

**The Impact of Colliding Cultures and Displacement: Reading of the
Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and
Khaled Hosseini**

Thesis

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By

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “*The Impact of Colliding Cultures and Displacement: Reading of the Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini*” submitted for the Ph.D. Degree to the LPU, Jalandhar is my original work and all ideas and references have been duly acknowledged. This dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any degree or diploma.

Dated :

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Certificate

This is to certify that **Mrs. Shivani** Registration No 41200371 of Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar has completed the Ph.D. dissertation entitled “*The Impact of Colliding Cultures and Displacement: Reading of the Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini*” under my guidance and supervision. To the best of my knowledge, the present work is the result of her original investigation and research work. No part of the dissertation has ever been submitted for any other degree or diploma.

The dissertation is fit for the submission for the partial fulfillment the conditions for the award of Ph.D. Degree in English.

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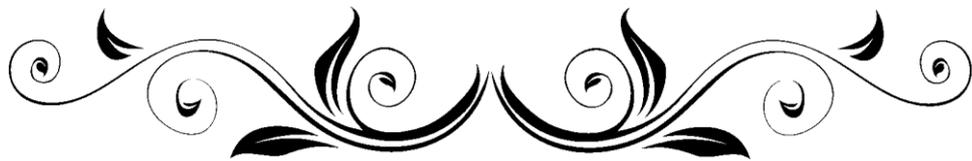
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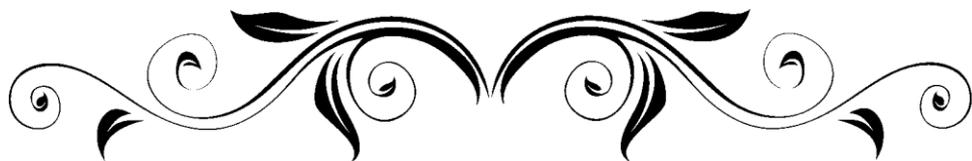
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*I DEDICATE
THIS THESIS TO
MY HUSBAND PANKAJ
FOR HIS CONSTANT SUPPORT
AND UNCONDITIONAL LOVE.
I LOVE YOU DEARLY.*



Acknowledgement

It is GODS GRACE that has been giving me the opportunity to accomplish this work. My gratitude for HIS ever showing grace is inexplicable.

“Gratitude is not a thing of expression; it is a matter of feeling”. This is, and has been my feeling, but my heart throbs me to admit that I shall be shrinking my duty in case I don’t express my gratitude to my reverend guide **Dr. Jit pal Aggarwal**, under whose expert supervision, superb and inspiring guidance the present work has been completed. His sympathetic and accommodating nature is additional source of encouragement.

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Abstract

In the present study entitled “*The Impact of Colliding Cultures and Displacement: Reading of the Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini*” the researcher has focused on the trends of cultural conflicts growing in the contemporary society because of the change of social and political set up. It is averred that the impact of cultural collision on the characters of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, and Khaled Hosseini is a serious phenomenon. Four post-colonial novelists are taken to analyze and investigate the impact of cultural collision. Bapsi Sidwa belongs to Pakistan, Monica Ali and Taslima Nasrin are Bangladeshi writers and Khaled Hosseini has written about the Taliban life of people living in Afghanistan. Interestingly, postcolonial society witnessed an upsurge of cross cultural fertilization of societies which resulted into untold miseries of the people. Diasporas not only connote demographic dislocations but also cultural reorientations as the foreign culture impinge upon the native culture. The textual analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini reveal the cultural dislocation resulting into the plight of the men and women, and their struggle to find their identity in colonized society Dislocation in this study refers to physical and psychological displacement experienced by the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. This study is focused on themes of cultural collision; the fractured identities of the protagonists and their quest for survival in a harsh alien society.

In all the chapters the socio-cultural perspective has been taken to explore the various cross-currents and ethnic pluralities depicted by Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Bapsi Sidhwa’s *An American Brat* (1993)

and The Pakistani Bride (1984), Cracking India (1991), Taslima Nasrin's French Lovers, Monica Ali's Brick Lane (2003) and Khaled Houseini's "The Kite Runner" the famous second novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns (2007)* depict the themes of dilemmas, tensions, cultural dislocations and loss of identity. This study theorizes that the colliding cultures disrupt history and create tensions and conflicts in the life of the individuals. Bhabha observes that the protagonists suffer from hybridity when they leave their native land. Dr. Boehmer (2005) has also expressed the same ideas in her research articles. The history of freedom struggle of India and Africa is packed with the instances of cruelties of the Imperialists. The protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini become the victims of savagery, degradation because of their cultural dislocation and displacement.

The critical theories of Bhabha, Gaytri Spivak and Edward Said, Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall and Ashcroft are be applied to explore the cultural and political tensions of the colonized people depicted in the works of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Paul Gilroy in his historical defense of the multicultural society in *Postcolonial Melancholia (2002)* analyzes the impact of race, politics and culture on the colonized people, their multilayered trauma ; economic, cultural, political and psychological tensions of the people. The present researcher has intensively explored the cultural theories propounded by Stuart Hall, James Clifford, Doreen Massey and Homi Bhabha to analyze and investigate the forces that disintegrate the cultural stability of the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Interestingly Taylor gave his famous idea of "unfixed identity" and Bhabha's theories of mimicry, hybridity are quite valid to explore the causes of the fractured identity of the protagonists.

Contents

Sr. No.	Topic	Page No.
1.	Introduction	1-23
2.	Chapter 1 : Cultural Collision and Its Impact on Characters: Perspectives of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini	24-64
3.	Chapter 2 : Causes of Cultural Collision of the Colonized Women: Alienation and Cultural Dislocation in <i>Cracking India</i> , <i>The Pakistani Bride</i> and <i>An American Brat</i>	65-146
4.	Chapter 3 : Borders, Partition and Migration: Impact of Cultural Collision on the Thoughts and Ideas of Protagonists of <i>Brick Lane</i>	147-187
5.	Chapter 4 : Contextualization Homelessness and Displacement: an Analysis of <i>Taslima Nasrin's French Lover</i>	188-204
6.	Chapter 5 : Displacement and Cultural Alienation: the Psychological Trajectories of the Protagonists in <i>The Kite Runner</i> ; <i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i> ; <i>And the Mountains Echoed</i>	205-263
7.	Conclusion	264-287
8.	Bibliography	288-320

Introduction

The present thesis entitled *The Impact of Colliding Cultures and Displacement: Reading of the Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini* seriously analyzes the trends of cultural conflicts growing in the contemporary society because of the change of social and political set up. This study investigates the impact of cultural collision on the characters of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, and Khaled Hosseini. Four post-colonial novelists belonging to different countries of the Indian sub-continent have been examined in the thesis. Bapsi Sidhwa belongs to Pakistan, Monica Ali and Taslima Nasrin is Bangladeshi writers and Khaled Hosseini has written about the Taliban life of people living in Afghanistan. Ackard (2000) in his *Effect of body image and self-image on women's sexual behaviors* has taken up the issue of sex and violence in the fiction of Taslim Nasrin. M.M. Bakhtin (1981) in *The Dialogic Imagination* investigated the cultural history and its impact on the lives of the characters of Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali. Ian Baucom in his seminal book *Out of place: Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity* took up the issues of marginalization and hybridity of the women characters of Khaled Hosseini. T. F Cash in (2004) took up the stylistic techniques and discussed in detail the use of images and symbols by Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali. Jill Didur in his *Cracking the Nation: Gender, Minorities, and Agency in Bapsi Sidhwa's Cracking India* (1998) discussed the plight of women of Bapsi Sidhwa. Sadaf Fareed analyzes the women protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa from the perspective of subjugation. Frederic Jameson wrote *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern* in 2009. She believes that the migrants mingle with middle class people and the loss of identity is inevitable. It is contended that no

critic investigated and examined the texts of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini from the perspective of collision of culture and displacement. The present study is at once original and innovative opening new vistas of critical knowledge for the scholars of post-colonial study.

The term Diaspora has been borrowed from the Greek meaning “a scattering or sowing of seeds”. All the cultural theorists such as Homi Bhabha, Edward Said and Paul Gilroy observe that diaspora is the movement of people sharing common ethnic identity. They are forced to leave their homeland and struggle to settle in an alien land. Diaspora cultural growth is linked with the variety of cultures; the diversity of people and their quest for a space and struggle for settlement. Migrants embrace different traditions and customs with view to assimilate in the local culture. The globalization also means the development and changes in culture, traditions and social norms. Diaspora suffers the communication problem while living in the alien land. They have to assimilate in the local culture since they start learning the language of the local people. When the people of Punjab migrated to London in 1862; they survived after learning English language. Robin Cohen in *Global Diasporas* opines that diaspora is a community of people living together in one country who struggles to assimilate in the local culture and also acknowledged that the old country always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions (Cohen 1).

Interestingly, Postcolonial era is full of dichotomy and cross cultural wars. The late twentieth century witnessed an upsurge of cross cultural fertilization of societies which resulted into untold miseries of the people. Diasporas not only connote demographic dislocations but also cultural reorientations as the foreign culture impinge upon the native culture. Dislocation in this study refers to physical

and psychological displacement experienced by the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. This study is focused on themes of cultural collision; on the fractured identities of the the protagonists and their quest for survival in a harsh society.

The socio-cultural perspective has been taken to explore the various cross-currents and ethnic pluralities depicted by the novelists under research. Bapsi Sidhwa's *An American Brat* (1993) and *The Pakistani Bride* (1984), *Cracking India* (1991), Taslima Nasrin's *French Lovers*, Chaman Nahal's *The Azadi*, Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003) and the famous second novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) of Hosseini depict the dilemmas, tensions, cultural dislocations and loss of identity of the men and women of the post-colonial era. The comparative approach offers a new area to interpret the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini applying the theories of cultural collision. Different aspects of these novelists have been explored in this dissertation through analysis and criticism.

In the Post-Colonial world there is a growing interest among the critics and novelists to investigate the causes of the emergence of cultural studies. Amitav Ghosh writes *The shadow Lines* explores the traumatic experience of people because of cultural antagonism. In the present study, the focus is on the impact of diversity of cultures, languages, places, migration and exile on men and women living in the colonized societies of Indian sub-continent. Interestingly, the cultural study presents two areas; the approach to “independent self-concept” of the West and “interdependent self-concept”. This study theorizes that the colliding cultures disrupt history and create tensions and conflicts in the life of the individuals. Bhabha

observes that the protagonists suffer from hybridity when they leave their native land. Dr. Boehmer (2005) has also expressed the same ideas in her research articles. The critical theories of Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Edward Said, Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall and Ashcroft are applied to explore the cultural and political tensions of the colonized people depicted in the works of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Paul Gilroy in his historical defense of the multicultural society in *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2002) analyzes the impact of race, politics and culture on the colonized people, their multilayered trauma ; economic, cultural, political and psychological tensions of the people. Bhabha has propounded the theory of “Otherness” to describe the alienation and cultural dislocation of the migrants who leave their native land for material affluence.

Fanon in his famous book *Wretched of the Earth* gave a new theory of the diaspora. He contended that the colonizers used every tool to crush the culture of the migrants. The imperialists evolved new strategies to exploit the colonized people. Fanon points out the domination of the colonial forces in the colonies with a sole motive to rule to dominate the subjects. In India and Africa the British used all political strategies to obliterate the culture of the Indians and Africans. Sartre flayed the imperial forces in his “Preface” to Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth* that the Western people had their own selfish views of colonialism. The Imperialism evolved a dangerous political system that destroyed the history and culture of the native people. The British in India ruined the silk industry; the weavers cut their thumbs sapped all natural resources and drained away the wealth of India. The history of freedom struggle of India and Africa is packed with the instances of cruelties of the

Imperialists. The protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini become the victims of savagery, degradation because of their cultural dislocation and displacement.

The present study has intensively explored the cultural theories propounded by Stuart Hall, James Clifford, Doreen Massey and Homi Bhabha to analyze and investigate the forces that disintegrate the cultural stability of the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Interestingly Taylor gave his famous idea of “unfixed identity” and Bhabha’s theories of mimicry, hybridity are quite valid to explore the causes of the fractured identity of the protagonists. Doreen Massey observes that space is very important in the life of the individuals but the migrants live in a vacuum. Taylor gave his theory of travelling to depict the loss of identity of the migrants. All these ideas and theories are very important to analyze the nature and behavior of the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. In the novels of Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini, the themes of hybridity, migrancy, and cultural clash are of paramount importance. Mohit K. Ray in *Critical Essays (2002)* observes thus:

In the modern technological set up society is fast changing every day. There is no possibility of the stable and settled life as there is a mad rush among young people to go abroad to earn dollars abroad. When they reach an alien land they are bound to come in conflict with the culture of the local people; they make desperate effort to assimilate but the process of assimilation result into the loss of their culture and identity (Ray 102).

The symbols of “Travel” and Journey are very crucial in the modern diasporic fiction. Travel transforms the ideas and perceptions of the individuals; it plays a vital role in determining the concept of place and home of the individuals who go abroad. James Clifford in his chapter “Traveling Cultures” published in *Cultural Studies* (1992) gave new ideas about “settling” and “dwelling” in an alien land. Interestingly Clifford links “travel” with “displacement.” Travelers and migrants don’t mind in assimilating in other cultures. The concept of multiculturalism has grown very popular in these days. Kiran Desai’s famous novel *The Inheritance of Loss* is about multicultural societies. Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali wrote about the life of the South-Asian diaspora, their struggles and challenges of life became the main themes of their fiction. The metaphor of journey is the core of his Sidhwa’s novels:

Each novel of Sidhwa is about journey to other land and the image of journey dominates the plot of each novel of Sidhwa. It is not a simple journey but the diasporas leave the native land to settle abroad; to assimilate and to find a new home in the alien land. It is not a temporary sojourn but a thoughtful and planned journey to find roots somewhere else. It is their journey which brings total transformation in their life (Sidhwa 179).

Edward Said in his *Cultural and Imperialism* (1993) contends that colonization was a “geographic violence” as it involved the lust for land and its natural resources. The impact of the geographic violence was both territorial and cultural as the colonized suffered poignant cultural displacement, migration and

marginalization. Patterns of displacement of the people subjected to colonization made them struggle and engage with loss and belonging. Said observes thus:

Geography guides and determines the fate of the travelers; and the irony of life is that nobody is free from the struggle over geography. The struggle of the protagonists of Monica Ali, Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hoseeini struggle to find a space but the geographical violence doesn't allow them peace and rest. Their struggle is very complex and it is not about battles and wars but about new ideas and their quest for identity and space (Said 6).

Fanon expressed his serious concern about the destruction of culture and history of the African by the colonized in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963). He argues that it is the duty of the historians to restore the cultural history of the Africans. The Africans have suffered the loss of identity and culture and the intellectuals must raise a voice against this cultural disruption and disfigurement. The intellectuals and artists must illustrate “the truths of the nation” to restore the existence of African culture (235). The fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini depict the themes of multiple cultures. Bhabha and Spivak have called them a hybrid creation of the colonized society. It is significant to note that Doreen Massey has different views about the concept of identity and place as discussed in his epoch making book *Space, Place and Gender* (1994) on cultural studies. Massey further observes that the place is never static as the socio-political forces are propagating multicultural ideas (Massey 155). Massey says of the reproduction of place:

Places are not permanent in modern socio-political society; they do not have single, unique “identities”; modern society is caught in internal conflicts; changes are very fast and the individuals have to confront the forces of change every day. People are worried about the future and are often caught in the conflicts and tensions generated by travels and settlements (Massey 155).

In his well known essay, '*Cultural Identity and Diaspora*', Stuart Hall observes that cultural identity is not stable; it goes on changing from time to time. Cultural identity plays vital role in the contemporary diasporic literature as it is directly linked with the post-colonial struggles of the migrants. The ancestors who left their homeland and migrated to the tea and sugar plantations in Trinidad and Figi islands run by the British had to compromise with their native identity in the process of assimilation. This fact has been highlighted by Bhabha in his *Location of Culture* and by Vijay Misra in his study of Diasporic fiction. Hall goes on to stress the significance of a very “different conception of identity which stresses critical points of deep and significant difference” (Hall 223).

In this thesis all issues concerning cultural collision are seriously explored and investigated with focus on the major texts of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. It is pertinent to add that in this study cultural collision is taken from the wider perspective covering the themes of sexual assaults on women; rapes and their oppression. Cultural collision simply doesn't occur when the migrants leave their homeland in search of material prosperity. Migration can be voluntary or forced. The cultural collision can occur when there are riots, political anarchy or invasion of some foreign power. In each circumstance people are forced

to leave their homeland and the impact is always disastrous. After having investigated the post-colonial theories of Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Paul Giory, Ashcraft, Doreen Massey and Stuart Hall all the problems confronting the migrants and the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini are explored in this study.

In the present study the main focus is to unravel the forces of cultural antagonism realistically depicted by all the novelists under research. Salman Rushdie has discussed in detail the plight of the migrants who are subjected to all forms of oppression and subjugation while living in the alien land. Vladimir Nabokov is the prominent American novelist who wrote more than a dozen novels including, *Mary* (1926), *The Gift* (1930), and *Lolita* (1955) examining the multiple displacements of the people that are forced to flee from their motherland. The cultural collision is an inescapable reality in an alien society since the migrants are bound to come in conflict with their local culture. This fact is highlighted by Anita Desai in her novel *Fasting, Feasting*. The protagonist Arun is sent to America for higher education by her ambitious father. In America Arun feels uncomfortable since he is not used to the non-vegetarian food. Arun feels cut off from his culture and feels alienated in the world. Desai's *Fasting, Feasting*, of course, is a novel of multicultural studies, the one, Indian, known for its pious and longstanding customs representing 'fasting,' and the other, American, a country of opulence and material prosperity epitomizing 'feasting.' The perceptions of Uma are typically Indian, and of Arun are American. Both of them are entrapped, and bulldozed by oppressive bonds exercised by their own parents, Mama Papa. Kiran Desai wrote *The Inheritance of Loss* and got Booker Prize for her depiction of multicultural society.

Kiran Desai depicts the poignancy of the immigrant Biju in her *The Inheritance of Loss*. Multiculturalism originates from “culture” which comes from a Latin word “cultura” which means to “cultivate.” Cultural theorists such as Taylor, Edward Said and Paul Gilroy observe that cultural collisions are inevitable in a global society. The migrants are obsessed with “ethnocentrism” perspective. Salman Rushdie explored this ambiguous situation in all his writings because he was a victim of cultural collision. V.S. Naipaul got Nobel Prize for literature for his realistic treatment and the depiction of the plight of the colliers of the British plantation of Trinidad and Fiji islands. All the Indian colliers led a miserable life since all were treated as the “Other” by the colonial powers.

The major themes of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini are related to the problems of cultural collision, sense of alienation, fractured identity, cultural displacement, perpetual exile, and their homelessness. Women were sexually assaulted, raped and treated as commodities. In this study the researcher has depicted the traumas of Zaitoon, Nazneen and Hassina, Mariam and Laila. The cultural theorists such as Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Paul Gilroy, Ashcraft, Doreen Massey and Stuart Hall have discussed in detail the various problems confronted by the migrants but no full length and comprehensive study is available on the issue of cultural collision. The major themes of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini are related to the problems of cultural collision, their sense of alienation, their fractured identity, their cultural displacement, perpetual exile, and their homelessness. Women were sexually assaulted, raped and treated as commodities. In this study the researcher has depicted the traumas of Zaitoon, Nazneen and Hassina, Mariam and Laila.

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Bhabha observes that colonial power invents the tools to control and dominate the marginalized people. Frantz Fanon used certain metaphors in his book and used the term "black skin/white masks," to depict the plight of the diaspora. Naipaul used the term "mimic men" to describe the nature of the colonized people. Diaspora implies people who are “scattered” away from their original homes. Scattering, as Homi K. Bhabha observes, becomes a gathering. Regional groups, racial groups, caste and class groups represent various sub-cultures existing within the society. Each sub-culture may have its own folkways, customs, etiquettes, mores, beliefs, practices which eventually result into cultural collision. Most of the characters of Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini are displaced and diffused people. Diffusion is one of the main sources of cultural collision and social change. The spread of the modernization process around the world represents the diffusion of industrialization from the advanced to less developed societies is the most outstanding contemporary social change.

Objectives of the Study

The main focus of the study is on the representation and identity of protagonists who suffered the atrocities, marginalization and alienation because of the cultural collision when they lived in the colonized societies. Bapsi Sidhwa’s *The*

Pakistani Bride and *An American Brat*, Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, Taslima's controversial novel *Lajja* and *The French Lover*, Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* represents the experience of Muslim women from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who migrate to the US in quest of empowerment and identity. The interdisciplinary, comparative and cultural approach offers a new dimension to the interpretation of the postcolonial fiction of four famous contemporary novelists. Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali and Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini deal with the issues of cultural collision, cultural dislocation, political instability, infrastructure collapse and displacement of protagonists. The purpose of this study is to discover the struggles, conflicts, and cultural dislocations, psychological traumas of men and women depicted in the novels of, Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin, and Khaled Hosseini. This study is an attempt to critically examine the portrayals of men and women protagonists who become the victims of cultural collisions. The personal experiences of these women protagonists reflect the political circumstances which they encounter, and the impact of cultural collisions on their vision, love, sex, marriage and identity. The main focus of the study is on the themes of oppression and victimization, disorientation and cultural dislocation. Precisely, the present study has the following objectives:

- 1) To examine and investigate the causes of cultural dislocation in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monika Ali, Tasleema Nasreen and Khalead Hosseini.
- 2) To trace the disorientation and dislocation of culture because of cultural collision in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monika Ali, Tasleema Nasreen and Khalead Hosseini.

- 3) To trace physical and psychic displacement of women of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who suffered because of the Partition and cultural collision.
- 4) To investigate causes of the loss of identity and their struggle to survive in a harsh colonized society in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monika Ali, Tasleema Nasreen and Khalead Housseini.

Review of Literature: Past and Present

Ackard (2000) in his *Effect of body image and self-image on women's sexual behaviors* has taken up the issue of sex and violence in the fiction of Taslim Nasrin. He discusses the role of cultural collision and its impact on the behavior of women. The colonized women suffered oppression of male dominated society. This critical essay deals with the application of the objectification theory. He ignores the cultural impact on the life of protagonists. M.M. Bakhtin (1981) in *The Dialogic Imagination* discusses the cultural history and its impact on the lives of the people. This book contains essays that describe the historical forces bringing about the cultural conflicts. The theories of Bakhtin are applied in the investigation of the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monika Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Bakhtin is a prominent cultural historian, and a major theoretician of the novel. The Post-Colonial fiction can be interpreted with the help of the philosophical theories of Bakhtin.

Ian Baucom's *Out of place: Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity* discuss issues of migration, hybridity and culture in the perspective of "otherness" of the marginalized people. The writer has nowhere mentioned the objectification theory and the critical analysis is based on traditional analysis of

thematic issues, social issues. It is interesting to note that the learned critic does not discuss in detail the impact of cultural collision in the life of the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa. Homi Bhabha published his famous book *Location of Culture* (1995) in which he has discussed the main features of the post-colonial literature. Bhabha has explored the nature of cultural disruption and the plight of the migrants. This book analyzes the issues of displacement and hybridity. Bhabha has discussed the nature of cultural and political boundaries which exist in gender, race, class and sexuality. Elleke Boehmer published *Colonial and postcolonial literature* in 2005. She has discussed and examined the sensitive issues such as identity crisis, and marginalization. Her theories are having promoted the cultural studies. Boehmer also talks about cultural dislocation and displacement. K. Brooks in “*Women's sexual self-efficacy and communication: The role of body image*” (2009) focuses on the significance of body, the article is very valuable to apply the objectification theory but this research paper does not refer to the issue of cultural collisions. S.E. Byers published *Women & Therapy* (2001). He contended that women cannot sit at homes in the modern society. They must participate in the corporate sector for growth and development. Her approach is sociological. The approach of the critic is sociological and not cultural. R.M. Calogero's “*Potential implications of objectification on women's bodies for women's sexual satisfaction*” (1999) discusses the plight of women who are oppressed by the male domination society. Body determines identity of women. The learned Professor focuses on the issues of sexuality and does not talk on cultural conflicts which impacted the life of the women. T. F. Cash in (2004) discusses the psychology of a woman from social perspective. It is pertinent to note that there is no reference to cultural impact on the life of the protagonists. James Clifford in *Cultural Anthropology* (2003) further

gives the features of diasporic consciousness. Clifford believed that the travelling culture has both negative and positive features. When a migrant leaves his homeland he encounters new challenges and interact new people. This venture often brings the pain of discrimination and marginalization. According to Clifford cultural collision is an important feature of diasporic literature. He has simply referred to cultural forces which can impact the life of people but there is no detailed discussion of the collision of cultures in the research paper.

Robin Cohen in *Global Diaspora: An Introduction* (1997) discusses the various themes of global diaspora. He explores the concept from wider perspective analyzing the life of Jewish, Armenian, African, Chinese, British, Indian, Lebanese and Caribbean people. Professor Cohen discusses the problems of the migrated people in general in his case studies. Jill Didur *Cracking the Nation: Gender, Minorities, and Agency in Bapsi Sidhwa's Cracking India* (1998) discussed the plight of women and gender discrimination. Found in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa. He has taken up the gender issues, the themes of gender discrimination in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa. Franz Fanon published three important books on cultural studies, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), *Studies in a Dying Colonialism* (1965), *The Wretched of the Earth* (1965), and *Toward the African Revolution* (1967). All the three books of Fanon give theories of Post-colonialism. Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* is a psychological analysis of the dehumanizing impact of colonization upon the people and on the nation as a whole. He discussed in detail the issues of borders, social and cultural implications of imperialism and how there is an eruption of resistance and revolt against imperialism. Fanon indicts colonialism which blocks the growth of the individuals. Fanon has given a concrete analysis of the nature of

diaspora. He investigated the causes of unrest of the the people of Algeria. The colonial powers plundered and exploited the resources of the colonies. Their approach was primitive and destructive. In fact, all the three books are basic texts and the theories can be conveniently applied in the analysis of the fiction of Taslima Nasrin, Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini. Sadaf Fareed analyzes the women protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa from the perspective of subjugation. He opined that Sidhwa's women lead a life of slavery as they are not allowed freedom. The laws of Shariat are very rigid and the Pakistani patriarchy is orthodox. Men enjoy liberty but women are subjugated and suppressed and their survival is possible only if they conform to the rigid laws of patriarchy. Dr Sadaf does refer to the cultural antagonism between the Hindus and the Muslims but the detailed analysis of cultural collision is missing.

Frederic Jameson wrote *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern* in 2009. She believes that the migrants mingle with middle class people and the loss of identity is inevitable. The confrontation of the migrants with the alien culture brings pain and anguish. Eric Hobbessawn in *Fractured Culture and Society in the 20th Century* (2013) seriously considers the issue of cultural collision and asks what went wrong with the 20th century? The cultural collision suffered by the colonized society was a major socio-political development which changed the entire fabric of the contemporary society. The irony was the old institutions were destroyed and new were uncertain which propagated skepticism and distrust among people. The post colonial fiction expresses the mood of despair and despondency, fractured identities of people and cultural displacement brought untold miseries to the people. Marvin L Goldberger published *Collision Theory* in 1964 and gives in this book the

theory of collision based on his scientific investigations. The cultural collision is imminent because of the “scattering tendencies of people” who leave their native homes and settle in alien lands. They desperately try to assimilate but in the process of assimilation the rupture of their native culture becomes irrevocable resulting alienation, and displacement. Karen Horney published her *Our Inner Conflicts* in 1966. Dr Horney is reputed psychologist of America and has published many books and research papers on the symptoms of neurosis, depression and alienation. She has given her revolutionary ideas on, self-realization, and the idealized image, and she brought to psychoanalysis a new understanding of the importance of culture and environment.

Sangeeta Ray (2000) discussed the sexual oppression of women found in the world of Bapsi Sidhwa. Her novels also depict the dilemmas and absurdities of the Parsee community. She didn't focus on the cultural issues as well. Jagdev Singh in his article *Ice-Candy-Man: A Parsi Perception on the Partition of India* (1996) touches upon the sociological approach of Bapsi Sidhwa. She has written about the traumatic experiences of the Parsees'. She reports faithfully her personal experiences of the aftermath of the partition. She has depicted the plight of women protagonists in her novel in simple and lyrical prose. Critical analysis of *Cracking India* deals with issues of cultural disruption and the sufferings of women protagonists highlighting the loss of identity. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson in *Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference. Cultural Anthropology* (1992) discusses the politics of cultural difference, cultural collision and its impact on the lives of the people in the colonized society. Being an anthropologist, he discusses the issues of cultural difference from the broader perspective but the

present researcher has taken the cue and planned to discuss and investigate the novels of Taslima Nasrin, Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Alia and Khaled Hosseini.

Ravindra Kumar in *LAJJA: An Evaluation*, (2006) discusses the socio-political forces which led to the demolition of Babri Masjid and how the novel *Lajja*, which spans over a period of thirteen days in the year 1992. The main focus of the novel is on the anti- Hindu riots that broke out in Bangladesh to protest the demolition of Babri Masjid in India. There were scenes of death and burning in Bangladesh. *Lajja* addresses the communal issues depicting the scenes of violence. In this article there are only stray references to the issues of cultural collision but the detailed analysis of this fundamental issue is conspicuously missing.

Deirdre Lasghari (1995) has taken up the post-colonial issues of marginalization, collision of culture and quest for home of the diaspora. He has explored the difference between self and the other. He has discussed the issue of displacement resulting from migration. Taslima Nasrin's *Growing up Confused: For a Bengali Muslim Girl, Life is Full of Contradictions* published in 2002 observes that people suffered from cultural dislocation and homelessness because of fundamentalism, her *Lajja* contained the scenes of the killing of Hindus in Bangladesh. The Muslims burnt their houses raped their women in the streets and persecuted them. It was really a disgraceful experience and her *Lajja* depicts the scenes of horror and terror. The novel is a novel of cultural antagonism.

Patricia Pessar and Mahler in *Transnational Migration Review* (2003) deals with the gender issues in this book. They observe that women migrate almost at the same rate as men. Women also experience traumatic experiences. This book depicts

the process of assimilation and alienation. *An American Brat* of Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the diasporic experiences of Feroza who goes to America for interaction and learning. She is a Pakistani girl, belonging to Parsee community. She embraces the western radical thoughts and ideas and develops modern approach and outlook. Feroza has to face new challenges in America. She suffers cultural dislocation because of her American assimilation. Pennycook in *A Global English and Trans-cultural Flows* (2007) observed that when migrants leave their homeland, the cultural forms also move, and the cultural conflicts modify their identities. The globalization process; new languages, new pop music, the growth of science and technology further bring changes in society. He looks at the ways in which the globalization has brought new ideas about gender, sexuality and religion. Rehana Ahmad, Peter Morey and Amina Yagin published *Culture, Diaspora, and Modernity in Muslim Writing* in 2012. The book is a collection of critical essays which investigate the various aspects of *The Kite Runner* of Khaled Hosseini.

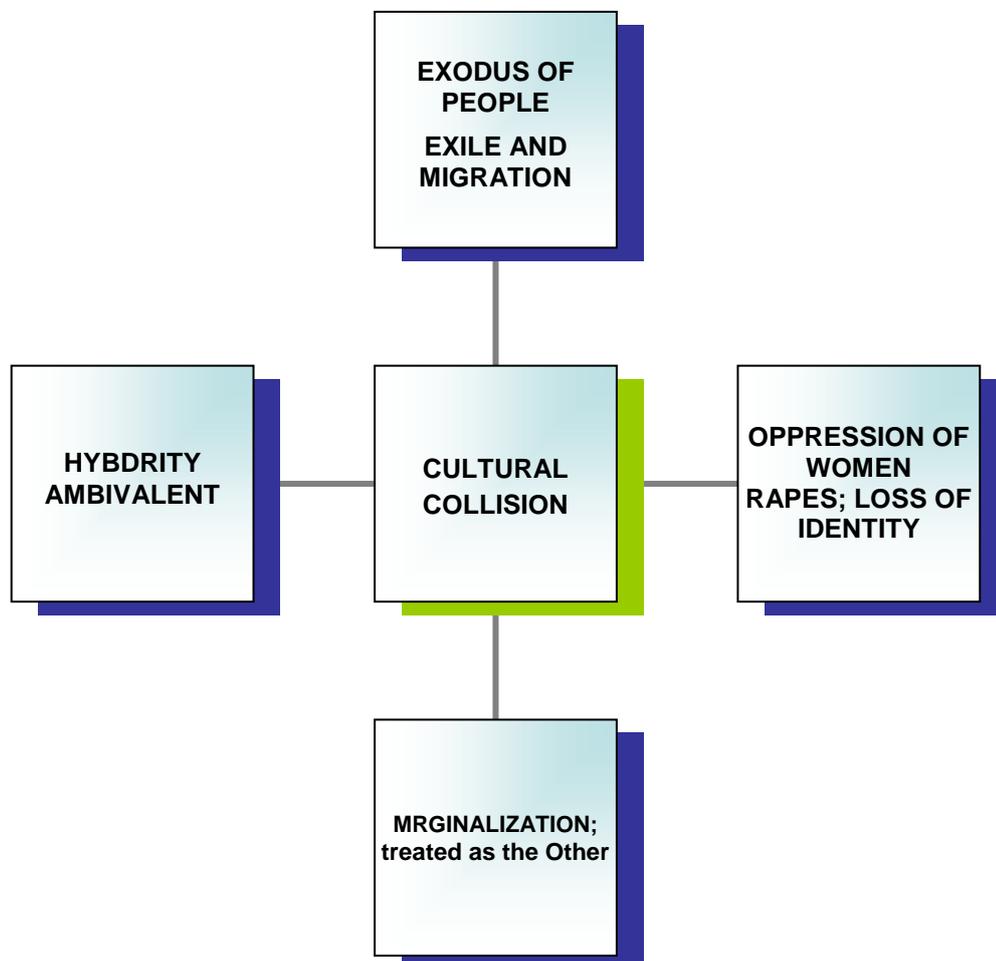
The critical essays describe the themes of Muslim cultures, the forces of modernity and multiculturalism impacting the protagonist Amir. People in Kabul were the victims of terrorism of the Taliban. The worst hit were the women in Kabul. The Taliban deny them fundamental rights as they are forced to wear veils. They are subjected to marginalization and sexual oppression. This work addresses the religion, revolution, and national identity of Afghan women. Khaled Hossein sought inspiration from such works and depicted the plight of women in his novels. Sujata Sen wrote an article *I write because I want to change society* in this article (1994), she stated that she was shocked to witness the brutalities of the Muslims perpetrated on the Hindus of Bangladesh and her ambition to change the society and not to just

entertain the people through fiction. As a writer she has social responsibility to the society and she is serious and sensitive to the social and political issues of the society. Her *Lajja* is according to her social commitment. Mary Anne Weaver in *A Fugitive from Injustice* (1994) defends Taslima who dared to depict the plight of Bangladeshi women. Mary Ann interviewed Taslima Nasrin in Stockholm, where she is living in exile, underground from Bangladesh. The reporter published her revolutionary ideas in this journal exposing the hypocrisy in Islamic laws.

Gap in the Past and the Present Research:

The present study focuses on the emergence of cultural wars, the migration of people from one place to the other and the aftermath of the events of cultural conflicts. The post-colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini has become very popular because their works are devoted to issues regarding cultural collision, displacement of people suffering because of migration from their homeland. The treatment of women in general and the discriminatory laws against led to marginalization of women in Pakistan. Salman Rushdie has realistically depicted their sufferings and untold miseries in his novel *Midnight's Childern*. Alongside Khushwant Singh's famous *Train to Pakistan* (1966), Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* (1975) and Shauna Singh Baldwin's *What the Body Remembers* (1999) also focused on the traumas of partition. Urvashi Butalia in her book *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* has given harrowing facts about people who suffered widespread sexual abuse; about 75000 women were raped and abducted, thousands of children became orphans and countless men and women lost their homes (Butalia 3).

Briefly stated the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini suffer from the following physical and psychological ailments resulting from the cultural collision:



In the chapters that follow all these challenges of the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini are examined and investigated relying on the cultural theories of Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Paul Giory, Ashcraft, Doreen Massey and Sturat Hall. The texts of all these writers reveal that the protagonists suffered because of the cultural collision and cultural dislocation.

Chapterization

Introduction

Chapter 1 : Cultural Collision and its Impact on Characters: Perspectives of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasreen and Khaled Hosseini

Chapter 2 : Causes of Cultural Collision of the Colonized Women: Alienation and Cultural Dislocation in *Cracking India*, *The Pakistani Bride* and *An American Brat*

Chapter 3 : Borders, Partition and Migration: Impact of Cultural Collision on the Thoughts and Ideas Protagonists of *Brick Lane*

Chapter 4 : Contextualization Homelessness and Displacement: an Analysis of *Taslima Nasrin's French Lover*

Chapter 5 : Displacement and Cultural Alienation: the Psychological Trajectories of the Protagonists in *The Kite Runner*; *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; *And the Mountains Echoed*

Conclusion

Bibliography

Chapter 1

Cultural Collision and Its Impact on Characters: Perspectives of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini

In the post-colonial society, cultural collision is an inescapable reality since the world today is like a family and the growth of science and technology has accelerated the pace of cultural collision. The cultural theorists such as Taylor, Edward Said and Paul Gilroy observe that cultural collisions are unavoidable when the migrants move to other lands. The migrants often are carried away by their “ethnocentrism” perspective as they claim that their own race, culture is superior to others. The migrants fall in the trap because they are ignorant of the language and culture of the aliens. Cultural awareness and language skills are effective tools to narrow down the cultural differences. Cultural collisions occur because different values, beliefs, and norms create discord. Richard D. Lewis in his book *When Cultures Collide: Managing Successfully Across Culture* (1996) explores the question of how the human mind is conditioned culturally at an early age. Lewis discusses the concepts and issues that impact the sensibility of the aliens in a foreign land analyzing the relationship between language and thought, common sense, truth and the tools of survival. Samuel P. Huntington published his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. (1996) expressing his belief that the age of ideology has ended as the societies ruled by the colonizers were characterized by cultural conflict. He contended that in the post-colonial society the major cause of concern is cultural wars as we find in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini.

With the emergence of globalization there is a strong current of multiculturalism. When a migrant crosses the borders he has faces manifold challenges in the alien society as the survival is not easy. He carries with him values and beliefs of his country and culture with him and the inevitable cultural collision is inescapable. Very often the migrants compromise with their native beliefs and values because of the pressure of the alien culture and get assimilated. The modern cultural theorists have observed that with the growth of globalization and modern technology there has been a consistent threat to the migrants to lose their identity in the cultural conflicts. They are forced to live with the people of, various nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. The result is the escalation of cultural barriers and conflicts. Putnam & Wondolleck (2003) observe thus:

The main traumatic experience suffered by the migrants is the loss of identity. The cultural conflicts have wider ramifications in the current post-colonial set up. When identities are intertwined with shared ideologies, the stakes in a conflict are much greater. It is very hard for migrants to get assimilated in the local culture so soon and in the words of hybrid culture becomes inevitable (Wondolleck 43)

Ashforth and Mael (1989) have propounded social identity theory examining the role of an individual in a society. They observe that cultural conflicts are bound to emerge because the individuals have deep rooted prejudices and there are boundaries and tensions persisting in societies. When the migrants live with the alien confrontation becomes inevitable. Northrop Frye (1989) has put forward his psychological theory pointing out that individuals have strong needs for both inclusion and differentiation.

The cultural conflict leads to threats, uncertainty, disruption of history and confrontation with new challenges. Susan Moller Okin in her book *Justice, Gender and the Family* (1989) depicted the tension between feminism and multiculturalism. She took up the anthropological stance and found that primarily most cultures are patriarchal in nature. The migrants living in foreign land are compelled to opt for assimilation. The groups of migrants are in minorities; they have to pursue multicultural ideology in order to claim rights. Bapsi Sidhwa published her famous novel *The Pakistani Bride* to depict the plight of women living in the orthodox patriarchal Pakistani society. Bapsi observed in her interviews that the plot of the novel is based on a true story that she heard while living in the army camp far away in the high mountains of Karakoram.

Barkty is a prominent feminist who observes that oppression of women and her domination by the male hegemony only consists of depriving women of political and legal rights. The structure of our society and our culture permeates our consciousness” (Barkty 63). Zaitoon is the main protagonist in the novel who becomes a victim of the collision of alien tribal culture which thrives on sexual domination and subjugation. Zaitoon is sold for five hundred rupees to Sakhi who abuses and tortures her constantly. Zaitoon struggles in her entire life to get freedom from the rapists, cruel and lustful men. She is sold out for five hundred rupees to a tribal man and is condemned to suffer for her whole life. It is Carol through whom Sidhwa speaks when she cries out against the oppression of women:

Women in the world through the ages had been murdered, raped, exploited, and enslaved. They were impregnated and bullied; they were disinherited by society. They were physically assaulted and no voice was raised against the cruelty of the patriarch. It was an immutable law of nature. What had the tribal girl done to deserve such grotesque retribution? Had she fallen in love with the wrong man? (Barkty 216).

