. Alarmed by the rising antisocial attitude of Feroza, her mother, Zareen decided to send her to America to stay with her uncle. After an initial culture shock, she realizes that "America is not all Saks and skyscrapers" (Sidhwa, 81). However, Feroza decide to remain in America as a college student, where she falls in love with a young Jewish man. Feroza becomes much politicized about the issues like gender, sex, and global relations. Zareen, Alarmed by Feroza's newly, Americanized attitude, traveled to the U.S.A to retrieve her daughter, who Zareen believes has become *An American Brat*. (Sidhwa, 279).

Comparability, Kiran Desai (b.1971) also belonged to the same territory that Sidhwa belonged. She is Indian- American post-colonial writer, widely, recognized and praised throughout Asia. Her book *Inheritance of Loss* (2006) won the Man Booker prize, as well as the 2006 National Book Critics Circle fiction Award. In *The inheritance of loss* as a diasporic writer, Desai presents the characters who fail to assimilate new culture or give up rigid class systems that exist in India and abroad amongst Indians, and the struggles that the people face after colonialism. This study focuses on how the mind affects and shapes the behavior of individuals and how this behavior causes class discrimination and identity crises. And the person who experiences this sense of alienation becomes a diaspora identity

This is what in the case of Feroza in *American Brat*. The conflicts are between Feroza, her mother, and her uncle. It is the Id of her mother and afterward her uncle's that causes her migration and then stay in America. Her ego always keeps her in a conflict that what is wrong and what is right, what she should adopt from American culture and what should not. Her ego is defeated by Id when she adopts American culture forgets her own and loves Jewish While she is Parsi, the Diasporic notion is there in this state when she isolated herself from her own culture. In the end,

her superego drives her to return to her own origin.

The same is the context of inheritance of loss, As the characters are in the dilemmas of a displacement for-reaching, an agonizing process of alienation and psychological dislocation when may create an imbalance that can greatly affect a person's mind, thought, and feelings. And that person could be stated as a diaspora identity. From the psychoanalytical perspective, we can compare Sai to Feroza as they have undergone the same dilemma of identity and mental conflict. It is her Id that she feels isolated from her own origin her diaspora is because of her own mental phenomenon. She prefers western culture whereas belongs to eastern. She falls in love with a boy of the lower class but afterward, her superego makes her guilty and she recognized her privileged life she becomes aware that being a westernized Indian is difficult and dangerous. In the end, her ego mediates her mind eventually she tries to find how to leave Kalimpong.

Literature Review

Literature is an open area to discuss, interpret, to explore through the lenses and perspective of researchers. The reviews on a piece of literary work make the study more luring. Jemubhai is a case of the "mimicry", about which Homi Bhabha says in his book "The location of culture" that mimicry can be a rebellious instrument on the grounds that in its slippage in its generation of imitators as opposed to genuine "Englishmen"— the intensity of the colonizer is undermined. This inner conflict recommends that the acculturating mission simply does not work since it takes into account Anglicization, not the absolute change of "locals" into "British chaps." Colonized can utilize it to subvert the colonizer. This progresses toward becoming clearer he attests, when set between "the interest for personality" and "change"; mimicry speaks to an unexpected trade-off. Lola and Noni who live and eat like the West, wear Marks and Spencer are likewise instances of mimicry, they discover Westerners unrivaled and worth imitating. They keep their ties with the west and hotshot about thoroughly understanding western peculiarities and cuisines (Bhabha 157).

Jumpa Lahiri, in his book "interpreter of maladies," defines identity problem as in the twentieth century, the problem of identity loss has become complex because of the procedure of globalization and the formation of a worldwide homogenous community. Identity is the "vague" term that may be utilized for a wide range of purposes. Everybody has his own particular personality that contrasts from the others,

for example. Even though personality is something complex and not a thing one can pick (Lahiri136).