The modern cultural theorists such as Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Gayatri Spivak and Paul Gilroy talk about the growth of multiculturalism and globalization and its impact on the thoughts and sensibility of the post-colonial writers. Multiculturalism means embracing of the values of other culture. The term means existing in alien society with adjustment and acceptance. It calls for the celebration of diversity of cultures in a society – a diversity which is usually brought about by immigration. Bapsi Sidhwa is a prominent writer of Pakistan; she had witnessed all the brutal scenes of violence after the partition. She was a diaspora and moved from Pakistan to America and experienced the subjugation. Her *An American Brat* reflects her personal experience of the partition of Indian subcontinent. Multiculturalism originates from 'culture' which means to develop and cultivate. Culture is one of the most important concepts in social science. The study of society is incomplete without a proper understanding of the culture of that society. Everyman is born into society and truly justifies the dictum 'man is a social being' can thus be redefined as 'man is a cultural being'. Culture is a total learned behavior including values, norms, and languages, material artifacts that reflect the way of living of the members of society which evolve through a gradual process of change and transmit it from generation to generation. E.B Tylor in his *Primitive Culture* defines culture as

an integrated whole including knowledge, beliefs of people, artistic ideas, morality, conventions and traditions which the people follow willingly. Conformity to all the rules and laws is appreciated and nonconformity punished. Growth of culture defines the growth of civilization (Tylor 190).

Culture in this sense is not a biological heritage but a social heritage. Man becomes a civilized and cultural man only while living in men. It is culture alone that helps man to grow and develop human and cultural tendencies. To borrow Clyde Kluckhohn's phrase, culture is a "design for living" held by the members of society. Man is born with instincts of learning that drive his actions; it is only by learning that he grows showing his cultural progresses. Without a shared culture, members of society would be unable to communicate and co-operate resulting in confusions and disorders. Thus, Robert Bierstedt rightly states that "culture is something adopted, used, believed, practiced, or possessed by more than one person. It depends on group life for its existence" (Rao 191). Culture, thus is seen as having no existence outside the similar habitual behavior of individuals. Ideas are often expressed through symbols or material artifacts made for purposive use. This kind of behavior is a result of social learning. Geertz defines Culture thus:

Culture is the sum total of the achievements of human beings in social, political and economic and religious matters. Culture is the barometer to measure the growth of a nation or a tribe. It is through culture human beings interpret their experience and guide their action. No man is outside his culture, it is his destiny. Social structure

of society is determined by cultural achievement of human beings. Culture cannot be seen in concrete form but its impact is felt and expressed through behavior pattern of the members of the society (Keesing 56)

The novel *An American Brat* of Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the poignant experiences of a sixteen year old Feroza who visits America for higher education. Her parents live in the orthodox society in Pakistan. They feel concerned about the growth of Feroza who is following and developing the rigid and orthodox mind set. Zareen and Cyrus Ginwalla are shocked to see her conservative attitude. Her mother decides to send her to America for better learning and to shun her growing fanatic attitude. Sharing her shock, Zareen informs her husband,

She objected to my sleeveless saree-blouse! Really, this narrow-minded attitude touted by General Zia is infecting her, too. . . Can she wear frocks? No. Women mustn't show their legs, women shouldn't act like that. Girls mustn't play hockey or sign or dance! (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Brat* 10).

The patriarchal social set up of Pakistan society deeply impacted the behavior of Feroza who grew into a narrow-minded and orthodox woman. Zareen is worried about her orthodox outlook of life. She decides to send her to USA for a holiday. She is of the opinion that travelling will broaden her outlook. Feroza will be in a position to get rid of her Puritanism. Zareen is really very happy. She starts dreaming the land of rock stars and Hollywood glamour. The main focus of the novel is the cultural challenges, fracture of identity of a Pakistani woman when she

leaves her homeland. At the Kennedy airport Feroza feels the thrill of freedom. She exults thus: “She knew no one, and no one knew her! It was a heady feeling to be suddenly so free –for the moment, at least – of the thousand constraints that governed her life” (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Brat* 58). Feroza is surprised to see the gaiety and glitter of the glass and steel tubes. Her experience with the passport officer who asks her a series of questions shocks her. For the first time she realizes that she it was a country of strangers. Indeed, the plot of the novel depicts a corrosion of Parsee and American culture which brings poignant pain to Feroza. Bapsi’s *An American Brat* reveals the mental, psychological, social and cultural conflicts of Feroza in the novel. The plot of the novel describes the journey of Feroza and her quest for identity and her encounter with the American culture. Feroza is a victim of patriarchal oppression of Pakistan society airport she experiences strange cultural collision. She gets uprooted from her ‘mother culture’. She struggles to assimilate in the alien American culture. The poignancy of the immigrant Nila is very well depicted by Taslima Nasrin in her novel *French Lover* (2001) when she realizes that she does not fit in an alien environment of France. The plot of the novel depicts how Neelanjana (Nila) is exposed to European racism, Indian male chauvinism, lesbian and French lovers. Nila is “homeless’ in her home, She is homeless in India and displaced in France. She is an alien, an unwanted in Kolkota and unwanted in France too. She experiences the glamour of the smart city of Paris, comparing it with drab and dirty Kolkata. Nila’s desires, aspirations, dreams and fantasies are conditioned by her cultural collision. Taslima Nasrin portrays the multiple vision of Nila, her experiences of patriarchal oppression of Kolkota, her harrowing experiences of lesbianism, sexual eroticism in France. Betrayed by the lover Sushant, the Calcutta

girl had no option but to accept a proposal of a Punjabi boy settled in France. Even though the proposal was accidental the flight to France gave wings to her thoughts and expectations. Being a modern girl, she wanted to explore France's great history and culture. Taslima Nasrin portrayed the cultural differences in the society and provides a bitter-sweet picture of illegal immigrants who struggle to survive in difficult working conditions.

When a protagonist dares to cross the frontier, he faces uncertainty of life, his mind is full of fear and anticipation as something new might happen. The migrant becomes a hybrid as he confronts the cultural antagonism in the alien land. In *Imaginary Homelands*, Rushdie points out that when a migrant leaves his native land he is uncertain about his future; his sole purpose is to settle abroad and in this process his identity gets fractured because the forces of culture force him to compromise with his native culture. It is pertinent to note that the concept of hybridity was first developed by theorists such as Edward Kamau Brathwaite and Edouard Glissant to describe the creolized identity of post-slavery Caribbean populations. But it was Salman Rushdie who used the term "mongrelization" for the first time giving the idea of cultural hybridity. Homi K. Bhabha gave us a theoretical development of the metaphoric notion of hybridity and the concept has become indispensable to academic critical discourse. In the modern times there is a consistent trend towards multiculturalism. The immigrants experience cross-cultural influences as people from many countries are seen struggling for material prosperity. The mobility of labor; the modernization of transportation and communication has opened new avenues for the people. Travel culture has become very popular today.

Doreen Massey observes that there are plenty opportunities open to the labor force to migrate and work abroad. This has promoted the growth of multiculturalism. The modern culture is fluid, hybrid moving between spaces of meaning. Bhabha calls it cultural hybridity is the product of interaction between “colonizers” and the “colonized.” Bhabha contended the colonized individuals are dependent on the colonizers in evolving a new shared culture. In his book *The Location of Culture* (1994) he opined that there is a “Third Space of Enunciation” in which cultural systems are constructed. He argues thus:

In the modern world there are diverse cultural experiences faced by the migrants. Each country has its own life, literature, art, music, ritual, life, death. There are multifarious layers of culture present in the world. There are multifarious signs and symbols signifying the locations and social systems of value. The cultural transformation has become an inevitable reality as migration is very common among the people. This tendency results into diasporic experiences as the people who leave their homeland have to suffer displacement and cultural disruption. People experience new things; they come in contact with new ideas and thoughts; they view new landscape and come in contact with new people and this interaction inevitable bring cultural conflicts. The different myths, rituals and traditions bring new relations and give birth to new social and political awareness. The growth of multiculturalism adds new discourses as the society grows global (Bhabha 247).

It is pertinent to note that Edward Said was perhaps the first cultural critic who propounded the theory for the analysis of the post-colonial literature. There has been tremendous interest generated by the publication of Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1978). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin gave new ideas about the interpretation of post-colonial studies. They published *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (1989). The term "postcolonial" became widely popular among the critics and theorists. New terms were coined since the publication of the books on post-colonialism. The terms "Commonwealth" and "Third World" became popular. The literature of the colonial period was re-examined and re-interpreted. The colonizers promoted their own culture and philosophy and used strategies to remain in power. Franz Fanon has observed that the colonial powers distorted and disrupted the history and culture of the colonized and exploited their resources in a callous manner. The critics have explored the interactions between European nations and the societies they colonized in the modern period. Bhabha published *Location of Culture* and Salman Rushdie published *The Imaginative Homeland* to investigate the complexities of a world marked by colonial and neo-colonial wars. John Noyes is a famous cultural theorist who examines relating to travel and concludes that "these texts contributed in the making of the colonial space" (John Noyes 19) Noyes investigates the colonial space and the life of the migrants living in the colonies. He is of the opinion that the migrants who travel in other lands leaving their homelands are bound to suffer cultural dislocation as their cultural rituals are not prevalent in the colonies in which they live. According to Noyes, colonization is 'an expression of social forces which

structure subjectivity in a certain manner” (John Noyes 19). Fanon expands dislocation as follows:

Every colonized people have to face the traumas of cultural dislocation. ... Migrants have to face the difficulties in the alien land. They confront language barrier, cultural barrier and other unimaginable challenges while living in the foreign soil (Fanon 18).

Doreen Massey gives her own perspective and contends that “globalization has dissolved geographical boundaries and has dispensed with the idea of ‘place as a source of belonging, identity and security’” (Massey 14). Rosemary, J. George in *Politics of Home* (1996) discusses in detail the concept of “home and belonging” taken by the post-colonial writers. She argues that in literature ‘imagining a home is as political an act as is imagining the nation’, as both are a ‘display of hegemonic power’ (Rosemary 9). He continues her arguments and answers the question “Where, then is home? thus:

Home is the dream of each individual in this world and quest for home is found in most of the diasporic literature of post –colonial era. The prominent writers such as V.S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie have expressed the theme of home and settlement in their fiction. Home is a place to escape to and a place to escape from. Home is very important since to most of the people fail to get home in their entire life. It is the desired place and people fought for it; home means community living (Rosemary 9).

Bhabha became famous in the domain of post-colonial criticism coining the words like “diaspora, displacement and relocation “All these terms have become very popular depicting the dynamic nature of culture. Bhabha has rejected the traditional view of historical narratives giving the cosmic ideas linked with cultures. Kapchan and Strong observe thus:

Hybridization has become very popular these days among the cultural theorists. The term defines the hybrid status of the diasporas who are settled abroad. The metaphor of hybridity is used to characterize the status of the diasporas. In the process of assimilation the diasporas compromise with their native values and traditions to find a space in the alien land (Kapchan 246).

What is hybridization? Bakhtin aptly observes thus:

It is a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation, or by some other factor (Bakhtin 358).

The term hybridity has become very popular in postcolonial cultural criticism. Homi Bhabha has analyzed and investigated the term hybridity giving the example of *Robinson Crusoe* written by Defoe. Mr. Friday comes in contact with Robinson who is lonely in the tribal island and is quite ignorant of the climate and threats of the island. His friendship with Friday helps him to encounter the threats of the tribal island. Friday also learn from Robinson the language and many good

things. He becomes hybrid because he has to give up some of the conventional ideas of his primitive religion. Bhabha made serious efforts to resolve and point out the contradictions in the colonial discourse. He has also highlighted the ambivalence of the colonizers. He is treated as the “Other” by the colonized. His analysis is largely based on the Lacanian theory of mimicry. Bhabha sees “the colonizer as a snake in the grass who, speaks in "a tongue that is forked” (Bhabha 85).

Edward Said in his essay “The Time of Hybridity”, published in *Philosophy and Social Criticism* talked about the peculiar intellectual “pleasures” of migrancy and “exile”. Said praised hybridity as creative, unconventional, methodologically liberating and eccentrically enlivening neither erase the awkwardness of such efforts nor alleviate the “envying those around you who have always been at home, the notion of hybridity describes the process of constructive fusion and mixture of cultural identities, knowledges, languages, races, sexualities, and ethnicities” (Said 6). In this sense, hybridity is akin to what Mikhail Bakhtin termed the unconscious “organic” or unintentional hybridization Hybridity refers to “that unstable and interactive open spatiality in which selves and othernesses become enmeshed, decentered, and recentered” (Bakhtin 7). Rita Felski argues in *The Doxa of Difference* (1997) that

Metaphors of hybridity depict the fractured identity of the diasporas while living in an alien land. The term is linked with the identity of the individuals but this identity depends on the urge of the diaspora who struggle to assimilate in the colonized culture (Felski 12).

Current critical interest in the concept of hybridity has been largely influenced by the work of Homi K. Bhabha, who has encouraged writers to explore

the causes of cultural conflicts. Hybridity is not a discourse about cancellations and reversals. Bhabha in his *The Location of Culture* has spoken about hybridity and its power to create the “third space”. Bhabha thus defines hybridity as ‘a problematic of colonial representation’ (Bhabha 156).

Robert J.C. Young further elaborates hybridity in his *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (1997). He observes that the history of the English novel reveals the themes of fractured identities. Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* deals with “imbrications of the two cultures within each other.” In the modern novels James, Forster, Cary, Lawrence, Joyce, Greene, Rhys are “concerned with incorporating the culture of the other, whether of class, ethnicity or sexuality; they often fantasize crossing into it” (*Rhys* 2). Young begins with some theoretical considerations about the nature of hybridity and culture. This economy is “perpetuated by the (typically) hetero-sexual transgression of racial lines, hybridity, which at once organizes and collapses cultural boundaries constructed around race” (Young 53). The post-colonial novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini have shown that hybridity provides an “elasticity capable of embracing incompatible cultural discourses and practices; this kind of multiplicity will imply richness rather than sterility or loss of integrity” (Hosseini, *Kite Runner* 6). In the words of Giles Deleuze “hybrid is all the more total for being fragmented” (Deleuze 6). In the words of Stuart Hall

Cultural identity is a matter of becoming, as well as of being. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture (Hall 225).

Bhabha observes that colonial power invents the tools to control and dominate the marginalized people. Frantz Fanon used certain metaphors in his book and used the term "black skin/white masks," to depict the plight of the diaspora. Naipaul used the term "mimic men" to describe the nature of the colonized people. Diaspora implies people who are "scattered" away from their original homes. Scattering, as Homi K. Bhabha observes, becomes a gathering. Regional groups, racial groups, caste and class groups represent various sub-cultures existing within the society. Each sub-culture may have its own folkways, customs, etiquettes, mores, beliefs, practices which eventually result into cultural collision. Most of the characters of Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini are displaced and diffused people. Diffusion is one of the main sources of cultural collision and social change. The spread of the modernization process around the world represents the diffusion of industrialization from the advanced to less developed societies is the most outstanding contemporary social change.

Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1965. His father was a diplomat in the Afghan Foreign Ministry and his mother taught Farsi and history at a high school in Kabul. In 1976, the Foreign Ministry relocated the Hosseini family to Paris. They were ready to return to Kabul in 1980, but by then their homeland had witnessed a bloody communist coup and the invasion of the Soviet Army. The Hosseinis sought and were granted political asylum in the United States, and in September 1980 moved to San Jose, California. Hosseini entered the University of California, San Diego. Hosseini published his debut novel *The Kite Runner* in 2003, and he became an international bestseller. In May 2007, his second novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, was published. Hosseini published his third novel, *And the*

Mountains Echoed on May 21, 2013. Khaled Hosseini appeared as a new writer writing about the life and culture of the people of Afghanistan. He gave an insight into the life and culture and the problems of the Afghans who became the victims of the Taliban. His novels depict the miserable condition of the colonized people who suffered violence and human degradation. Khaled Hosseini depicts the hybrid identity of Amir in *The Kite Runner* who recounts the long journey of his life from Kabul to Peshawar and finally from there to San Francisco, America. Khaled Hosseini depicts the critical themes such as ethnic clash and its impact on the protagonists who are caught in a cross fire and overwhelmed by external forces in his *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Their inner lives are perturbed by the brutal forces of external world. They are compelled to take decisions to escape from revolutions, wars, and extremism. The plot of the *Kite Runner* seriously deals with the sensitive issues of loss of identity, betrayal and expiation of Amir who decides to go back to his motherland for moral and spiritual rejuvenation. The novel unfolds the journey of a diaspora who is always haunted by his childhood memories. Hosseini refers to Amir's "un-atoned sins" that have plagued his conscience. The phone call from Rahim Khan ruins the happiness of Amir. He begins his epic journey back to Kabul to expiate his sins. He determines to save the life of Sohrab, the only son of Hassan from the clutches of Taliban. Amir's journey home is packed with cultural conflict, violence and violations. Amir is in psychological dilemma since he is leading a settled life in America with his wife Soraya. Amir articulates his tension thus:

I have a wife in America, a home, a career and a family". But how could I pack up and go back home when my actions may have cost Hassan a chance at those very same things? And what Rahim Khan revealed to me changed things. Made me see how my entire life, long before the winter of 1975, dating back to when that singing Hazara woman was still nursing me, had been a cycle of lies betrayals and secret. ” (*Kite Runner* 238).

Khaled Hossini narrates an interesting episode to depict the fracture of identity of his father Baba who lost all his strength and vitality while living in America. His beard was growing grey and this loss of youth is linked with the cultural decline of Kabul. This physical decline reflects his loss of power within America. Baba and Amir lived for a long time in California but they could never assimilate in the American culture. Amir and his father Baba were treated as the “Others”. Hosseini vividly describes the scenes of cultural collision, the destruction of art and culture by the Talibans, the scene of hurling stones at the adulterers by the crowd till the death of the victims. Hosseini visualizes the scene of tossing the dead bodies of innocent people and tossed them into the trucks. Hosseini has highlighted the brutality of the Taliban in simple and effective language. Assef is presented as an evil incarnate in the novel that enjoys sadistic pleasure in butchering innocent people in the name of Allah, decimating the non-Pashtuns mercilessly. Amir ridicules Assef for his mission of vandalism in the name of God: “Stoning adulterers? Raping children? Flogging women for wearing high heels? Massacring Hazaras? All in the name of Islam?” (Hosseini, *Kite Runner* 248).

Assef's extreme hatred for the Hazaras results into the marginalization and oppression of the non-Pashtuns in Kabul. Assef compares the Hazara with "garbage". He uses derogative language for Hazaras treating them as the "other." Kabul is compared to a "beautiful mansion littered with garbage (249). Assef is shocked to know that Amir has come from America to take Hazara boy Sohrab. Assef thinks it a futile effort of Amir to save the life of Sohrab "I wonder . . . I wonder why you've come all this way, Amir, come all this way for a Hazara?" (249). Assef challenges Amir for a duel, the bloody fight begins in the closed room according to the deal. Assef used to laugh at Hassan for being Hazara and raped Hassan during his boyhood. Hassan and his wife Farzana became the victims of inhuman cruelty of the Taliban as reported by Rahim Khan to Amir. Hassan protested but he was taken in the street and shot dead. Sohrab is so much under the psychological stress that he does not want to live any more in Kabul as he tells Amir: "... they did things . . . the bad man and the other two . . . they did things . . . did things to me" (278). It was Farid who describes the scene of destruction and wholesale massacre committed by the Taliban while driving his car. Farid realistically depicts the gruesome scene of murder and burning of the house. His village was burnt and the Taliban mercilessly assassinated him and his family (214).

Hosseini depicts another horrible episode to reveal the traumatic experiences of the people of Kabul. Amir had given "a hundred thousand Afghanis, or the equivalent of about three dollars" (217) to a beggar who turned out to be none but Dr. Rasul, a learned Professor of the University. His eyes wide open to know that this old man who is struggling for survival now, was the colleague of his mother Sofia Akrami at the university in the past. But the cultural collision had robbed the

old beggar of those sweet moments and the comforts of life. Once, a lecturer, now he is waiting and begging in the street of Kabul to earn his bread. His health is at its worst condition with “his left eyelid dropped over an empty socket” (217) suffering from cough and cold. The clash of cultures depleted all sources of the people of Kabul, made them wretched and miserable and drained away all the energies of life. They lost everything, the happiness and the will to live and the inner strength.

The Post-colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini explores their concern for the subalterns, their philosophy about exile and home, and their themes about homelessness, cultural dislocation and poignant diasporic experiences. The socio-cultural perspective helps to explore the various cross-currents and ethnic pluralities discussed in their post-colonial fiction. Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini investigate the problems of the migrants who suffer displacement, marginalization and dispossession. From the psychoanalytical perspective the protagonists suffer rootlessness, fragmentation and alienation in their life. The Indians migrated to Trinidad and other regions of Africa as indentured coolies; they lived a similar experience of uprooting and displacement. They were subjected to all types of humiliations; abuses were freely hurled on them and were oppressed. The Indian coolies occupied the barracks inhabited by African slaves; their imperial masters were used to manage the workforce by the use of whip. The psychological implications of this harsh treatment were severe, and there were many cases of suicide, wife murder and mental derangement among the coolies. Dr. Robert Grieve’s *The Asylum Journal* records the impact of racial oppression under colonial rule on the coolies of East India. During the slavery, the colonized work with indentured

system that is identical with migration. This migration causes the existence of a population so-called diaspora in the new land. According to Tyson in *Critical Theory Today*,” diaspora is a population of the colonized descendants who are separated from their native homeland” (Tyson 421).

Bapsi Sidhwa published her first novel *The Pakistani Bride* (1987) depicting the plight of women and the theme of cultural collision. The novel hinges on interaction of two cultures, the tribal people and the urban plain. The plot of the novel revolves around the survival struggle of Zaitoon to escape from the cruel Pakistani tribal society. Zaitoon lost her parents and was married into a feudal boy who believed in male. Sidhwa presented the plight of Zaitoon and Carol who become the victims of cultural collision. Both are exploited by men. Life of Zaitoon is miserable as she is persecuted in every possible manner. Dipika Sahai remarks:

The Pakistani Bride is a lyrical cry against the mental and spiritual torture of women. Sidhwa has used complex metaphors to depict the multiple agonies of Zaitoon who represent all the women of Pakistan. The plot of the novel depicts the poignant tale of a woman who is tortured; she is treated like a commodity by the tribal head. It is a tale of cultural conflict of Punjabi culture and the tribal culture of Kohistani tribe (Sahai 85-86).

Zaitoon and Carol are victims of cultural disparity; their sufferings begin because of their failure to assimilate in a new culture. Sakhi’s prejudice about the inferiority of Zaitoon’s ethnicity results into her agony. The migrants often suffer from double consciousness abuses her because he feels that he is superior and has

the natural right to intimidate her and prove his dominance as her husband. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* observes. It means that double consciousness is the issue that relates to image as the sign of authenticity by means of the negotiation for displacement. Kevin Bales in his book *Defining and Measuring Modern Slavery* (2005) gives a concrete analysis of slavery thus:

Slavery is defined as “a relationship in which one person is controlled by violence” In this relationship the purpose is to exploit and coerce the other. He is all bent to exploit and harass and persecute the other In slavish relationship no free movement is allowed. Zaitoon leads a slavish life in the tribal society (Kevin Bales 1).

The migrants always struggle for home in the alien land since they are treated as the “Other”. The cultural theorists believe that home is a social and cultural construct, as the displaced protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini look for home in alien land. They suffer alienation and displacement because of homelessness. Edward Said wrote his trilogy *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1979) and *Covering Islam* (1981), and brought revolution in post-colonial criticism. He has discussed and investigated the paradoxical nature of identity. In the globalized world the issue of identity has become very complex. The nature of identity in the modern society is conditioned and framed by the cultural interaction. Said’s cultural theory depicts complexity of cultural identity. Said’s cultural analysis has reinterpreted the human relationships in post-colonial society. Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) has given us new relationship between the colonial powers and the colonized. The significance of the

worldliness of these texts is that, they demonstrate that there is no empire without its culture. *Culture and Imperialism* also rehearses a favorite topic of Said's: "how should the post-colonial world react to the dominance of imperialism." Peter Wade in his article "Hybridity Theory and Kinship Thinking" published in *Cultural Studies* discussed the problems faced by the immigrant writers and observed thus:

In the present world the meaning of hybridity has changed. The nature of hybridity has completely changed. What we have is a dualism in hybridity. There are two kinds of hybridity; one which is dynamic and progressive; the other subversive and anti-essentialist (Peter Wade 602).

In the Post-Colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled terms "Other", "Exile" and "Marginalization" have historical and cultural significance. The critical theories of Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Edward Said can be conveniently applied to explore the causes of cultural collision depicted in the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Paul Gilroy in his historical defense of the multicultural society in *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2002) analyzes the impact of race, politics and culture on the colonized people and their multilayered traumas of life.

Homi Bhabha has given his theory of "Other" in his essay *The Other Question*. In his book *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha talks about his famous "concept of 'fixity'". He contends that fixity is the "sign of cultural/historical/racial difference" (Bhabha 18). Bhabha also gives his famous and much talked theory of

“the stereotype”. Bhabha defines it as a "form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always ‘in place, and what is unknown. When the migrants leave their homeland they don’t know the nature of identity but soon they realize their fractured nature of identity. For example, Fanon observes that “Blacks are savage brutes.” The concept of identity is well explained by Bhabha giving an example of Defoe’s novel *Robinson Crusoe*. Robinson is feeling lonely in the tribal island; he has no body to talk and the weather of the island is very uncertain and inhuman. The tribal people are man eaters and life is very hard on the island. His friendship with Mr. Friday brings new hope in his life as he learns so many things from his tribal friend. Mr. Friday learns English and his identity get fractured. In the post-colonial society the growing trend is towards multiculturalism. Franz Fanon on the other hand observes that the colonizers use the hegemonic devices to obliterate the culture of the colonized. He says that “Colonial domination is total in disrupting and distorting history and culture of the colonized” (Fanon 236). Gramsci has argued that hegemony is a reality in the colonized society. It means leadership and domination; the cultural leadership results into the loss of identity and distortion of history. Colonialism means, disfigurement and destruction of history and culture. The colonial rulers propagated a false belief they are powerful to “lighten their darkness. “ But in reality the colonizers encouraged degradation, and bestiality. Conrad has discussed this issue in detail in his *The Heart of Darkness*. Stuck in London but dreaming of Jamaica, Irie in Zadie Smith’s *White Teeth* thinks the following:

There is no myth about the sufferings of Irie. His sufferings are reality and there is no denying the fact. He suffers in his own homeland. He suffers all the diasporic pain and anguish. He lives in illusion and is caught in the web of darkness of alienation and cultural dislocation (Fanon 402).

Monica Ali was born on 20 October 1967 in Dhaka and Bangladeshi. She immigrated to England in 1971. Her mother Hatim was a teacher and father Simon Torrence was a British citizen. She was educated in Oxford and her debut novel *Brick Lane* was published in 2003 and she got Man Booker Prize for this novel. She became an international celebrity because of her concern to raise the cry of women suffering alienation and sexual oppression in the patriarchal society Monica Ali in her *Brick Lane* (2007) depicts the diasporic experiences of the protagonists who leave Bangladesh and go to London. *Brick Lane* revolves around Nazneen is a poor Bangladeshi girl who is married to a man “at least forty years old” (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 17). Interestingly, Nazneen is trapped inside her apartment upon her arrival in London. Her vision is limited like her small window of her flat which opens to “the dead grass and broken paving stones” (17). Nazneen gets the first to come into contact with the external world as she watches the tattoo lady who looks like a magical witch on the other side of her apartment. Nazneen soon starts identifying with the tattoo old white woman. She intently looks at the window and watches the body of the mysterious woman with surprise and fantasy:

The tattoo lady mysteriously scratched her skin; her arms and shoulders and even the lower part of her buttocks. Her major portion of her body was covered in ink and this surprised Nazneen; her major portion of the body was covered with ink. Her body was mysterious and she looked ugly to her horror (18).

Brick Lane of Monica Ali examines the various forms of violence, the physical violence, mental violence double standards of patriarchy and sexual exploitation in the diasporic location as well as in the home country. Monica Ali has compared the Nazneen's socio-cultural background with the western culture of the tattoo lady who does not mind the exposure of her body. Nazneen was really confused and bewildered to look at the exotic body of the tattoo lady who enjoys freedom. Nazneen is also dazzled to see the "strange hair [...] pumped up like a snake's hood" (57). The white woman is horrified to look at her and she walked in a mysterious and bizarre style. Spivak observes that women in the post colonial society are treated as the other the way Nazneen and Hasina are treated. The plot of the novel depicts multifarious experiences of Nazneen. She is a young woman of Bangladesh brought by her husband Chanu to settle in London. She has to confront a new culture and new society. She feels alienated as her apartment in London is like a cage. She has to depend on her husband but as the novel progresses she breaks all the chains and struggles to assimilate in the local alien culture compromising with her native culture.

The impact of cultural collision is detrimental on the mind and sensibility of the protagonists of Nasrin. The term Diaspora has been borrowed from the Greek

meaning “a scattering or sowing of seeds”. All the cultural theorists such as Homi Bhabha, Edward Said and Paul Gilroy observe that diaspora is the movement of people sharing common ethnic identity. They are forced to leave their homeland and struggle to settle in an alien land. Diaspora cultural growth is linked with the variety of cultures; the diversity of people and their quest for a space and struggle for settlement. Migrants embrace different traditions and customs with view to assimilate in the local culture. The globalization also means the development and changes in culture, traditions and social norms. Diaspora suffers the communication problem while living in the alien land. They have to assimilate in the local culture since they start learning the language of the local people. When the people of Punjab migrated to London in 1862; they survived after learning English language. Robin Cohen in *Global Diasporas* opines that diaspora is a community of people living together in one country who struggles to assimilate in the local culture and also acknowledged that the old country always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions (Cohen 1).

In the modern globalized world, diaspora is a displaced community from homeland. They are emigrated ethnical group who leave their homeland for affluence and prosperity. They are always in minority in the host country and often struggle to keep their ethnical identity. The basic concepts of Diaspora are their strong love for their homeland and collective ethnical identity and group consciousness. Diaspora is a dispersion of people from their original homeland. Expatriation, extradition, migration and displacement are often used for them. Diaspora fiction depicts the struggle of the migrants to settle and assimilate in the

host land. They are always attached to the homelands. They always long for their native land and remain attached to the traditions and customs of their homeland. The fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini depict the hopes and aspirations and struggles and displacement of the diaspora. Bapsi Sidhwa focuses on the social problems of the migrants which prompt them to leave their homeland. For instance, Nazneen is married to an aged Chanu who takes her to Brick Lane against her wishes. In *Brick Lane* Nazneen experiences racism and hostility, she feels a sense of rootlessness. She struggles for her identity which results into her displacement.

People who leave their homeland are called voluntary diaspora. They leave their homeland in pursuit of earning pounds and dollars and migration in their case is voluntary. They want to expand their business or want to get material opportunities abroad. The advanced technology and communication inspire them to leave their homeland. As Homi Bhabha in *Location of Culture* aptly describes displacement as a “disorienting condition: “the borders between home and world became confused and uncanny”. The present study explores the issues of displacement, expatriation, and marginality experiences by the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Interestingly, the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini deal with issues like migrant culture, hybridity, loss of identity, post-colonial predicament of the people trapped in rigid national identities.

For Taylor, socio-political and educational policies must evince cultural recognition because cultural misrecognition may prevent individuals from being

capable of finding value in their identity. It must be admitted that cultural misrecognition results into cultural displacement and alienation. Cohen asserts that people who lived in colonial plantations had to struggle to emerge, survive, and thrive. Post-colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali transmits a new cultural heritage to next generation that has become a part of collective memory. In this way the writers become chroniclers of the histories of the displaced whose stories will otherwise go unrecorded. The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini are social documents of the culture of dislocation and exile. Their literary and critical texts have become condensed archives of national and ethnic memories. Nazneen is the heroine of *Brick Lane* taken to London by her husband Chanu Ahmad who was forty years old. He had a face like a frog. They would marry and he “would take her back to England with him” (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 17). She is trying to make sense of her life in London's gritty Tower Hamlets. Nazneen had little knowledge of English and most of the time she is confined to her apartment. Nazneen is a migrant from Bangladesh who carries with her the beliefs and a value of Bangladesh with her in the alien land. The novel is packed with her diasporic experiences of alienation and homelessness. The novel deals with the themes of cultural alienation, immigrant experience and the loss of identity of Nazneen who not only has to learn to live with Chanu, but she has to survive in a completely new culture as well. Hassina is another important character in *Brick Lane* who gives additional details of the Bangladeshi society. Her letters describes the psychic pressures of the migrants, the pull of home, the longing of going back home and the feelings of cultural dislocation. It is investigated from

the cultural theories that exile is a major factor that results into cultural collision.

Edward W. Said in his book *Reflections on Exile* writes in the title essay about exile:

Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience.

It is the unbearable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home; its essential sadness can never be surmounted. And while “it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile’s life” (Said 5).

The word ‘exile’ has become very important in these days. It has become multi-dimensional covering a variety of relationships with the mother country. Exile may be forced exile, self imposed exile. In the Indian context perhaps all meanings are true with the migratory movements having been governed by different reasons at different times of history. Economic reasons governed the movement of indentured labour and of trading communities. John Simpson in *The Oxford Book of Exile* writes that exile “is the human condition; and the great upheavals of history have merely added physical expression to an inner fact” (Simpson 2). Anita Badami observes thus: “I was 29 years in India and 10 years here (Canada), so I have one foot in India and a couple of toes here” (Badami 123). In an interview Edward W. Said reflected on the condition of exile:

I think that if one is an intellectual and can understand the meaning and significance of exile; it is a situation when man is exposed to external forces of society and its culture. Exile is a unique experience; it compels man to think in new perspective because he

has to struggle for new identity; his fractured identity I mean. That allows for independence commitment but independence and a certain kind of detachment (Said 13).

In her novel *The Hero's Walk*, Badami's own resolution of the crises of being diasporic is expressed in her affirmation of the blessings of double vision: "we are both doomed and blessed, to be suspended between two worlds, always looking back but with two gorgeous places to inhabit, in our imaginations or our hearts" (Badami 20). All the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini move from one place to the other and often come in clash with the host cultures. The two cultures often overlap and the diaspora have a special regard for their homeland. Their assimilation is limited and quest for identity a constant struggle. In the process of assimilation they suffer alienation and displacement.

Bapsi Sidhwa's *An American Brat* depicts the dilemmas of a Parsee girl who goes to America for higher education and enlightenment. Feroza emerges as a timid and docile girl of Lahore. But as the plot progresses she emerges as a modern girl with her American experience. In America she comes in contact with her uncle Manek who teaches her the American slangs, the American values. Feroza is over excited to know the meaning of American liberty. Feroza comes to know about male prostitutes, the pimps and miniskirt prostitutes. She is also shocked to know about the poverty and stench of filth in USA. Feroza had seen the filth and dirty drains in Lahore so she is not surprised at all. In Pakistan open drains, the pile of debris is a common sight. These sights and smells in Pakistan had developed a tolerance for them. Soon the process of cultural assimilation begins in the life of Feroza. Her

Parsee identity is fractured as Joe teaches her the American way of life. Feroza joins the University of Denver for the hotel Management course. In the campus of American college, she explores a new American life quite different from the Pakistan society. She faces many challenges and soon finds that she has become a different person. Feroza is impacted by the free and liberal environment of America. She comes in contact with David for the first time in America without the knowledge of her parents. Feroza was a religious girl in Pakistan, she was proud of her Parsee religion and culture but her contact with David punctured her Parsee morality. She has fallen in love with David and now she has only David in her mind as she wishes to marry him. Feroza knows that David is a non- Parsee but she determines to resolve the cultural conflict revolting against her Parsee community. One day she came late from the party, it was morning as she left the club and ran all the way carrying her shoes in her hand. She is tired and exhausted as she looks confused. Feroza is quite upset as she finds her identity bulldozed by the forces of change. Feroza is so much intoxicated by the love of Davis that her vision of life got changed. She feels so passionate about David that she writes to her parents about him. Her mother Zareen is shocked to know about her mad love for David in the alien land. She rushes to America to dissuade her daughter to marry a non- Parsee boy. She frankly tells Feroza that she cannot marry David as her elders would consider it as her moral transgression. She would be cut off from her family and religion. She would never be allowed to enter the Parsee places of worship. She wouldn't be allowed to attend the funeral rites of her mother or father. When Feroza does not agree to her wish, Zareen rages: "I should never have let you go so far away. Look what it's done to you – you have become an American Brat" (Bapsi

Sidhwa, *American Brat* 279). Zareen cautions of her the consequences of inter-caste marriage. Feroza is intimidated by the threats of cultural collision in this part of the novel.

Zareen meets David and deals him psychologically because she knows she cannot intimidate him as force will be fruitless in this case. Zareen handles the situation intelligently, and a psychological manner. She gives fabulous gifts to David's relatives to win their confidence. She gives a new confidence to David and declares that the marriage will be a big affair. David fails to understand the inner intentions of Zareen who pretends to agree to the marriage of Feroza with David. However, Zareen at the same time gives the knowledge of Parsee culture and traditions. She tells him that once Feroza marries him she will be totally boycotted by the Parse community. She talks about the rigid rituals and ceremonies of Parsee community which repel David. She explains to David the Parsee wedding rituals and customs. Zareen plays her trump card and intimidates David by telling him how different their cultures are. She slowly drives a wedge between him and Feroza. Zareen performs a ritual to cast out the spell of the evil eye that afflicted Feroza. David is shocked and he recoiled in horror. David orthodox and rigid nature of Parsee community and for the first time he becomes conscious of the collision of cultures. He loses no time and realizes the threatening consequences of his marriage with Feroza. He deserts her forever and expresses his typical Americanism. Initially Feroza feels depressed over her break-up with David Press, but gradually she recovers and decides to stay in America. The migrant Feroza has adjusted herself well to a different culture and "there would be no going back for her" (317). Feroza also discovers that there is another side to America's alluring magic "... an 'alien

filth'. So you've seen now, America is not all Saks and skyscrapers" (156). Feroza is depressed at the beginning but soon she starts assimilating into American culture as she refuses to go back to Pakistan to marry any one of the three boys selected for her. Feroza becomes a divided self as she cannot escape from her religion and culture, the music and ghazals and memories of Pakistan. The cultural theorists such as Bhabha and Said have discussed in detail the theory of loss of identity. Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini seriously deal with the painful experiences of fractured identity of their protagonists. Her friendship with Joe brings many changes in her life. Feroza is quite successful in embracing American culture and life style. Interestingly, Feroza is seen, talking and dressing like an American girl. She learns to drive, drink, dance and use the American slang. Her loss of Parsee identity begins with her meeting with David and her furtive meetings of love with him. This relationship brings a U turn in the novel as her parents will never like her to marry outside her caste and religion. The adventure of her mother turns misadventure as she rushes to America to solve this dilemma. David puts in her mind the American culture, freedom and luxuries of life. She is young and beautiful so she must enjoy life on the American land which offers numerous opportunities. David took "her across the uncharted terrain of her emotions" (251). Feroza is so much excited that she not only accompanies him to the bar and takes drinks, but also dances not knowing that she has lost her heart. Feroza has a rosy picture about America as she is seen over excited in the beginning of her journey. The cultural collision begins when Feroza is grilled by the officers at the airport. She starts crying being sensitive and her smarting tears symbolize her shattered dreams about American liberty that her parents talked about. In blaze of

fury she cried out thus: “To hell with you and your damn country. I’ll go back” (58).

Bapsi Sidhwa describes her situation thus in a lyrical style:

She had entered in a surreal world of hushed opulence festooned by all manner of hats propped up on stands and scarves and belts draped here and there like fabulous confetti. The subtle lighting enhanced the plush shimmer of wool and leather and the glowing colours of the silk. Feroza felt she had never seen such luxuriant textures or known the vibrant gloss of true colours (73).

In the *The Crow Eaters of Bapsi Sidhwa* Freddy, Putli and Jerbanoo face the same cultural conflicts: “.... the England of their imagination looked glossy and mesmerizing but in reality the experiences were quite tormenting” (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Crow* 252). When they land in England; on a land of their enchantments all their dreams are shattered and their excitement turns into disillusionment. They are shocked to see the beautiful British girls sweeping streets and working as clerks. They are confused to see girls working as sales girls in the streets. They also find houses with no servants where people had to scrub their own toilet bowls. Thus Jerbanoo cries: “I want to go back to my Lahore. I don’t want to die in a foreign land” (258). Edward Said observes that in the colonized societies coolies lost their identity. He has discussed the painful nature of displacement in his books and lectures. In his famous book on Palestine, *After the Last Sky*, (1986) he observes thus:

The main concern of modern man is to know his Identity. He is always obsessed with the idea that who he is and from where he has come. It is entirely difficult to live in exile with all the shin of native

culture. Those who are in exile are always treated as the other; they have no space to live. They silently suffer collision of culture and displacement and disruption of history and culture (*Said* 16-17).

Said felt alienated and his identity was ruptured because of the colonization of Palestine, he was to examine the imperial discourse of the West, and to weave his cultural analysis with the text of his own identity. Said in all his works demonstrates the fractured identity in a migratory and globalized world. Said has exposed the truth of the colonized society, each migrant feels dislocated, exiled from his homeland. Bill Ashcroft observes that the gist of all Said's cultural theories is that "all cultures are changing constantly, that culture and identity themselves are processes" (Said 5). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin talk about dislocation as the major theme in the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. The term dislocation refers to such cultural and psychological effects of displacement. The abolition of slavery led to the shortage of labour in imperial colonies. There was great rush of migrants who worked as indentured coolies, dislocation describes the experience of those settlers who left their "home" in order to live and work in the colonies. Ashcroft et al call "cultural denigration", referring to practices that make the colonized feel marginal in power, social and cultural relations" (Ashcroft 75). Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini depict the issues of dislocations, migrations, exile, the idea of being unanchored and displaced, and the enigma of displaced protagonists. Bapsi Sidhwa in *An American Brat* depicts the loss of identity of Feroza in a poignant lyrical style. Feroza is now totally transformed as the liberal atmosphere of America has changed her sensibility:

She was a changed girl as their preoccupation with children and servants did not interest her any more. She had developed a broader outlook of life. She had no interest in the endless parties of her parents. She was a changed woman with her own independence and ideas of a bright future (Bapsi Sidhwa, *American Brat* 312).

Feroza reviews her new situation after her separation from David, she knows that she has lost so much but she has gained also a lot. She does not want to go back to Pakistan where there is no security for women, In America she will not be subjected to sexual oppression, marginalization. There is no sight of poverty, filth and dirt, oppression and discrimination. Feroza suffers from the sense of dislocation and of not belonging because of the forces of cultural collision. Feroza's psyche changes with the interaction of her American friends. She emerges as a new woman as she shows an impression of her changed behavior and multicultural attitude. She reveals the impact of the culture of an adopted alien land and brings about a transformation in her personality and life. Her fracture of identity is seen as an inescapable reality in the novel.

Taslina Nasrin was born to Rajab Ali and Idul Ara in the town of Mymensingh in 1962. Her father was a physician, and she followed in his footsteps. Her mother was a devout Muslim. After graduation, she practiced gynaecology at a family planning clinic in Mymensingh, "where she routinely examined young girls who had been raped," and heard women in the delivery room cry out in despair if their baby was a girl. She was reassigned in 1990 to work in Dhaka. Born into a Muslim family she became an atheist over time. In course of writing she took a

feminist approach. In 1982 she fell in love with poet Rudra Mohammad Shahidullah and fled home to marry him; they divorced in 1986. Later she married journalist and editor Nayeemul Islam Khan; they divorced in 1991. In 1991 she married Minar Mahmood, editor of the now defunct weekly Bichinta, they divorced in 1992. Her *Lajja* raised a cry in India and all the Muslim leaders condemned her for her anti-Islam stance and a fatwa of death sentence was issued against her like Rushdie who wrote *The Satanic Verses* and created a sensation in the world.

Taslima Nasrin in her novel *French Lover* depicts the poignant tale of Neelanjana, the Calcutta girl. She is betrayed by her lover Sushant and being depressed she had no option but to accept the proposal of a Punjabi boy settled in France. The idea of going to France excited her so much that she started dreaming of glamour and luxurious life, the flight to France gave wings to her thoughts and expectations. Nila is a modern girl who wants to explore the history and culture of French society. Her husband Kishan Lal is a rich NRI who believes in subjugation of woman. He wants to keep Nila at home being dominated by him but Nila revolts against his patriarchal mind set and took up a meager job to live independently. “Nila got a job, packing computers in boxes: fifteen hundred francs a week” (Nasrin, *French Lover* 35). She broke with her husband and starts his journey of self exploration in the alien land. The process of her cultural collision begins when she takes shelter given by her co-worker Daniella for a short period. Nila was shocked to know the sexual perversion of Daniella who wanted to use Nila for her lesbian pleasures. Nila had painful experiences of men in her young life. Her father, Anirban cheated on her mother to a mistress. His brother Nikhil looks for a fair partner where he himself is brown. Her husband Kishan wanted to treat her as a servant. Sunil was

her very good friend but he broke her faith. Beverly Greene and Janis Sanchez-Hucles (1997) are famous modern psychologists. They argue thus on this situation:

All women in the world are bound to share and experience gender oppression. They know that their oppression is the outcome of historical, social, political, economic changes of the society. It is very hard to change the structure of the society. They gradually learn to live in and tolerate the oppression. To understand any woman therefore, one must incorporate an understanding of many different aspects of her, not merely gender (Sanchez 123).

Simone de Beauvoir in her *The Second Sex*, (1949) observes that “One is not born a woman, one becomes a woman”. Nila rushes to Calcutta to attend to her dying mother. After her mother’s death, she is free to go anywhere and her choice is France. She returns to France with the money her mother gave to her with a dream of a French lover. In France Nila has to experience all types of cultural conflicts every day. She is sad to experience rejection gender discrimination and even psychological oppression. When she lands Paris she is grilled by the immigrant officers, she is the only girl from India who is screened and her passport is scanned by the scanning machine. No one was cornered and isolated except her. During her stay in Paris, Nila feels lonely and alienated as she finds it very hard to assimilate in the French society. Nila tries to make friends to end her alienation with Mojammal, Bachhu and the other migrants working in Kishanlal’s restaurant. Nila desperately struggles to cope up with her sense of “elsewhereness” by creating a home for her in Paris. She tries her best to ward off exile and to prevent its devastation. Edward Said writes:

Exile is very tormenting and it is not so easy to endure the painful tortures that a migrant experience when in exile. He feels a wide gulf between the culture of the local people and the native country. He is haunted by his own country and remembers the customs, traditions, festivals and people of his land. There is a psychological rift between a human being and his homeland; he is nostalgic about his original home and thus seld is distracted (Said 173).

Nila is in exile, her sense of separation from her roots torments her all the time in foreign land. She tries to assimilate in the alien land to reform her fragmented life. But in the process of cultural assimilation she becomes more lonely and disgusted. Thus the immigrants fail to assimilate in the host country and are denied reception as naturalized social counterparts, irrespective of their success and prosperity. The gap between the adopted land and the real home is filled with a sense of fear, loss, with psychic and historical form of repression. All the main protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini experience fission of their selves. When fusion occurs it is only then they learn to confront various faces of society in an alien land. To achieve such a fusion, self has to pass through many experiences. Fusion is the act or the process of fusing, in engineering it is welding in which two or more pieces of metal are joined together by the application of heat, pressure or combination of both. The ambivalent nature of the self is very well described by Jung thus:

Self is a term on the one hand definite enough to convey the essence of human wholeness and on the other hand indefinite enough to express the indescribable and indeterminable nature of this wholeness (Peggy 33).

Thomas Kreilkamp, in his book *The Corrosion of the Self* opines that Nila suffers disintegration of self because of hybrid culture, and this leads to her alienation and constant sufferings. Taslima Nasrin depicts the journey of a self through Nila who struggles for fusion and integration in Paris. Monica Ali was an immigrant and had experienced the diasporic condition. *Brick Lane* is packed with the themes of cultural dislocation, displacement, change and continuity, strangeness and familiarity which Nazneen and Chanu Ahmad encounter living in a complex and multicultural world. The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali depict the agony of diaspora who lived and suffered cultural dislocation and homelessness. In their novels, Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali deal with various national and International themes, but their primary focus is on Pakistan and Bangladesh and England, the East West encounter and the loss of identities. The predominant themes of Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini are migration, exile, multiculturalism and cultural corrosion. Bapsi Sidhwa believes that an immigrant writer must take the risk of pushing creativity to “the limits of what are possible, in the attempt to increase the sum of what it is possible to think” (*Sidhwa* 15).

To conclude, Cultural displacement is inevitable as the immigrant as the migrant is forced to conform to the cultural changes prevalent in the alien land. This inevitable process of cultural assimilation results into homelessness and the loss of identity. Monica Ali develops a fragmentary vision of reality because of her experience of displacement and homelessness. This fragmentation conditions the perception of the past, history, memory and fractured identity. In the critical analysis of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini hybridity, “ambivalence,” and “mimicry” often operates and are discussed.

According to Linda Hutcheon, it is the result “of negotiating the many dualities and multiplicities” that have come to the immigrants and post-colonials (*Hutcheon* vii). Indeed, the migrants experience the psychological pain because of the forces of cultural antagonism.

Chapter 2

Causes of Cultural Collision of the Colonized Women: Alienation and Cultural Dislocation in *Cracking India*, *The Pakistani Bride* and *An American Brat*

The migrants always struggle for home in the alien land since they are treated as the “Other”. The cultural theorists believe that home is a social and cultural construct, as the displaced protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini look for home in alien land. They suffer alienation and displacement because of homelessness. Edward Said wrote his trilogy *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1979) and *Covering Islam* (1981), and brought revolution in post-colonial criticism. He has discussed and investigated the paradoxical nature of identity. In the globalized world the issue of identity has become very complex. The nature of identity in the modern society is conditioned and framed by the cultural interaction. Said’s cultural theory depicts complexity of cultural identity. Said’s cultural analysis has reinterpreted the human relationships in post-colonial society. Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) has given us new relationship between the colonial powers and the colonized. The significance of the worldliness of these texts is that, they demonstrate that there is no empire without its culture. *Culture and Imperialism* also rehearses a favorite topic of Said’s: “how should the post-colonial world react to the dominance of imperialism”. Peter Wade in his article “Hybridity Theory and Kinship Thinking” published in *Cultural Studies* discussed the problems faced by the immigrant writers and observed thus:

In the present world the meaning of hybridity has changed. The nature of hybridity has completely changed. What we have is a dualism in hybridity. There are two kinds of hybridity; one which is dynamic and progressive; the other subversive and anti-essentialist (Peter Wade 602).

In the Post-Colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled terms “Other”, “Exile” and “Marginalization” have historical and cultural significance. The critical theories of Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Edward Said can be conveniently applied to explore the causes of cultural collision depicted in the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Paul Gilroy in his historical defense of the multicultural society in *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2002) analyzes the impact of race, politics and culture on the colonized people and their multilayered traumas of life. The word ‘exile’ has become very important in these days. It has become multi-dimensional covering a variety of relationships with the mother country. Exile may be forced exile, self imposed exile. In the Indian context perhaps all meanings are true with the migratory movements having been governed by different reasons at different times of history. Economic reasons governed the movement of indentured labour and of trading communities. John Simpson in *The Oxford Book of Exile* writes that exile “is the human condition; and the great upheavals of history have merely added physical expression to an inner fact” (Simpson 2). Anita Badami observes thus: “I was 29 years in India and 10 years here (Canada), so I have one foot in India and a couple of toes here” (Badami 123). In an interview Edward W. Said reflected on the condition of exile:

I think that if one is an intellectual and can understand the meaning and significance of exile; it is a situation when man is exposed to external forces of society and its culture. Exile is a unique experience; it compels man to think in new perspective because he has to struggle for new identity; his fractured identity I mean. That allows for independence commitment but independence and a certain kind of detachment (Said 13).

In her novel *The Hero's Walk*, Badami's own resolution of the crisis of being diasporic is expressed in her affirmation of the blessings of double vision: "we are both doomed and blessed, to be suspended between two worlds, always looking back but with two gorgeous places to inhabit, in our imaginations or our hearts" (Badami 20). The protagonists move from one place to the other and often come in clash with the host cultures. The two cultures often overlap and the diaspora have a special regard for their homeland. Their assimilation is limited and quest for identity a constant struggle. In the process of assimilation they suffer alienation and displacement.

Homi Bhabha has given his theory of "Other" in his essay *The Other Question*. In his book *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha talks about his famous "concept of 'fixity'. He contends that fixity is the "sign of cultural/historical/racial difference" (Bhabha 18). Bhabha also gives his famous and much talked theory of "the stereotype". Bhabha defines it as a "form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place, and what is unknown. When the migrants leave their homeland they don't know the nature of identity but soon they

realize their fractured nature of identity. For example, Fanon observes that “Blacks are savage brutes.” The concept of identity is well explained by Bhabha giving an example of Defoe’s novel *Robinson Crusoe*. Robinson is feeling lonely in the tribal island; he has no body to talk and the weather of the island is very uncertain and inhuman. The tribal people are man eaters and life is very hard on the island. His friendship with Mr. Friday brings new hope in his life as he learns so many things from his tribal friend. Mr. Friday learns English and his identity get fractured. In the post-colonial society the growing trend is towards multiculturalism. Franz Fanon on the other hand observes that the colonizers use the hegemonic devices to obliterate the culture of the colonized. He says that “Colonial domination is total in disrupting and distorting history and culture of the colonized” (Fanon 236). Gramsci has argued that hegemony is a reality in the colonized society. It means leadership and domination; the cultural leadership results into the loss of identity and distortion of history. Colonialism means, disfigurement and destruction of history and culture. The colonial rulers propagated a false belief they are powerful to “lighten their darkness. “ But in reality the colonizers encouraged degradation, and bestiality. Conrad has discussed this issue in detail in his *The Heart of Darkness*. Stuck in London but dreaming of Jamaica, Irie in Zadie Smith’s *White Teeth* thinks the following:

There is no myth about the sufferings of Irie. His sufferings are reality and there is no denying the fact. He suffers in his own homeland. He suffers all the diasporic pain and anguish. He lives in illusion and is caught in the web of darkness of alienation and cultural dislocation (Fanon 402).

In the modern globalized world diaspora is a displaced community from homeland. They are emigrated ethnical group who leave their homeland for affluence and prosperity. They are always in minority in the host country and often struggle to keep their ethnical identity. The basic concepts of diaspora are their strong love for their homeland and collective ethnical identity and group consciousness. Diaspora is a dispersion of people from their original homeland. Expatriation, extradition, migration and displacement are often used for them. Diaspora fiction depicts the struggle of the migrants to settle and assimilate in the host land. They are always attached to the homelands. They always long for their native land and remain attached to the traditions and customs of their homeland. The fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini depict the hopes and aspirations and struggles and displacement of the diaspora. Bapsi Sidhwa focuses on the social problems of the migrants which prompt them to leave their homeland. For instance, Nazneen is married to an aged Chanu who takes her to London against her wishes. In London Nazneen experiences racism and hostility, she feels a sense of rootlessness. She struggles for her identity which results into her displacement. People who leave their homeland are called voluntary diaspora. They leave their homeland in pursuit of earning pounds and dollars and migration in their case is voluntary. They want to expand their business or want to get material opportunities abroad. The advanced technology and communication inspire them to leave their homeland. As Homi Bhabha in *Location of Culture* aptly describes displacement as a “disorienting condition: “the borders between home and world became confused and uncanny.” The present study explores the issues of displacement, expatriation, and marginality experiences by the protagonists of Bapsi

Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Interestingly, the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini deal with issues like migrant culture, hybridity, loss of identity, post-colonial predicament of the people trapped in rigid national identities.

For Taylor, socio-political and educational policies must evince cultural recognition because cultural misrecognition may prevent individuals from being capable of finding value in their identity. It must be admitted that cultural misrecognition results into cultural displacement and alienation. Ruby Cohen asserts that people who lived in colonial plantations had to struggle to emerge, survive, and thrive. Post-colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali transmits a new cultural heritage to next generation that has become a part of collective memory. In this way the writers become chroniclers of the histories of the displaced whose stories will otherwise go unrecorded. The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini are social documents of the culture of dislocation and exile. Their literary and critical texts have become condensed archives of national and ethnic memories.

Bapsi Sidhwa was born 11. August 1938; she spent most of her time in Lahore and it is no wonder that most of her novels deal with the culture of Lahore. Lahore is known for old Muslim culture and values; the city provides an important setting in all of Sidhwa's novels. Sidhwa has given many interviews; she expressed her bold views in *Monsoon Magazine*. Sidhwa in her interviews clearly admitted that Lenny is an autobiographical character. In her childhood she also suffered from polio. Sidhwa had polio during her childhood and this resulted in her loneliness. Sidhwa

grew up in a strict Parsi, middle-class household. Bapsi Sidhwa was a prolific writer who published *The Crow Eaters* (1990), *Ice-Candy Man* (1988), *The Pakistani Bride* (1990), *An American Brat* (1993) and a collection of short stories. Her novel *The Ice-Candy Man* is a partition novel. *The Crow Eaters* narrates the impact of cultural collision on the life of the Parsee community and can be considered as a Parsee saga.

Early history of Parsee is quite interesting and adventurous. Parsee migrated to India in 7th Century. They struggled for a long time to settle in Sanjan but later migrated to Bombay. Then after time they shifted to other parts of India. The Parsee community was in a dilemma to maintain their original identity. For them it was a challenge to maintain their cultural purity and always resisted the invasion of external alien cultural forces. They continued their old traditions and cultural norms and resisted all the changes of alien country. Parsee is known for compromise and adjustment and they can adapt to any environment. They can assimilate in the diverse cultural life of India in a remarkable manner. With the passage of time the Parsee feared physical and cultural extinction. Bapsi Sidhwa knew that her community is facing physical and cultural extinction and has tried to depict the cultural corrosion through her novels. She took up the challenge to record their cultural dilemmas, hence their problems of assimilation and adaptability becomes important in the novels of Sidhwa. She uses the images and symbols drawn from their cultural traditions and customs. No wonder Bapsi Sidhwa loads her novels with Parsee cultural norms, rituals and values. She has loaded her plots with religious words and images and metaphors. Sidhwa has made efforts to explore the Parsee psyche in her novels. In her novels, Sidhwa portrays the fears which are haunting the

Parsee community. These fears are the product of cultural collision, displacement and marginalization. The Parsee community is suffering from sterility and the loss of ethnic stability. Bapsi Sidhwa was an eight year old girl when she witnessed the horrifying scenes of violence at the time of partition. She was a young bride when she lived in the city of Bombay. Bapsi Sidhwa then moved to Lahore and settled in Pakistan. She loved the city of Lahore so much that all her novels are either set in Lahore or in Karachi.

Bapsi Sidhwa had personal experiences and observations of two big cities of Pakistan, Lahore and Karachi. Her family belonged to the elite class of Lahore. In all her novels she espoused the values of Parsee community. Bapsi Sidhwa is a powerful modern feminist of Lahore. Her novels *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) and *Cracking India* (1988) explore issues of marginalization, displacement, and cultural dislocation. *Cracking India* describes the harrowing tale of Partition days when the lofty ideal of nationalism was bartered for communal thinking, resulting in devastation, political absurdities and deranged social sensibilities. Sidhwa has portrayed the political anxiety and social insecurity suffered by the masses during the Partition days. The unfortunate partition led to the largest forced migration of population, the demographic dislocation, cultural wars and endless plight of men, women and children who suffered homelessness. People who have survived this holocaust, or witnessed it from a distance try to exorcise this past through memories. The partition novels depict the scenes of violence, rapes, and traumas of cultural dislocation. There are so many novels which deal with the themes of cultural collision and prominent among them are Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges*, B. Raj's *The Dark*

Dancer, and Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* are expressions of colliding cultures. Sidhwa was a keen observer of men and their manners. She witnessed all the scenes of barbarity; riots and burning of houses during partition. She was so much shocked to witness the inhuman cruelty that she documented her experiences in her famous novels *The Cracking India* (1993) and *The Pakistani Bride*. (1983) Bapsi Sidhwa's novels are set in Lahore and Karachi where she spent most of her life. Lahore plays a vital role in shaping her creative sensibilities, and forms a setting for almost all her works. In the *Introduction: City Beloved*, she states:

I spent most of my time in Lahore and Karachi; both the cities are the setting of my novels because I have been deeply rooted in the life and manners of the people of these cities. Lahore and the city of eight million provides the geographical location of my novels. I am greatly fascinated by the romance of these two cities. To belong to Lahore is to be steeped in its romance, to inhale with each breath an intensity of feeling that demands expression (Sidhwa xi).

The critics have hailed Sidhwa as a powerful feminist and a realist. Her novels depict the sensitive issues of cultural assimilation and cultural dislocation. She is known for her post-colonial perceptions of life. She depicts the issues of displacement, marginalization and cultural collision. The plots of *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) and *Cracking India* show the cultural corrosion and its impact on the lives of people. Sidhwa has projected her vision of love, marriage and sexuality with the layers of the issues of corrosion of culture. Sidhwa depicts the marginalized condition of women in the post-colonial society; they are treated as the objects of sexual satisfaction. P.R. Singh has examined the themes and issues of Sidhwa in his

latest book *Bapsi Sidhwa* published in 2005. The learned critic holds that novels of Sidhwa are the representative of post-colonial consciousness and contain all the elements of diasporic literature. Her women protagonists are autobiographical as they exhibit all the experiences that Sidhwa had experienced in her personal life. Her women are not rebellious; they love to adapt and are submissive. They try to confront with the societal and cultural pressures. They are the victims of psychic pressures because their identity is lost in their struggle. Life is full of dangers and fears but they fight with the forces of patriarchy and orthodox rules and regulations of society (Sidhwa 22).

Bapsi Sidhwa published her famous novel *Ice-Candy-Man* and she became an international celebrity. The plot of the novel depicts the traumatic experiences of the people who witnessed the naked dance of death and destruction. The central protagonist is a small girl Lenny is the main commentator of events. Lenny is very shrewd in observing the events and reporting them faithfully. The plot of *Ice-Candy-Man* depicts the terrifying scenes of cruelty, human loss and dislocation in the most poignant and lyrical language. Sidhwa reports that society of Lahore is crumbling because of the rising wave of suspicion and distrust between two communities. Lenny reports the scenes of barbarity and cruelty; all the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs are seen crazy to kill the other. The characters and events of the novel highlight the scenes of vanity, hypocrisy and self-deception. Khushwant Singh in his review in *The Tribune* has commented that *Ice-Candy-Man* is a great creation of Bapsi Sidhwa. Githa Hariharan also eulogized Sidhwa for her verisimilitude and for her faithful depiction of the turmoil of the partition era. No wonder, the protagonists of Sidhwa are often confronted with the new environment of alien culture and find

their life threatened by the external forces. In such situations they struggle to assimilate and the result is loss of identity and dislocation of culture. *The Pakistani Bride* is packed with the scenes of social and political unrest caused by the cultural wars. In a disordered society, women are treated as tradable commodities by the feudal lords of mountainous tribe. The novel offers a deeper analysis of war and counter wars, the social and political uncertainty, the cries of men and women and children.

Bapsi Sidhwa published her first novel *The Pakistani Bride* (1987) depicting the plight of women and the theme of cultural collision. The novel hinges on interaction of two cultures, the tribal people and the urban plain. The plot of the novel revolves around the survival struggle of Zaitoon to escape from the cruel Pakistani tribal society. Zaitoon lost her parents and was married into a feudal boy who believed in male. Sidhwa presented the plight of Zaitoon and Carol who become the victims of cultural collision. Both are exploited by men. Life of Zaitoon is miserable as she is persecuted in every possible manner. Dipika Sahai remarks:

The Pakistani Bride is a lyrical cry against the mental and spiritual torture of women. Sidhwa has used complex metaphors to depict the multiple agonies of Zaitoon who represent all the women of Pakistan. The plot of the novel depicts the poignant tale of a woman who is tortured; she is treated like a commodity by the tribal head. It is a tale of cultural conflict of Punjabi culture and the tribal culture of Kohistani tribe (Sahai 85-86).

Zaitoon and Carol are victims of cultural disparity; their sufferings begin because of their failure to assimilate in a new culture. Sakhi's prejudice about the

inferiority of Zaitoon's ethnicity results into her agony. The migrants often suffer from "double consciousness abuses her because he feels that he is superior and has the natural right to intimidate her and prove his dominance as her husband. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* observes." It means that double consciousness is the issue that relates to image as the sign of authenticity by means of the negotiation for displacement. Kevin Bales in his book *Defining and Measuring Modern Slavery* (2005) gives a concrete analysis of slavery thus:

Slavery is defined as "a relationship in which one person is controlled by violence" In this relationship the purpose is to exploit and coerce the other. He is all bent to exploit and harass and persecute the other In slavish relationship no free movement is allowed. Zaitoon leads a slavish life in the tribal society (Kevin Bales 1).

Mohanty is a famous feminist of post colonial era and known for her book *Feminism without Borders* (2003). Mohanty is of the opinion that in "Third World" feminism race, class, sexuality, and nationality dominate the neo-colonial literature. She argues that woman is based not in biology, color, or geography, but her struggles against cultural imperialism and colonial domination define her status. The modern anthropologists, sociologists and feminists are exploring the role of woman in perceptions and power relationship in modern society. Bordo with *Unbearable*, Grosz, *Volatile*, Turner's *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory* (1984), there has been an explosion of interest in studying the body and its subjugation by the colonized rulers. The novel *An American Brat* of Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the poignant experiences of a sixteen year old Feroza who visits America for higher education. Her parents live in the orthodox society in Pakistan. They feel

concerned about the growth of Feroza who is following and developing the rigid and orthodox mind set. Zareen and Cyrus Ginwalla are shocked to see her conservative attitude. Her mother decides to send her to America for better learning and to shun her growing fanatic attitude. Sharing her shock, Zareen informs her husband,

She objected to my sleeveless saree-blouse! Really, this narrow-minded attitude touted by General Zia is infecting her, too . . . Can she wear frocks? No. Women mustn't show their legs, women shouldn't act like that. Girls mustn't play hockey or sign or dance!
(Bapsi Sidhwa, *American Brat* 10).

The patriarchal social set up of Pakistan society deeply impacted the behavior of Feroza who grew into a narrow-minded and orthodox woman. Zareen is worried about her orthodox outlook of life. She decides to send her to USA for a holiday. She is of the opinion that travelling will broaden her outlook. Feroza will be in a position to get rid of her puritanism. Zareen is really very happy. She starts dreaming the land of rock stars and Hollywood glamour. The main focus of the novel is the cultural challenges, fracture of identity of a Pakistani woman when she leaves her homeland. At the Kennedy airport Feroza feels the thrill of freedom. She exults thus: “She knew no one, and no one knew her! It was a heady feeling to be suddenly so free –for the moment, at least – of the thousand constraints that governed her life” (58). Feroza is surprised to see the gaiety and glitter of the glass and steel tubes. Her experience with the passport officer who asks her a series of questions shocks her. For the first time she realizes that she was in a country of

strangers. Indeed, the plot of the novel depicts a corrosion of Parsee and American culture which brings poignant pain to Feroza. Bapsi's *An American Brat* reveals the mental, psychological, social and cultural conflicts of Feroza in the novel. The plot of the novel describes the journey of Feroza and her quest for identity and her encounter with the American culture. Feroza is a victim of patriarchal oppression of Pakistan society and at the Kennedy airport she experiences strange cultural collision. She gets uprooted from her 'mother culture'. She struggles to assimilate in the alien American culture.

Kishwar Naheed speaks in her poems of the plight of a woman who suffers because of the cultural collision in Pakistani society. Naheed is raising the woman question for the first time in Pakistan through her heart-rending poems. Naheed has depicted the plight of women and their sexual oppression as women in Pakistan are subjected to all types of brutalities. Their existence is only in relation to men; they don't enjoy any independent status. Pakistani society is rigid and patriarchal, giving special treatment to men and giving its harsh treatment to women. Bapsi Sidhwa has explored the inner tension of women who are victimized by religion and patriarchy and their sufferings are justified in the name of cultural traditions and religion. The cultural clashes are imminent in Pakistan as gender discrimination is the core evil in the society. Men in this society are given respect, dignity but women struggle to earn these qualities. Men are treated as strong individuals but women are treated as bodies and the objectification of sex is very common. The great Pakistani writers including Bapsi Sidhwa, have focused on the themes of cultural conflicts highlighting their struggle against patriarchal structures of Pakistani society. A distinguishing feature of Sidhwa is her central focus on the domestic lives of

women. Sidhwa's *The American Brat* (1993) and *The French Lover* (2001) of Taslima Nasrin depict the cultural dislocation and homelessness of migrants. Both the novels depict the lived experiences of women as they confront the alien society when they leave their homeland. Sidhwa women are in eternal conflict with men who oppress them sexually, physically and emotionally. The emphasis of this chapter is to explore and analyze the struggle of female protagonists who are the victims of cross cultural conflicts. *The American Brat* of Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the scenes of rape, forced marriage and sexual discrimination to highlight the issues of gendered oppression. The impact of cultural collision is clearly seen in the life of women of Bapsi Sidhwa and Taslima Nasrin. They have to confront the new social and political set up when they leave their native land and try to assimilate in the host culture. Bhabha observes that diaspora are bound to come in conflict with the alien people sooner or later

Bapsi Sidhwa was a diaspora who moved to America with her husband and settled there. But she could never forget the life and culture of Lahore and often felt nostalgic about the Punjabi culture. She lost her Punjabi identity since she assimilated in American culture and had firsthand experience of the problems and challenges that diaspora face in the alien land. In her interviews Bapsi Sidhwa often claimed that she was a Parsee first and then she was a Pakistani woman. She could never like to be called as an American woman. She has written about the culture of Parsee and Pakistani and not about the people and culture of Americans. Sidhwa lived in two countries so she gained multiple experiences of two cultures. She enriched her knowledge about Pakistan and America that helped her to depict the real issues confronting her women in America. Her novel *An American Brat* is based

on the theme of cultural collision. Bapsi Sidhwa's interests are vast and she cannot be easily categorized as just a Parsee novelist. Her novels are remarkably different from one another in both subject and treatment. There is a variety of themes in her fiction such as the cultural dislocation, displacement and sexual oppression of women. Sidhwa's fiction also deals with the theme of marriage, women's problems and patterns of migration. Her treatment of such wide ranging themes is a testimony to her growth as a powerful novelist who is a shrewd observer of human society and a keen teller of stories. She is perhaps Pakistan's the finest English language novelist. There is a complex sprinkling of themes in her novels which defy any simplistic interpretation.

Sidhwa depicts the cultural collision of Feroza in *The American Brat* who struggles to get assimilated in the American culture. The novel is the story of a young woman who journeys through three cultures, her own Parsee culture, Islamic culture and the western culture. Feroza's passage to America, her education in life and her transformation into a mature young woman form the kernel of the novel. *American Brat* is about various cultural conflicts or tensions, between husbands and wives, mothers and daughters, young and old, conservative and progressive, East and West, India and Pakistan, Parsee and Muslim. Sidhwa has produced a remarkable sketch of American society as seen and experienced by modern immigrants. Feroza Ginwalla is the main heroine of the novel. She is a sixteen year old girl belonging to a small prosperous Parsee family of Lahore. She is following the conservative Islamic code, she is deeply inflamed by the Islamic life-style and she does not accept her mother's dress of sleeveless blouse and Saree. The novel deals with the change that Feroza undergoes in the west and how her perspective on

life changes. The plot of the novel is focused on the expatriate experiences that bring drastic changes in the outlook and mindset of the people. The novel also deals with the theme of inter –community marriage. However, the plot doesn't present Feroza as a conventional girl but she has shown her resilience to assimilate in American culture. Postcolonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa addresses the globalization issue in terms of the power relations, which flourish as a legacy of western imperialism. In this process, the most affected are the women who suffer the rupture of placid postcolonial life. The women in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa experience the process of alienation and assimilation. Sidhwa's famous novel *An American Brat* is focused on the issue of the hybrid identities of the women. Interestingly, the novel investigates the concept of the fixed identity, indicating the role of gender discrimination and cultural corrosion. Regarding the theme of cultural clash of the novel, Suman Bala observes:

Bapsi Sidhwa in her novel *An American Brat* depicts the sensitive issue of cultural antagonism. Feroza is a Parsee but David is a Christian. The theme of cultural collision and inter-cast marriage dominates the plot. Bapsi Sidhwa tries to affect a clever balance a clever balance between tradition and modernity (Suman Bala 84).

Bapsi Sidhwa's *An American Brat* is an interesting narrative of multidimensional conflicts. The writer has depicted many conflicts in the plot; there are serious conflicts between husbands and wives, mothers and daughters. There are scenes of conflicts between young and old, and conservative and progressive. The novel hinges on the East and West encounter India and Pakistan, Parsee and Muslim communities. Zareen Ginwalla is the main heroine of the novel. She is following the

conservative Islamic code; she is deeply inflamed by the Islamic life-style. Her Lahore based family sends her to the United States of America for a three-month vacation to broaden her outlook on life. Feroza's mother Zareen feels she is 'becoming more and more backward everyday' (2). Feroza's mother Zareen is not happy about the growth of her daughter since she is growing narrow minded while living in the rigid and orthodox society of Pakistan. She wants her daughter to adopt a broad minded outlook. Zareen complains Feroza is not allowed to wear even frocks and jeans. She is always dominated by rigid patriarchal rule and norms of the society. *Hudood Ordinance* of 1980s blocked the growth of women in Pakistan. The new laws didn't make any distinction between adultery and rape. Man could oppress and marginalize women. Sidhwa has given a detailed analysis of the plight of women afflicted by the new laws of the *Hudood Ordinance*. Bapsi Sidhwa has given the example of Safia Bibi who was tortured and molested but couldn't prove her rape. Bapsi depicts the plight thus:

Safia Bibi's father tried his best to establish the charges against the rapist in the court. The new ordinance demanded the testimony of at least four eye-witnesses to establish the rape incident of Safia Bibi. But all his efforts bringing the charges against her assailant failed as the new Zina Ordinance d assailant (Bapsi Sidhwa, *American Brat* 236-237).

Zareen is seriously perturbed by her conservative behavior, which she considers to be a direct result of the fundamentalist turn in Pakistan. She experiments and sends her daughter to an alien land for liberal education. She

believes that decides to send her to America to liberate her from the conservative outlook of patriarchal society of Pakistan. Zareen has noted that her daughter Feroza has adopted un-Parsee like orthodoxy in her attitude and outlook, thereby making her a misfit in her community. No one in the family supports the idea of sending Feroza abroad. Zareen's mother, Khutlibai vehemently opposes the plan of Zareen. She gets angry at her daughter but Zareen argues that Feroza is going to America only for 3 to 4 months. She adds:

Oh ! Mom Feroza is not going to settle in America. She is having difficult time her in Pakistan. All this talk about Islamic society, how should she dress, talk and behave is unacceptable. I don't want her to grow like a fanatic and orthodox (30).

It was hoped that the trip abroad would broaden Feroza's thinking and open up further avenue for her. But the Ginwallas had no idea that she would become modern in the truest sense of the word. They had not imagined that she would challenge traditional views, and grow beyond the confines of a patriarchal society. The plot of the novel highlights her journey to the United States of America brings a drastic transformation in Feroza. The self-awareness that Feroza Ginwalla acquires becomes a threat to Parsee community. The rituals of Zoroastrian religion clash with the American way of life. She has to make a moral choice with the obsession of American liberty. She is a migrant trying to strike a balance between Parsee and Americanism. Feroza is allowed to stay with her uncle Manek for just three or four months to explore the American society. Manek has been studying at MIT for nearly three years. The initially discussed period is 'just three or four months. [...] Travel

will broaden her outlook; get this puritanical rubbish out of her head' (2). However, Feroza begins the journey to America where she is to be cleansed of her pseudo extremist sensibilities (24). Cyrus, Feroza's father does not like the idea of his wife Zareen who is adamant to send her daughter to America as he says:

I'll tell you one thing, though.' Cyrus twisted his neck to follow Zareen's restless passage across the room. 'Zia or no Zia. I'd much prefer she stay narrow-minded and decently dressed than go romping about looking fast and loose (5).

The control of the Pakistani woman's body and sexuality is so oppressive that after a week Cyrus gives his final approval "he would not have his daughter fool around with Muslim boys" (10). Feroza's migratory journey begins as a Parsee ritual. It symbolizes a kind of emancipation:

Feroza slipped under her quilt fully dressed, her eyes wide open, her mind throbbing with elation. She was going to America! She found it difficult to believe. She repeated it to herself. 'I'm going to America. I'm going to America!' until her doubts slowly ebbed and her certainty, too, caught the rhythm of her happiness. To the land of glossy magazines, of *Bewitched* and *Star Trek*, of rock stars and jeans (21).

In her novel *American Brat*, Feroza's multiple identities become the main cause of her traumatic sufferings. The novel gives an insight to American life and makes a comparison between the orthodox society of Pakistan and liberal America

life and culture. Feroza maintains a strained relationship with her new environment, fluctuating between adulation and alienation:

The liberating anonymity she had discovered within moments of her arrival at Kennedy Airport, when no one had bothered to stare at her and the smoky-eyed American she was talking to, still exhilarated her. In Lahore these contacts would have been noticed and would have drawn censorious comment. Within the heady climate of freedom in America, she felt able to do anything (224).

Feroza experiences the first cultural shock from officers of the Department of Homeland Security who are convinced that Feroza's uncle is actually her husband. At the airport Feroza is harassed and grilled by the immigration officers. Though she is disappointed by the insults and dehumanizing behavior of the officers at the airport, she forgets everything when she indulges in a tour to New York:

It was like entering a surreal world of hushed opulence festooned by all manner of hats propped up on stands and scarves and belts draped here and there like fabulous confetti. The subtle lighting enhanced the plush shimmer of wool and leather and the glowing colours of the silk. Feroza felt she had never seen such luxuriant textures or known the vibrant gloss of true colours (122).

At the airport, the immigrant officers of America grill her with unpredictable questions bewildering Feroza. She realizes the impact of cultural collision for the first time and starts crying before the officials. They ask her strange questions doubting that she is the wife of Manek and has come to stay with him permanently

in America. In the first round Feroza fails to satisfy the custom officials. Her answers are quite ambiguous; the officers open her bags and check all her dresses. The immigrant officers grilled Feroza beyond limits; they took away her undergarments one by one just to harass her. It is a new experience for Feroza who feels depressed and curses herself for her choice to visit America. She starts shouting in desperation thus: “To hell with you and your damn country. I’ll go back!” In the mean time, the custom officers feel guilty. Manek gives all the papers to prove that. Feroza is just a tourist and she will go back to Pakistan after three months and no violation will be done by her relating to visa regulations. She will not work here in America and will spend time like a tourist. Feroza for the first time is in conflict with an alien culture because in America she is treated as the “Other.” At last the custom officers allow them to go but this episode of cultural collision teaches her a very harsh lesson. Manek observes that Feroza is visibly upset; he tries to console and Sidhwa comment on her initiation in the American culture thus:

Feroza was consoled by Manek and taught to forget the honor le living in alien society. At their rented place, Manek advised her to forget what happened at the airport. She shouldn’t get frightened at the sight of two sex-maniacs... She realizes that America is not a city of dreams and skyscrapers. There is enough of filth which leads to retch (120).

Feroza begins her journey to explore herself in America. Manek takes her in different parts in New York. There are also two horrifying encounters at the YMCA in New York where Manek has arranged accommodation. Firstly in the communal bathroom with a drug addict, who enters the ladies only facility and threatens Feroza

with sexual aggression. And then a woman pushes her into the pitch black, unfolding flight of stairs Feroza is helped by an American couple when she encounters a moving staircase. She is virtually moved by their courteous and amiable behavior. Soon she forgets all that happened at the airport. A young American helps her to load her luggage in the cart just to flirt with her. Feroza learns about the difference between the American people and her Parsee people of Lahore. Randhir Pratap Singh rightly observes that the Americans are not interested in the affairs of others. They are always lost and obsessed in their own problems. They have no time for the others (67). Feroza is very much excited when she reaches America. She is happy and excited by the glamour of the skyscrapers. There were no checks on her and she can develop her individuality to enjoy the liberty in America. Sidhwa has discussed in detail the awareness of Feroza; her excitement and her learning experience. Three months become three years, as she takes a college course in hotel management in Idaho, and then a degree at the University of Denver. Here she meets friends and potential lovers. Feroza visits various parts of New York as Sidhwa comments. “Feroza felt she had never seen such luxuriant textures or known the vibrant gloss of true colors and it was merely the entrance foyer that had affected her so” (73). Manek took Feroza to the famous Fifth Avenue and she got an opportunity to visit all the famous museums of New York: “They visited the Museo el Barrio...the Jewish Museum in the Warburg Mansion...The museum of Modern Art” (75) Feroza is dazzled by the pomp and show of American prosperity and technology. She thinks of her backward Pakistan and asks Manek a strange question: “Why is Pakistan so backward and America so advances” (76). Manek tells her that the people of Pakistan are backward because they waste time and are not progressive

but the “Americans are hard working they use the technology for the prosperity of the country” (77). Manek tells her the ugly side of New York also. He shows her the presence of male prostitutes and homosexuals, the pimps and drug peddlers. She is shocked to witness the filth and slums and dirty places in New York. Feroza had been used to urine and open drains as they are plenty in Lahore. She accumulates knowledge about American culture to encounter the various challenges of society. She struggles to assimilate in the American culture as she starts dressing like an American girl. She learns to drive the car in the American roads and starts attending the clubs and bars for enjoyment. The shy and conservative Feroza turns into a confident and self-assertive girl.

Feroza has to work hard to survive in America being a migrant woman. Manek aptly advises her that she should be quite vigilant in America as the society here is heterogeneous. Moreover nobody gets here something without anything. Each one has to work very hard in this country as nothing is given to a man on the plate. Manek works hard and gets her admission in an American University. Feroza gets excited and she writes a formal letter for permission to stay in America. Khutlibai, Zareen and Cyrus and all other members of the family give their permission and Feroza joins the college. Manek observes that it is not easy to survive in multicultural society of America. In the beginning each immigrant “gets the knocks” (144) and life becomes hellish. The American culture is entirely different as anything can happen at any time. The Americans love privacy and don’t like someone interfering in their private life. The new immigrant often commits social blunders. Nobody can escape cultural shock.