AvtarBarah in her book, cartographies of diaspora: contesting identities (gender, racism 'ethnicity) is of the view that identity is an "enigma" on the grounds that the person's regular experience demonstrates that identity is variable and it isn't the equivalent in all the circumstances. These researchers contend that "identity "is a procedure and not ownership. It implies that this procedure proceeds through the previous "history", the present, and to a limited degree the future, and time is something, which implies that personality is molded dependent on what one encounters through life and not something that one develops independently from anyone else. Identity is a standout amongst the most examined ideas as of late and it is a mind-boggling issue. As indicated by Fearon, our comprehension of 'what personality is' depends on how we characterize ourselves and how we answer the inquiry 'who are you?' (12). Nonetheless, this inquiry may have numerous answers relying upon the person's circumstance, and it has a persistent move as per spot and time. The individual personality isn't something clear and something one can't state that "this is my character"; rather individuals are related to various personalities when they have a place with a few gatherings or live-in better places, this can be found for instance in individuals who live in Diaspora (Brah 65).

Since identity is a creation, not a "thing" that anybody might do or has, it likewise is an "open" procedure (Deshpande 153).

Freud is of the view that in spite of the significance of the creator here, psychoanalytic analysis is like New Criticism in not fretting about what the creator expected, but about what the originator is looking for. The unaware physical has been twisted by the blue inscription aware nature. Psychoanalytic experts will make inquiries about the cause and effect (Freud 167).

In Diasporic cognizance, the feeling of misfortune, wistfulness, distance, seclusion, stun, is associated with one another. They all originate from the sentiment of disengagement from the new spot. The diasporic literature of South Asia has numerous tones of feelings and emotions in it. that It is brimming with sentiments of distance, love and worry for country, wistfulness, scattering and in some cases discouragement because of downfall, a double personality with unique country and embraced nation, character emergency, scan for self in a remote spot, a battle to spare oneself from being disintegrated in the culture of unusual individuals. In addition, there is additionally a sentiment of rebel against separation in

the embraced nation. (Brazil 197)

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The creator's oblivious life prompts the more intricate inward operations of the human personality, which are a mix of the cognizant and the oblivious, and which are populated by the id, the conscience, and the superego, and which show in projection, dislodging, and other abstract procedures. Psychoanalytical analysis of writing "centers around a work of writing as an articulation in an anecdotal type of the internal activities of the human personality" (Kirsznert2054).

The psychoanalytic methodology is an astounding instrument that causes us to comprehend both writing and the working of the human personality. The essential impediment of the psychoanalytic methodology is its stylish insufficiency. To see an incredible masterpiece fundamentally as a mental contextual investigation is to miss its tasteful noteworthiness. Abstract understanding and therapy are two particular fields and can't be viewed as parts of one order. In short, this thesis is viewed under the vision of Freud's theory of Id, Ego, and Superego of human psychology. His work is the best indication of studying the identity crisis in Sidhwa's *An American Brat* and Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*.

Analysis

Psychoanalysis deals with the subconscious of the mind, most likely the childhood experiences of a man which has become part of his subconscious and he is unaware of them.

In *An American Brat*, the plot of the novel is partially in Pakistan and partially in America. Whereas in *The Inheritance of Loss* history of the novel is in India and U.K. The way the British domineeringly instructed impact, and regarded Indian locals as the second rate made individuals like Jemubhai copies them and endeavors to resemble them; "he even ate his chapattis with a fork and blade"(Desai 23) and lived like an "outsider in his own nation"(Desai 23).

That is on the grounds that Jemubhai, in *The Inheritance of Loss* couldn't relate to his local culture, and was torn among East and West. Jemubhai discovered his very own better half so unsophisticated as per Western guidelines of quirks, that he sent her back to her dad's home and repudiated her. Despite the fact that he experienced mortifications and segregation in England, he turned into a phony individual carrying on with falsehood for his entire life. He preferred Sai for her Western attitude toward things. This conveys us to the Postcolonial hypothesis of "Eurocentrism", the frame of mind of utilizing European culture as a standard to which every other culture is contrarily differentiated.

Diaspora Identity in an American Brat

The theme of 'Diaspora identity' is very clear in American Brat. In an interview, Sidhwa says, This novel deals with the topic of 'culture shock. Young people from the subcontinent have to face when they choose to study abroad. It also presented the crisis, diversion of cultures create among families back home and their transformed transgressing progeny bravely scrambling their way into a new world. (Hussain 19)