Sit, Stupid. You must get over your complex. Once you know enough whites, you will realize how ignorant and dirty they are, and you will stop feeling sorry for bastards like him (84).

Manek teaches her that in American society each woman is self dependent unlike in Pakistan where girls have to depend on the support of their parents. Feroza is portrayed as a shy, conservative and tradition-bound girl of Asian continent. She is also depicted as a representative of the Parsee milieu with love for modernity and change. Though both cultures are entirely different, Feroza is soon transformed, she is soon attracted by the modernized western culture. Feroza struggles to learn to be self-dependent as Manek continues guiding her to live in America. Once she is trapped while descending the stairs. She is confronted with a drug peddler who horrified her by his ugly look and evil intentions. He was leering at her in the mirror when she looked up from brushing her teeth (91). Feroza was seen crying banging the doors to save her. It was her good luck that Japanese saved her life and reprimanded in a decent manner: "Oh! Never do that in future. They are deadly people. You might get killed" (94). After some months Feroza got confidence and learnt the ways to live in America." Manek taught to feel free to do anything within the rules of life: "Never rely on anyone but yourself" (135). Feroza is dangerously caught between two cultures. There is a conflict between "licentious American" versus" conservative Parsee. The "extraordinary sexual possibilities" Manek and Feroza "would avail themselves of" (116) threaten to inscribe a different kind of sexual freedom: Geoffrey Kain, in *Rupture as Continuity: Migrant Identity and "Unsettled Perspective in Bapsi Sidhwa's An American Brat* observes that the novel

focuses on the sufferings and dilemmas of a post-colonial migrant who feels unsettled till the end of the story:

An American Brat is a tale of continuity. From another perspective, Feroza is almost lost to extended family, to her religion, to modes of traditional behaviour, to native place and culture as she is “swallowed” by the seductive giant of America. *An American Brat* is a tale of rupture. It is a very American Tale (Kain 244).

Manek teaches Feroza the dignity of labour. The whole family as a unit work to run the house. Time is very precious for all here. Husband and wife work together to run the house. It is very hard to survive in America alone as the cost of living is very high. Maneck taught Feroza American mannerism in routine life:

As I was saying, if there is one thing Americans won't stand, it is being interrupted. It's impolite. It's obnoxious. You've got to learn to listen. You can't cut conversation just as you like. You'll be humiliated (Bapsi Sidhwa, *American Brat* 101).

Bapsi Sidhwa has given in detail the life of two cultures in this novel. The plot unfolds the tale of a Pakistani girl struggling to assimilate in American culture. In Pakistani social milieu women are supposed to stay within the four walls of their homes. But in America life is free and there is no barrier in the way to growth and progress of women. All are treated equal as there is gender discrimination and no patriarchal oppression as we find in the Pakistani society: “Nothing is given to you on a plate. You don't know that because nobody works in Pakistan. Not your father, your grandfathers or uncles (124). In America there is a tough competition in

American society as each aspires to excel the other, is crazy to buy the luxury cars, and expensive villas. Time is very valuable and nobody can afford to waste time in gossips and meaningless discussions as people do in India and Pakistan. The Manek teaches Feroza the American culture of materialism and the secrets of American Dream. The novel is packed with the episodes of oppressive patriarchy, sexuality and abuse of female body. Manek is the best teacher for Feroza in the novel. He gives her comprehensive information about the American culture. Feroza had never dreamt that she would be so free in America. Feroza must learn new communication skills to survive in America. Feroza is conventional in the beginning of the novel but soon she understands the complexities of American culture as she comes in contact with Jo. She teaches her the real ways to live in America. She teaches her the abuses and slangs in American language and inspires her to develop communication skills. Feroza seeks the help of her American friends in learning the American slangs including the abusive language. Feroza often goes with her but she is amazed to know the sexual liberty of Joe who enjoys flirting with boys. Jo visits clubs and theatres and picks up the boys to enjoy sexual pleasures. She even excites the sexual passions of Feroza telling her to “get used to the boys” (163). Feroza falls in the bad company of Jo and even starts drinking in the company of boys opposing her Parsee morality. It is pertinent to note that Joe had changed the mind set of Feroza. She hated the rigid *Hudood* Ordinance as it was hellish for women to live freely over there. She now is used to liberty and had known the meaning of women empowerment and it would be foolish for her to return back to Pakistan. At times, she feels guilty being a Pakistani woman and thinks of her parents who had sent her to America with the hope of broadening her outlook with American exposure. But

Feroza was misusing her liberty and rejecting the traditional customs of her Parsee culture. Sidhwa observes that Feroza in America took a wider, bolder and cosmic view of life as her outlook is developed in coming into contact with the American culture. The cultural clashes of two cultures in her case proved enlightening. She learnt many new things in America (164).

Jo teaches so many new things to Feroza including the abusive language. This was a strange experience for her in America. She had never seen women in Pakistan using abusive language but in America it was a common practice. Feroza learnt such dirty words ““shit” and “ass hole” “Gimme a soda” in her process of cultural assimilation. Manek is a male migrant, his dreams, aspirations are different from Feroza. Manek gives a clear picture of the American society and helps her to cope with the cultural clash. Feroza is the product of Pakistani culture that is rigid and oppressive but in America things are quite different. He tells Feroza in Brimingham Young University she would not enjoy sexual liberty as drinking or premarital sex is banned there. She would not wear “biknis” or shorts. Manek explains the main traits of Americanism telling her the difference between the backward society of Pakistan and the growing economy of America. Prosperity in America is because of liberal economy: “That’s why the Third World is so backward and poor” (126). When at work, Feroza is shocked to find that he has adopted, or been given, the name Mike. ‘Manek’s gender gives him an advantage over Feroza in *both* sets of cultural formations, spaces and ideologies.

Feroza moves into another apartment when Jo goes to live with her boy friend. She lives with Rhonda and Gwen and learns many things about love and

sexuality in American society. Rhonda is a white girl but Gwen is a black. Rhonda enjoys flirting with the boys in the molls and in the streets. Feroza is visibly changing in open and free environment. She comes in contact with Shashi and enjoys flirting with him. She kisses him and takes physical liberty just to pass time and to express her sexual liberty in America. The relationship gradually drives them into a passionate physical affair. In winter holidays, Feroza decides to go back to Lahore. In chapter 22nd Sidhwa reports the transformed Feroza who reaches Lahore to spend her holidays with her parents. She gets warm welcome from her family as they feel surprised to see her confident and daring. She is totally changed; she argues and debates about everything. Her ideas about politics and women empowerment are quite revolutionary. Feroza becomes “modern” her parents think that she will challenge traditional views, and grow beyond the shows that the journey to the U.S.A is described as a learning process. Feroza becomes “too modern” and thus striking as a threat to the Parsee community. Slowly she changes her life-style from conservative East to modernized West. Her mother cannot even dream that in America Feroza will become more independent than Zareen could ever dreamt, “Travel will broaden her outlook, get this puritanical rubbish out of her head.” Zareen invoked her cultural Ahura Mazda’s blessings: “May you go laughing – singing to your in-law’s home soon husband and children” (234). Her mother is quite upset as she wants her to marry and get settled but Feroza wants to continue her studies and wants to go back in America. Zareen is amazed to find her daughter totally changed with new confidence and daring look on her face made her happy. She was no longer a timid, orthodox girl but had grown into a bold and beautiful woman. Zareen invoked more blessings with a flood of tears in her eyes:

Zareen poured a little water from a round-bottomed silver mug onto the tray. Divested of egg, coconut, and sugar, it held only residual grains of rice. She circled the tray seven times round Feroza's head to banish the envious eye (235).

Khutlibai; her grandmother also noted the vibrant face of Feroza; she observed her "shrewd eyes luminous with pride and love" (235). Zareen gives a marriage proposal to Feroza but she expresses her resentment saying that she wants to complete her education first in America. Zareen lost her temper and burst out in anger thus:

What's nonsense? How can you think like that ? You were sent to America for modern outlook and for international exposure and we sent you only for a few months and not for whole life. Your father and I offered our finger and you grabbed our whole arm! (240).

Feroza argues that she will settle first and then she will marry as she doesn't want to be a burden on her husband." I will first complete my education, I want to pursue a career; I don't want to be at the mercy of my husband" (240). Khutlibai and Soonamai wanted to "see Feroza married and settled before they passed away" (240). So the pressure on Feroza was mounting and she gave them the assurance that she would marry after completing her education after a few months. "I refuse to die an old maid! " (240). Feroza leaves Lahore and takes a flight to Denver. On her flight she opens the envelope gifted to her by her parents. She is overwhelmed to discover seven hundred dollars given by her parents and friends as parting gifts to her. She is extremely happy. She makes her mind to buy a second hand car and starts

scanning the advertisements in the newspapers. She realized that it was not possible to explore life without conveyance. Her meeting with David brought a historical transformation in her attitude to life and sex. She bought the car but lost her heart to David. She felt the pressure of the forces of true love for the first time in her body. Her body became weightless and she was patting out of nervousness. She felt as if (255). Feroza also experienced guilt and the sinful feeling of moral transgression. Sidhwa has depicted the view that women are shaped and conditioned by the new cultural forces:

David had entered into her soul as she thought of David day and night. She would visit him even during odd hours and spent long hours with him enjoying and planning of the future. She was often driven by the bouts of her guilt. She knew she was a strict Parsee girl and what she was planning would not be permitted by her parents and the Parsee community. It was late night when she returned from David's apartment into her room with her shoes in her hand like a thief (264).

When Feroza decides to marry David, Zareen herself flies to the United States to stop such an act of transgression. Zareen tries to dissuade Feroza that by marrying David she would be cut off from her family and religion and she would not be able to follow the rituals of her Parsee community. She says that Parsee men can marry outside the faith and still remain Parsee and bring their children up in their faith. However, Parsee women who marry non-Parsee are excommunicated. Zareen brings money to buy David and she would not do so as she spends all her money on

shopping. Zareen pretends that she has accepted David's proposal and explains to him the Parsee rituals and customs. He feels whether he will be able to cope with the rituals and wonders how far he is away from the conservative Parsee culture. Pakistani culture is treated as the "Other" by Bapsi Sidhwa in this novel. Zareen handles the situation in a tactful manner as she tried to understand the psychology of Feroza. Zareen suggests to Feroza that she should forget about men and concentrate on her studies:

Why can't she be like the two women who share her apartment? Busy with their studies, says Zareen, they are not bothered with men. No, says Feroza, because they are lesbians. Zareen does not understand. She has come across the word in magazines, but has never heard it used. Feroza explains that the two are lovers. Zareen is surprised. Why? They are pretty, and there is no dearth of men around, (29).

Sidhwa introduces lesbianism, a subject that sub-continent girls do not dare to involve and even talk about. Feroza shocks her mother by narrating the lesbian love of two women who were her room mates. Women in America don't like to suffer the heartbreaks in love break-up so they prefer to live with women. This is the height of cultural collision as Feroza and her Pakistani morality clashes with the American cult of free love. In contrast to this, in the modern world of America people give less importance to such things. Although she succeeds in her mission, yet Feroza decides to stay in the United States. She has adopted two cultures, and has become the victim of fractured identities. She does not hate Pakistan but she loves American values and sexual liberty. Feroza protests against Manek's criticism of Pakistan:

Are we stuck in the Middle Ages because we were colonized? Because we were illiterate? Because we don't have technology to make atom bombs? (77).

Feroza's affair with David Press comes to naught because, in spite of all the American allurements, she could not break away from the interdependent self. She gives in to her mother's request, eschews the relationship and holds fast to her native Pakistani culture that provides serenity to her mind and soul: "Before going to bed, she said her *kusti* prayers and stood, hands joined, invoking Ahura Mazda's blessings and favor" (317). However, being a newcomer, Feroza does feel a sense of dislocation of not belonging, but it is more tolerable because it is shared by thousands of newcomers like her. Moreover, she has become used to the comforts that America has to offer: "Happy Hour, telephones that worked the surfeit of food, freezers, electricity, and clean and abundant Water, the malls, skyscrapers, and highways" (312). Feroza feels alienated in America, she suffers cultural dislocation. Sidhwa confirms the fact that the two opposite poles tradition and modernity, because of their mutual opposition and antagonism, cannot make the people live in peace. Her assimilation is false and results in alienation as the cultural interaction fractures her identity. Her friends advise her to inspect two- American women who enjoy sexual liberty. They are free in making decisions and their parents have no role to play in their marriages. She buys the car but loses herself. Feroza gathers a lot of information about the relationships. Dating and courting are common things in America unlike Pakistan where the activities of women are controlled by parents. A woman in Pakistan is always under the lens of parents. She is aware of the Islamized Pakistani culture and Zia's regime. No woman in Pakistan dares to transgress the

strict morality code of Pakistan but in America things were different. In America Feroza observed that sexual liberty is a mode of women empowerment. Feroza also made an experiment as she started her love affair with David. She went to buy a car and met David there. She found him quite active and smart and decided to make him her life partner. Now Feroza is under the spell of David and soon she starts experiencing a sense of guilt because she feels she is betraying her family. She knows that she belongs to Parsee community and David is an American Jew. Certainly her parents will not support or give consent to this marriage. Bapsi Sidhwa has faithfully described the cultural antagonism between Parsee and Christian culture in matters of love and sex. The entire relationship is quite interesting as it reveals how women are shaped by social, psychological, historical and geographical forces. Feroza and David started taking physical and sexual liberty as they came closer and closer. Feroza was mad in love and she didn't bother her Pakistani cult of culture because she was in America and had no one to check or torture her. She was carried away by the tempest of love and sexual desires and she wanted to enjoy all the way American women were doing. She made up her mind to marry David under all circumstances. She was in a whirlpool of romantic passions enjoying furtive moments of love in America with David.

David is a sincere lover; he loves Feroza from the core of his heart. He takes her to his parents who have free discussion about marriage though his parents Adina and Abe Press are worried about the rigid religion of Feroza. She becomes aware of their differing religions and the problems of ethnic assimilation. Feroza makes up her mind to marry David. This news shocked her mother Zareen. She wasted no time and took a flight to America to settle the issue before it was too late. Her mother

didn't want Feroza to commit an act of transgression. Zareen tries to dissuade Feroza that by marrying David she would be cut off from her family and religion and she would not be able to follow the rituals of her Parsee community. She says that Parsee men can marry outside the faith and still remain Parsee and bring their children up in their faith. However, Parsee women who marry non-Parsee are excommunicated. Zareen handles the situation in a tactful manner. She doesn't threaten Feroza but tells of the dire consequences of religious transgression. Zareen tells her frankly that she would be treated as an adulterous by the elders of the Parsee community. She would suffer alienation as no one in her community will allow her enter Parsee places of worship. She would not be allowed to attend the funeral of her grandmother or even the parents. Feroza really feels the burden of cultural confrontation. It was a do or die attempt for Feroza. She had been living in the world of dreams and fancies but she was compelled to face the reality of cultural forces for the first time. Feroza had been thinking in the American way but now she was forced to think in her Parsee way Zareen cautions her thus:

What will you bring to the family if you marry this David? His family won't get involved with ours. But that doesn't matter so much.... What matters is your life- it will be so dry. Just husband, wife, and may a child rattling like loose stones in this huge America!" (278).

Zareen regrets that she sent her abroad for liberal growth but she has become a rebel breaking all the conventions of Parsse culture: "You can't toss your heritage like that. It's in your bones "(279). She is visibly upset to find that she has become an" American Brat! (279). Zareen feels guilty because she wanted her to grow

broadminded but she had never imagined that she would get assimilated in American culture at the cost of her Parsee faith. However, Zareen handles the situation in a psychological manner as she enjoys company with David; goes with him for shopping and buys so many gifts. David feels quite comfortable and starts believing that Zareen has in a way given her consent. But soon things change as Zareen decides to spend days in a cool manner and enjoy the company of David and Feroza during her stay in America. Zareen pretends that she has accepted David's proposal and explains to him the Parsee rituals and customs. Zareen is extremely excited to go for shopping in the big malls of America but in the third week she received letters from Pakistan in the form of "WARNING" and "NOTICE" from Parsi leaders. Zareen became tense as all forces were turning against her:

How she could allow her daughter to be deprived of her faith, her religion and family traditions. The Parsee communities will not allow her to enter into any temple or join the cremation procession (289).

Zareen uses all her cultural rituals to handle the situation. She gives her consent to David with a condition that it would be an arranged marriage and in a tactful manner she explains all the Parsee rituals to David. David is a free man with liberal ideas. He smells communal trapping in her speeches and feels that he may not be able to accommodate the religious customs after marriage with Feroza. Bapsi Sidhwa has given a wonderful interaction of two cultures and two communities in this part of the novel. He David defends his Jewishness in his reply to Zareen:

My parents also don't like this marriage it is all my wish to marry your daughter.. We have Jewish customs, you know. My family will miss my getting married under a canopy by our rabbi (298).

Feroza gives in to her mother's request, eschews the relationship and holds fast to her native Pakistani culture that provides serenity to her mind and soul: "Zareen performs her *kusti* prayers invoking Ahura Mazda's (317). David introspects and seriously considers the issue of cultural differences; he becomes aware of the consequences of cultural collision and the problem of adjustment with a Muslim woman. He felt uneasy and realized that it would be difficult for him to cope with Parsee religion and rituals. He becomes a victim of cultural clash and decides to break the relationship for ever.

Stuff his mouth with sweets; break a coconut on his head! ...he'd have the singular honor of having his remains devoured vultures and crows in a ghastly Tower of Silence (309).

The psychological way of handling the situation of Zareen was very successful as she appealed to the emotions of David. He found David a sensible Jew who could understand the cultural differences of her society and faith. Soon David's love for Feroza disappeared and Zareen found Feroza alone. Her exoticism worked very well and the circumstances also changed quickly in her favor. David got a job in California; he wasted no time to leave Denver bringing the ending of the drama of love. In all the episodes Bapsi Sidhwa explored the destructive impact of cultural collision in the novel. Love is fine but it is very difficult to transgress morality and religion. The forces of culture were so powerful in case of Feroza that she had to give in in compliance with the norms of religion and faith. Zareen tried to understand psychology of Feroza. Zareen suggests to Feroza that she should forget about men and concentrate on her studies:

Why can't she be like the two women who share her apartment? Busy with their studies, says Zareen, they are not bothered with men. No, says Feroza, because they are lesbians. Zareen does not understand. She has come across the word in magazines, but has never heard it used. Feroza explains that the two are lovers. Zareen is surprised. Why? They are pretty, and there is no dearth of men around (29).

Zareen is successful in dissuading David to marry Feroza but she expresses her strong desire to stay on America. She doesn't want to go back to Pakistan as she is assimilated in American culture. She has adopted two cultures, and has become the victim of fractured identities. Feroza's affair with David Press comes to naught because, in spite of all the American allurements, she could not break away from the interdependent self.

Her break with David still hurt so much, especially the circumstances surrounding the break. If she flew and fell again, could she pick herself up again? Maybe one day she'd soar to that self-contained place from which there was no falling, if there was such a place (332).

Zareen has to go back to Lahore leaving her daughter isolated and culturally dislocated. She does not go back to Pakistan and decides to live in America. She faces the reality about the migrants and submits to her dislocation. Feroza's story depicts the poignant experiences of a migrant who becomes a victim of cultural collision. The migrants leave their homeland to escape religious persecution. But it is very hard for them to settle into the alien country. The migrants are confronted

with new challenges and issues. Postcolonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa addresses the globalization issue in terms of the power relations, which flourish as a legacy of western imperialism. In this process, the most affected are the women who suffer the rupture of placid postcolonial life. The women in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa experience the process of alienation and assimilation. She has adopted two cultures and has become the victim of fractured identities. She does not hate Pakistan but she loves American values and sexual liberty. However, being a newcomer, Feroza does feel a sense of dislocation of not belonging, but it is more tolerable because it is shared by thousands of newcomers like her. Feroza feels alienated in America, she suffers cultural dislocation. Sidhwa confirms the fact that the two opposite poles tradition and modernity, because of their mutual opposition and antagonism, cannot make the people live in peace. Her assimilation is false and results in alienation as the cultural interaction fractures her identity.

To conclude, the post-colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa explores her concern for the subalterns, their philosophy about exile and home, and their themes about homelessness, cultural dislocation and poignant diasporic experiences. The socio-cultural perspective helps to explore the various cross-currents and ethnic pluralities discussed in their post-colonial fiction. Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini investigate the problems of the migrants who suffer displacement, marginalization and dispossession. From the psychoanalytical perspective the protagonists suffer rootlessness, fragmentation and alienation in their life. The Indians migrated to Trinidad and other regions of Africa as indentured coolies; they lived a similar experience of uprooting and displacement. They were subjected to all types of humiliations; abuses were freely hurled on them and were

oppressed. The Indian coolies occupied the barracks inhabited by African slaves; their imperial masters were used to manage the workforce by the use of whip. The psychological implications of this harsh treatment were severe, and there were many cases of suicide, wife murder and mental derangement among the coolies. Dr. Robert Grieve's *The Asylum Journal* records the impact of racial oppression under colonial rule on the coolies of East India. During the slavery, the colonized work with indentured system that is identical with migration. This migration causes the existence of a population so-called diaspora in the new land. According to Tyson in *Critical Theory Today*, "diaspora is a population of the colonized descendants who are separated from their native homeland" (Tyson 421).

In the *The Crow Eaters of Bapsi Sidhwa* Freddy, Putli and Jerbanoo face the same cultural conflicts: "... the England of their imagination looked glossy and mesmerizing but in reality the experiences were quite tormenting" (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Crow* 252). When they land in England; on a land of their enchantments all their dreams are shattered and their excitement turns into disillusionment. They are shocked to see the beautiful British girls sweeping streets and working as clerks. They are confused to see girls working as sales girls in the streets. They also find houses with no servants where people had to scrub their own toilet bowls. Thus Jerbanoo cries: "I want to go back to my Lahore. I don't want to die in a foreign land" (258). The cultural theorists such as Bhabha and Said have discussed in detail the theory of loss of identity. Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini seriously deal with the painful experiences of fractured identity of their protagonists. Edward Said observes that in the colonized societies coolies lost their identity. He has discussed the painful nature of displacement in his books and

lectures. In his famous book on Palestine, *After the Last Sky*, (1986) he observes thus:

The main concern of modern man is to know his Identity. He is always obsessed with the idea that who he is and from where he has come. It is entirely difficult to live in exile with all the shin of native culture. Those who are in exile are always treated as the other; they have no space to live. They silently suffer collision of culture and displacement and disruption of history and culture (*Said* 16-17).

Said felt alienated and his identity was ruptured because of the colonization of Palestine, he was to examine the imperial discourse of the West, and to weave his cultural analysis with the text of his own identity. Said in all his works demonstrates the fractured identity in a migratory and globalized world. Said has exposed the truth of the colonized society, each migrant feels dislocated, exiled from his homeland. Bill Ashcroft observes that the gist of all Said's cultural theories is that "all cultures are changing constantly, that culture and identity themselves are processes" (Said 5). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin talk about dislocation as the major theme in the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. The term dislocation refers to such cultural and psychological effects of displacement. The abolition of slavery led to the shortage of labour in imperial colonies. There was great rush of migrants who worked as indentured coolies, dislocation describes the experience of those settlers who left their "home" in order to live and work in the colonies. Ashcroft et al call "cultural denigration", referring to practices that make the colonized feel marginal in power, social and cultural

relations” (Ashcroft 75). Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini depict the issues of dislocations, migrations, exile, the idea of being unanchored and displaced, and the enigma of displaced protagonists. Bapsi Sidhwa in *An American Brat* depicts the loss of identity of Feroza in a poignant lyrical style. Feroza is now totally transformed as the liberal atmosphere of America has changed her sensibility:

She was a changed girl as their preoccupation with children and servants did not interest her any more. She had developed a broader outlook of life. She had no interest in the endless parties of her parents. She was a changed woman with her own independence and ideas of a bright future (312).

To conclude, cultural displacement is inevitable as the immigrant writer is forced to accept “the provisional nature of all truths, all certainties” (*Sidhwa* 12). Monica Ali develops a fragmentary vision of reality because of her experience of displacement and homelessness. This fragmentation conditions the perception of the past, history, memory and fractured identity. In the critical analysis of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini hybridity, “ambivalence,” and “mimicry” often operate and discussed. According to Linda Hutcheon, it is the result “of negotiating the many dualities and multiplicities” that have come to the immigrants and post-colonials (*Hutcheon* vii).

Postcolonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa attempts to uncover the colonial ideologies by feminizing, marginalizing and dehumanizing the natives as the “Other.” The writers stressed on the issues of fractured identities of the characters,

displacement, gender discrimination, oppression and the dilemmas of the people living in the colonized societies. The partition of India and Pakistan was a painful political episode which brought unpredictable death destruction to people of Pakistan and India. People witnessed a brutal genocide of the innocent people, riots and mutual hatred at the crescendo. Millions of people crossed over the borders. Innumerable people lost their homelands. Women became widowed, raped and murdered in the streets. Large number of children became orphans and homeless. This chapter focuses on the dilemmas of the colonized women, their displacement and alienation caused by the events of cultural collision and power politics. As Nelson (1992) is a famous cultural historian who observes that the post-colonized literature deals with issues of identity and cultural corrosion of the migrants. He also contends that the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa deals with the themes of disruption of history and confrontations with racism. The plot of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa is dominated by intergenerational conflicts. The post-colonial writers were confronted with new challenges and writers such as Anita Desai, V.S. Naipaul, Shashi Tharoor, Hari Kunzru, Salman Rushdie, Bharti Mukhrjee, Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini have projected the historical and cultural events. All these writers used images and symbols to depict the traumatic experiences of the displaced people. Sudesh Mishra wrote his famous book observes in his *From Sugar to Masala: Writing by the Indian Diaspora* in which he stated that psychological traumatic experiences of the migrants leads to nausea and schizophrenia.

Bapsi Sidhwa is a prominent novelist who wrote on the themes of post-colonial society depicting cultural conflicts. The voice of feminism is more

perceptible and prominent in Pakistani and Bangladeshi fiction. Bapsi Sidhwa has portrayed women and their issues; they have portrayed the scenes of partition and cultural collision. They were subjected to injustice, oppression, and exploitation by the colonizers. Young has observed that all the cultural theories of Said, Bhabha, Taylor and Spivak are directed to the themes of displacement and cultural dislocation of the colonized people. In the post-colonial era is women were also “the victim of social oppression of the post colony or the metropolis (Young 115). Bapsi Sidhwa believes that an immigrant writer must take the risk of pushing creativity to “the limits of what are possible, in the attempt to increase the sum of what it is possible to think” (*Sidhwa* 15).

Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride* takes the post colonial issue of sexual difference and cultural dislocation which was the products of cultural collision and partition. Bapsi Sidhwa has taken up the issue of female sexuality in all her novels. She has focused on issues of veiling and marriage transactions *The Pakistani Bride* describes many episodes describe the scenes of cultural collision. Zaitoon's marriage is a major event in the novel. She belongs to Lahore and is quite comfortable in Lahore city as she is the product of Lahore culture but she is sold off to a tribal boy to suffer forever. In her novels her women protagonists are too fragile to confront the cultural collision. Her sexual awakening motivates her to escape from her cruel husband. The plot of the novel depicts the patriarchal prejudices against women and trends towards her dehumanization. Neluka Silva (2003) has also commented that the main focus of Bapsi Sidhwa is on the problem of cultural antagonism. Sidhwa has focused all her novels on patriarchal and cultural conflicts relating to cultural disruption and its aftermath:

The main focus of Bapsi Sidhwa is on the disintegration of cultural harmony. All her novels are about the body, breaking down its taboos and loss of identity. Women protagonists are denied individual freedom because of the cultural transformation. They are forced and persecuted to be conformists. Women are the most affected and subjected to all forms oppression and repression. The main conflict in her novels is social and cultural as the patriarchy appears as a powerful monster to crush the identity of women (Silva 34).

Katie Conboy (1997) also opines that Sidhwa is a historical novelist who is concerned about the social and political change in society. Her documentation of the plight of women and the ethnic conflicts are historical facts. She used fiction and reality to depict the cultural impact of women's bodies:

It is interesting to note that tension does exist between the Hindus and the Muslims and the Sikhs. The female body is exploited and crushed by the patriarchal and cultural forces. Since antiquity women have enjoyed their identity in the society on the basis of the body and sex. Representation of female body forms the core of ritualistic patterns of the society. They have been subjected to sexual oppression and even physically assaulted as male hegemony has been predominant (Katie Conboy 1).

The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa deal with both the pre and post-colonial traumas and dilemmas of the women of the subcontinent. The novels of Sidhwa bring to life the horror of the Partition vividly portraying the complexities of life in the

subcontinent after Independence. She has recreated the history of the subcontinent. Sidhwa depicts the dilemmas of the Pakistani people in *The Pakistani Bride*. *Cracking India* represents the psychological and social realities of Lahore in 1942–1948. The plot of the novel gives a touching story about love lost, trust deceived and the subjugation of the mind and the body of women. Indeed, in *Cracking India*, Sidhwa grapples with the realities of the pre-Independence period, and the impact of the neo-colonialism in Pakistan. Her dual perspective is the outcome of cultural conflicts and the political instability She vividly describes the traumatic sufferings of the millions of people who were trapped in social and political uncertainty. Sidhwa's re-writing of history in *Cracking India* is complex and subtle since she re-writes history not just from the Pakistani but also from the Parsee point of view. The historical and political episodes in the novel highlight the dilemma the Parsee community. They have faced the dilemma of assimilating themselves into an alien culture.

The textual analysis of her famous novels *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) and *Cracking India* (1988) elucidates the destructive impact of the cultural conflicts and the disintegration of society of Lahore. The Hindus and the Muslims were leading a peaceful life and each was ready to sacrifice the other. In *Cracking India*, Jagjeet Singh living in Pir Pindo village observes thus: "We shall save our Muslim brothers sacrificing our lives!" (*Cracking* 65). Soon the communal harmony transformed into mutual hatred, jealousies, and enmities. The riots led to burning of houses and killing of people in the villages and cities. Women were the worst affected since men of each community oppressed women to take revenge from the other out of hatred. Sidhwa exposed how patriarchy used the weapons of religion and culture to

exploit and suppress women. During partition violence erupted and new challenges were faced by the people to cope with the political and social upheaval. Bapsi Sidhwa used the material of communal violence and hatred in her novels to depict the dilemmas of women fighting against the forces of sexism and gender discrimination. Spivak also argues that women are the most affected protagonists of Sidhwa (Spivak 304). Sidhwa has focused on the issues of victimization and oppression by inheritance laws and orthodox patriarchal system. Mohanty, Ritu Menon and Urvashi Butalia also discussed about the problems of the migrants who cross borders. Grosz argues that sexual oppression of women in the novels of Sidhwa is because of the cultural conflicts.

Patriarchy has rationalized male domination in terms of the biological superiority of the male partners in relation to females. Patriarchy is very powerful as women in history have been treated as the “Other”. They are considered fragile; unreliable and weak. The role of women is subordinate in the society (Menon xiv).

Thus the cultural, social, ethical positions of women are constructed in relation to limitations, inadequacies and frailties of their bodies. In her novels Sidhwa portrays men as strong and active and women as the weaker and dependent characters. Simon de Beauvoir observes that gender discrimination is a social construct:

In history of mankind the terms masculine and feminine are used as per the requirement and suitability of the patriarchal societies. The terms only define legal differences but in reality the difference is over

stretched. The relation of the two sexes is not and cannot be like two separate electrical poles. It is preposterous to assume that man is positive, energetic, bold and powerful being brainy and vigorous but woman possessing only the negative qualities (Raoul 2).

The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa are focused on the social, political and historical forces that led to the partition and collision of culture. The plots of the novels center on the quest of the protagonists to survive in a harsh post-colonial society. Bapsi Sidhwa is committed to tell the world about the values and norms of the Parsee community. She takes up the issues of Parsee faith, Parsee culture and history in her novels. Her narrative style is quite simple but often in her episodes she uses the tools of burlesque and caricature. Bapsi Sidhwa performed the double role in her novels. She took up the cruelty of men and their subjugation of women. The novelist is concerned about problems of displacement, sexual oppression and the cultural antagonism in her plots. The novels of Sidhwa became very popular because of her cry against the role of oppressive patriarchal system that exploits women. In *Discipline and Punishment* (1978), Foucault also argued on the same line exploring the causes of violent and coercive means to control individuals.

In fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa women are colonized and treated as the “Others” The Muslim and the Hindu religion further contributed in making these taboos even stronger. There are so many scenes and situations in the plots of *Pakistani Bride* and *Cracking India* that describe the plight of women. Bapsi Sidhwa presents her women as marginalized and repressed. Sidhwa’s novels highlight the problems of women who become the victims of cultural collision. The novels bear the imprint of both older and more modern feminist literature, firmly situating Sidhwa within

the feminist literary tradition. The impact of the foreign culture and the hatred propagated by partition politics was disastrous. The role of the female body was restructured in the patriarchal system of Pakistan. In both the novels Bapsi Sidhwa focuses on female bodies and on the patriarchal and cultural forces that defile female bodies. Mohanty has flayed this sordid picture of women in *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (2003) “Sidhwa expresses her serious concern about the plight of the Third world women. She has depicted many events in the novel depicting the plight of women and their sexual oppression. Young also supports the ideas of Mohanty and observes thus: “In Postcolonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa the common themes are cultural antagonism and the social oppression of women in the post colonial fiction. Its concern is not in the first place with individual problems but with those that affect the whole communities” (Young 115).

Women of Bapsi Sidhwa such as Zaitoon and Feroza are under the imposing rule of political, religious and social institutions. The customs and tradition are fast developing and changing. The demons of the partition culture engulf them. The plots of the novels suffer nausea, depression and loss of identity because of cultural corrosion. In *Cracking India* Sidhwa has depicted the social realities of the people of Lahore from 1942 to 1948. These years were very turbulent and brought tremendous transformation in the lives of men and women. The main themes are love lost, trust deceived and the colonization of mind and body of women. The novel is also about redemption, intolerance, shrugging of passivity duplicity of colonialism. Hirschmann has made a historical statement that patriarchy is the real monster that blocks and inhibits the growth and freedom of women. Patriarchy gives special power to men to control women in social, legal and economic matters. Hirschmann further contends that:

Women are bound to suffer from depression; they are bound to experience violence and social oppression. Women are often tortured and tormented and they have to bear all the atrocities silently since they are inferior in status and position to men. They are supposed to conform to the traditions and values of the society whether they may like it or not. They are aware of their roles in society and their status and when men divorce them they feel guilt or shame even to come forward at all or even to admit to themselves that they *are* battered women (Hirschmann 133).

Cracking India is based on Bapsi Sidhwa's own experience of Partition in 1947. The title *Cracking India* has symbolical significance as it refers to the collapse of political system both in India and Pakistan during and after partition. The main plot of the novel of *Cracking India* is set in Lahore. The novel brought name and fame to Sidhwa since it exposed the oppression and suppression of the colonized by the colonial forces. The novelist has done a wonderful job to dismantle the colonial discourse. She has projected new facts about history raising the issues of sexuality, cultural collision and patriarchal oppression. *Cracking India* is a horrifying tale of the violence of partition highlighting the struggle of people. The novel is packed with gruesome scenes of Hindu Muslim riots, carnage and bloodshed and anarchy. In this chapter the researcher has applied the theories of Gyanendra Pandey to investigate the representation of the Partition and its violence. Through this critical lens, *Cracking India* reveals the silence of the subaltern women. Bapsi Sidhwa dramatizes the struggles of the oppressed women who are denied power, respect and rights in society. Her canvas is quite vast and like Shakespearean comedies her

women protagonists are seen struggling with the cruel patriarchal forces. Lenny is the main narrator of the events of the plot and Bapsi has put her faith in her narration. She is innocent and her perspective depicts reality of life. The plot begins with a depressing note as Lenny opines the “my world is compressed” (11). The image of gloom is quite relevant to the melancholy tone of the novel;

My child’s mind is blocked by the gloom emanating from the wire mesh screening the oblong ventilation slits. I feel such sadness for the dumb creature I imagine lurking behind the wall (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India* 11).

There is certainly no exaggeration in her details and we tend to believe in what he says. Lenny begins her narrative presenting the “chocolate –brown and short figure” (12) of Ayah who is the main protagonist of the novel. Ayah is as sexual and her gestures are erotic. Lenny depicts her thus:

Everything about her is eighteen years old and round and plum. Even her face. Full blown cheeks, pouting mouth and smooth forehead curve to form a circle with her head. Her hair is pulled back in a tight knot (13).

The scene of Lenny’s operation brings darkness and despair in her life. Lenny has become a freak as her father expresses his apprehension and fear thus: “You will merry widow. You will blow every penny I’ve saved.” (20) Dr. Bharucha advises the parents not to put pressure on Lenny, “her nerves could be affected... No need to strain her studies and exams” (25). Bapsi Sidhwa gives the readers a panoramic view of society; she has depicted the plight of Muchoo and Papoo

belonging to the lower rung of society. Muchoo is a traditional cruel and oppressive mother and it is pity that Papoo becomes the victim of oppressive traditions and customs. Both women are persecuted in the male dominated society. Dr. Bharucha avers that women are created by God for marriage, reproduction and breeding of children. They are treated as toys for sexual pleasures of men as Lenny observes the truth about male domination thus: “She’ll marry-have children leads a carefree, happy life. No need to strain her with studies and exams... Thereby sealing my fate (Lenny’s voice)” (15).

The first part of the novel shows the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsee living side by side as friends and neighbors in Lahore. The next section of the novel depicts the tension that was rising all over India and the violence that erupted because of cultural collision when Partition destroyed the peace and harmony of the people. The last few chapters deal with the aftermath of partition and the violence that engulfed the lives of all the characters. The novel has a realistic style of narration as it depicts the realistic scenes of savage violence and barbarity of racism. In style and unity, the plot of the novel is realistic packed with heart rending episodes. *The Cracking India* has very interesting themes; Bapsi has described the racial antagonism between Hindus and Muslims and the cracks in law and order system. The main focus of the novelist is on the themes of prostitution and sexuality, class and caste conflicts and above all on the theme of cultural collision. All the episodes of the novel are based on the current situations as Sidhwa had witnessed all the horrible scenes of the partition. She was a crippled girl but had acute sense of observation as she observed the corrosive impact of religion and culture on people. She closely observed the religious and cultural conflicts; the scenes of prostitution,

rapes and sexual oppression of women. However, Lenny is a younger heroine in the novel the reader follows Lenny from the age of four till nine. Lenny is eight years girl child, disabled and belongs to the Parsee religious minority.

Lenny supplies the readers the comprehensive views of socio-political realities of India and Pakistan. The plot of the novel is quite innovative as it unfolds the sensitive issues of communal tensions, and cultural disruption of communities. Religion is used as a tool to define identity of an individual determining his power of love and sex. Lenny represents the marginalized women who become the victims of cultural collision and patriarchal orthodox society. Her perspective seems to be consciously feminist and cultural. The voice of a child brings a displaced naivety and innocence to the story. Lenny's female perspective exposes the harsh realities confronted by men and women being the victims of cultural collision during Partition. There are many layers in the novel, the marriage of Lenny's parents and the other marriages in their community, the relationship between the servant woman Muccho and her daughter Papoo, the sister relationship between Godmother and Slave sister, the kidnapping of Ayah and Lenny's own position as a girl in the household are interesting dramatic episodes. The novel is packed with the traumatic scenes of violence, bloodshed which ruined the lives of people. Ayah becomes a victim of cultural disruption in the novel as all important events revolve around her. The openness and honesty running through the descriptions of Lenny's awakening erotic feelings is remarkable.

It is pertinent to note that there are two female bodies on which Lenny focuses throughout the novel: The sensual and attractive body of Ayah and the

disabled body of Lenny. Visits to hospital, operations, pain, as well as the advantages of being disabled, are all significant parts of Lenny's childhood and the formation of her identity. To her mother, Lenny's polio is a great sorrow. Her mother blames herself for leaving Lenny with the ayahs instead of taking care of the child herself. Lenny expresses her anguish when she says: and believes this to be the cause of her daughter's illness as she compares herself to her brother: 'Lenny's low self-esteem is brought on by thoughtless comments from the grown-ups around her. 'Drinking tea, I am told, makes one darker. I'm dark enough (90). When Lenny is a little older, her uncle asks her: "Why do you have such an unfortunate pair of eyes?"(180), adding that he thinks she is cross-eyed. Lenny's low self-esteem is also connected to her parents' problematic marriage: "

And, as the years advance, my sense of inadequacy and un-worth advances. I have to think faster – on my toes as it were ... offering lengthier and lengthier chatter to fill up the infernal time of Father's mute meals. Is that when I learn to tell tales?" (88).

Lenny takes it upon her to fill the silences between father and mother, in a sense taking responsibility for repairing the cracks in their marriage. Nilufer E. Bharucha, in her article '*From Behind a Fine Veil*', agrees that Lenny is a marginalized character, representing all the women who suffered cultural dislocation and homelessness (136). Bharucha calls *Cracking India* may "as a political allegory" (136). Lenny represents the colonized and oppressed women. Indeed, Lenny's disability and sex make her physically marginalized. Gramsci was perhaps the first post-colonial critic who propounded the theory of subalternism. Spivak later on

developed this theory and wrote her famous essay: Can the Subaltern Speak?” Ranjit Guha continued further research on the subject and most of the contemporary writers describe the tremendous impact of these ideas on the thinking of the contemporary writers. In his *Subaltern Studies* Guha talked about women like Lenny who were treated as the “Other” in the society.

Partition was a great political event in the Indian sub-continent that impacted millions of people. Partition turned out to be a monster for the people. The ugly part of the partition was violence which resulted into mass migration, cultural disruption. The Subaltern Studies group explored the causes of the cultural collision and the sufferings of the people (Guha 35).

Lenny’s innocent voice speaks of the cultural dislocation of the people; her female perspective brings out the plight of women. Lenny’s narrative focuses on the plight of women and on the brutal violence that sprang out of cultural antagonism. The abduction of her Hindu Ayah is a horrifying example of mutual hatred of the communities. Sudhir Kakar is a renowned psychoanalyst who opines that there is a direct connection between religious fanaticism and violence.

Sexual violence is main theme of Bapsi Sidhwa. Riots broke out in India and Pakistan and the worst affected were women who were raped in the streets and killed just to take revenge from the rival communities. People were in frenzy during partition; they launched a crusade to kill and dishonor women just to take revenge from the rival communities. The historical data about the violence is quite shocking

as a large number of women were targeted in the open streets during riots in India and Pakistan. In hatred men kill each other to articulate their cultural and religious frenzy (Kakar 38).

Kakar's analysis depicts the cruel patriarchal world in which Lenny and the Ayah live and suffer. Men enjoy sadistic pleasure to rape and torture women as depicted in the plot of the novel. It is shocking to observe that the sexual objectification and exploitation of women was a routine element in the society. Lenny is a keen observer as she gathers information from the adults who talk and discuss the issues. When Lenny sees the middle-aged groom, and notices the way he is slyly looking at her and the other pre-pubescent girls at the wedding, she imagines the "grotesque possibilities awaiting Papoo" (Bapsi sihwa, *Cracking India* 199). Her future seems bleak, filled with a lot of hard work as the youngest wife, and the risk of sexual abuse by her husband. Child marriage and little girls dressed as women are mentioned a couple of other times in the novel. Lenny envies the Muslim girls in the park, "dressed in satins and high heels, the little Muslim girls wear make-up" (105). Lenny uses her observant eyes and draws knowledge from what she sees. Her Hindu Ayah is the best teacher who enlightens her about the harsh realities of the post-colonial society. The Ayah in the novel is a major issue as Bapsi Sidhwa has portrayed her as a sex doll that is seen surrounded by her thirteen admirers. People from all sections of religions are her admirers as she has an erotic body. Men from all sections of society are after Ayah. Ayah has the most described and most desired sexual body in *Cracking India*. Her "rolling bouncy walk that agitates the globules of her buttocks under her cheap colorful saris and the half-spheres beneath her short sari-blouses" (13), and her sensual scent are remarked upon whenever she is present.

The game of courtship that is played out between Ayah and the different men who compete for her favor is observed by Lenny, and teaches her about men and women, relationships and sexuality. She has an enormous physical presence as beggars, holy men and even hawkers were excited by the erotic body and poses of Ayah. Lenny has narrated in detail the impact of her sexual body on the every sort of people from cyclists down to hawkers and cart drivers:

Holy men were seen hovering around her to enjoy sexual pleasures with her, or to rape her. All traders or business men down from hawkers to coolies, cooks or cyclists were after her because her body was so erotic and sexy (195).

Whereas Lenny's mother has a physical presence that is described as "motherliness" (50) and Godmother has a physical presence that radiates stability due to her size and age, The game of courtship that is played out between Ayah and the different men who compete for her favor is observed by Lenny, and teaches her about men and women, relationships and sexuality. Ayah is, in many ways, a character who is ahead of her times. She has grown up in a society that expects young women to live in their parents' home whilst waiting for an arranged marriage, but she still has left her home town of Amritsar to work as an Ayah. Her family was passing through a period of economic crisis so she was compelled to work outside Amritsar. It is still interesting that Ayah has found work away from Amritsar, which takes her away from the protection of her family. She represents the working class of women who enjoyed limited freedom in the Pakistani society.

Ayah represents several millions of displaced people. She was raped and her rape is symbolical of the sexual violence and oppression in the post-colonial society.

The women were persecuted and sexually molested during partition. The plight of Ayah is depicted as a case study by Sidhwa highlighting the worst phase of cultural and political disruption. Ayah is sobbing to Masseur's proposal to marry her, says, "I'm already yours" (201) thus echoing its poignant undercurrent that she was already lost. Sexuality and alienation are the prominent themes of the novel. Women suffered these traumas because of cultural collision. The plot of the novel is packed with the incidents of violence and its relation with the body of women. Bapsi Sidhwa has depicted the nature and treatment of female body giving the message of the oppressor of the female body. No wonder, female body is the worst affected during the clash of two communities. The body of woman is treated as a toy which can be mutilated and broken at any time. The main oppressors in the novel are the Hindus, Muslims, or Sikhs. There are innumerable scenes of broken bodies of men and women depicting the cruelty of the perpetrators. The plot of the novel is loaded with the scenes of rape, and murder depicting the physical and psychological anguish of women protagonists. In *Cracking India*, the main focus is on the colonization and abuse of female body. All violence springs from female body as men are seen hunting women for revenge and for sexual pleasures. The real communal violence resulting into cultural breakdown begins in Chapter 16 of *Cracking India*. The Sikh mobs are very ferocious and cruel waving the "corpses of a child terrorizing the young and old in the streets of Lahore" (144). Lenny narrates the frightening scene of meaningless cruelty. Lenny vividly narrates the brutal violence rising from clash of communities:

Sidhwa has also depicted the psychological tensions on the face of Lenny. The dreadful scenes of violence have psychic impact on her sensitive mind. Sidhwa

has described a very interesting scene to depict the inner world of Lenny who mutilates her doll performing the same action that she saw in the street. Lenny is fear-ridden and looks frightened. She cries to express her confusion and traumatic experiences. The mutilation of the body described in the scene reveals the collapse of colonial culture. The action of mutilation of the body reveals the aftermath of partition. In Chapter 18, Sidhwa announces the most horrible news through the mouth of Ice-candy-man, who gives the sensational news of the butchering of men and women in the train coming from Gurdaspur (159). The Ice- Candy- Man gives the sensational news that the rioters raped and killed Muslim women; their breasts were amputated and dumped in a gunny sack found in the train coming from Gurdaspur” (159). The amputation of a woman’s breasts is an example of treating woman as a tool of cruelty, it symbolizes barbarity. The breasts in the gunny-sacks are again symbolical of the aftermath of the cultural conflicts and frenzy of the people who became insane. Ayah is uninhibited about her sexuality as she soaks in the admiration of her group of male friends. Sidhwa also explores the little girl’s sexual curiosity as seen through her interactions with her cousin. At its heart, the novel is a critique of the colonial patriarchy which used body as a tool to further its motive. Indeed, the plot of the novel offers an insight into the themes of sexuality, violence and universal guilt. Lenny looks on helplessly as her circle of friends divide themselves into hostile religious groups, and eventually set Lahore on fire:

The whole world is burning. The air on my face is so hot I think my flesh and clothes will catch fire. I start screaming, hysterically sobbing Ayah moves away, her feet suddenly heavy and dragging” (147).

Ayah's body becomes a site of cultural conflict. The horrible scene of her gang rape, her forced prostitution depicts the theme of using body as a tool in the society. The abduction of Ayah is the main episode in the novel; she represents thousands of women who were tortured and tormented; sexually oppressed and maltreated. The Ayah is a subaltern representing the working class who live in abject poverty and are marginalized. The novel depicts how society was suffused with domestic violence, sexual molestation, and male domination. Body of women was treated as tradable commodity. The main episodes of the plot of the novel are about the scenes of sexual violence perpetrated on women, through the fate of the Ayah. Lenny betrays Ayah and suffers from her sense of guilt after her betrayal:

For three days I stand in front of the bathroom mirror and curse myself for the betrayal and I am haunted by a sense of guilt. Whenever I brush my teeth or got to the bathroom the guilt haunts... I'm so conscious of its unwelcome presence at all times that it swells uncomfortably in my mouth and gags and chokes me (196).

Lenny is overwhelmed with the guilt consciousness. She uses the words "vile" and "gagging" to articulate her sense of guilt. The plot reveals the horrendous episode of the abduction of Ayah describing the loss of harmony and the consequences of the corrosion of cultural harmony. In Chapter 7 Bapsi Sidhwa points out the force of rumors that destroyed the peace and stability of the countries. Imam Din was an old servant in the family of Lenny. He took leave and went to his village to tell all about partition that would engulf all in its pool of blood. The people of his village are quite unconcerned about the partition expressing their

mutual love and harmony thus: Lenny becomes aware of the imminent cultural corrosion:

The religious differences erupted all of a sudden. People of all communities were leading a peaceful life and soon they became aware of religious differences. Soon they turned out Hindus and Muslims and started killing each other I become aware of religious differences. It is sudden. Ayah was no exception (101).

The climax of the novel comes when Bapsi Sidhwa reports the plight of the people; the tensions and anxieties before the coming of partition. The violence and hatred is in full circle. Now there meeting place is a private restaurant. People become aware of the growing tensions and anxiety. Often a Muslim argues with a Sikh:

At the table, a Muslim argues with a Sikh, shouting: “They [the Sikhs] have a tradition of violence, [...]. Haven’t you seen the portraits of the gurus holding the dripping heads of butchered enemies?” (140).

Laura Mulvey has given a psychoanalytic analysis of the objectification of women in the patriarchal culture. She contends that woman persecution is very common in the events of racial antagonism. Man exults in sexually oppressing women. The male finds his pleasure in objectifying and oppressing women. Ayah becomes the sexual object. Sidhwa has highlighted Ayah’s “chocolate chemistry” (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India* 28). She becomes the object of sexual pleasures thus her case represents the outcome of the cultural conflict. Bapsi Sidhwa narrates a

woeful tale of sexually oppressed Ayah to depict the repercussions of the cultural corrosion and the aftermath of communal violence. Ayah is sexually oppressed by Ice-Candy-Man. He is a villain in the novel descending from the dynasty of pimps. He has sexual intentions to objectify and sexually oppress Ayah. He penetrates inside Ayah's sari to enjoy sexual pleasures. Ayah is sexually offended by Ice-Candy-Man. The scene of flying kite again is erotic. He pretends that he will teach kite flying to Ayah and starts taking physical liberties with her to enjoy sexual pleasures. On the symbolical level the Kite is Ayah and the Kite controller is Ice-Candy Man. He treats her like a kite and likes to control the kite dexterously. He discloses his fetishistic comparison of Ayah to the kite in his passionate his desire to control her. However, Ayah doesn't understand her evil intentions and remains passive suggesting her dilemma under the patriarchal oppression.

Ambreen Hai (2000) discussed the theme of "Otherness" of Ayah. Hai observes that "Ayah is a symbol of aggression against women." Hai observes that "Ayah's erotic body has been repeatedly emphasized in the novel; she excites the passions of many men including Sharbat Khan who gives her almonds and other dry fruits. Sharbat Khan gives a ride to her in his bicycle to enjoy physical liberties. Ayah's sexualized body excites multiple masculine desires resulting into her ultimate abduction and rape. Hai continues her arguments and contends that Ayah's abduction just is one example in the novel. The history of partition reveals that there were more than seventy thousand women who were abducted, raped and sexually tortured during partition in India and Pakistan. Lenny watches all the incidents of Hindu- Muslim riots silently. Lenny watches the plight of Ayah who becomes an "object of violation" (Hai 397). She separates herself from Ayah after abduction. For

Lenny, Ayah is just a poor, illiterate and homeless servant. She is vulnerable to all forms of abuse and sexual oppression. Sidhwa clearly highlights the fact that sexual violence becomes pervasive during cultural conflicts. The scenes of violence, sexual torture and maltreatment are the result of cultural corrosion.

Pappo is a woman character belonging to the lower strata of society. She lives in slums with her father who is an ordinary sweeper. Through the sufferings of Papoo Bapsi has depicted the cancer of class differences. Lenny is loved and respected in the society but Papoo leads a wretched life. Her mother Muccho also gives her a shabby treatment (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India* 21). Her mother beats her in a callous manner and she is admitted in the hospital for treatment. Muccho abuses her in an endless manner calling her a “Bitch!” She is called a prostitute and a slut. She pounces on her daughter like a wild cat and hurls her on to the wall (56). On the eve of her wedding “celebration,” Lenny is shocked to find her intoxicated. She is an opium addict and is seen lying in a “crumpled heap.” The woeful tale of Papoo’s coercion reflects the cruelty of patriarchy, and sexual enslavement. Women like Pappo and Ayah are victims of a cultural set up that fractures the identity of women and legitimizes sexual predation. The Ayah’s post-abduction story is the horrible product of cultural collision. She falls into the hands of a group of Muslim boys who rape her mercilessly. Papoo is coerced into marriage Ayah is forced to accept Ice-Candy Man as her husband. The Sethi family tracks her down and Ayah is “to Amritsar” (262). Ice-Candy Man is a “goonda” who compels her to marry him. Soon he sends her to a brothel house of Lahore. She becomes a “dancing girl” in Lahore’s Hira Mandi. Ice-candy-man claims he belongs to the family of the “the cradle of royal bastards” (258). Godmother Rodabai plays the heroic role saving the life of Ayah from the clutches of the Ice-Candy Man. Rodabai is fully determined to

save the life of Ayah. His sexual control over her is a reality and her subjugation of the Ayah is an example of religious- communal identity politics. Partition culture fostered hatred and violence, attitude of people changed and the group round Ayah became Hindus, Muslim and Sikh. Sidhwa narrates thus:

One day everybody is themselves- and the next day they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian. People shrink, dwindling into symbols. Ayah is no longer just my all encompassing Ayah, she is also a token, a Hindu” (93).

The plot of the novel unfolds the tale of cultural collision between Ayah and Ice-Candy Man. He is a Muslim and Ayah is a Hindu maid-servant belonging to poor family of Amritsar. Is relationship as a model to describe the sufferings of Ayah who becomes a prey to Ice-Candy Man. He changes her name and gives a new Muslim name. Ice-Candy Man used all foul and fair means to enslave and sexually oppress Ayah. He persecutes and ill-treats Ayah to avenge himself from all the Hindu people. He abducts her and keeps her in the Hira Mandi. Ice-Candy Man uses religion as a tool to colonize Ayah’s body. She gets a Muslim name and becomes Mumtaz. Ice-Candy Man pretends that he passionately loves her. His love sentiments are pretentious and hypocritical. In desperation, he appreciates her beauty thus:

My family lives in the old quarter of the Mandi. Now they have accepted her in the Hira Mandi. She has become a lovely and charming dancing girl. She has divine gift to charm everyone. She sings like an angel and has the melodious voice. You should see her dance. How she moves! (277).

Ayah uses her erotic body as a tool to survive in society and to further achieve her ambitions. She does gain cheap doilies, cashew nuts, and many other things. Body is used by Ayah to survive in the colonial society. But soon she is caught in the whirlpool of cultural conflicts and communal hatred. Bapsi Sidhwa uses the female body to describe the horrors of cultural antagonism. Her sexual oppression and rape is the result of a collective action. Ayah suffers abduction, rape and sexual oppression. Godmother and Lenny finally meet Ayah and find her a distracted woman. She has to perform the double role in the novel acting as a psychic wreck playing the roles of Shanta and Mumtaz. In frustration she confesses that she is “not alive” (274), Lenny aptly sums up the agony of Ayah and her psychological depression being the victim of cultural antagonism:

When I think of Ayah I think she is in the clutches of a monster. He has smothered her spirit and mutilated and polluted her body. She lost her angelic voice because of her psychological tortures. While Ayah is haunted by her past, Ice-candy-man is haunted by his future; and his macabre future already appears to be stamped on his face (276).

The kidnapped Ayah is found in the Lahore’s red-light district of Hira Mandi. She loses her identity, her home and her religion. She becomes Mumtaz and suffers the agony of humiliation. Rodabai tries to comfort Ayah thus:

Worse things are forgiven. Life goes on and the business of living buries the debris of our pasts. Hurt, happiness... all fade impartially ... to make way for fresh joy and new sorrow. That’s the way of life”. She has lost faith and finally replies-“I am past that I’m not alive” (Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India* 262).

Lenny is quite ignorant about the dancing girls and prostitution profession. She is shocked to hear the news from her cousin who tells her the reality about Hira Mandi; it is not a mandi for the sale and purchase of diamonds. The young and beautiful girls are described as diamonds. The men pay them to dance and sing “(252). Lenny still doesn’t understand her cousin who then does practical to tell her the sexual act: “Ever ready to illuminate, teach and show me things, Cousin squeezes my breasts and lifts my dress and grabs my elasticized cotton knickers” (253). Lenny actually visits Hira Mandi to get the first hand knowledge about the famous brothel of Lahore. It is a heart rending experience for young Lenny. Her cousin opens her eyes giving her concrete information about the prostitution centre. Lenny knows about the world of prostitutes and pimps for the first time. Bapsi Sidhwa brings a world of sexual violence in the novel to depict the mysterious and monstrous nature of cultural antagonism. Bapsi Sidhwa has narrated the tragic tale of the mother of Lenny who also becomes a victim of male domination and sexual molestation.

The plot of the novel portrays the activities of the Sethi family belonging to the elite class of Lahore. They enjoy all the amenities of life. Mrs. Sethi is also the victim of male domination and subjugation. Mrs. Sethi is always treated as “ a battered woman” in the novel Mrs Sethi is an activist dedicated to the rehabilitation of the abducted and sexually oppressed women of Lahore. She engages in humanitarian project to save women of partition violence. She helps Hindu and Sikh families during partition cultural wars. She shelters kidnapped women. During Lahore communal violence, Mrs. Sethi extends all help to the partition victims. In

public, Mrs. Sethi is an empowered woman but in closed door she is a subjugated and persecuted woman. Lenny refers to marital discord of her parents thus:

I heard noises of my mother and father always fighting even in their bedrooms. I heard mother crying and father bullying her endlessly. My father was always harsh, imposing and demanding. My mother cried for money and my father was thrifty terse and brash in his attitude (224).

Sidhwa has depicted the cat episode in the novel to symbolize the routine conflict between Mrs. Sethi and her husband. Imam Din highlights the battered status of Mrs. Sethi. Imam Din threatens violence against the tom cat. Hamida, Lenny, Yousaf urges him to let go the cat. Mrs. Sethi orders Imam Din to let the cat go at once. She identifies herself with the cat and doesn't like it to be tortured. She grabs her shirt and even proceeds to hit him with a fly-swatter. She defends itself. Imam Din's threats against the cat horrify her. She thinks that her husband is violent against a cat symbolized as woman in the novel. This episode has great thematic significance as it depicts the struggle of the female with the male. Thus, the Muslim and the Sikhs are united in oppressing women and sexually molesting them. Their exposure of genitals to frighten and molest harass women. Bapsi Sidhwa has narrated the scene of slaughter of Hindus and Muslims as they are fleeing to Pakistan (159). Ice-Candy-Man warns everybody of imminent riots and violence:

All of you must know the natural justice. You see how men are running from the village. Some Muslims tortured the sister of Sher Singh and even played with one of Sher Singh's sisters. He was

killed in the scuffle. Many people left Lahore sooner or later. After what one hears of Sikh atrocities it's better they left sooner! The refugees are clamoring for revenge! (166).

Lenny goes with her family's cook, Imam Din, to his village in Punjab. There, she again encounters little girls acting like adults. Imam Din's two female grandchildren are 'looking like miniature women of eight and nine (63). In the society of the novel, the space, both metaphorical and physical, left for women in which to act and express themselves is very limited. At a gathering with their Sikh neighbors, one of the neighbors suggests that the girls' marriages be arranged soon: "Already practiced in the conduct they have absorbed from the village women, the girls try not to smile or giggle. They must have heard their mother and aunts. Rodabai brings back Ayah back to Amritsar. The denouement of novel comes with the theme of the impact of cultural antagonism on the minds of the people of India and Pakistan thus: "I am told that Ayah, at last, has gone to her family in Amritsar... And Ice candy- man, too, disappears across the Wagah border into India" (277). The child Lenny takes it upon herself to fill the silences between Father and Mother, in a sense taking responsibility for repairing the cracks in their marriage. Nilufer E. Bharucha, in her article '*From Behind a Fine Veil*' suggests that *Cracking India* may be seen as a political allegory, where Lenny represents the colonized and oppressed; or a feminist one, where Lenny represents oppressed women. Sidhwa has used all the techniques of narration to document the scenes of cultural antagonism in her novel. The main focus in the novel is the collision of the cultural norms and the aftermath of the cultural wars and conflicts so vividly described by the novelist. The scenes of merciless butchering, the naked parade of the innocent women, arson is

indeed horrifying. Sidhwa has also given the brutal scene of cutting off women's breasts in the novel. The scenes of rape and murder further depict the fragmented identities of women and their battered status.

Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride* is based on the real story. Sidhwa came to know about the sexual oppression of a girl when she was enjoying holidays with her husband in the mountains. The incident is about involving a Pakistani girl who becomes Zaitoon Bano. She is also called Dilshad in the novel. Zaitoon runs away selling her son to a wealthy, childless couple. She is traded like commodities in the exploitative society. Sidhwa depicts the heart rending scenes of clash of cultures resulting into sexual exploitation of women:

Women the world over had been subjected into slavery through the ages. She had been persecuted, murdered, raped and enslaved. She had been impregnated, beaten up and by male partners. She is often disinherited. Society had been silent on the persecution of women. It was an immutable Law of nature (Bapsi Sidhwa 226).

Bapsi Sidhwa's feminist stance is quite revolutionary as she launches a vigorous attack on the patriarchal society that fails to save women moral and sexual persecution. She was shocked to hear a story of a tribal woman. Bapsi Sidhwa got upset and made up her mind to write a story about the plight of women being persecuted in the patriarchal society. But then on finding her, her husband killed her on the spot. Bapsi Sidhwa in her "*Why Do I Write?*" recorded her experiences thus:

When I heard the story of a Panjabi girl I was shocked. Her story haunted me, it reflected the miserable condition of many women in the Indian subcontinent. It became an obsession with me. I wrote a story to depict the plight of women all over the subcontinent. Then the story which began as a short story and eventually it became *The Bride*, or *The Pakistani Bride*, as it is titled in India (Sidhwa *Cracking India* 28).

Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride* hinges on the theme of cultural collision. The two main characters in the novel are Qasim and Zaitoon. Qasim represents the cruel, barbarous Kohistani tribal people who are not subjected to any law and order. Major Mustaq depicts the real history of Qasim and his people thus:

That part of Kohistan has no administration. It is inhabited by isolated pockets of feuding tribes, for centuries imprisoned by the Karakoram Range. They have their own notions of honour and revenge; a handful of maize stolen, a man's pride slighted, and the price is paid in bloody family feuds (*Bapsi Sidhwa Pakistani Bride* 115).

Qasim had left the region for a long time; he got settled in Lahore. He imbibed in him good qualities but in his blood there is Kohitani pride and ego as she is always ready to kill the man for his honor. Zaitoon was not his real daughter. She was the daughter of Sikander Khan who was killed during partition riots when he was travelling by train with his wife. The real name of Zaitoon is Munni who belongs to a family who lived in Lahore. Qasim adopted her; educated her and

Miriam, the wife of Nikka Pehlwan looked after her. Munni had the cultural blood of Lahore as she loved the city; expressed her desire to get married in Lahore. Qasim- Munni relationship is based on cultural conflicts in the very beginning of the novel. Qasim himself deposes before Major Mushtaq on the border of the Indus Bridge:

We were on the train from Jullunder at the time of Partition. The train was ambushed. Her parents were killed. I had jumped off the train before the mob attacked. After the killing, when I ran along the tracks to Lahore, the child called to me thinking I was her father. I carried her to Lahore (135).

Munni is adopted by Qasim Khan who gives the name of his daughter Zaitoon to her. Qasim loved his daughter Zaitoon very much but she died because of small pox along with his wife Afsahn. Qasim took away Munni because he was alone at that time and he wanted to fill his void: "Munni you are like the smooth, dark olive, the Zaitoon that grows near our hills... The name suits you... I shall call you Zaitoon" (30). It is a chance that Zaitoon fell in the hands of Qasim who belonged to the Kohistani tribe. Qasim saved Munni; walked two hours in the scorching heat of the sun: "his clothes were soaked with perspiration and his trousers stiff and black with dust" (31). Qasim struggled to survive as he made tremendous efforts to escape the rioters to reach "the thicket of the Muslim safety" (31). Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the profile of Qasim thus:

A simple man from a primitive warring tribe, his impulses were as direct and concentrated as pinpoints of heat. No subtle concessions to

reason or consequence tempered his fierce capacity to love or hate, to lavish loyalty or pity. Each emotion arose spontaneously and without complication, and was reinforced by racial tradition, tribal honour and superstition. Generations had carried it that way in his volatile Kohistani blood (31).

Qasim Khan had killed Girdhari Lal before he took the train bound for Lahore. It is again a chance that he met Nikka Pehlwan who saved his life and the life of Zaitoon when they were sleeping under a mango tree. Nikka Pehlwan's wife was a barren woman; Qasim and Nikka became friends. Qasim gave him two hundred rupees with the promise that Nikka would return twice the amount after six months. Nikka was a small trader; his business flourished because of the shortage of commodities because of the riots since most of the shops were burnt down during the riots. Nikka's wife Mariam was a good woman; the care of Zaitoon was entrusted on Mariam who gave love and affection to Zaitoon. It is again a chance that both Qasim and Nikka started living together in Lahore: "Qasim and Nikka secured adjacent rooms on the second floor of a narrow three-storyed building" (44). Mariam transmitted her Lahori culture, manners and tastes to Zaitoon. She sent her to school; she made him to read and write as she believed that women must be given proper education. Mariam was very progressive in her ideas and was little liberal in her approach to the woman question. Zaitoon attended full five years in the schooling; learnt reading and writing; went to Mullah for the religious learning and soon grew into a fine woman of aesthetic tastes. She learnt cooking and all the domestic chores to be a successful wife. Mariam would teach her so many things to be a successful woman. She learnt the art of cooking and other important tactics of

life that a woman should know from Miriam. She spent her days and nights in training Zaitoon but Qasim was lost in the world of prostitutes in the Hira Mandi of Lahore. He was totally carefree because his daughter was looked after by Mariam. Sidhwa has reported thus the sexual exuberance of Qasim:

He could stroll in these lanes for hours; his senses throbbing...the heady smell of perfume, the tinkle of payals on dancer's ankles, the chum chum of feminine feet, dancing around closed doors excited him (62).

The dancing girls in Hira Mandi are a mix of prostitutes, strippers and courtesans, the business is hiding behind the pretence of being a place of music and poetry, and the girls all can dance or sing. For Qasim, the Hira Mandi is a fairy land. It is quite interesting to note that women in Pakistan were made the victims of sexual oppression and male subjugation. They were traded like commodities by their native people; many of the poor women were sold as prostitutes and sent to Hira Mandi, a famous brothel of Lahore:

The Mandi looked like a dark alley where girls were seen dancing and singing to entertain their customers for money wearing rose petals, and marigolds. They would wear glistening and bright clothes; wearing looking beautiful with artificial make up. Men would wear "chooridar pyjama" sitting like feudal lords. Qasim, like a sperm swimming, aglow with virility up to the tips of the hair on his knuckles, feels engulfed in this female street (63).

Sidhwa depicts the facts of the corrosion of culture and partition in the novel. The horrifying tale of Zaitoon is linked with the turbulent history and cultural disruption of India and Pakistan. The Kohistani tribal men believe in colonizing the body of women. "For the tribal a woman is a symbol of honor; a useful commodity dearly bought; they were very possessive and wouldn't allow freedom to her" (138). The life of Zaitoon is a case study; she was quite comfortable in Lahore city but she is forced to marry a tribal boy. Her life is represented to show the readers the clash of cultures of plains and hills. The tribal people believe that their honour important and women are "Others". They don't regard the feelings of their women. Novy Kapadia has highlighted the cultural differences between the plains and the people of hills thus:

Sidhwa's novel *The Pakistani Bride* is a poignant attack on the Kohistani community in particular and the Pakistani society in general. The writer has given scathing indictment of the patriarchal society for its brutal treatment of women. The historical episodes of cultural collision are faithfully documented by Sidhwa in the novel. The scenes of sexual oppression and marginalization of women are indeed barbaric (142).

Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride* presents a Punjabi girl Zaitoon as the unfortunate heroine whose tragedy is symbolical of cultural confrontation. Her crisis begins with her entry into the world of Kohistani Qasim. He is proud of his Kohistani blood and believes that his tribal friends are the best in the world. Qasim adopted Zaitoon who lost her parents during the partition of violence. The real

interest in the novel builds up with the marriage settlement of Zaitoon with the tribal Sakhi. A secondary protagonist Carol is introduced. She is an American and is travelling around the country with her Pakistani husband. The role of Carol is to give a comparison of American women who enjoy liberty and Zaitoon who is crushed by the cruelty of patriarchy. In the fourth and last part of the novel, Zaitoon runs away from her violent husband, who chases her through the mountains, and the tragedy of Zaitoon. Miriam comes to know that Zaitoon is of thirteen years of age; she talks about her marriage with Qasim who has great regard for her. In the 10th chapter of the novel Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the cultural clash between Kohistani Qasim and the Punjabi Miriam and Zaitoon. In Pakistan marriage is considered as a business transaction between two families. The bride and groom have no say in the marriage transactions. The tribal men have their own independent traditions and rituals of marriage. In the Punjab families the bride is given away to the groom and huge dowry is taken from her parents; she gives working support to the family. Life in the mountains is very hard and the mortality rate is very high. Woman doesn't enjoy any personal liberty. Domestic violence is very common. Young girls are given to settle the disputes or to pay the loan. Qasim got the daughter of Rahim Khan because he couldn't pay the loan: "Any girl – and he had made sure this one was able-bodied – was worth more than the loan due" (7).

In this short passage, the fundamental view of women in the tribal culture is spelled out clearly. The father sees the girl as something he has purchased. He has even made sure she is 'able-bodied', and the association to the buying and selling of livestock is disturbing. Having 'only' one wife himself, he considers taking her for his own property, but decides to 'bestow her' on his son instead. The language used

here shows the father's attitude towards the girl as a piece of property that he can give away or use as he sees best fit. In Punjabi culture child marriage is practiced. Mariam talks about the issue of marriage to her husband Nikka Pehlwan. For Nikka she is only a baby but Miriam doesn't agree with him." No. She is not a Baby. She has grown up as her body is assuming different form. She is entering into womanhood... (53). Miriam is shocked to know that Qasim fixed the marriage of Zaitoon with his cousin Sakhi without her consent. She hates the idea of sending Zaitoon to the hilly region far off from Lahore. She had practical experience and predicted that she will not enjoy happiness of married life with the tribal people. But Qasim is adamant:

But sister I gave him a word of honor!

What is Your word! Your word! Your word! What has your word to do with the child's life? What ? Tell me? (91).

Qasim couldn't answer her practical question. He kept quiet and remained firm in his decision. Miriam was highly excited because she was imagining a dark future of Zaitoon. She summoned up her courage again and tried to dissuade Qasim:

Brother Qasim, listen to me; how can a girl, brought up in Lahore be happy in the far off remote region? Tribal are savages. Brutish, uncouth, and ignorant! She will be miserable among them. Don't you see? (93).

Qasim was firm in his decision. "How dare you! You've never been there! You don't understand a thing. I have given my word! I know Zaitoon will be happy.

The matter should end (94). Miriam then exposes the cruelty of Qasim and dares him to confront the truth:

I know you are giving your daughter because that Pathan offered you five hundred rupees-some measly maize and a few goats? Is that why you are selling her like a greedy merchant? I will give you that, and more...Nikka will! How much more do you want? We will buy her! (94).

Qasim was out of rage; Miriam felt the impact of his anger but she continued with full force: “Yes I’ll welcome her, look after her. We have no children and she’ll be my daughter. She will bear Nikka daughters, and sons!” (94). Qasim tried to convince Miriam that “It is my word-the word of Kshistani!” (94). Nikka soothed Miriam who gave her a gold necklace and blessings to Zaitoon from the core of her heart. In the cultural clash the real sufferer is Zaitoon who becomes a victim of Qasim’s hereditary cruelty and false ego. It is ironical for him Miriam has no identity as she is a tradable commodity like a goat or a sheep. The main issues in the novel are sexual oppression domestic violence and cultural conflicts. Zaitoon is forced to marry a tribal man and soon discovers that reality is harsh and her romantic dreams are deceptive. She rebels against the oppressive nature of patriarchy of the tribal represented by Sakhi. She discovers that all these tribal are savages as they don’t regard women as individuals but objects of sexual pleasures. Her culture clashes with the culture of Sakhi and her awareness of cultural collision brings radical change in her behavior. She decides to run away to the world of her Miriam. Robert L. Ross, *The Research for Community in Bapsi Sidhwa’s Novels* observes thus:

A region where men were heroic, proud and incorruptible, ruled by a code of honour that banned all injustice and evil.... Their women beautiful as hour is and their bright rosy-cheeked children, lived besides crystal torrents of melted snow (Ross 1).

Zaitoon's escape from this rigid, traditional tribal community is considered by Fawzia Afzal-Khan as a spirit of defiance. She "endorses a challenge to the structures of patriarchy" (9). Both Carol and Zaitoon believe that Zaitoon's sexual relationship with Sakhi is based on hatred. In contrast to Carol, Zaitoon's experience of sexuality is covered with secrecy and therefore more surprising to find in a Pakistani novel. To her, sex has been a non-subject. This makes her transformation from girl to woman all the more interesting:

In young age a girl doesn't understand the very meaning of sex. She doesn't take sex as good or bad. The religion doesn't give her the right direction and the parents often remain silent about it. Zaitoon was also like an ordinary woman. She suffered all the traumatic experiences as she grew up into a woman. She tried her best to escape from the male sexual oppression and persecution but she couldn't escape male domination (162).

These two passages show the pre-pubertal or early pubertal Zaitoon, who does not know 'how babies come' or that sex exists at all. Living in 'Muslim seclusion' in a 'sexual vacuum', she does not know the origins of her impulses. However, the relationship between Zaitoon and Qasim is based on the cultural clash between a Kohistani Pathan and a Punjabi girl. Zaitoon's long journey into a hell

with her step father Qasim is a tragic tale of her sufferings. The journey begins with an ill-omen; Zaitoon saw a “fallen bulldozer” symbolizing imminent death and destruction. Qasim is highly excited because he is going to his hilly area after many years: Bibi!..., we are free and manly lot” (100). Qasim boasts of his freedom; talks of his people; their traditions; ecstatic with the wonder and beauty:

Bibi! We are different from the people of the plains. We are not bound hand and foot by government clerks and police. We live by our own rules -calling our own destiny! We are free as the air you breathe! (100).

The above passage clearly depicts the cultural antagonism between Kohistani and Punjabi culture; between law and unlawful people. The savagery and barbarity of the Kohistani tribe is distinctly depicted by Bapsi Sidhwa Qasim was fired by raw and savage elements once again and what he had learnt in the civilized city of Lahore was forgotten in a moment. Zaitoon was shocked to know that Qasim was not her real father as Qasim narrated the entire story of his life to Major Muhstaq of his past to satisfy him that he was a genuine person and he didn't intend to do any wrong with the army people who were guarding the Indus Bridge. Zaitoon also encountered here with Carol; a American woman wearing jean and top in the fashionable manner. She was drinking and looked care free. Zaitoon inquired from Qasim:

“Abba, her ways are different from ours?”

“Yes, child” replied Qasim.

As different as my ways will be from those of your people in the hills?

Hush, Zaitoon. What nonsense you talk (140).

Zaitoon comes to know the mystery of cultural differences for the first time. She is not happy with the Karakoram region. The imagery of “darkness,” sapphire snake” and the “granite lifeless rocks” is very effective in conveying the impending doom of Zaitoon. In the 16th chapter appears the oppressive Sakhi:”Hawk eyed, he followed each movement with growing feelings of humiliation and jealousy. Hatred and fury burned within him, yet he dared not descend any further.” (*Bride* 148) Zaitoon looks at Qasim who is very cheerful and full of excitement; she also feels the impact of lonely and desolate environment as she asks: “Abba, the man I am to marry...Do you know him?” (148). Qasim gives an evasive reply to her: “I saw him long back, when he was a child. He is a man of our tribe, bibi, and I can safely leave you in his care” (*Bride* 148). Zaitoon is caught in the trap of ignorance and uncertainty. She looks worried when Qasim tell that he is “a few years older than her” (148). The first shock Zaitoon gets when she meets Hamida; her mother –in-law with her deep scars and ferocious look.” She looked like an apparition. She saw a horrible dream: “She had been standing on by the river, admiring its vivid colours, when a hand come out of the ice-blue depths and dragged her in, pulling her down and down...”(156). The rug was slipping under the feet of Zaitoon; she was aware of their poverty and harsh struggle for their life. All her dreams of beauty and glory were shattered in a minute after she reached there. Bapsi Sidhwa sums her horrible and threatening experiences thus: “with the shrewd instinct of the damned, she sensed the savagery of the people she had met”(156). Zaitoon made a fervent appeal

to Qasim once again: “Abba, take me to the plains when you go. Please don’t leave me here. Take me with you” (157). She begs him to marry her to a Punjabi boy (157). She is restless and looks disturbed. She is shocked to know their eating habits “Dirty maize bread and water!” Zaitoon gives vent to her inner lacerated heart thus: “If I must marry, marry me to someone from the plains... I will die rather than live here” (157). The cruel and oppressive real self comes on the surface who feels insulted by the bold words of Zaitoon. She had dared to puncture his male supremacy which was intolerable to Qasim. She threatened to kill her:” If have given my words. On it depends my honour. It is dearer to me than life. If you besmirch, I will kill you with my bare hands” (158). *The Pakistani Bride* depicts the reality of the plight of women, the sexuality of women and the sufferings caused by the cultural clashes. All women are the victims of oppression of men and patriarchy, Like Zaitoon Carol is victimized, Sakhi’s mother Hamida was pretty, tall and beautiful personality but she lost all her glamour at the age of forty as she looked now a hideous hag. She is savagely beaten and tortured even at this age. Zaitoon is already being battered by her cruel husband. Zaitoon is raped on the bank of the river. When she wakes up, she is a total wreck:

The men had kept her hostage for two hours. When Zaitoon regained consciousness, her body screamed with pain. She wept, putting her trembling legs through the shalwar. Her brown skin gaped through new rents in the cloth (230).

To conclude, Bapsi Sidhwa has depicted in all her novels, the traumatic experience of people in a lyrical style. Women suffer sexual oppression,

marginalization because of collision of culture. They experience hatred and are subjugated to physical and psychological violence due to the virus of cultural antagonism.

Chapter 3

Borders, Partition and Migration: Impact of Cultural Collision on the Thoughts and Ideas of Protagonists of *Brick Lane*

In the modern fiction of post-colonial period the writers have used the themes of cultural antagonism between the colonial and the colonized. Monica Ali wrote her debut novel *Brick Lane* in which she explored the diverse modes of sexualities experienced by the immigrant women of Bangladesh. Ritu Menon in her book *Borders and Boundaries* (1998) observes thus:

In India a woman is no better than a buffalo or car; she can be raped or sexually oppressed at any time...It is just the expression of his carnal lust and there is no law that can protect a raped woman or punish the guilty because crimes such as rapes are not taken seriously. Man is always a victor of female body and he takes pride in this despicable and disgraceful act (Menon 123).

The historical experience of Ritu Menon is based on partition violence; abduction and recovery; widowhood; women's sexuality and the terror of the religious communities (Menon 20). In another book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (2008) Urvashi Butalia depicts the miserable life of the South Asian women suffering from alienation because of the migration and exile. Monica Ali's debut novel *Brick Lane* critically investigated the impact of cultural conflicts of two cultures; the British and the Bangladesh. The main thrust of Ali is on the use of culture and morality as powerful tools to control over the female bodies. The representation of Bangladeshi woman is quite thought provoking as in theory she is considered as the symbol of

love and purity but in reality she is subjugated, sexually molested, raped and brutalized in the name of traditional morality and religion. The plot of the novel depicts the impact of cultural corrosion on the mind and body of the characters. In Bangladesh women are subjected to male hegemony and are treated as commodities. It is quite ironical that religion and society are silent spectators. The forces of patriarchy are so strong that women are exploited and persecuted. Women have been made to suffer because of the materiality of their bodies; A woman is treated as a domestic cat subjugated by male because of her poverty, gender discrimination, cultural corrosion and illiteracy and inheritance laws. In the post colonial discourses, women are defined as victims of male violence (Fran Hosken); as universal dependents (Beverly Lindsay and Maria Cutrufelli); victims of the colonial process (Maria Cutrufelli); victims of the Arab familial system (Juliette Minces); victims of the Islamic code (Patricia Jeffery). Mohanty in his book *Feminism without Borders* (2003) has long argued that “Third World” feminism is entirely different from liberal feminism. The modern feminists insist on race, class, sexuality, and nationality. She argues that woman is not a biological construct. She has to struggle against the forces of racism and colonial domination. Monica Ali published her first novel and this publication was highly praised by the critics and the reviewers. The editor *The New Republic* reported thus:

Splendid . . . Daring . . . Brilliant . . . Refreshing . . . Intensely gripping and involving . . . The power of Ali's book is the way in which it charts its heroine's slow accumulation of English, her gathering confidence as a mother and a wife, and the undulations of her marriage to a man whom she eventually learns to respect and

perhaps even to love . . . *Brick Lane* is a great achievement of the subtlest storytelling (*The New Republic* 6).