Feroza is also Pakistani-American who left her country and lived in America. Sidhwa is Parsee and her character Feroza also belonged to a parse community and she faced religious influence, being a part of the minority community. During Zia's Islamization era, Parsee feels uncomfortable in the stubborn environment of that time. Zareen, Feroza's mother recalls her childhood memory when they have more liberty to live according to their way of life. Now she feels that the environment in Pakistan is not tolerant enough to provide them their freedom. She has a desire to bring up her daughter according to her community values but she is afraid of the extremist environment in the country, her identity has received a shock when she was a child when at the time of partition, the liberal mindset was shattered. So now the elders of the community were concerned about the future of their progeny. So Feroza migrates to America from Pakistan. Zreen said, "Perhaps the teenagers were right, The Zoroastrian Anjuman in Karachi and Bombay should move with the times that were sending them to a new world" (Sidhwa 288) Later on, during her stay in America, from the airport episode till her visit to Pakistan, she felt like oscillating between two contrasting cultures and kept on identifying herself whether she belonged here or still retained some traces of Pakistani culture. She found variation in her behavior, speaking style, ways of living like being involved in dancing, drinking, driving all alone at night. The story of her identity

crisis begun right after she migrates to America which reflects the two major aspects of postcolonialism that are hybridity and Diaspora which are at the root of the identity crisis which Feroza suffered throughout the novel. Here we see that the characters of Sidhwa try to find a place for themselves even at the cost of their identity. Kiran's characters are also, in the search of identity. We see Sai in Search of her lover. Biju is always in a struggle to find his identity. Same way Jemubhai is also finding his identity in one or the other way.

Manek was later called Mike JungleWala by his companions and he frequently felt nostalgic about his country in general and of his family specific. The longing of numerous Asians to attain American citizenship and called an American (double personality) is likewise uncovered in the present novel, as a child of Manek got birth in America. Especially in Manek's case, the reason behind that is he wants that his child would not have to bear the culture clash that he himself has to face. It often occurs that whenever a settler comes back to the country, he feels like an outsider, on account of the social impact of a foreign nation. The equivalent occurred to Feroza when Feroza came back to Pakistan.

From her visit to Lahore, Feroza realized she had changed, and the rundown of her companions there had likewise changed' (312)

She felt misfitted in a nation where Feroza once had a place.

'Feroza was nonconformist in the nation in which she once had fitted so rightly, (239)

Throughout the story, Feroza tries to overcome her anxiety, quells her emotions, and suppressed her dreams as her superego does not allow her to be rebellious. Although she does not like disciplines, yet she tries to adjust to the situations. At last, Feroza took a choice of living in America for all time, for Feroza felt misfitted for a nation she once had a place and later on attempted to absorb in the US culture. She finally learned to recognize her dreams. Here we see that the identity problem presented by Kiran is just like Sidhwa. Both of these two writers are at their peak while presenting the theme of diaspora. Both have created male characters who are not satisfied in the outer culture. Jemubhai and Biju are just like Manek and Cyrus. The hero Biju goes up against a battle to accomplish a steady character and yet faces such huge numbers of social clashes. His circumstance is increasingly pitiable as he is an illicit worker not at all like Judge. He has pitiable existence and is even misused by Indian worker Harry, proprietor of Gandhi Café. He is deprived of his fundamental right as a laborer as he remains here

illicitly. Both Biju and Judge stay as untouchables infringe on host nations disregarding their endeavors of cultural assimilation. and not to follow the others. Kiran investigates the torment of settlers, encounters of the world. Jemubhai, a resigned judge is living in Kalimpong in his home named Cho Oyu, who went over the social clashes and even misfortunes his character when he was in remote nation. He likes to carry on with his existence with British culture. Sai is a young lady of sixteen and has a place with the privileged society. She puts in a few years that she has spent in the culture of the west. These years totally changed her viewpoint about the culture of India. When she returned, she was having a deep impact on the Culture of the west. She has totally changed. Gyan, then again, is from a Nepali family. His family is Gurkha. They have a very different outlook about the culture. He has completed his graduation in science subjects. Sai's granddaddy designates him, coach. Gyan arrives in the life of Sai life as a mathematic coach. Both have an Indian background. But both have different social classes. He accepts the culture of India and shows his disliking for the culture of the west. Be that as it may, then again, Sai is always in favor of the Culture of the west. She stocks things of this very culture. She tries to look like English. For this purpose, she wears English, drinks English, eats English, and lives like English. She leaves all her Indian traits. She also never takes care of his Indian traditions while in school or in her daily life. Gyan and the unadulterated man of honor do not like her liking for the culture of the west. The main conflict happens in their affection when she welcomes him in the festivity at Christmas. He dislikes all this. He says in a very rude way: "It is not Christmas! Which intrigues me. But the thing is why you...you are celebrating this. You belong to India. You must go to Gurkha and Id. You must take care of your Indian traits. You are going away from these things. This really scares media cannot bear all this from you. I cannot allow you to do all this." (I.L:163)