Monica Ali was born on 20 October 1967 in Dhaka and Bangladeshi. She immigrated to England in 1971. Her mother Hatim was a teacher and father Simon Torrence was a British citizen. She was educated in Oxford and her debut novel *Brick Lane* was published in 2003 and she got Man Booker Prize for this novel. She became an international celebrity because of her concern to raise the cry of women suffering alienation and sexual oppression in the patriarchal society Monica Ali in her *Brick Lane* (2003) depicts the diasporic experiences of the protagonists who leave Bangladesh and go to London. In her essay *Where I am Coming From* Monica Ali expresses all the events of her life which motivated her to write *Brick Lane*. Ali observes thus:

My father had lived in Dacca for a pretty long time with my father who was a Bengali in origin. He married an English woman and soon he moved to London and settled over there. I often witnessed the forces of cultural clashes as it took a lot of time for my father to assimilate in British culture. I experienced a conflict between first- and second-generation immigrants. My father used to narrate very interesting stories of two cultures and the ambivalent situations he often faced (Monica Ali 2).

The novels of Monica Ali are critically examined to expose patriarchy's use of culture and traditional morality as powerful tools to control over the female bodies. The representation of Bangladeshi woman is quite thought provoking as in

theory she is considered as an image of love and honor but in practical life she is subjugated, sexually molested, raped and brutalized in the name of traditional morality and religion. The doctrine of patriarchal supremacy still exists in Bangladesh and in Pakistan. The biological ideas about gender discrimination dominate all societies. Religious traditions in Bangladesh have been used by patriarchy to construct the bodies of women to be inferior, fragile, and passionate about uncontrolled sex. Women are psychologically and physically oppressed. She is treated as a domestic cat subjugated by male because of her poverty, gender discrimination, and illiteracy and inheritance laws. In the post colonial fiction the real marginalized picture of women is depicted and there are many scenes of sexual violence in the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica. Women have to depend on men for financial security, for love and for sexual pleasures. They have to watch the moods and temperament of the male. In the fiction of Bapsi and Monica Ali women are defined as victims of male violence; they are ill-treated by the Islamic code.

Her novel *Brick Lane* received well by the reviewers and critics and was hailed as a classic first novel of Monica Ali depicting the traumatic experiences of the women of Bangladesh. The main focus of Monica Ali is on the theme of cultural collision of the migrants of Bangladesh who go abroad to earn dollars. The novel was born out of her experience from childhood onwards, much more than maybe apparent perhaps, and the themes of intergenerational and cultural conflicts” (25). Concerning the fame she acquired after her debut, Monica Ali says:

Brick Lane was the creation of my personal experiences about the life and challenges of the migrants who often struggle to get a space in the alien land. The loss of identity is inevitable as the migrants of Bangladesh leave their homeland (Monica Ali 55).

Brick Lane has been judged to offer a “terrifically subtle portrait” of a Muslim marriage and provide “an insight into a religion that people often find confusing.” The current trend is to read *Brick Lane* as a “window” through which to view the Muslim “Other” and to examine the role of patriarchy and religion to subjugate women in male dominated society. *Brick Lane* depicts the poignant scenes of domestic violence and sexual oppression and marginalization of women. These issues are presented through the voice of Hasina and Nazneen’s flashbacks.

Monica Ali has focused on the theme of cultural corrosion. Sydney the editor of *Morning Herald* also commented thus in this connection: “Monica Ali's first novel, *Brick Lane*, exposes a hidden world and allows the reader a detailed and fascinating glimpse into British Bengali culture” (*Morning Herald* 7). The female body becomes important in *Brick Lane* of Monica Ali, the plot reflects the struggle of Nazneen and Hasina in the colonized society. The impact of cultural corrosion is quite evident in the novels of Monica Ali who is called the minority ethnic writer. The reviewers and critics reviewed the novel in positive manner and hailed *Brick Lane* as a neo post-colonial novel depicting the traumatic lives of women of Bangladesh. No wonder, Monica Ali became an international celebrity and many rewards were showered on her as the novel proved to be the best seller. It is quite interesting to note *Brick Lane* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize for Fiction for the year 2003. Kaiser Ritu Menon points out in his entry on Monica Ali in *South Asian Writers in English* (2006), “a dual significance, depending on whether it is considered from a Bangladeshi or British perspective” (Haq 21-22). Monica Ali has always resisted “ghettoisation” in an interview she observed that hybridity for her does not boil down to diasporic experience:

I am interested in Indian literature and history, but I don't necessarily feel any special relationship. I'd read Nadine Gordimer with as much interest.... I am also interested in many different areas of literature that tap into the 'cross-cultural' experience but don't originate from the subcontinent (Haq 3).

Monica Ali became a popular novelist but many organizations of Bangladesh flayed her feminist perspective. She was condemned for her denunciation of the Bangladeshi community. It was alleged that *Brick Lane* depicted the people of Bangladesh only as economic migrants. The Bangladeshi people were offended by Chanu's derogatory comments on the Bangladeshis of *Brick Lane* in the novel. Salman Rushdie has described this dilemma of a diasporic writer since he was also the victim of public wrath when he published *The Satanic Verses*. Salman Rushdie has pointed out in *Imaginary Homelands* that Monica Ali is a diasporic writer who depicts the theme of cultural antagonism. Chanu is the main protagonist; an aged person who marries a young Bangladeshi girl. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak remarks that Monica Ali lives in America yet she has successfully captured the spirit of the diaspora. The main focus of Ali is on the plight of women who are treated as the subalterns. Indeed, Monica Ali occupies a supreme place among women writers of the post-colonial age. She enjoys Bhabha's "third space," a hybrid location of antagonism, perpetual tension and chaos. Like Jhumpa Lahiri, Monica Ali deals with cross cultural and independent identities for diasporic women. The identity of women of Monica Ali is determined by class, culture and gender. Capello (2004) observes thus: "The diaspora rewrites home and presents new identities and subjectivities emerging with a confluence of heterogeneous cultures" (Capello 57).

Bhabha talks about the question of culture in the alien society. The diaspora struggles to find space and they struggle for identity (Bhabha 1-2).

In her book *Writing Diaspora* (2005) Yasmeeen Hussain observes that culture is not genetically inherited but is acquired while living with people of alien land. Monica Ali was born in 1967 in Dhaka to a Bengali father and English mother. She inherited hybrid culture and soon the family shifted to Britain. Monica Ali thus grew up in multicultural society and she was fully conversant about the impact of cultural collision. She published her first novel *Brick Lane* in 2003. The novel opens in 1967 in rural Bangladesh. John Marx reviewed *Brick Lane* contending that globalization changes the mind set of women more than men. He published the article *The Feminization of Globalization* in which he openly defended and praised the ideas of Monica Ali. Alistair Cormack was another critic of Monica Ali who talked about “double bind” faced by women migrants. He contended that *Brick Lane* gives innovative and new ideas about women migrants and it is not wrong to state that women are treated as the “Other” by the host nation ” (Cormack 700). Sarah Brouillette has praised Monica Ali for giving a “gentrification tale” in *Brick Lane* (Brouillette 428). *Brick Lane* deals with the themes of identity confusion, gender inequality and religious conflicts. *Brick Lane* is packed with sensational themes such as racism, sexuality, and patriarchy. Monica Ali’s *Brick* is about Nazneen who goes abroad to settle there with her husband and becomes the victim of cultural dislocation. She has to cope up with the alien culture there and her identity gets fractured. The letters of Hasina keep her enlightened about the life in Bangladesh. Nazneen migrates to London with Chanu. But in London she never enjoys life because she feels lonely and often recollects her golden days of youth spent in a

village of Bangladesh. She also feels nostalgic about the separation from her beloved sister Hasina, who is still in Bangladesh. Nazneen defines her as, “a woman on her own in the city, without a husband, without protection” (36), and this is precisely the role that Hasina represents through the majority of the novel; the role of the lone and therefore unprotected woman

The plot of *Brick Lane* reveals the theme of collision of culture; Nazneen is in the web of clash of cultures. Her husband wants her daughters to speak Bangla at home but his daughters are students of a Christian college. Chanu is a contradictory personality; Nazneen has to confront the oddities; whims and contradictions of her husband in London. He doesn't allow her to go out and all the time she is stuck in the kitchen. She is treated like a commodity by her orthodox husband. In his book *Salaam Brick Lane. A Year in the New East End*, Tarquin Hall describes this part of London as dirty and worn-out; the houses are abandoned and covered in graffiti, there are prostitutes, alcoholics and homeless people. There are no signs of nature as there are neither trees nor green grass anywhere. Drug dealing and fights are a daily part of life in the colony where Nazneen lives. There are so many races living there; men from many countries but predominantly white people and black people living there.

Ali chooses Nazneen as her protagonist whose transformation and self-realization is of great interest. Nazneen is an example of a “subjugated Muslim woman”. At the end of the novel she breaks all the barriers of traditional morality and expresses her freedom resisting against the oppressive cultural norms. Chanu fails in his long stay in London. He never feels settled and at the end of the novel he

decides to go back to Bangladesh. His failure to assimilate in the alien culture brings anguish in his life. He fails because he is unable to cope with the cultural conflicts; remains rigid in his ideas till the end of his stay in London. On the contrary there is growth in Naneen who learns the art of confronting the colonial set up and adapts to the cultural changes.

Monica Ali describes *Brick Lane* (2003) as ‘a classic’ dealing with the themes of intergenerational and cultural conflicts” (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 25). The plot of the novel is focused on the quest for identity of Nazneen. Monica Ali has depicted the scenes of intergenerational conflicts and cultural antagonism. Nazneen is a citizen of Bangladesh about racism and is a realist and post-colonial text in the way that it represents lives of the Bangladeshi who feels alienated in community of London. Concerning the fame she acquired after her debut, Monica Ali says:”It seems to me that *Brick Lane* is still a part of that haziness since it calls for an ethnic identity” (55). *Brick Lane* has been judged to offer a “terrifically subtle portrait” of a Muslim marriage and provide “an insight into a religion that people often find confusing.” The current trend is to read *Brick Lane* as a “window” through which to view the Muslim “Other” and to examine the role of patriarchy and religion to subjugate women in male dominated society. Monica Ali’s novel *Brick Lane* depicts the scenes of violence and marginalization of women. These issues are presented through the letters of Hasina and Nazneen’s flashbacks.

Nazneen is the main woman protagonist of the novel. At the very outset of the plot, Nazneen is locked into a foundational narrative, “the logic of the story of How You Were Left To Your Fate” (15) which tells when she was born and was

refused to feed, no attempt was made to take her to hospital. Nazneen was “left to her fate” to live or die (15). She spends most of her time either in the kitchen or in cleaning rugs or dusting books. The communication barrier blocks her growth. Chanu doesn’t want her to go out in the streets because he believes in male hegemony. He simply asks her whenever she expresses her will to go out: “Why should you go out?” (45). *Brick Lane* is populated with many women who play vital role in the novel. Monica Ali has depicted the impact of corrosion of culture and portrayed them through suicides, arranged marriages, violence, polygamy and prostitution. Women in this Bangladeshi enclave in London are not allowed to work, and are judged according to their clothes and behaviour. Their identity is formed by the sexism brought from Bangladesh that they have to handle. Suppression is another important aspect of the novel. When Nazneen is born to her father’s disappointment: he wanted a boy (14). When Nazneen’s baby dies, her sister writes her a letter where she wishes Nazneen to have more sons (149). The differences between men and women are a cultural problem, the letters of Hasina reveal the cultural differences: “I do my best but I am only a woman” (163). A woman is always the subject of controversy. People often invent false stories if a woman goes out. Woman is always humiliated in the patriarchal society as in Bangladesh woman is not given any liberty. In Bangladesh women are not allowed to work outside and they are closely observed in dress, manner and other matters of routine life. There are set norms for the ideal prescribed by Bangladeshi culture. Her ethnicity becomes a source of positive rather than stigmatized identity (91). Nazneen goes in the market with Chanu. She has great respect for her husband as she is seen following her husband with her head down and face covered” (210).

During Nazneen's birth, there was no doctor and no facility available to help the mother in labour; there was only the midwife, Banesa, who saved her life. Having borne Nazneen for seven months, Rupban says that she 'thought it was indigestion' (13). Although she is constantly suffering, she keeps silent and simply expresses her suffering by shedding tears. Indeed, Nazneen is born to a fatalistic Rupban, and the story of her uncertain birth. Rupban leaves it to fate, not medical intervention, to decide whether Nazneen would live or die, foreshadows much of her life. At the beginning of the novel, Monica Ali narrates the mysterious death of Rupban:

Mumtaz found, Amma was leaning low over the sacks of rice in the store. "She had fallen, said Mumtaz, "and the spear was the only thing holding her up. It looked [...] It looked as if she was still falling (46).

Nazneen got the first shock of her life with the tragic death of her mother. She made all efforts but Rupban couldn't survive and breathed her lost. Monica Ali conceived Nazneen as a typical Bangladeshi woman possessing all the traits of Bangladeshi culture. She is a religious woman, traditional in ideas as she loves her mother. She follows Rupban's principle of life "to accept the Grace of God" (11). She was greatly impacted by the ideas of her mother who always advised her to have absolute faith in God because "What could not be changed must be borne" (11). Nazneen's mother tells her that "If God wanted us to ask questions, he would have made us men" (64). She encouraged Nazneen to be "faithful to her husband and obeys his commands religiously" (19). Throughout the novel, Nazneen tells stories

about her diasporic experiences from her perspective, Letters of Hasina give valuable information about the plight of women in the novel. The letters present Hasina's life and the women around her. The focus is Nazneen's recollection of her birth, her mother's life, Rupban, and her aunt, Mumtaz. Apparently, the vision about women pictured in *Brick Lane* is on the theories of Bhabha and Spivak. Oppressing women, denying their rights, marrying them off, like Nazneen, secluding them and divesting them of their will are actually parts of Bangladeshi society. In the Bangladeshi community, beating women and children is common. Polygamy and considering women to be second-class citizens, alongside with seclusion are still prevalent. Nazneen approaches her freedom when she starts to work through which she falls in love with a typical, 'fundamental', Muslim boy, Karim. Nazneen is haunted by this guilty because she knows she has done something wrong as her illicit relationship with Karim is a moral transgression according to the religious rituals and practices. She knows that she will go to hell and nobody can save her. She goes outside and soon she becomes familiar with the people of an Islamic organization. She starts to go to the mosque also against the wishes of her orthodox husband. Nazneen's "freedom" is crippled by Islam and Islamic values, whereas there could have been another prospect provided such as getting involved in a woman's liberation organization. "If it is true that 'this is England, you can do whatever you like'" (492). Nazneen grows up with the sister Hasina, in the dirty, hot village of Gouripur in Bangladesh where she was born. Her childhood is idyllic as both the sisters spent the best days in "her village Gouripur" (30).

Nazneen grows up, her mother's suicide shatters her life completely, the train of her sufferings begins, and her father's indifference and infidelity brought havoc in

the family. In one of her letters, Hasina hints at the relation between Nazneen and Hasina's father and mother: 'He go to other women. He want to take other wife but she give threat to kill own self'" (156). The main cause of Rupban's suicide was the infidelity of Hamid. Rupban was a noble lady; devoted to her husband and her daughters. She couldn't bear the oppressive nature of Hamid who developed illicit relations with another woman at this age. The scene of the suicide of Rupban is reported by Hasina in one of her letters. thus: "Forgive me sister I must tell you now this secret so long held inside me...She take spear and test on the finger. She takes another and put it back" (434). Living in a marriage that includes other wives may lead to merciless difficulties and a feeling of loneliness. Her crying is described in several episodes of the novel.

The real development of the theme of cultural collision begins with the episode of Hassina's elopement with a boy. Hassina eloped with her lover at the age of sixteen to the chagrin of her father who retaliated and married Nazneen off to Channu who was twenty years senior to her age. Nazneen's father Hamid is the head of the family of Nazneen's house who gives approval to her marriage with Chanu much older than her. Nazneen is quite innocent and is ruled by male domination. She simply gives her assent saying that her Abba must choose the right man for her being her father. She gives the promise that she "would be a good wife, like Amma" (12). Monica Ali has given many effective images to describe the impending ghostly life of Nazneen. For example, "A hawk foreshadows her future before she leaves; the bird flies against the sky, but shrinks into nothing". Monica Ali gives the image of death in this section of the novel. Nazneen is described as a bird that would fly away. The people of the villages are busy in burying their dead bodies who lost their

lives in a a tornado. The image of the lonely hut is also quiet effective. The hut is destroyed “due to the natural disaster” (17). No wonder, when Nazneen arrives in London, the journey of her trials and tribulations begin. She had enjoyed an active life in her village of Gouripur, Nut now she is lonely, depressed and friendless. She makes time pass by doing her household chores and looking out of the window. The only contact she has with people other than Chanu, is when she waves at the ‘tattoo lady` living across from Nazneen. The tattoo lady symbolizes witch like appearance and Nazneen is sick of her presence. She sits for a long time doing nothing after her kitchen work; she has no company as Monica Ali comments: “How can she just sit and sit?” (87). This also goes for Nazneen. What can she do with her life living in a strange culture? When the tattoo lady” On her first day in Britain, Nazneen cuts her finger when chopping onions symbolizing her fractured identity.

Being lonely and desperate, Nazneen is compelled to build friendship with Razia, another Bangladeshi immigrant, and through an affair with immigrant Karim. This relationship symbolizes a clash of two cultures. Nazneen grows as she she learns the art of assimilation. She breaks her relationship with Karim at the end of novel and takes a historical decision to live and fight with the cultural forces daringly and courageously. Nazneen has to encounter with racism, sexism and oppression. The novel discusses the themes of colonization, alienation, cultural dislocation of the protagonists and their fractured identities. *Brick Lane* deals with the issues of cultural conflicts that impact the individuality of the protagonists in the novel. Chanu who is educated man but he married Nazneen belonging to lower middle class society. She is not well educated but Chanu accepted her being older in age. Chanu is never comfortable in his job and Hassina often asks about his new job.

He is a shifting guy encountering difficulties in alien land. Chanu fails in life and ironically Nazneen is the one who in the end succeeds despite her husband's strictures. Nazneen is successful in London because she struggles to face the problems of cultural assimilation. She is ignorant of the social codes in England and feels dislocated because of the corrosion of cultures. Nazneen is a progressive girl, she wants to learn English to survive in English society but Chanu discourages her. Chanu himself stresses the high importance of education, something not when Nazneen expresses her desire to learn English his approach is contradictory. As a man, he wants to control his wife as he is afraid of what the other Bangladeshis in the community will say about him. Christina Julios observes that education is essential for the growth of individuals. To "speak English is a part of the British identity" (14-15). But when immigrants gather together in small societies in their new country, the need to know the new language is not always that clear:

London, for instance, has become home to the largest concentration of Sylheti-speaking Bangladeshis in the United Kingdom and anywhere outside Bangladesh.... (15).

The novel is about women issues within that community and in the postcolonial situation of Bangladesh. Comparing *Brick Lane* to Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, James Procter describes the novel's popularity to be "undeniably bound up with issues of race and ethnicity" Monica Ali has realistically reflected the dilemma of Bangladeshi women. The novel hinges upon the theme how women are outsiders in London society. In *Brick Lane* cultural differences play havoc in the life of the protagonists since assimilation becomes difficult. The migrants lack in communication skills and they remain lonely and neglected in the society" (15).

Loneliness is also closely related to identity almost throughout the novel. Nazneen has trouble finding her true self and her personality in the new country. Nazneen feels nostalgic all the time; her only company is TV and the old furniture, papers and books of Chanu. In England, Nazneen has to struggle to assimilate in her new country and culture. She has to learn to live in a completely new way. Nazneen has to encounter many cultural differences; she conceded to the choice of her father and married Chanu who took her to England. Problems of communication soon arise. Nazneen does not know a single word of English when she arrives; she learns only “Thank You” and “Sorry” after her long struggle. Chanu talks about philosophy and often refers to the great English poets in his routine conversation but Nazneen does not understand him. She does not understand precisely what he does for a living. Chanu is a mighty creation of Monica Ali who becomes a victim of cultural collision and is forced to leave England in spite of his struggles to get assimilated in the English culture. He goes on shifting the jobs because he is never comfortable in any of his jobs in England. He claims himself to be westernized; speaks English at home and speaks high of English culture and philosophy. Nazneen once overheard him in his telephonic conversation lashing at his wife. He observed that his young wife is “a commodity that he bought from the open market” She can produce many children since she has good hips” (14-15). He condemns his Bangladeshi people as “uneducated, illiterate, close-minded without ambition” (20-21).

Chanu brings English manners and cultural values at home as he teaches his daughters the English manners and the religious practices (215-216). Chanu is a contradictory character; he says something else and believes something else. Chanu is caught in the dilemmas and uncertainties of life. He doesn't allow girls to learn

English language and forbids Nazneen to take English course. He struggles to maintain his Bangladeshi identity in London. Chanu is becoming a hybrid in England knowing well that his cultural beliefs and ideas are disappearing from his family. He lays stresses on the eternal value of Islam. Nazneen notes that he never prays and believes that Bengalis were Hindus and Buddhists. The Moguls converted them into Muslims“(197). Chanu does not send his daughters to the conventional mosque school. Chanu’s religion is “education” (260). Chanu is worried about his identity “I’m talking about the clash between Western values and our own. I’m talking of struggle to assimilate in the English culture” (113). Nazneen is surprised by the things she sees in her new country. She cannot understand why women care about such things as slimming their dogs etc. In Bangladesh, such shallow preoccupations did not exist, and being skinny could be a sign of poverty. However, in many ways Nazneen enjoys the fact that the English mind their own business.

One significant critical concern of this thesis is to examine the link between Islam and the oppression of women resulting from cultural collision. By discussing this issue, this chapter makes it clear that the novel is trying to give another image of Islam. *Brick Lane* tries to show this upside-down. Trying to ‘tell’ about Bangladeshi women and their problems, and how they are related to Islam, seems problematic for Ali, who affirms thus: “That ‘standing neither behind a closed door, nor in the thick of things, but rather in the shadow of the doorway, is a good place from which to observe (37). There is another powerful symbol of the black wardrobe which is a constant source of anxiety to Nazneen. She compares it to a sin, and keeps dreaming about it. In one of her dreams, “she is locked inside it as it falls down and crushes

her. The closet is almost like a coffin, and represents death in the novel". Nazneen also says that she hates the wardrobe, but that this fact has not made any impression on her husband Chanu (72). Nazneen wishes to be a bird that everyone thinks will fly away, but never does. She feels trapped forever (217). Another bird described is Hasina, who decides to fly away. Like her, "it should leave for a better future" (335). Nazneen was an obedient girl, docile and unresisting by nature. She moved to London and started living in the colony where Bangladeshi immigrants live. Nazneen only sees negative and ugly things around her environment, which is restricted anyhow - a sign, a defecating dog, the bored look of the tattoo lady. Nazneen lives in the company of the British women. Monica Ali gives a comparative study between the English culture and the culture of Bangladesh. Nazneen's compounded isolation is described by Monica Ali thus:

Nazneen spent her eighteen years leading a life of loneliness. She got married and came to London; she became more alienated as most of her time was spent in staying home. She only watched the tattoo woman from her window to pass her time and looked restless and neglected in the novel (12).

In London, Nazneen has multiple experiences; her identity gets fractured because of loss of her freedom and innocence. Nazneen becomes a diaspora who experiences dislocation of culture while living in the Brick Lane colony. Nazneen opened her eyes in the morning to get ready to waste another day in silent contemplation (18). Nazneen feels dislocated and suffers traumatic loneliness because she is caught between two cultures, inwardly she is Bangladeshi but

outwardly she is forced to follow the alien culture of London. Nazneen becomes silent because of psychic pressures and in every day she is becoming sick and decadent. Consider for instance the following passage depicting the life in London: “It was hot and the sun fell flat on the metal window frames and glared off the glass.... No parking. No ball games“ (6). Nazneen identifies her with the metal frames, her heart has become stiff, and there is no sunshine in her life as she feels metallic about everything. She feels nostalgic and recollects the glorious days when she enjoyed a life of bliss and innocence in her village, Mymensingh, Bangladesh:

I walked in the village with Hasina as we played with trees and their branches enjoying the bliss of Nature. We heard the melodious voice of the mynah birds singing from trees. We also watched the goats fretted by. All was calm and glorious and life looked sweet and blissful. We watched heaven above in the sky that looked wide and empty and the land stretched everywhere. We often walked with Hassina on way to school and played games on the way; we often fell but enjoyed every moment of life (10).

Monica Ali describes the innocent life of Nazneen in her home town, but as she moves to London, her life becomes mechanical and artificial, and she becomes the victim of eternal torture, by the metallic environment of London and from the battering of her husband. In London, Nazneen’s house is cramped with furniture of plastic, metal, wood and glass. She is fed up with her synthetic rugs, books, files, papers and pottery animals collected by her husband who had eaten away her soul and made her a mechanical soulless being. In dusting her furniture, she had no time

to dust her soul which was getting dustier every day. Her “spindly legged, puffy-faced” aged husband thinks of her as:

An unspoilt girl. From the village... Not beautiful, but not so ugly either... All things considered, I am satisfied... And a blind uncle is better than no uncle. I waited too long to get a wife (11).

Monica Ali wrote an essay *Where I am Coming From* in which she explained all the forces that motivated her to write her novel. She was a keen observer of human nature, she was not from an aristocratic family but she had firsthand experience of the immigrants who would go abroad to earn dollars. She had closely studied the lives of the Bangladeshi women garment workers in Dhaka and the East End of London, In this novel she used her information and on the basis of her experience she depicted the themes of cultural antagonism.

Amrit Wilson in *Dreams, Questions, Struggles* (2006) uses the metaphor of “infidelity gene” to depict the nature of female sexual liberty. It is argued that sexual liberty of women is a psychological disease as it could be infectious in any society. Each woman is bound to come in conflict with her society and very often female sexual liberty is described as “deviant”. Honour of a woman “is related to the social and personal prestige of male ego” (Wilson 13). She talks of woman’s sexuality which determines her social status. This idea of a women's sexuality being her own fault is clearly demonstrated in Hasina's letters to Nazneen. The famous scene of ice-skating in the novel has symbolical significance as for the first time gets new awareness about life and struggle. She feels like trapped bird desperately trying to fly away. The female ice skater in many ways represents what she wants, and also eventually gains in life:

She stopped dead and flung her arms above her head with a look so triumphant that you knew she had conquered everything: her body, the laws of nature, and the heart of the tight-suited man who slid over on his knees, vowing to lay down his life for her (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 36).

The image of the ice skating is very effective in depicting the inner turbulent of Nazneen who is cut off from the Bangladesh culture while living in an alien land. She discovers her limitations as woman for the first time in the novel:

Nazneen stared at the television. There was a close-up of the woman. She had sparkly bits around her eyes like tiny sequins glued to her face. Her hair was scarped back and tied on top of her head with plastic flowers. Her chest pumped up and down as if her heart would shoot out and she smiled pure, gold joy. She must be terrified, thought Nazneen, because such things cannot be held, and must be lost (37).

Nazneen feels hurt but she is helpless being subjugated by her cruel husband. She starts questioning if life were really that wonderful in her home country, expressed by her terse remark "It may be written down,"[...] "But I do not believe it. Chanu shows her a newspaper which says that Bangladeshi are the happiest nation in the world (350). Her attitude towards the world has changed. The symbol of ice-skating further digs up the traumatic soul of Nazneen. She begs his husband to turn off the TV for she notices only "the false smiles, the made-up faces" (364). She expresses her suspicion that Dhaka would not provide a home to her any more: "And

would we sit like this and would it feel just the same and would everything be the same just in a different place?" (372). Chanu tries to put her off, his false and oily tone disturbs Nazneen. He argues that she would not be a good sister to Hasina if she did not move to Bangladesh: "But of course you want to go. [...] What kind of sister would you be if you did not? Of course you do want to go" (350).

Nazneen seeks the help of her daughter to interact with the outside world. Monica Ali uses the metaphor of ice skating to depict the growth of Nazneen. She explores her real identity as she gets new awareness for the first time. She saw "a huge white circle," her eyes fell on "glinting, dazzling, enchanting ice" (492). Nazneen looked at the ice and her mind got new enlightenment. She saw a woman wearing such crucial moment jeans. Her daughter Razia shows her the way. She said, "But you can't skate in a sari" Razia was already lacing her boots. 'This is England', she said. 'You can do whatever you like' (492). The scene of ice-skating symbolizes escaping, and the medium of escape is television. At this moment, the scars in the ice are accepted parts of life. Nazneen understands that she can go on by herself despite what has happened in the past. As the ice reveals itself, Nazneen also apprehends her own opportunities in her new life. The colours that shift and change, show that life varies, but the ice's unchanging nature represents the stability that always lies beneath. The boards bounding the ice may symbolize one of the many obstacles and hindrances Nazneen faces in England. But as she decides to go on the ice, the barrier does no longer exist. The clothing also has a symbolic meaning. The ice skating woman wears jeans, not a skirt like the women Nazneen has seen on television. At the same time, Nazneen is going to skate in her sari. Because they are in England, women can choose what to do themselves. Nazneen chooses to keep her

sari, and also Bangladeshi traditions and culture, at the same time as she adjusts to her new country. Finally, she is not dependent on men anymore.

In the world of *Brick Lane* women have to suffer male domination. Nazneen leaves Bangladesh in the hope of enjoying peace and prosperity in London. Her ideal was her mother and she wanted to be a good house wife. She has horrible experiences in an alien land being a migrant. It is very hard to assimilate in the host culture. She tries to maintain her Bangladeshi identity; daily reads the Quran; goes to the mosque being a faithful Muslim woman. But all her efforts fail to give her real love, sex and freedom. Women in *Brick Lane* are often humiliated and battered. In her new apartment she has heard about the episodes of rapes and prostitution. In Bangladesh culture a woman is supposed to take care of the dignity and honor of the family. Hasina elopes with her lover to Khulna challenging the patriarchal supremacy. Her father expressed her desire to kill her. *Brick Lane* perpetuates the myth that Muslim women can become assertive to claim their rights. *Brick Lane* focuses on Nazneen who is a passive protagonist unwilling to challenge her husband in matters of family, liberty and status. *Brick Lane* (2003) throws light on the marginalized status of women. It tries to point out the record of Nazneen's varied experiences. Many feminist critics congratulate Ali for writing the story of a Muslim woman who finds “her proper place in the world, her assumption is that a Muslim woman’s “proper place” can only be found in the full embrace of western liberalism.

Loneliness is also closely related to identity almost throughout the novel. Her metaphysical loneliness contributes to insecurity and loss of self. She is trapped between two cultures, she feels nostalgic about the scenes and sights Bangladesh and

she also tries to settle in London. Nazneen faces a new dilemma; she has to assimilate in her new country and culture. She is confronted with the dilemma to live in alien land and to adjust with Chanu who was twice of her age. In her new apartment Nazneen feels lonely and restless. The image of saree with so many layers depicts the inner sufferings. Nazneen goes with her friend Razia to buy her clothes in the market. Nazneen unravels the secrets of her life to her new friend Karim. Like the folds of sari, she unfolds the inner pent up feelings of her life. For the first time she discloses her inner secrets to her friend. This scene in the novel symbolizes her economic freedom and independence. The great feminist Mrs. Virginia Woolf aptly observes that ‘a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction’ (Woolf 23),

In Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane*, all women are trapped in the diasporic situations. Nazneen and Mrs. Islam are two important women who live in an alien land with fractured identity. Both are the victims of cultural collision. In the last section of the novel Monica Ali describes the various stages of awareness of Nazneen. The scene of roundabout is significant because it further depicts the inner world of Nazneen who is crushed by the burden of cultural collision in the novel. Nazneen looked at the roundabout which symbolized her turbulent state of mind. The roundabout “symbolized the riddles of life. She was in a situation where she couldn’t get freedom and was bound to go round and round like roundabout” (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 278). The symbol of the roundabout is very effective in depicting the the inner traumatic world of Nazneen, Hasina and other women in the novel. Nazneen and many women in *Brick Lane* face hindrances when it comes to

escape. They have to remain inside their cage; they are not given any chance to break away from their lives. Nazneen has a dream about being trapped as well. She feels that she is caught in an alley and she “has no chance to fly away” (430-431). All women in the novel are locked up in a patriarchal mess; they have to whirl around like the roundabout of life.

The other important symbol is Brick Lane. Ali describes bricks several times in the novel. Bricks symbolize the impediments of life which hinder the progress. Hasina says she hates bricks (169). When water comes through the brick wall in her flat she is extremely worried, water symbolizes fate which cannot be controlled. When Nazneen`s son is ill and they are at the hospital, Nazneen starts thinking about brick tombs (117). The brick tombs remind her of her son`s death. Nazneen suffers a breakdown. But in the aftermath, she shows a visible change in her attitude. She begins to make decisions on her own, and corrects her husband, something she has never done before. Nazneen for the first time makes her mind to independently run her life without any direction from her husband or by Karim. Nazneen confronts the existential reality while living in the alien land for the first time. She explores her inner strength and makes a historical decision to get assimilated in the English culture. She decides to stay in England with her daughters. She refuses to go back to Bangladesh with her husband Chanu because she thinks he is a failure in his life and she doesn`t want to live with the failed people. She thinks of a bright future for her daughters and struggles independently. She gets a job in England and decides to live independently. She refuses to marry Karim because she is fed up with the oppressive male attitudes. She discovers that Karim is another Chanu who will not allow her freedom to grow and prosper independently. Chanu goes back to Bangladesh in

desperation. Nazneen comes in contact with Dr Azad who teaches her many things. The domestic life of Dr. Azad is very problematic; his wife smokes and drinks and pampers her daughter. She gives money to her to enjoy life in the pub against the wishes of Dr. Azad is embarrassed about her way of dressing. And she knew why the doctor came:

Not for the food, not to get away from his purple-clawed woman (although maybe for these things as well), not to share a love of learning, not to borrow books or discuss mobile libraries or literature or politics or art. He came as a man of science, to observe a rare specimen: unhappiness greater than his own (114-115).

Nazneen feels that the cultural differences between her and her neighbor are just too great, there is too much to lose by attempting to forge this connection. She fears that the white woman “might be angry at an unwanted interruption” (7). Nazneen and Karim relationship is ruined because Nazneen feels the difference. Nazneen realizes that Karim is another Chanu; dominating and oppressive: realization about Karim comes from this difference of place:

He was who he was. Question and answer. The same as her. Maybe not even that. Karim had never even been to Bangladesh. Nazneen felt a stab of pity. Karim was born a foreigner. When he spoke Bengali, he stammered. Why had it not puzzled her? She saw only what she wanted to see. Karim did not have a place in the world. That was why he defended it (335).

Nazneen left Karim because he was also a migrant and had no place in the world. Nazneen seriously thinks about her relationship with Karim: “How did Karim see her? The real thing, he’d said. She was his real thing. A Bengali wife. A Bengali mother. An idea of home. An idea of himself that he found in her” (339). She describes the plight of women thus: “Hasina was in Dhaka. A woman on her own in the city, without a husband, family, friends and without protection’ (58). Nazneen feels nostalgic and longs to go home. She wants to enjoy the company of her father and Hasina. But her worry is the future of her daughters who are in a public school and there are no holidays (129-30). The compounded sense of alienation of Nazneen is described thus:

Every person who brushed past her on the pavement, every back she saw, was on a private, urgent mission to execute a precise and demanding plan: to get a promotion today, to be exactly on time for an appointment, to buy a newspaper with the right coins so that the exchange was swift and seamless, to walk without wasting a second and to reach the roadside just as the lights turned red. Nazneen, hobbling and halting, began to be aware of herself. *Without* a coat *without* a suit, *without* a white face, *without* a destination. A leaf shake of fear—or was it excitement? passed through her legs (35).

Hasina is the most interesting woman character after Nazneen in the *Brick Lane*. The inner world of Hasina is disorderly; she is a case study in the novel. She is subjected to all forms of torments, from rape to prostitution. Her long journey reveals the theme of sexual oppression of women and their marginalization. She

remains homeless like the Willie Chnadran of V.S. Naipaul. She is adventurous whose quest for love; sex lands her into endless sufferings. She throws off all the moral scruples and elopes with her lover. Hasina claims to be happy, but reveals through the letters that men treat her badly. Her first husband beats her, and she leaves their home to find another domicile which is far less expensive. Mr Chowdhury treats Hasina in an extremely degrading manner. Her female body is polluted as she loses her innocence. When she is fired from her job she has to find a new place to live. Hasina becomes a prostitute, marries one of her customers and struggles to have her home. Again, Hasina has to escape and finally finds a family to live with as their employee. In all her journey of life, Hasina remains homeless and sick of love and sex. Her repeated elopements lead her to mental breakdown.

Hasina is introduced ‘through a series of letters’. The letters reveal her level of education and her personality. In addition, the letters give insight into the conditions of the working class, the oppression of Bangladeshi women and their marginalized situation. Unlike Nazneen, Hasina doesn’t believe in compromising with life. She is passionate and sex hungry. She follows her desire for a ‘free’ life. Hasina runs away from her husband because he beats her. Hasina’s attitude to herself, discloses the relationship between men and women and unveils how the former is superior to the latter. The narrator’s words, describing Nazneen’s status, show a strong emotional link between Nazneen with her sister. She “feels scold and pain because her sister Hassina is lost” (58).

Monica Ali has depicted the heart rending plight of Hasina in the novel and her character is a case study of the theme of cultural collision and sexual oppression.

The letters of Hasina give a running commentary of the life and living styles of Bangladeshi women in the novel. She writes about all incidents; she is always in touch with Nazneen through her letters. She is very much concerned about the birth of Shahana and Bibi. She also writes about her people; her job and her problems and relations. She is always anxious to know about Chanu and his style of shifting jobs. In one of her letters she writes out her rape and the cruelty of Mr Chowdhury. Hasina is sick of male domination in the society. One of her colleagues working in the garment factory describes her as “the rotten one” (130). Nazneen describes the plight of women thus: “Hasina was in Dhaka. She has no husband, no home living all alone. She is living without a family, without friends, without protection’ (58). Hasina appears as a vulnerable woman. Mr Chowdhury exploits Hasina’s poor financial state:

He come to my room naked; asks me to comb hair, I did and I massage feet. [...] Evening time I cook the meal and I serve’ ...In addition, the ‘respectable’ man rapes her later: ‘He put lamp down and he starting to take off shirt (165-166).

Monica Ali has created a wonderful character Hasina who is a victim of patriarchal atrocities and sexual oppression perpetrated by male dominated society. She exposes the rotten system of the orthodox society of Bangladesh. Hasina is described as extremely pretty with “her pomegranate-pink lips and liquid eyes” and her” heart-shaped face” (50). Monica Ali has depicted her sufferings, alienation and marginalized situation thus:

This is what happen and afterward I cry. ...I stretch out my hand it burn and by my side wither. This is what He plan for me. This is how I thinking. [...] I pray God forgive me. [...] Everything has happen is because of me (166).

Monica Ali has used the tools of psychology to depict the plight of Hasina. Monica Ali depicts the themes of female sexuality and oppression on women through Hassina. Hussain plays an important role in the tragic scenes of Hasina's life. Hasina writes: "I get mil from him, he give me food and shelter. He come to my room I cannot say no to him. Hussain give me sari some ribbons and pretty box with pearl lid. His friend Ali also giving presents" (168). After about a year of silence, Hasina begins to write again and confesses how she has descended into prostitution as the only recourse. She came in contact with Hussain who was a pimp when she got a job in the garment factory. Hussain also betrayed her after ten months as he got another girl near Borobazar. Hasina again became "lonely without a man" (169) But fate does not make life easy for Hasina. She is fed up with the physical tortures so she runs away when her husband goes for work in the morning: "I go away..." (36). Hassina takes a choice and goes to a big city. She comes in contact with Mr. Chowdhury, who 'cares for' her, for his selfish motives. She is raped by him in a merciless manner. She cannot resist him who is powerful in the city: "I say nothing I do nothing and then it done" (116). The plight of Hasina doesn't end here. She comes in contact with a pimp while working in a garment factory. She is trapped by Hussain who lures her for money. "He the one making sure I get the money" (119). Jamal Mohsin Islamel observes that the culture of Bangladeshi society is extremely oppressive for women; they are chained to the traditional patriarchy; the Islamic

code battered them” (I31). In the plot of the novel Hassina comes in contact with three men who destroy her life. She was married to Malek who beats her mercilessly. Mr. Chowdhury exploits and rapes Hassina. Hussain throws her into a brothel. Nazneen is always worried about Hassina:

As she cleaned the bathroom the next day, Nazneen thought of Hasina. Fate, it seemed, had turned Hasina`s life around and around, tossed and twisted it like a baby rat, naked and blind, in the jaws of a dog. And yet Hasina did not see it (340).

There are episodes in the novel describing Hasina`s development of self. But she looks confused and less self-assured. “I am a low woman. I am nothing. I have nothing”(171-172). At last Hasina gets a job in the family of James and Lovely. She finds love in the baby daughter of the family. Once again the cultural conflicts ruin her life. Hassina becomes a problem for young Lovely. She feels insecure and the rug slips from her feet.

Monica Ali gives an insight into the plight of working women of Bangladesh. There are so many cotton and jute factories in Dhaka. Women come from the villages and work in factories. The letters of Hasina describe the horrible condition of women who are sexually assaulted by men. They are compelled to sell their bodies for survival. Hasina expresses her wish to go back to her home: “City smell different smell of men and cars. I like to smell the village again” (170). The voice of Hasina is feministic as she is the victim of sexual oppression. It is a feministic expression. Another phase seems to begin; bad consequences are yet to come. One of the customers, Ahmed, proposes to Hasina. Hussain takes pity on

Hassina and inspires her to accept the marriage proposal of Ahmad since he has been suffering from liver cancer and wouldn't live (171). This is an irony through which Ali shows how the exploiter is pretending to be favourable towards Hasina; the pimp has now become a protector. Although Hasina degrades herself, "I am a low woman. I am nothing" (171). Hasina has no option but to accept the proposal. She deludes herself about the new husband: "Always he watching me with love. If I move he move. If I go to wash he follow. And he keeps hand on me (172).

The letters of Hasina play a vital role in the novel as she gives all the valuable information in her letters. She describes the life of Nazneen; her marriage and the days of her pregnancy when she gives birth to Shahna. Hassina loves the children of Nazneen and keeps a record of all the important events of the family. Hassina is a very critical thinker; her letters give running commentary on Chanu's struggles and his habit of changing jobs. She comments that: "Your husband is very good at finding jobs" (178). Hassina tells in letters that Nazneen suffers from nervous problems and often she emerges as a psychic wreck. She is very sensitive and takes even petty things to heart. In the patriarchal society of Bangladesh domestic violence is a common episode; men enjoy many rights and control all their activities. They are often humiliated and physically tortured; women don't dare to oppose their husbands. The main focus of Monica Ali in the novel is on the miserable condition of Bangladesh women who are bullied and raped mercilessly. The novel gives many instances describing the plight of women; their marginalized situation; rapes and prostitution. Monica Ali has described all the cultural norms of Bangladeshi society. In patriarchal set up women are not allowed sexual liberty since a girl is considered as an honor in the family. She is well protected and looked

after. Moral transgression is regarded as a serious sin and punished with violence. When Hasina elopes with her lover to Khulna, her father is found waiting with an axe to cut her head to punish for the dishonor she brought in the family.

Hasina's relationships with men are based on sexual oppression. In her first marriage, she is physically abused. Hasina marries a husband but doesn't get any right. She is mercilessly tortured and physically beaten. Throughout the novel, the narrator presents that Nazneen tells stories and different episodes from her perspective, including her reading of some of Hasina's letters. The letters present Hasina's life and the women around her. The focus is Nazneen's recollection of her birth, her mother's life, Rupban, and her aunt, Mumtaz. Apparently, the vision about women pictured in *Brick Lane* is on the theories of Bhabha and Spivak. Oppressing women, denying their rights, marrying them off, like Nazneen, secluding them and divesting them of their will are actually parts of Bangladeshi society. In the Bangladeshi community, beating women and children is common. Polygamy and considering women to be second-class citizens, alongside with seclusion are still prevalent. Nazneen approaches her freedom when she starts to work through which she falls in love with a typical, 'fundamental', Muslim boy, Karim. She establishes contact with an Islamic organization. Nazneen's 'freedom' is crippled by the Islam code whereas there could have been another prospect provided such as getting involved in a woman's liberation organization. "If it is true that 'this is England. You can do whatever you like'" (492). In one of her letters, Hasina hints at the relation between Nazneen and Hasina's father and mother: 'He go to other women. He want to take other wife but she give threat to kill own self' (156). Rupban's death remains mysterious until Hasina's last letter reveals that it was suicide. Her mother

Rupban endured all the sufferings silently shedding tears in a lonely room. At last she was so much dejected that she decided to end her life:

She take spear and test on the finger. She takes another and put it back. And third one she takes before is happy. Then she moves the rice sacks she grunt a bit but she never look around (434).

Hasina is indeed a victim of corrosion of culture. She is introduced ‘through a series of letters’. The letters reveal her level of education and her personality. In addition, the letters give insight into the conditions of the working class, the oppression of Bangladeshi women and their marginalized situation. Hasina’s attitude to herself, discloses the relationship between men and women and unveils how the former is superior to the latter. Hasina appears as a vulnerable woman. Silvia Federici in his famous book *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and the Primitive Accumulation* (2004) notes the male control over women’s bodies is a reality. She argues that men control even conception and all child birth issues. Women are trapped in labor pains and they are not paid at all for their hard life (Federici 92). Hasina is a victim of patriarchal atrocities, cultural collision and marginalization. Monica Ali has depicted her sufferings, alienation and marginalized.

Briefly stated, *Brick Lane* is a heart rending tale of colonized fallen women who suffer cultural dislocation, displacement and fractured identities. Domestic violence, sexual exploitation and mental torture are common occurrences in the world of *Brick Lane*. Monica Ali describes the experiences of women in a patriarchal setup with the accompanying violent behavior, discriminations and

inequalities. This chapter examines these in the light of corrosion of self and cultural antagonism. Women experience violence as wives and citizens, acceptance of brutality is a cultural phenomenon which promotes their inferior position and denies them any right. It is quite ironical to note that women suffer the physical and psychological consequences and put up with the pain and terror silently Foucault observes in *The History of Sexuality* (1976) thus:

Whatever (historical) identity the body has, this is the result of a play of forces unifying and codifying the different organs, processes and functions which comprise it. These forces are never capable of completely subduing the bodies and bodily energies they thereby produce, for there is a resistance to the imposition of discipline, and a potential for revolt in the functioning of any regime of power (Foucault 35).

Ironically, Nazneen is already trapped in a situation where there is no exit. In England tattoo culture is very popular; Nazneen anxiously gazes at the tattoo lady and finds her lonely and desperate like herself. Nazneen really appreciates the reserve disposition of the English people as she dreads Mrs. Islam's visits. Within Nazneen's own culture, there is a lot of gossiping and rumours. Nazneen needs to tell someone about her lover Karim because of her confusion: "A few times she had imagined conversations with Razia. She played them out, reading both parts, trying a new phrase here and there. [...] They did not speak of him. It was not possible" (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 393). Nazneen also encounters difficulties when she understands that Razia's son Tariq has drug problems. She wants to tell her friend,

but does not dare. Nazneen loses her self confidence in Brick Lane, her identity gets fractures and all the time she feels lonely and desperate since assimilation is a problem for her. She is caught in an inner conflict as described by Monica Ali: "Nazneen desired to go back to Bangladesh with Chanu but she thought of the future of her children. All her children would suffer; there has been a consistent growth in her personality. She was no more a village girl" (385). As the plot of the novel progresses, Nazneen looks a changed person. The impact of British environment can be seen on her behavior, thinking and mindset. Now she is the girl from the modern city. Her self-esteem grows, and she "decides for herself that *she* would be the one who decided what would happen to her" (405). There is some awareness in her perception as she becomes cautious of her fractured identity.

The theories of Erik Homburger Erikson about identity are applied to understand the identity of Nazneen. Homburger Erikson was born in Germany in 1902. He started training as a psychoanalyst under Anna Freud, the daughter of Sigmund Freud. In his books, he raises questions about both identity and identity crisis. He stresses that an identity crisis is a normal and necessary part of human life. An identity is not static; it is in constant change. In *Identity. Youth & Crisis*, he presents eight stages of psychosocial development (Erikson 94), Nazneen has got self-confidence, and she decides where to be at home. Not being self-confident makes her doubt to be able to find a home for herself and the children - "*What* would she decide? *What* did she want? [...] Perhaps it would be best to go to Dhaka" (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 405). Regarding the mug with the picture of a cottage on it, she knows that she would "visit" the "real" England which she has never seen during

all the years that she has lived in the country” (423). It is during her pregnancy that Nazneen is transformed into an independent self. She explores her real self and discovers that she can live independently for the growth of her children. Nazneen breaks all the barriers and determines to live alone without her husband. Nazneen gradually learns English language; learns a lot from her friend Razia and falls in love with a Muslim boy Karim. She explores her inner strength as she determines to start a new life. The novel becomes quite interesting when Nazneen decides to stay in England to carve her own independent existence. She has been struggling to belong to some place and at last she chooses England as her permanent place which can give good education to her daughters. Life in England is clean offering good opportunities of growth for the future. She gets assimilated in the English culture. Monica Ali has portrayed the colonial history through the characters Chanu who has lived in Britain for many years. Chanu always speaks about the country where he was born, and draws comparisons between Bangladesh and Britain. Chanu takes his family for sightseeing after spending thirty years in this city. He feels alienated in the big crowded city of London and finds white Englishmen living and enjoying stability of life:

All I saw was the Houses of Parliament. And that was in 1979. It was a project. Much equipment was needed. Preparations were made. Chanu bought a pair of shorts which hung just below his knees. He tried them on and filled the numerous pockets with a compass, guidebook, binoculars, bottled water, maps and two types of disposable camera. Thus loaded, the shorts hung at mid-calf. He

bought a baseball cap and wore it around the flat with the visor variously angled up and down and turned round to the back of his head. A money belt secured the shorts around his waist and prevented them from reaching his ankles (289).

To Chanu, it is important to tell his daughters and wife that their country is the one that has benefited England. Bangladeshis have moved from their home country and settled in an enclave in London, having to deal with difficulties of different kinds. Nazneen is torn between her Bangladeshi background and her new identity in London. Monica Ali depicts the failure of Chanu through the images of cobwebs around the computer where once internet had been “that cost him much money but which he could never get to work” (318). His home in London is deceptive, and paradoxically he acts and looks like a tourist, but not like a local citizen, when he finally does. At the same time he tries to get rid of his religious roots by missing his prayers and drinking alcohol (110) pretending to his relatives in Bangladesh as if he earned much money and were successful (132). Nazneen finds herself in the most trying situation since the impact of English culture burdens her sensitive psyche. In desperation she struggles to run away from everything: her flat, her husband, her identity and her new life. This is a turning point in the novel as she encounters a British native who expresses his sympathy for her. Nazneen has talked to someone in English. The day started out badly with a panic attack, but ended up with Nazneen understanding that her new life can work out. She can make it on her own, without any help from a man. She does not have to feel lost like the other Bangladeshi women of *Brick Lane*. Stuart Hall claims that identity is not as transparent as we think. In his article ‘*Cultural Identity and Diaspora*’, he writes

that” identity is a production which is never complete and always in process” (Hall 47). Monica Ali describes the historical episode of walking outside. Nazneen goes for a walk and starts looking at her life positively for the first time. But her path of assimilation is full of obstacles symbolized by bricks and notices. One day, Nazneen passes a notice telling her that smoking, eating and drinking are not allowed, All these signs are symbolic of the restrictions in Nazneen`s life. There are no signs telling her what she actually can do, how to act in her new life and culture. Her flat packed with books and papers also symbolize her obstacles. Chanu keeps and collects so many different things in his flat; his items become barriers to Nazneen.

Chanu seems to be stuck between two cultures and tries to justify himself with the explanation that "back home, if you drink you risk to be an outcast. In London, if you don't drink you risk the same thing" (Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* 110). He is full of contradiction, he claims that his British environment is a "racist society" with "all the skinheads and drunks" that his son should not grow up in because it would spoil him and make him naughty (111). Chanu`s hopes are dashed to the ground, his future is uncertain and he has failed in life. The alien culture has ruined his life because in spite of his stay for thirty years he remained unsettled migrant. He wanted to be a successful man in London, but he is forced to return to Bangladesh loaded with certificates: "All my certificates here." He closed the doors. He made a jolly face. Chanu complains to Mrs Azad that the real cause of his failure in London is the "clash of cultures" (112-113) it becomes clear that his vision of life is blurred. Gradually, as the years go by and his daughters get older, Chanu seems to change his mind. His awareness of Bengali tradition rises and it becomes important to him that his children gain this awareness as well. He does not like the attitude of his daughter

Shahana who believes in western values. Chanu is full of contradictions; he is in London but forces his daughters to learn the poems of Tagore. He doesn't allow Nazneen to learn English. Chanu puts up the rule that the girls are not allowed to speak English at home. Nazneen watches Americans jumping out of the windows, having no other options. This is a symbol of difficulties concerning the novel's characters as well. They are all trapped somewhere most of them do not want to be, and somewhere where they cannot easily form new identities. Even though they want to be free, they are tied up in their own lives without any alternatives.

Shahana and Razia's son Tariq are the victims of the colonial system as they are torn between two very different cultures. They do not know whether they belong to English or to Bangladeshi. In fact, they are affected by both societies. This leads to their fractured identities. Homburger Erikson's fifth stage of psychosocial development; Identity vs. Identity confusion is true in their case. Shahana fears she will be sent back to Bangladesh and she will be a victim of an arranged marriage. This makes her restless. This also goes for Tariq who struggles with drug problems. Tariq and Shahana's personal problems become the source for identity confusion. The two girls Shahana and Bibi do not have any problems with England and its culture; they clearly prefer it to the Eastern culture which their father wants to drum into them. Yet they suffer from a kind of rootlessness, evoked of their parents' foreign origin. Shahana revolts against everything that has to do with Bangladesh and make disparaging remarks such as pointing out how horrible it would be to be "married off in no time" and your husband will keep you locked up in a little smelly room and make you weave carpets all day long (395). She is critical of the style of living of the Bangladeshi as she says: having "to brush your teeth with a twig. They

don't have toothbrushes" (398). Shahana is born and raised in England, and has never been to Bangladesh. She feels British. But the white majority in British society and the Bangladeshi immigrants do not consider her a part of their community. It is difficult for Shahana to adapt. She is confused and lives with fractured identity.

To conclude, Monica Ali has vividly described the plight of woman of Bangladesh trapped in alien culture. Nazneen and Chanu desperately struggle to assimilate in the alien culture, but the forces of cultural collision are so powerful that bulldozed the identity of Chanu. He experiences acute frustration and goes back Bangladesh. However, Nazneen confronts the cultural reality and successfully adapts to the imperial culture to survive in the colonized society. This cultural antagonism is transmitted to the second generation as the daughters of Nazneen come under the impact of British culture and learn the art of surviving in the alien land. They become hybrid as they carry with them the traditional culture of Bangladesh and imbibe the values of British life as well. Monica Ali has realistically dramatised the scenes of cultural collision in this novel.

Chapter 4

Contextualization Homelessness and Displacement: an Analysis of *Taslima Nasrin's French Lover*

Taslima Nasrin is a Bengali writer born in 1962 and famous for her revolutionary modern ideas. She published *Lajja* in 1963 and she suffered a number of physical and other attacks because of her controversial ideas against Islamic philosophy and religion. She spent most of her life in exile. Nasrin's novel *The French Lover* (2001) depicts the theme of cultural collision and its impact on the life of Nila who leaves Kolkata and goes to France. *The French Lover* (2001) deals with the theme of adultery and infidelity which can be interpreted from the perspective of a diaspora. The plot of the novel deals with the problems of cultural collision as the patriarchal structure is very rigid and women revolt against the patriarchal oppression. The chief woman protagonist is Nilanjana who is under the control of her father and her husband Kishanlal. She doesn't get any opportunity to enjoy freedom and feels inhibited by her friends and lover. *French Lover* deals with many sociological, political and cultural issues which condition the fate of women everywhere. Nasrin may be construed as justifying the frustration of Nila who is given shabby treatment by Kishanlal and who deserts him forever. In the marriage of Nilanjana and Kishanlal the disharmony begins because of the clash of two cultures, two individuals of different tastes and feelings who suffer separation and alienation. Ironically, Monique Mathew, the French citizen turned Indian, after marrying an Indian, travels from France to India in the hope of living with her loving husband forever. But cultural conflict ruins their domestic happiness. Though she is a lovely

and vigorous person and has married a Bengali much younger than her she gets a divorce. In the relationship between Nilanjana's mother Molina and Anirban, destiny snatches Molina away from Anirban.

In 1994, at the height of the Taslima Nasrin controversy, the *New Yorker* and the *London Review of Books* published two fairly long pieces on her controversial novels and their impact on contemporary Bangladeshi society. Until 1993, Nasrin was unknown outside Bangladesh but she attracted international attention in May 1994 when a *fatwa* was issued sentencing Nasrin to death on charges of blasphemy. The Western media labelled her a Bangladeshi "female Salman Rushdie" Nasrin was quoted as saying: "I will not be silenced. Everywhere I look I see women being mistreated and their oppression justified in the name of religion. Is it not my moral responsibility to protest?" (*Outlook* 25). Nasrin's *Lajja* sparked off heated controversies in India and Asia. The plot of the novel was structured around on the demolition of Babri Masjid in India.

Taslima Nasrin depicts the agony of her characters that live and suffer at various places of the world. Her characters fly from East to West and West to East, with the hope of enjoying bliss through marriage, which is not to be. Almost all the women characters suffer sexual atrocity because of cultural dislocation. Nasrin generalizes the plight of women by introducing various scenes of India and the French society focusing on the parallel situations where in the experience of one woman happens to be that of other women. Ultimately the culmination becomes the emancipation of women from men. Diaspora is a complex experience; Taslima Nasrin explores the different aspects of migrant culture which primarily focuses on

the territory of displacement, cultural alienation, and the processes of reintegration that lead to emotional destabilization and insecurity. The main argument in the present study is to focus on the psychological trajectory of Nila, her struggle to merge with alien culture and the consequences of her liberated self. She desperately tries to pave her way outside her homeland due to her unfulfilled and dejected self. Taslima Nasreen depicts Nila's move to the external world, far away from her homeland with the paradoxes of immigrant subjectivities. In *The French Lover* Nasrin has reflected on the context of globalization, cultural dislocation which result plight to her. The gap between the adopted land and the real home is filled with a sense of fear, loss, with psychic and historical form of repression. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin have published the book *The Empire Writes Back*, in which they have described the prominent characteristics of post-colonial diasporic literature. The main thrust of V.S.Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini is on the concern "with place and displacement". Nila initiates her journey of migration; she experiences a strained trauma of alien culture in France. Her migratory experience brings untold sufferings in her life, she feels uprooted as she fails to settle anywhere. *The French Lovers* narrates the attempt of Nila to adapt in diasporic conditions, essentializing the transmutative turn that is the active signifier for both migration/diaspora and the 'transgression' of adultery. Migrants who leave their homeland have to suffer discrimination, alienation and marginalization. Nila leaves Kolkata and goes to France and she also experiences "rejection, discrimination and oppression" She has to endure the harsh attitude of the immigrant officers at the airport and for the first time she realized that she was in an

alien land. Taslima Nasrin's novel *French Lover* deals with the themes of love, sex, lesbianism and marriage and patriarchal oppression. Other novels *The Immigrant* (2008) and *French Lover* (2001) deal with the theme of adultery and lesbianism. The plot of *French Lover* revolves around Nila who belongs to Kolkota and goes to France in quest of sexual liberty and empowerment. Nila is introduced thus by Nasrin:

The girl, with chapped lips, draped in a red silk saree with gold on her ears, nose and hands, got off the aero plane and gazed at the white people (Nasrin, *French Lover* 1).

It was "past noon and almost dusk When Nila landed at the air port of France, she was grilled by the immigrant officers with barrage of questions. She felt humiliated:

No one was sent to a corner- the girl was the only one. She felt the corner was like a zoo. Everyone looked at her through the inevitable cage as they walked past (3).

Nila's relation with her husband is not thick; she is leading a formal life with Kishanlal. They would only discuss urgent matters with each other like strangers. She had "slept with him for only two weeks after the marriage in her Calcutta home" (11) She felt like a guest in her own home in Paris. Nasrin gives the image of an uprooted tree to depict the imminent dissolution of her marriage:

But at the twenty seven her life was topsy-turvy, the tree of her dreams lay uprooted, the thousand lamps were blown out, a ghostly pall had come down on the music festival and the moonlight was covered by a chunk of clouds. Nila was flown on this dangerous wind into a shining household with everything she need (13).

Nasrin has depicted the elements of diasporic dislocations, the predicament of Nila in a superb style. When she goes abroad, she is treated as an object by the alien people. In '*The French Lover*' Kishanlal regards Nila as an object of his sexual gratification. She is treated as a doll. Nila faces the challenge to assimilate in the French culture and these results into alienation and anguish. She is confused and bewildered as the French society is extremely liberal and insecure. She tries to make friends with Mojammal, Bachhu and the other migrants working in Kishanlal's restaurant. Edward Said comments thus:

Exile gives very challenging experience to the migrants. Those who are in exile can best understand the dialectical antagonism between the native culture and the alien values. The conflict brings psychological tensions in the mind of the migrants as they feel insecure in the alien land. The migrants all the time feel dislocated and displaced as the alien society never gives them proper place (Said 173).

Nasrin has depicted the predicament of Nila who is in exile from her homeland. Nila is completely confused and bewildered when she confronts the sexual liberty of the French society. She is rooted in her Indian culture; but she has

longing to explore new world. Kishanlal holds the remote control of her life and she decides to seek her identity. “Nila got a job, packing computers in boxes: fifteen hundred francs a week” (35). In her own way, Nila enacts the war machine that transcends the commodification of her by obliterating the external rootings such negative constructs.

I took the job to enjoy independence from you. I want to live and my own independent life as I don't want to lead a slavish life as dictated by you. I know you are the master; you are the boss; my status in the family is that of a servant; you want me to clean the house; cook your food, serve and give you sexual pleasures (79)

Nasrin lashes at the tendency of male domination. Nasrin exposes and ridicules the attitude of men who consider women as objects of sexual pleasures. The plot of the novel deals with the theme of marriage and the problems faced by women after marriage. Marriage is described as a source of despair and anguish as most of the women after marriage are subjected to tortures. Women are so much harassed and exploited that it ends in dissolution. Nasreen depicts the move of the protagonist to the external world, away from her homeland with determination to face the challenges of an alien society. Nila finds herself in a golden cage as she sings: “*Break free these doors and take me away*” (26). Nila is a girl from Calcutta who is desperate to explore a new world in quest of material success and love. Nila of *French Lover* is a young girl, adventurous, educated and liberal in ideas. Her quest is for ‘true love’ in life. She thinks that her status in her husband’s house is no better than a prostitute.

Nila wondered if there was any difference between a prostitute's client and a husband. The only difference she could find was that the client can get away only after paying off the prostitute whereas the husband can get off the hook without ever paying his wife's dues (28).

Nasrin has depicted her life in various stages of growth and enlightenment. Primarily there are three stages; the pre-marital, marital and post-marital. Nila passes from these stages and in each stage she is subjected to tortures and tensions. She struggles to become liberated but she is oppressed and her growth is inhibited by patriarchal oppression. Nila was guided by the teachings and principles of her mother who taught her to cater to the needs and comforts of men in the family. Nila learns cooking, cleaning and other chores of the household. She adores husband and does everything to please him. Nila was married off to Kishan Lal, whom she did not really like or choose, consenting to the decision of her father. Nila sarcastically remarks that her transition is from her father's hotel to her husband's hotel. Her conflict with her husband begins when she invites her friend on dinner in her home. She is humiliated by her husband. Nila faces the situation boldly and doesn't make any compromise. Nila emerges as a modern liberal woman who revolts against the patriarchal oppression. Like a modern feminist she advocating free raises a voice against the old and orthodox Indian traditions. Nila is a creature of instincts than of intellect. Her experiences are traumatic as she suffers from marginalization. Being an immigrant, she fails to assimilate in the host country and is treated as the "Other". The gap between the adopted land and the real home is filled with a sense of fear,

loss, with psychic and historical form of repression. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin write in *The Empire Writes Back*, (2001) that diaspora Literature,

is the concern with place and displacement..... the special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place” (6).

The plot of *French Lover* depicts the patriarchal hegemony on women. Nila was controlled by her father Anirban when she was an unmarried woman. Her marriage was also fixed by her father. After her marriage her husband Kishanlal treated her as an object of sexual pleasures. Nasrin raised the cry of women who are subjected to all forms of tortures. *French Lover* focuses on the feministic views of Nasrin. Nasrin may be construed as justifying the frustration of Nila at her shabby treatment by Kishanlal and subsequently abandoning her husband. When Nila speaks on behalf of Nasrin, she justifies her liberated escapades as the result of the lack of real love or affection in her husband’s attitude towards her and his former French wife. Taslima Nasrin has blended both fancy and reality to weave the plot of the novel depicting the sufferings of the migrants who suffer cultural dislocation. Nasrin also pursues the theme of male-female encounter, which assumes a rare depth and validity. It may be summed up as man-woman relationship in the context of marital and extra marital relationships. In the marriage of Nilanjana and Kishanlal we find the disharmony between two individuals of different tastes and feelings. Monique Mathew, the French citizen turned Indian, after marrying an Indian, travels from France to India in the hope of living with her loving husband forever. But

destiny decides differently. Though she is a lovely person and has married a Bengali much younger than her she gets a divorce. In the relationship between Nilanjana's mother Molina and Anirban, destiny snatches Molina away from Anirban. Nilanjana's mother has been neglected for long and there is no treatment for her disease though her father Anirban is a doctor. In Nilanjana's opinion whatever treatment Anirban might have given to his wife was a pretence to she was getting treated by doctors.

Danielle, a French citizen, has a very bitter childhood to recall. Her father had raped her; she has suffered bitterly many times because of the sexual vulgarity of the people around and, ultimately, she turns into a homosexual. Danielle "feels a certain repulsion for the male body" and becomes a self-identified lesbian, through her denial of "penetration and masculine domination" (Beauvoir 123). As a matter of fact, she refuses to get into a relation with men and desires Nila as a "feminine flesh". In fact, to Danielle Nila's body is the same as for the male "an object of desire" (Beauvoir 123). Hence, instead of being aroused by a male, she gets aroused by Nila's body, a female body, which she kisses, licks and tickles, just as a man acts on a woman's body. Sexual pleasure and lesbian desire is deemed to be something unnatural against the basic tenets of Indian culture. Nila does not accept the fact of having a same sex relation with Danielle and instead prefers to be loved by a man, which confirms to the assumption that "women are 'innately' sexually oriented only towards men" (Rich 123).

In *French Lover*, Nila's intimacy with Danielle develops within an erotic level. The erotic encounter between Nila and Danielle is quite sensational in the

novel. Interestingly, Danielle is sexually charged but Nila is not. Nila prefers not to struggle with men and rather chooses to become a lesbian as “homosexuality can be for woman a mode of flight from her situation or a way of accepting it” (Beauvoir 199). But after embracing homosexuality, Nila no longer gives into men’s desire and hence from a sense of “virile inferiority” rejects Benowa from her life. Danielle initially takes care of Nila and respects her feelings and desires unlike Kishan Lal or Benoir. Danielle restrains Nila from going to her ailing mother, doesn’t allow her to go to a cinema or sit in a café. Danielle manipulates Nila’s consciousness. Danielle showed Nila a homosexual who wearing the dress of men. Danielle and her lesbianism represent western freedom, which means she is emancipated, free from all restrictions, social or otherwise, but runs the risk of moral corruption. Nila feels rootless in France because she loses her identity as she confesses:

Perhaps I was better suited to be Krishan’s bride, the archetypal housewife who’ll cook, clean and sometimes talk to an Indian or two. Actually I am not cut out for this society (Nasrin, *French Lover* 96).

Nila’s confrontation with Danielle and her relationship with her is dramatically based on ignorance and confusion. Nila is trapped in a lesbian relationship about which she has no knowledge. Nasrin has dramatized the scene of cultural collision in a simple and effective language:

Danielle what are you up to?”

Why? Don’t you want it too? Danielle was surprised.

“Want what?”

“Sex”

“What?”

“I thought you wanted it too”

“How did you think that ?”

Danielle said: “You held my hand in the street”.

“So”

“So I thought you liked me” (99).

Nilā stared at her in open amazement. “I liked you and so I held your hands in the streets. But sex...Wh’t’s this? How can two women...?” (99). The society at large is still ignorant of such vulgar and gruesome assaults on women though it is a land of “equality”, but she revolts against these atrocities by transforming herself into a lesbian to get a female identity. Nilā’s relationship with Sushanta who belongs to the high caste Brahmin of Calcutta exposes the infidelity of a love that fails before marriage. The girl marries Kishanlal with thousands of hopes and dreams: “Nilā had her share of dreams about hard life sustained only on love. Perhaps every Bengali was born with that desire”(19). On her first trip to Paris, Nilā meets the Dutch lady Gabriella; she is forty three and has been buying fabric from India and taking it back to sell in her country. She makes a good profit in her trade of selling plate, jewellery, incense etc. In the Western culture the woman takes her relationship with a man perhaps in a very light way and there is nobody to talk about her. But, in Calcutta, if a woman flirts with a man her life is considered to be doomed and there will be no man to marry her. Kishanlal has had to travel from France to marry Nilā when Sushanta jilted her. On her second trip to Paris, on board the flight, Nilā meets Benoir Dupont, who is two years younger than her. Benoir can sense that Nilā is like

a reckless refugee. He is very cautious about his every move towards this newfound friend. In Nila's Indian tradition, sex is admissible only in the context of love and affection. But, in Benoir's culture, one can have sex with someone without loving her. Nila is an unfortunate woman; she gets shocks after shocks. Her husband Kishanlal couldn't give her the genuine love of her dreams. Nila is a modern bold woman who seriously thinks to break away from the mismatched marriage. Benoir's love is also artificial and depressing; selfish and disgusting. Nila emerges as a New Woman of Nasrin who is crazy to lead an independent life. Nasrin generalizes her opinion and makes the reading public aware that the liberation of women should start from one's own mind. Marriage is considered as a sacred institution to organize a family; husband and wife enjoy happiness in this legitimate institution. Meena Shirwadkar, in *Image of Woman in the Indo-Anglian Novel*, observes thus: "Marriage is an obligation for womanhood but it makes a demand on woman. She is expected to go through a long process of learning what she has to learn in order to adapt herself to her new environment" (Shirwadkar 60).

Nasrin's women characters are all dominated by emotions, they are not ready to tune themselves to the domestic sphere ruled by man. The author makes her characters live and suffer at various places of the world, kindling the imagination of the sensible readers to recognize that the plight of women is the same throughout the world. Her characters fly from East to West and West to East, with the hope of enjoying bliss through marriage, which is not to be. Almost all the women characters suffer sexual atrocity. It may be not necessarily from unknown men but the men of their own family and men who happened to be their friends. Pathetically enough, sex does not distinguish a daughter or a friend, Nasrin generalizes the plight of women

by introducing various women characters in parallel situations where in the experience of one woman happens to be that of other women. Ultimately the culmination becomes the liberation or emancipation of women from men. This may be like Nilanjana leaving her husband to live with her friend or like Danielle leaving her father to live alone in the company of friends of her own. The heroine removes herself from her family and her husband because she feels she has an identity of her own that cannot be related to anybody else. Nasrin wants to show that her women characters have liberated themselves from their subordinate status. Baker Jean Miller, in *Towards a New Psychology of Women*, says:

Most women do have a much greater sense of the emotional components of all human activity than most men. This is, in part, a result of their training as subordinates; for any one in a subordinated position must learn to be attuned to the vicissitudes of mood, pleasure and displeasure of the dominant group (Miller 19).

The institution of marriage falls heavily on a woman. However, when it becomes a battlefield between two egoistic individuals who are not ready for compromise, it proves that the fittest can survive. Nila is subjected to all the internal and the external pressure from the society and she suffers the loss of her identity. Nila is a bold adventurer who cannot compromise with the loss of her individuality. She becomes a victim of the destructive forces that threaten her identity. Nila, is a victim of the institution of marriage and identity crisis, Kishan never understands the identity of Nila. In fact, as the husband has total control over his wife, being “masters, rulers of the wife’s body and soul” (Pradeep 123) in *French Lover*. Nila is compelled to live according to the desire of her husband as women have never been

equal to men in any way. Women have faced identity crisis, but the crisis seems to occur mostly because of the control men over women. A crisis in one's identity leads to a heightened sense of alienation. Nila is convinced that she cannot enjoy freedom in her husband's home. She takes a bold decision and leaves her husband's home. She doesn't feel in secured in her husband's home. Her prime aim is to survive in a foreign land. But it is quite ironical that she becomes an object of sexual pleasure for Danielle, a homosexual: "Nila couldn't understand the inner intentions of Danielle's mind. She turned to be a homosexual. Nila lay there speechless and breathless" (Nasrin, *French Lover* 99).

Nasrin generalizes Nila's experiences as a subjugated woman and the subsequent trauma she undergoes and her successful exit as an individual to raise consciousness among women in general. Nila is obsessed with her act of becoming a pimp every night for her husband, as every time Kishan Lal forces her to indulge in sexual encounter and Nila takes it as a form of marital rape. As Wollstonecraft points out, that woman is expecting love all the time. So a young girl like Nila who was brought up with "idealization of heterosexual romance and marriage" (Wollstonecraft 198) becomes unhappy. In fact, the marriage between her and Kishan Lal has nothing to do with love. Rather, to Kishan Lal Nila is like the body of any other woman, which he can sexually exploit and attain pleasure. Nilanjana is a new bride who is assigned to take care of Kishan Lal's household, prepare breakfast for her husband and stay indoors. Therefore, because of the presence of power dynamics within the household "Marriage has always been a very different thing for man and for woman" (Beauvoir, 1997). Nila's exile from her motherland brings a chain of sufferings. She becomes a victim of cultural collision and her

identify gets fractured. She desperately tries rejuvenating her life because she finds her in a desperate crisis of the loss of her integral self. She feels tortured, alienated and culturally dislocated. She feels nostalgic as she recollects the streets of Calcutta full of activity. She compares her lonely life in France and her soothing life in Calcutta. The first great achievement of Nila is getting a job as she doesn't want to be a dependent on Kishanlal. She is fed up with the rigid rules and regulations of her husband. "Nila got a job, packing computers in boxes: fifteen hundred francs a week" (Nasrin, *French Lover* 35). This job would give her economic independence and she would be able to take her independent decisions:

Nila is sick of slave master relationship with her husband: "I have to live according to your wishes because you are the master, you are the boss." Sband at She got the job to get freedom from daily cooking, cleaning and dusting and providing sexual pleasures to her husband at night (79).

Nila's quest for her liberal and independent life brings pain and anguish in her life. It is not easy for her to survive in alien land; she has to assimilate in the French culture. She lives with a void after she divorces to Kishanlal. She is sick of the hollowness of her relationship with her husband.

Nila wondered if Krishan really even needed a live female body to satisfy his hunger. She lay there still and motionless as Krishan's heavy body did its own work upon hers. He had been right about one thing: she didn't feel a thing (42).

Nilā is a keen observer of men and their manners. She visits various places of France and found that the girls could move freely even late at night. She accumulates knowledge of foreign land and compared with the life in Calcutta. “That wasn’t Calcutta that five lust men or bunch of robbers would pounce upon a girl and snatch away her money, gold and jewellery, honour or even life” (42). Kishanlal tells her so many things to add to the knowledge of Nilā so that she should feel comfortable in France. Parents are very free with their daughters; they are given liberty to go outside with their boy friends to enjoy life.

If on a Friday night girls of this age sit at home, if they don’t have a boy friend or sleep with a boy; it is then the parents would be worried. They would wonder if something was wrong with her, physically or mentally (47).

The French girls enjoy sexual liberty and they lose their virginity at very early age:

Even before they are twenty they may have bedded with hundred boys...There are no permanent principles...There are no enduring ties. They don’t know how to settle down, when and with whom (47).

There are two episodes described by Nasrin giving an analysis of cultural differences between Indian culture and French culture. Nilā’s father was a doctor; she had practical experiences of the routine check ups. But when she went to a French hospital; the nurse asked her to be totally naked: “Nilā couldn’t understand why she’d have to take off her clothes for a head X-ray” (49). In Calcutta Nilā found a remarkable difference men’s and women’s clothes but in France there was no

difference; boys were wearing the clothes of women. At the end of the novel Nila finds emptiness in her life; she fails to get any love from anyone. She feels that she is trapped in an alien culture and there is no place “for the French lover” (291). All for her is lost as she looks broken and shattered. Bhabha observes that a migrant is bound to suffer homelessness and cultural dislocation. Nila fails to get space in the French society and at last she expresses her anguish: “Was this her own country? Nila knew this land, decked up in such a beautiful autumn, was not her own land” (291).

To conclude, Nila’s journey results into her alienation and homelessness. Nila experiences rejection, discrimination and cultural dislocation in the alien land. She gained western knowledge but in the process of assimilation in the French society she suffered traumatic mental anguish.

Chapter 5

Displacement and Cultural Alienation: the Psychological Trajectories of the Protagonists in *The Kite Runner*; *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; *And the Mountains Echoed*

In the Post-Colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin and Khalid Hosseini the main focus is on the theme of the cultural clash of the immigrants living in America. The immigrants leave their homeland and carry with them the rituals, customs and traditions of their original culture. But as they live in the host country they are confronted with so many challenges during their stay. The immigrants are confronted with the reality that they are different from the local people by having different name, colour, appearance culture and ethnicity. Khaled Hosseini was an Afghani immigrant who came from Kabul with his wife Saroya and father, Baba. His ambition was to become an established writer. He started his life from California since his hometown, Kabul was in turmoil. This chapter will examine how cultural and political tensions of the colonized people result into dislocations, displacements and fractured identities. Paul Gilroy took the historical perspective in *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2002) and analyzed the impact of race, politics and culture on the colonized people and their multilayered trauma economic and cultural, political and psychological

Hosseini is an Afghan writer as he spent most of her life in Afghanistan. He migrated to Iran because his father was in diplomatic service. His mother was a learned lady who taught history and and Farsi in a school. Hosseini took the mission to write the real story about Afghanistan to clear all doubts and misunderstanding

from the mind of people of Europe and America. Most of the people in the world believed that Afghanistan is haven for the militants.

The Kite Runner primarily focuses on three significant periods in Amir's life: his Kabul childhood. Amir is the son of a rich merchant; he lives in Wazir Akbar Khan in Kabul. Amir looks superior even in appearance. Amir has a thin-boned frame, a shaved head, and low set ears. Amir had "a thin-boned frame, a shaved head, and low-set ears" (Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* 22). His face shows that he is a true Afghan. His mother Sofia Akrami died after giving birth to him. Father-son relationship are estranged because Amir hates Baba who forces him to be a real man like the Afghan boys who likes playing soccer and kite, hunting and fighting. Baba watched Amir crying when a horseman fell on the ground and died. At the outset of the chapter it is very important to know the history and geographical location of Afghanistan in brief because all the major events in *The Kite Runner* (2003) and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* occurred in Kabul. Afghanistan is a culturally mixed nation, a crossroads between the East and the West. The country has been a gateway of trade and migration since antiquity. The geographical location of this small country is very significant connecting her with South Asia, Central Asia and Southwest Asia. Afghanistan became a buffer state as the British and Russians tried to establish their hegemony. However, the third Anglo-Afghan War resulted into full independence. Khaled Hosseini wrote his debut novel *The Kite Runner* to prove the world that the people of Kabul are also the victims of the gun culture of Taliban. The Americans wrongly believed that Afghanistan was a safe place for the militants. But this plot of the novel reveals the cruelties of the Taliban perpetrated on the poor and innocent people of Kabul. The plot of the novel created sensation in American

media which reviewed the themes of the novel for more than hundred weeks. It is very different with other writers that most of them tell about alienation, cultural shock, and depression. Hosseini opened the eyes of the American readers who for a long time had misconceptions about the Afghan people and culture. Hosseini wrote about Afghanistan before the Soviet war because that is largely a forgotten period in modern Afghan history. For many people in the west, Afghanistan is synonymous with the Soviet war and the Taliban. Hosseini has covered the entire history of Afghanistan in a dramatic way depicting the internal cultural conflicts confronted by all the protagonists. The plot of the novel presents the social life of Afghan people in the Soviet ruled government, the scenes of Afghan civil war are vividly recorded. All important phases of Afghan history and culture are well reported by Hosseini. *The Kite Runner* was published in 2007. The title of novel, *The Kite Runner* means someone who runs to catch a kite. *The Kite* is the source of struggle among Amir and Hassan as a trophy of honor. It is a symbol of victory for the Afghan boys in Afghanistan. Hosseini focused on the life of the people of Afghanistan when the Taliban captured power and started gun culture in the county destroyed all institutions. Evil forces brought violence and anarchy in the country. Hosseini made the novel interesting by interspersing the theme of sin and redemption and the loss of innocence of children in the various episodes of the plot. The title of the novel is based on the cultural events of Kabul since the kite flying is celebrated as a national festival there. It is a pride for the family if someone wins the competition Hosseini has started the novel with Amir -Baba relationship. Baba belongs to the royal family; he is greatly respected in Kabul and is a successful businessman. He married a rich woman who belonged to a royal blood. He is a true Pashtun with tall muscular

body and courage. He once fought with a bear and everyone in the family and society he enjoys admirable reputation. Baba has a poor opinion about his son Amir who is given to writing poetry and reading. The novel gives a clash of different ethnic groups. Baba personifies all the typical qualities of Pashtun tribe; he is aggressive, bold and dominating. Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* is about Amir and Hassan who live in the same house; Amir belongs to an upper class since his father married to a royal princess and Hassan is a Hazara looked down upon by the people of Kabul. Hassan is a son of Ali who is a kind and noble person. Baba slept with his wife Sanaubar who gave birth to Hassan but Ali remained faithful to Baba. Ali is a good singer; Amir always praises his melodious voice. Ali helps Baba to export carpets and is his business associate. Hosseini portrays Ali thus:

Ali had congenital paralysis of his lower face muscles, a condition that rendered him unable to smile and left him perpetually grimfaced. ...But polio had left Ali with a twisted, atrophied right leg that was sallow skin over bone with little in between except a paper-thin layer of muscle (Hosseini, *Kite Runner* 2-3).