He does not like her praise for western celebrations. He cannot bear her talking and do in English. He feels intrigued by her way of life in English manners. He begins detesting her in view of her adjustment of English habits. He imagines that upper English culture is in charge of inconvenience and abuse of Nepalese. Social contrasts turn into a hindrance in their relationship and both begin abhorring one another. Sai can't alter her opinion from western qualities and habits. Sai even denies his conclusion of observing Id or Diwali. Gyan again shows his regard for the culture of India. She appears doing moreover with him, testing Gyan to perceive inconsistencies in

which he gets himself and does not consider them to be issued. Indian background. But both have different social classes. He accepts the culture of India and shows his disliking for the culture of the west. Be that as it may, then again, Sai is always in favor of the Culture of the west. She stocks things of this very culture. She tries to look like English. For this purpose, she wears English, drinks English, eats English, and lives like English. She leaves all her Indian traits. She also never takes care of his Indian traditions while in school or her daily life. Gyan and the unadulterated man of honor do not like her liking for the culture of the west. The main conflict happens in their affection when she welcomes him in the festivity at Christmas. He dislikes all this. He says in a very rude way:.

"It is not Christmas! Which intrigues me. But the thing is why you...you are celebrating this . You belong to India. You must go to Gurkha and Id. You must take care of your Indian traits . You are going away from these things. This scares media cannot bear all this from you. I cannot allow you to do all this." (I.L:163) Along these lines, it demonstrates boundaries in a relationship as it mirrors a social clash. Contention emerging among Gyan and Sai seems, by all accounts another multicultural clash. Their style and experience will be the fundamental issue causing numerous inconveniences. Their relationship goes on until coming political disappointment. Such multicultural clash, portraying judge's involvement from the abroad, including among most imperative Desai's epic. It is the judge who maintains the lives of other people in the story.

Feroza is a bit different from Sai. Not only the language of the story but also the title of the story is in accordance with his personality and character. Towards the end of the story, people start calling her *An American Brat*. She gets all the events of the story directed towards her in one or another way. All the characters converse about her indirectly or directly. Her parents are Cyrus and Zareen. She studies in class ten. She is a beautiful lady. She has the potential to decide for herself even at this age.

Feroza took a shawl on her shoulder. This was covering her whole body. Her eyes are extremely bright having a light of hope and optimism in them. At the start of the story she takes care of her values. She seems to be a pure continental girl. She comes from a Parsi family. Her family is very broad-minded. They are very modern. They want their children to act in modern ways. Whereas she is a religious girl. She takes care of her religious values. She is traditional and conservative. She never replied to the phone call. Her family used to make fun of her habits. She did not take care of all this. She is very wise and sensible. She knows what to do and how to do it. She shows her liking for the households. She wears simple. She never goes out shopping. She comes out to be a pure continental girl. She knows what is right and what is wrong. Most often her mother makes her mimicry. She also advises her to be modern. But she has her own outlook on life.

Conclusion

The two books propose that the topic of personality is tricky: regardless of how hard they attempt to fit in, they stay on the edges of American culture as legitimate outsiders and remote migrants. There's no

returning for either Feroza or Sai. The suggestion is that the relationship of the colonizer and the colonized leaves profound on colonized people that are difficult to delete. The wish of these people to compose the language of colonizers delineates profound situated predicaments of oppressed people's brains. The urgent issue of personality relates solely to uprooted persons, the peoples of colonized countries living in diasporas. But this position occupied by Feroza and Sai may be viewed as favored in that they will in general pick the position that will be in accordance with their mental state and viewpoint. Both characters cannot be taken as the delegates of common people. They are from a very high and elite society. Common people may not have characteristics like the heroines of these novels. But when defied by Americanness, they both take a gander at the American way of life as "other" of actual selves. Books never resolve the issue of characters raised by writers, rather these problematize fracture and dichotomous nature of progressing mission for personality and self.

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