Amir and Hassan live like brothers and are emotionally attached with the other. Baba and Ali were friends in spite of their ethnic differences. Amir played with Hassan; enjoyed the kite flying and cycling together but he never compromised with his self respect and elite status:

Never mind any those things, Because history isn't easy to overcome. Neither is religion. In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was Sunni and he was Shia, and nothing was ever going to change that. Nothing (22).

Amir spent his “first twelve years of his life playing with Hassan; enjoying “hide-and seek, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians” (22). Hassan remained illiterate but Amir used to narrate stories and recited poems to give him practical knowledge. Amir is sensitive; a book worm and of had aesthetic tastes. He aspired to be a writer in his life. Baba didn't have good opinion about Amir. He is not a Muslim fanatic as he disregarded Mullah Fatiullah who preached orthodox ideas. Interestingly, Hassan and Amir have lost their mothers and the novel is focused on fathers and sons. Amir-Hassan relationships form the main nucleus of the novel. Amir came under the influence of his mother as he aspired to be a writer. The main reason why Amir doesn't like his father is his jealousy of Hassan because Hassan steals Baba's attention and affection to him. In this case Hassan is not his friend but just his Hazara servant that gets more love and affection from his Baba than him:

I remember the day when Baba took me on a lake for the first time. He took me to a wonderful Gargha Lake that was situated a few miles north of Kabul. Baba loved Hassan more than me. I didn't like the presence of Hassan. I lied and told Baba that Hassan had gone somewhere and was not available. I wanted Baba all to myself (12).

The rape of Hassan in the alley of by Assef is a major event in the novel. Hosseini describes the entire episode in the 7th chapter of the novel. Amir won the kite tournament to please Baba who had a poor opinion about Amir. It was a great day for Amir who struggled hard to win the tournament. Hassan leaves Amir to get the blue kite back to him. He is trapped in an alley by Assef who is jealous of Amir and rapes Hassan with his friends Kamal and Wali. The entire scene of the rape of Hassan is described by Hosseini in a heart rending language:

Aseef knelt behind Hassan, put his hands on Hassan's hips and lifted his bare buttocks. He kept one hand on Hassan's back and undid his own belt buckle with his free hand. He unzipped his jeans; dropped his underwear. He positioned himself behind Hassan. Hassan didn't struggle. Didn't even whimper (66).

Assef had demanded the blue kite but he told him that he had captured this wonderful kite for Amir. Hassan was raped just for a kite by Assef who is a villain in the novel representing evil forces. Amir saved could have saved Hassan from the clutches of cruel Assef but on that day he exhibited his cowardice and remained as a silent spectator watching the cruel deed of Assef from a distance. Hosseini has described the scene of his cowardice thus:

I had one last chance to make a decision. One final opportunity to decide who I was going to be. I could step into that alley, stand for Hassan- the way he had stood up for me all those times in the past- and accept whatever would happen to me. Or I could run. In the end I ran (68).

Amir does not help Hassan because he was in an agreement with his friend who hates Hazaras and an agent of sexual harassment that nothing is free in the world. Amir becomes sinful and guilty because of his betrayal to Hassan. He silently witnessed the rape scene and did nothing to save Hassan. He enjoyed good reputation in Kabul and his father was a big gun Aseef couldn't have dared to molest Hassan if Amir had intervened. But on that day Hassan was more a Hazara to him than his fast friend. Amir was always haunted by his metaphysical guilt; he couldn't

face the presence of Hassan. He decided to get rid of him; he put his gold watch and money under the mattress of Hassan and complained to Baba of theft. Baba hated stealing as he believed theft to be the greatest sin of life. He took this decision but it accumulated his sins, as he says: Baba hated the act of stealing as he advised to Amir: “Now, no matter what the mullah teaches, there is only one sin, only one. And that is theft. Every other sin is a variation of theft. Do you understand that? (16).

It was easy for me; I had planned to get Hassan out of my house since I couldn't bear his sight. Then I put some cash in an envelope and a golden watch and placed under his pillow. Then I went to Baba and told him the loss of my money and golden watch. Baba was furious to discover my money under Hassan's Hassan's mattress. The decks were clear for me; Hassan was thrown outside the house (90).

Baba was very much upset when he recovered money and gold watch from the bed of Hassan. Ali was also very much disturbed and he decided to leave Baba and Amir forever. Hassan left Amir's house accepting his crime before Amir who had planned everything just to throw him out to hide his guilt. Hassan knew everything but he became a lamb to be butchered by Amir. Hassan is further separated after the fall of the Afghanistan monarchy and the Soviet invasion. Amir immigrates to America with his father, and they struggle to integrate into American society. The novel has a cyclical structure; it begins with Amir's life in America and ends with his life in Kabul. Hosseini has used the technique of stream of consciousness as the plot shuttles between past and the present. In the early life Hosseini describes Amir-Hassan relationship and the marginalization of the Hazaras

by the Pashtun tribe. The theme of cultural collision begins with the description of Hassan and his friendship with Amir. Hassan and Amir were like brothers as Hassan's mother had milked Amir from her breasts. Amir lost his mother at the early age and he was nurtured by Hassan's mother. Isabel Allende Liona highly praised the novel thus:

A wonderful work of this is one of those unforgettable stories that stay with you for years. All the great themes of literature and of life are the fabric of this extraordinary novel: love, guilt, redemption...it is so powerful that for a long time after, everything I read seemed bland (Liona 1-2).

Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* presents new ideas depicting complexity of conflict toward human relationship and other conflicts that happen in the life of the immigrants while living in war-torn Baba and Amir decide to leave Kabul because of the cruelties of the Taliban. Hosseini has described the scenes of exodus of people after the Taliban captured power in the most touching language. The Taliban destroyed all the institutions and disrupted the value system of Kabul. The gun culture started; people daily witnessed the savage cruelties of the Taliban, Aseef gained power and he started bullying and killing people just for fun. Baba and Amir decided to leave Kabul in quest for peace and stability. Amir begins his journey from Kabul and reaches Pakistan with Baba where he stays six months to complete his visa formalities to go to America. His long journey is loaded with the harrowing experiences of anguish, dislocation and homelessness. Hosseini gives the metaphor of river in this section of the novel to depict the inner turmoil in the heart of Amir.

The water of the river always goes forward; it never goes backward. Amir also wants to forget his past life and the sin that he committed in betraying Hassan. Hosseini's description recreates the intense disorientation and terror of experience.

They boarded on a fuel truck packed with many migrants and reached Pakistan. They stayed in Pakistan for six months and after that they flew to America to bury his past memories and to start a new life in America. In America, Amir lives in California where the Afghans immigrants live there. Amir and Baba still keeps their tradition and their habits as the Pashtun ethnic. In America, Amir is always haunted by his memories and his guilt toward Hassan in the past. He thinks that the cause of his sufferings in America is the result of his past deeds, the result of divine retribution. He feels guilty all the time and the guilt makes him always fastens upon anything with his mistakes that he has ever done in the past.

The interesting part of the novel is the detailed analysis of Afghanistan social condition during the conflicts. The plot runs on two levels, on the surface level the political events are reported but in the serious level Hosseini depicts the conflicts on the social plane, he depicts the relationship between father and son, the relationship between Amir and his friend Hassan, the feelings of guilt and redemption. Hosseini is much interested in the political events but he vividly portrays the social condition of the people during the Afghan conflicts. The story of the novel becomes the representation of Afghan life and culture, its richness and purity and inner beauty. The plot of the novel unfolds the impacts of conflicts and the various phases of cultural collision during Daoud Khan Coup, Soviet aggression, civil war until the cruel Taliban regime. The sufferings of the people are vividly described by Hosseini,

the sexual oppression of women and violence is indeed heartrending. Hosseini has also given some flashes of family life; the family outing to a lake and the annual winter lake tournament of Kabul are such examples. The sociological theory of Alan Swingewood is quite relevant who observes thus: “literature is a direct reflection of various facets of social structure, family relationships, class conflict, and possibly divorce trends and population composition” (13). The Afghan conflicts brought untold miseries to people, the conflicts ruined the peace and stability of people. Hosseini has depicted the scenes of rapes, sexual oppression of women, poverty, and loss of identity, shortage of food, clothes and shelter. Afghan conflicts resulted into the traumatic experiences as people were tortured and killed. Hosseini has depicted the various phases of the conflicts before the Afghan war and after the Afghan war. The worst happened when people started fleeing from Kabul. Amir also left Kabul for survival and in quest of peace and stability. This set in the process of cultural corrosion and the beginning of the inner trauma of the people since it was not easy for the immigrants to assimilate in the host culture. In Pakistan Amir and Baba feel dislocated as the memories of Kabul haunted them day and night. Amir observes Baba a victim of Taliban cruelty; he had to leave his home; his flourishing business and all his friends. Baba looked miserable as he had only “two suitcases as his entire life’s property” (108).

In both the novels *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* characters are caught in crossfire and overwhelmed by external forces. Their inner lives are influenced by an often brutal and unforgiving outside world. Amir and Hassan are seen fighting against the cultural forces represented by the Taliban. They suffer

alienation and become victims of complexities, and anxieties of life while living in Kabul. They are influenced by things over which they have no control as they are forced to confront revolutions, wars and oppression. Hosseini observes thus in an interview:

This, I think, is even more the case with *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. In *The Kite Runner*, Amir spends many years away from Afghanistan as an immigrant in the United States. The horrors and hardships that he is spared, Mariam and Laila live through; in that sense, their lives are shaped more acutely by the events in Afghanistan than Amir's life is (Hosseini 2).

Amir led a peaceful and settled life there because he had been assimilated in the American culture. He had a comfortable life in California; he owned “a home with a peaked roof, pretty wife to look after him and a bright career” (195). When his wife Soraya does not get pregnant Amir feels that it is God's punishment to him (164). They have chosen to adopt a baby to be their breed later, but adoption process is not an easy matter for Amir and his wife who has come from Afghanistan. The Afghan culture and the religious laws don't permit him to adopt a child. This question shows his guilt that impacts his thinking for not adopting a baby as his breed. Like Amir Soraya too is guilt-ridden. Soraya had run away with the Afghan boy “when she was eighteen” (143). However, he cannot do what she was done toward him. Amir compares himself with his wife who can tell the past bravely before their married.

I envied her. Her secret was out. Spoken. Dealt with. I opened my mouth and almost told her how I'd betrayed Hassan, lied, driven him out, and destroyed a forty-year relationship between Baba and Ali. But I didn't. I suspected there were many ways in which Soraya Taheri was a better person than me. Courage was just one of them (144).

Hosseini has given vivid description of cultural clashes in the second part of the novel. Baba faces a lot of problems to get assimilated in the American culture. He is proud of his Afghan culture and tries his best to maintain his identity in America. He refuses to take free food being a rich Pashtun.

And that was how Baba ended those humiliating food stamp moments at the cash register and alleviated one of his greatest fears: that an Afghan would see him buying food with charity money. Baba walked out of the welfare office like a man cured of a tumor (114).

Hosseini has described the scenes of cultural collision in a faithful manner. One day Baba went to a shop to buy something. The shop keeper demanded his Identity Card and Baba felt humiliated. He told the shopkeeper that he was a respectable Pashtun and in Kabul they don't carry any ID card. His violent conflict with shop owner is well reported by Hosseini depicting the dilemmas of Baba in alien land. Amir reports the entire scene thus:

I wanted to tell them that, in Kabul, we snapped a tree branch and used it as a credit card. Hassan and I would take the wooden stick to the bread maker. He'd carve notches on our stick with his knife, one

notch for each loaf of *naan* he'd pull for us from the *tandoor's* roaring flames. At the end of the month, my father paid him for the number of notches on the stick. That was it. No questions. No ID (112).

General Taheri, the father in-law of Amir also feels the burden of cultural collision as he finds him cut off from his afghan culture (154). In America, Amir begins his career in writing and tries his best to develop good relations with his father. Baba becomes a cancer patient putting pressure on Amir who is already in the grip of psychological guilt. Amir is quite successful in America assimilating in the alien culture in spite of the cultural challenges. He fully subscribes to the assimilation demands of American society; he joins a University and learns all the norms of American culture. Baba refuses to learn English and to accept any financial assistance resisting the forces of cultural assimilation. Amir pursues the American Dream of success and power and no wonder he completely becomes a part of American society. Amir never forgets his homeland and often feels nostalgic about his native culture. He recollects the scene of Hassan's rape and feels depressed. Hosseini writes about the political uncertainty in Afghanistan describing the bombing events of Kabul. The Northern Alliance attacked Kabul and the life of the people turned hellish.

Assef has been portrayed as an incarnation of evil.

Afghanistan is the land of Pushtuns. It has always been, always will be. We are the true Afghans, pure Afghans, not this Flat Nose here. His people pollute our homeland, our watan. They dirty our blood"

(35). Assef doesn't like Amir for his association with Hassan. He interrogates him thus: "How can you talk to him, play with him, let him touch you? (36).

Assef performs sexual violence against Hassan exhibiting his animalism. Assef also demonstrates his cultural domination. Hosseini depicts the images of sport, violence and sexuality to portray the terrorist figure as of Assef. Amir is a foil of Assef whose one point mission is to rescue and adopt Sohrab. Amir knows that it is not an easy task because he has to encounter and battle Assef. But he takes up the challenge and gets involved in his struggle to cementing his national identity. Assef emerges in the novel as an agent of evil. Assef is a stone-hearted person with no milk of kindness. Amir enjoys sadistic pleasure raping the young children of the orphanage. He is guilty of rape, terror and violence. It was Assef who sodomizes Hassan. Assef belongs to the elite class of Kabul; he is quite dominating and rich Pashtun boy. His parents provided him all the material amenities of life. He was a pampered boy; stubborn and aggressive. Assef represents evil as he abuses his power and position. He uses his and connections to ruin the happiness of his people. Assef becomes the leader of the Taliban and torments who cannot defend themselves. Assef believes in the philosophy of Hitler pursuing the plan to decimate the Hazaras. Assef sexually assaulted Hassan and now his eyes are on poor and innocent Sohrab.

Hosseini has depicted two forces, internal and external which Amir is called upon to confront. Assef is a major external force; he is sadistic sociopath who has no redeeming qualities. Amir's cultural clash with Assef is described in a lyrical style

by Hosseini. The simple but lucid conversation of Amir with Asef touches the heart of the readers. Assef is the leader of the Taliban group; he kidnaps Sohrab, a “drug addict and a heartless terrorist” (241), Assef was destructive and cruel. His ideology was rigid and orthodox as he believed in stoning adulterers. He was a sexual pervert as his hobby was to rape innocent children. He would get the sadistic pleasures in flogging women for wearing high heels. Amir questioned the value of his mission and condemned Assef in the bewitching style. He hated Assef who killed Hazaras just for fun. He didn’t find any sense in “flogging the innocent women and raping the orphaned children” (248). It was a height of crime and human degradation on the part of Assef. Amir decided to fight against the oppressive forces and with a mission to save the innocent Sohrab he returned Kabul. Amir has no experience in America and is much impacted by the liberal environment of America. He hates Assef for his fanatic policies, sexual oppression and violence. According to Amir there are no discrimination and racialism in America.

Assef’s discrimination is however ironic since he is half-German and has blond hair and blue eyes (35). As a member of the Taliban, Assef wears a turban and dark sunglasses which serve to disguise these markers of his own difference, problematising the ethnocultural boundaries of Afghan identity which he tries to maintain. Amir has learnt the values of toleration, love for humanity and the spirit of liberalism inspires him to confront Assef, allows him to position the barrier to his identification with Afghanistan through the racism, fundamentalism and violence of the Taliban. Assef is shown to have power over national identity through the act of terrorism, referring to this as “public justice” (242). He justifies the massacre of Hazara people in Mazari- Sharif in positive terms, explaining to Amir:

You don't know the meaning of the word 'liberating' until you've done that, stood in a roomful of targets, let the bullets fly, free of guilt and remorse, knowing you are virtuous, good, and decent. Knowing you're doing God's work. It's breathtaking...Unaware of the negative connotations to the phrase, Assef adopts it positively: "Ethnic cleansing. I like it. I like the sound of it" (249).

The conspicuous themes of *The Kite Runner* are sex, violence and marginalization of the Hazaras. Like Hitler who was responsible for the Jewish holocaust, Assef is an instrument of violence. Assef believes that violence is the only instrument which can purify his race and establish his supremacy for the ages to come. His faith in Taliban fundamentalism is opposed by Amir who finds Assef on the verge of degradation. He propagates violence in the city and brings anarchy and chaos in civil life. Many people had to flee from Kabul leaving their homes and business. Assef becomes in the words of Noam Chomsky "the symbol of ultimate evil" (Khaled Hosseini, (34). This representation as nonhuman is echoed when Amir first encounters Assef at a public execution during a heavily regulated soccer game:

In the meantime a tall broad-shouldered Pashtun appeared from a pickup truck. He was quite dashing and imposing and his sight drew cheers from a few spectators. This tall man was wearing bright white garment that shone bright in the afternoon sun.... (236).

Baba becomes a protective force from the evils of Assef, as Amir explains: "It [...] occurred to me how lucky I was to have Baba as my father, the sole reason, I believe, Assef had mostly refrained from harassing me too much" (36-7).The death

of his father doesn't dampen his spirit as he continues battling with the forces of evil exhibiting his American sensibility. As children, Assef invites Amir to a game of volleyball in Baba's presence. When he refuses Assef's invitation, Amir notices Baba's reaction: "I saw the light wink out of Baba's eyes and an uncomfortable silence followed. 'Sorry, Assefjan,' Baba said, shrugging. That stung his apologizing for me" (84). The demonstration of national identity through competition and sport becomes significant for Amir, who needs to appropriate sport in order to foster a bond to Baba and later to Sohrab. As fatherhood becomes representative of the nation, the engagement with sons through sport symbolizes the internalization of national identity. By engaging Sohrab in kite-fighting at the end of the novel (323), Hosseini has depicted father-son relationship through the powerful images of sport. Baba had been Amir's ideal; he had been greatly impacted by Baba's honesty, perseverance and love for human values. Amir's analysis highlights his desire to form a connection with Baba through displaying the images of power. Amir's victory at the kite fighting tournament has symbolical significance (58), and when he wins the tournament, he looks at Baba who looked Hollering and clapping" (58). Later, Amir would also use kite fighting as a way to secure his paternal role with Sohrab once they return to America (323). The cultural clash in *The Kite Runner* becomes meaningful; Amir's American identity gives him courage and power to confront Assef to defeat the forces of evil. But Amir endures all the traumas of life. Amir and his father immigrate to America and this cultural change is seen in the shift in relationships formed. They settle in California, in an area called "Little Kabul." They desperately struggle to recreate their home land in their new space but the memories of their homeland haunt them. Sohrab is a symbol of innocence in the

novel. He is an important character in *The Kite Runner* who becomes a victim of cultural corrosion. He experiences pain and sorrow no boy would ever want to experience. Sohrab's experiences with physical and sexual abuse depict his traumatic experiences through the changes of the character before, during, and after to develop the theme of lost innocence. Before the sexual abuse, Sohrab lived a happy life. He loved kite running, enjoyed freedom and innocence. His father, Hassan, would hang the kites they had captured like paintings. Amir is always haunted by his guilt. He discovers that Hassan was his half brother as Baba had made Hassan's mother pregnant. Baba's sexual relationship with Hassan's mother accentuates his guilt as he felt sorry for Hassan. Hosseini "memory" and "discovery" are the main tools to depict the metaphysical guilt of Amir and the themes of displacement and fragmented identities in *The Kite Runner*. Amir is guilty and so is guilty his father, the psychological trajectories are depicted vividly. His self disintegrates because he discovered that his "whole life is one big

To conclude, *The Kite Runner* reflects condition of Afghanistan society that becomes major issues such as discrimination, racialism and identity. Amir and Hassan story of the novel depicts the personal problems of Amir, his struggle and courage to atone for the sins of the past. But on the higher level, Hosseini depicts the real corrosion of culture when Amir is involved in the battle with Assef. Afghanistan is ethnically a very diverse country, namely Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Aimaq, Turkmen, Baluch, and other small group. In this story, the main characters who undergone those conflicts come from a Pashtun and a Hazara ethnic. The Pashtun as an ethnic group has all the positive qualities, they enjoy high status in Kabul, Pashtuns are highly respectable rich and successful. On the contrary, Hazara has

negative qualities, low status, poor, physically unattractive engaged in low jobs. Most of Hazaras are waiters, servants and beggars. In this case, the different backgrounds in both of them appear the issues of cultural identity which Amir also keeps his cultural identity until he lives in America. Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick in *Cultural Theory the Key Concepts* (2002) observe thus explaining the meaning of cultural identity:

The issue of cultural identity is central to cultural studies, in so far as cultural studies examines the contexts within which and through which both individuals and group construct, negotiate and defend their identity or self-understanding. (Sedgwick 183).

Stuart Hall in *Cultural Identity and Diaspora., Identity and Difference* (1997) on the other hand defines “cultural identity in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective one true self, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificial imposed selves, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common” It is called as identity as being (which offers a sense of unity and commonality” (Hall 51). Amir also suffers from diasporic agony while living in America. He tries to apply his native Pashtun culture in his host country, in his family like Baba and desperately struggles to maintain his cultural identity even in America. His hybrid identity becomes a reality because of his diasporic experiences and cultural corrosion. Diaspora identities are those which are always producing and reproducing themselves a new through transformation and difference. It means that immigrants in the host country stick with their culture and try to develop through transformation constantly. For Amir, Afghanistan is like two sides of a coin, namely

hating and missing. Those matters melt to become one, namely his willingness to expiate his sin and wipe off his guilt. His trip to Afghanistan is to wipe off all bad memories with a kindness, with rescue a half-nephew, Sohrab:

I recollected the innocent and the Polaroid face again. He was my brother. Hassan always loved me. He loved me from the core of his heart. Hassan would sacrifice anything for my love. I recollected all his sacrifices, he had always loved me, loved me sincerely and from the core of his heart. I was sure that Kabul, my own nation was callings place with th me. It was in Kabul. Waiting (Hosseini, *Kite Runner* 199).

Khaled Hosseini created his place with the grand success of his novel *The Kite Runner*. He was encouraged and his second novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* appeared. His focus is on the plight of Afghan women who became victim of patriarchal oppression and male hegemony Hosseini gives the history of two generations of characters who suffer cultural dislocation, displacement and violence. The plot is packed with the episodes of violence, fear and war. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* uses the political backdrop of Afghan society to narrate a domestic tale about the plight of women in an oppressive culture. The Taliban culture destroyed the identity of women; men like Rasheed were encouraged to torment women. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* traces the socio-political and cultural history of Afghanistan. As Brannigan rightly points out;

Literature is a vehicle for the representation of history, and it does contain insights into the formation of historical moments. It reveals

the processes and tensions by which historical change comes about. But it does not ... reflect history as a mirror. It sees literature as a constitutive and inseparable part of history in the making, and therefore rife with the creative forces, disruptions and contradictions, of history (Brannigan 418).

Like *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* also focus on the cultural clashes and their impact on the life of characters. The novel projects the intersection of several aspects of cultural corrosion, Afghanistan itself was war torn and demolished by conflicts. The bullets of doubt and despair rip holes in homes and result into homelessness and cultural dislocation of people. The image of a battered country is significant in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Laila and Mariam lead a battered life; their lives are disrupted and disintegrated. Laila and Mariam desperately struggle to get freedom from male domination. In spite of being co-wives, they lean on each other and put a united fight against the cruel Rasheed. Their bond is so strong that they are a challenge to Rasheed. Mariam wins the heart of Laila and is ready to die for her. In fact Mariam shines in the heart of Laila “with the bursting radiance of a thousand suns” (*Suns* 366). Hosseini explores the impact of cultural corrosion on the people in the midst of violence and carnage of war. Hosseini uses the friendship of Mariam and Laila as a tool to fight against the oppressive forces. Rebecca Stuhr has rightly said that:

Hosseini is a cultural theorist of the post-colonial era. His novels depict the traumatic experiences of the people caught in the web of cultural collision. His stories are quite compelling and the language is

quite bewitching. He questions assumptions that break and disrupt the lives of women. He gives details of history, culture, and daily life in Afghanistan (Stuhr 77-78).

In Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* Nana is enslaved by Jalil who is a rich businessman of Herat. Nana is psychologically tortured by Jalil. He doesn't bother, there is no scene of physical assault but she always feels deeper wounds in her soul. Nana warns Mariam to be careful and should never trust him blindly since he is a stone hearted person. Nana is forced to live in a poor and improvised kolba far away from the main town. Nana lives alone with her daughter Mariam. Mullah Faizullah, a religious tutor comes once a week to teach Mariam to read and to tutor her in Koran recitations. In desperation Nana abuses Mariam again and again calling her '*harami*'. Nana teaches her the cruelty of patriarchal ideology pointing out that just as a compass needle points north similarly "a man's accusing finger always finds a woman" (Hosseini, *Splendid Suns* 7). Jalil forces her daughter and mother to live like Hazaras. He lived with his three legal wives and ten children. Every Thursday Jalil visits the Kolba and gives Nana a pittance for child support to redeem his sin toward Mariam and Nana. Mariam is delineated as an outsider condemned suffering persecution and shame. The neurotic Nana warned Mariam of the malignant deeds of her father Jalil. Mariam's mother is marginalized. Nana leads a life of alienation with her daughter; she has no charm in life except the future of her daughter. She is bitter; emotionally unstable because of her guilt in having sexual relations with Jalil. She could never imagine that she would be forced to live in a small hut with no future of life. She is subjected to rejection, abandonment and

segregation. Jalil doesn't allow her to live with him since he has other wives. He is rich but coward; she is full of morbidity and frustration. Nana never sent her daughter to school; she was a poor lady as she depended on the weekly money given by Jalil. Mariam is also a victim of indifference of her father. She lives with a void; she loves her father but she is shocked to know that her father was a great hypocrite. Mariam never got any affection, she felt lonely friendless. She spent most of her time on the bank of a river brooding and imagining the golden days of life. Mariam waited for the Thursday because on this day her father would visit them. He would bring some gifts and would give her false dreams of life. She would pass other week waiting for the next Thursday. Ironically, Mariam loved her father; didn't know the real cause of their separation and the reason of her mother leading a lonely life. Nana always ridiculed Jalil warning Mariam that his love for her is false and frivolous. Jalil visited them just to atone for the sin of his sexual oppression. Nana warns Mariam of Jalil who is very cruel from the core of his heart.

You're afraid that I might find the happiness you never had. And you don't want me to be happy. You don't want a good life for me. You are the one with the wretched heart (Hosseini, *Splendid Suns* 27).

Mariam and Laila discover that "they were not enemies any longer" (224). Mariam disobeyed her mother on her fifteenth birthday and visited her father to meet her father alone. She ignored all the warnings of her mother. Mariam had a rosy picture of her father as she imagined a warm welcome in her father's mansion. She liked the city and wished to go to the cinema hall with her father. She felt free like other children and quite excited. She wanted to remind her father of the promise of

going to the cinema on her birthday. Nana had threatened her that she she would commit suicide if she went to Heart. When Mariam reached Heart, she was given a shabby treatment. Her father didn't come to receive her. All her dreams were shattered when she was confronted the reality and cruelty of her father. Mariam had to sleep outside her house like discarded item. Mariam for the first time learnt the reality about her father who wore a mask of love and honesty. She cursed herself and recollected the words of her mother. But it was too late; her sensitive heart broke but she was helpless. She was shocked to know the death of her mother who committed suicide as she had disobeyed her. Her mother Nana is no more in this world and father is a cruel monster who wrecks the happiness of Mariam. She is virtually sold to an aged cobbler Rasheed. Her father Jalil is a silent spectator of the scene of her ruin. Mariam is thrown into a cage of Rasheed where she will suffer eternal damnation. She hopes that Jalil will look after her but he is quite unconcerned staring at the pitcher”(51). Jalil is ashamed of his crime but he has no courage to speak to his wives. His plan of marriage of Mariam is just to get rid of Mariam.

Mariam recollects the words of Nana who had warned her of the malignant intentions of her father. Nana had told her how her father had betrayed them. In derogative language her mother had condemned Jalil; her “beloved father” who “cast us out” (5). Being lonely, poor and marginalized she grows possessive about her daughter. “You’re all I have. I won’t lose you to them...” (18). Nana is the victim of the oppression of Jalil who ruined her for ever. He was her husband only in name but in reality she had her daughter in the world. She led a lonely married life. She doesn't want her daughter to suffer marginalization.

You must know what it means to be a woman. Do learn it well my child! Now and learn it well...a man is always right and a woman is always wrong. He is always found accusing a woman. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have (18).

Nina is sexually oppressed by Jalil who is a rich man of Herat. She silently suffers because the society is cruel to her. She is not given any identity and is allowed to suffer alone in a small cottage. She is financially wretched and has to depend on the weekly support of Jalil. She has to bear the humiliations of society as the family of Jalil doesn't accept her. She is so much depressed that she commits suicide in seclusion under emotional breakdown. Her death exposes the oppression of patriarchal society and false morality and Afghan culture that don't allow right to life to the abandoned women. Mariam recollects the words of her mother: "there is only one skill a woman. She must have tahamul. Endure" (17). Mariam leaves Herat to be married. She goes to Kabul where she encounters more hardships of life and cultural dislocation. But Mariam is not pleased with the gifts because she recollects the warnings of her mother. The real cruel self of Rasheed comes on the surface when Mariam cannot give birth to her babies. Rasheed sinks into hatred and contempt; he beats her mercilessly. She sees the lower middle class living in crowded areas and in Rashid's house, Mariam sees "pots and pans and a pressure cooker" (53). Her husband Rasheed is bitter, cruel, insensitive and orthodox. Rasheed is rigid patriarch who uses all tools to subjugate and dehumanize Mariam. Sushmita Banerjee has lashed at the orthodox patriarchy of Pakistan. Hosseini has depicted the plight of women in all his novels. Women are forced to obey their husbands; tolerate their oppression. The Taliban laws reduced them to child bearing

machines (26). When Mariam suffers repeated miscarriages, Rasheed assumes the form of a cruel monster tormenting and torturing innocent Mariam. His orthodox mind set is depicted thus: “The women come uncovered; they talk to me directly, look me in the eye without shame. They wear makeup and skirts that show their knees” (63). Rasheed believes in patriarchal oppression as he warns her:

Remember Mariam I am of a different breed and you cannot understand me from where I come from? Nobody knows from where I come from and why have I come from ? You must remember that the face of a woman only belongs to her husband only. Do you understand? (69).

Mariam is docile and very submissive by nature. She obeys her husband and agrees to wear a *burqa* to please her husband. The wearing of *burqa* symbolizes her slavish existence and loss of vision. Rasheed is an orthodox Muslim; uneducated and belonging to a labor class. His mindset is narrow as he uses physical violence to torture Mariam. Rasheed doesn't love Mariam; he only wants her to give birth to a son. Mariam is oppressed; she is locked in a dark room to suffer pain and misery. Mariam is beaten; her hair are pulled and is beaten mercilessly. All women Nana, Mariam and Laila are beaten; raped and sexually assaulted. They are given physical and psychological torments. They are oppressed by patriarchy, terrorism and religious fanaticism of the Taliban. Laila loses her family and lover because Taliban terrorism. Laila loses Tariq and her parents in the political unrest of Afghanistan. They were packing things but their car was blasted by a bomb and her parents were killed on the spot. Taliban brought the gun culture in Afghanistan for the first time.

They passed very strict laws and banned all sorts of entertainment. Nobody could conduct music concert, writing of books and watching films was banned. The real threat was to young girls as the Taliban degraded all people. Tariq narrates to Laila of a person who had been publicly flogged for his love for paintings. Mariam is also neglected by Raheed; she is leading a life of a married widow. She is very unfortunate girl; her rich father ignores her and her husband beats her. Her repeated miscarriages become the real cause of her sufferings. Laila is an educated girl but the war destroyed her family and shattered her life. Rasheed is greedy and selfish. He wants a heir so he shifts his love and gives it to Laila, his second wife. Rasheed took Laila as his wife because Mariam turns out to be a barren woman. Political uncertainty forced Laila to marry Rasheed as her parents got killed in war. Her fate is linked with the fate of Mariam. Both are the victims of the Taliban cruelty. Laila is pregnant with her beloved man Tariq who moved to Pakistan to escape from violence of Taliban. The sufferings of Mariam begin with the marriage of Laila. Rasheed develops indifference for Mariam; he doesn't sleep with her and Mariam is forced to suffer alienation. Laila conceives a child and enjoys the love and confidence of Rasheed. But this love is selfish as very soon he starts beating her. Mariam develops good relation with Laila as she finds a meaning of her life. Her main motive is to look after the children of Laila and to save her from the cruel Rasheed.

Rasheed is jealous of Laila who really loves Tariq. Rasheed is guilty because he has told a pack of lies to Laila about the death of Tariq. Rasheed plans to kill Laila because she loved Tariq. The Taliban enforced strict laws which gave absolute

powers to Rasheed. All rights of women were scrapped. Mariam and Laila have to suffer because of the draconian laws of the Taliban. The cultural collision begins when the Taliban forced women to stay inside homes. They were not allowed to go outside. They are forbidden to take up any job so Mariam and Laila have to live in a cage of Rasheed. Laila was brought up in a liberal way but in “Rasheed’s house she is in a cage locked to suffer eternally” (271).

Rasheed is a callous husband believing in traditional oppressive patriarchy. He is greedy, selfish and mean and when he finds that Mariam is unable to give birth to a child he behaves in a monstrous manner. Mariam is treated as a servant; she is almost locked in a cage to be persecuted physically and emotionally. Rashid intimidates her thus: I know you are trembling! Did I terrify you? “Do I scare you? Don’t you feel scared of me?” (60). Mariam leads a hellish life being terrified by Rasheed every day. She passed four years of her harrowing life and then she realized that how difficult it was to lead a life in terror and horror. She also realized that “how much a woman could tolerate when she was afraid” (99). Rasheed was a man of explosive temperament and it was very hard to spend life with him. Rashid would enjoy sadistic pleasures in beating and humiliating Mariam. It was a routine matter for her to experience wounds on her delicate body but now she had become hard and tough. She was a fear ridden woman always sick of Rashid’s shifting moods and his aggressive behavior. When she entered his house after marriage she found the house a ghastly place inhibited by cruel monsters. Rasheed would give severe beating to his wives and he was a terror in the house. Laila tried to run away from his house. Rasheed caught her from her hair; dragged her violently and some of her hair ripped from her delicate scalp. Laila cried and screamed in pain but Rasheed witnessed her

sufferings silently. Rashid didn't stop, he pushed her violently and Mariam started bleeding profusely to save Laila" (269).

Mariam becomes alone with the death of her daughter to fight with the cruel world. She knows the reality of life and human relations for the first time when she finds her father a big hypocrite as she has to sleep in the open outside the big mansion of her father. She recollects the words of her mother and curses her for disobeying her. In the Bible the sin of disobedience is the main cause of human sufferings. Mariam feels guilty and is always haunted by her guilt. She thinks that she is responsible for the suicide of her mother. She has no option but to accept the marriage proposal of her cruel father as she has no place to go. Jalil had been very cruel to her. He could have married her in a good family since he had many contacts in the family. But Mariam is hurriedly married to a cobbler who is much older in age. The political uncertainty and the rule of the Taliban is in the background of the plot of the novel. Taliban destroyed Afghanistan and people continued to suffer. Laila, Tariq and Mariam are badly impacted by the cultural changes of society. Laila hopes and has firm faith in the resurrection of her country but she feels intense anger at the sight of the war lords walking away scot-free.

She was surprised to find the killers and murderers living in posh homes. They have been appointed minister of this and deputy minister but all are the enemies of the peace of Kabul (363).

Mariam is caught in the whirlpool of cultural collision; she had to confront Rasheed who represented orthodox Muslim culture. She struggled to survive in war torn society of Kabul. Mariam is always haunted by guilt-consciousness. She thinks

that she is responsible for the tragic suicide of her mother. Nana's death was not a minor incident, it shattered all her life. Jalil married her to Rasheed because her mother was not alive. She realized that fate and societies are colluding to ruin her. The first step of her domestication and victimization of Rasheed's culture is her acceptance of the *Burqa*. She symbolically lost her vision of life as all the shutters to the outside world were closed for her, "all the shameful secrets of her past" (66). The main cause of her despondency is her multiple miscarriages. She becomes pregnant again and again but she suffers miscarriage to the chagrin of Rasheed. She curses herself and Nature that doesn't allow her to enjoy the pleasures of motherhood. She becomes sick and sad losing interest in life and its activities. She is haunted by her guilt and feels torn in body and spirit. She is forced to ponder over her anguish thus:

Could I be a deceitful wife? Could I be a dishonorable woman? I had never been a vulgar woman. What have I done to this mean husband who is so cruel and violent? How could I tolerate his continual assaults,? (309).

Mariam had been subjugated and marginalized in all ways. She was persecuted emotionally, physically and psychologically. Nana, Mariam, Laila, Aziza suffer because of cultural antagonism. Khaled Hosseini gives the animal imagery of a grizzly bear to suggest his monstrous cruelty. His physical structure with huge body and rough hair give the impression of an ugly bear. He boasts thus: "Half the women in this city would kill to have a husband like me" (276). Rasheed keeps four wives and he enjoys sadistic pleasures in torturing all his wives like a tribal war lord

of primitive society. Laila and Tariq are true lovers; they wanted to marry but the change of government brought separation. Laila becomes pregnant but Tariq has to run away from Kabul for safety. He was badly injured in a land mine blast but never lost his courage. Parents of Laila are also killed in war. Rasheed exploits this opportunity telling a lie that Tariq has been killed to entrap Laila. She had heard interesting stories from his parents who had enjoyed courtship and marriage. Her father had told her that enjoyed the married life. Laila lived in the world of dreams as she had romantic view of love and marriage. Rasheed married Laila because Mariam couldn't give birth to a baby and she was a barren woman. In the first year Rasheed is very kind to Laila; looks after her very well and even gives her gifts. But after she becomes a mother, he resumes his habit of physically torturing Laila. His language is vulgar and abusive; his attitude towards women is violent and dehumanizing. He uses his kicks and sticks to torture Laila. In this novel, Hosseini brings Mariam and Laila together who unitedly put up fight against the oppressive Rasheed. Killing of Rasheed is symbolical in the novel; it signifies the end of patriarchal oppression and the dawn of a new era when women would enjoy empowerment and freedom.

In the last section of the novel Hosseini depicts the heroic action of Mariam who is fed up with the tormenting behavior of Rasheed. The Taliban had captured power, thousands of people were killed and thousands of people left their home migrating to other countries for safety and security. Many changes had come in the society but Mariam had hardly noticed any change because of her own troubles. Her life had become stagnant and wooden. Mariam had become a puppet of cruel

Rasheed. She was just a servant in the family; cooking food and cleaning floor and washing clothes all the time. Rasheed enjoys beating and hurling abuses on her. She had no wish and no dream. She lived only to save the life of Laila and her children. In order to rescue Laila Mariam intervenes. She kills Rasheed in the scuffle. She is stressed not to own the responsibility of Rasheed's death but she declines and prefers sentence of execution than the life of subjugation. In her last phase of life, she is executed for killing Rasheed but she is quite at peace with her. She has no feeling of remorse killing the monster to save the life of Laila. She had taken the decision to kill Rasheed independently in pursuance of the calling of her soul. Rasheed had been a brutal animal and it was a good job to kill the animal. She was leaving the world because she had brought order out of chaos. Her killing was meaningful and she was leaving a very good friend, a very loving mother and a very good guardian" (329). Mariam is not repentant at all and she thinks she has done a noble deed in killing a dangerous bear. Mariam kills Rasheed for her love to Laila and her children. She dares to end their subservience and exploitation.

Khaled Hosseini successfully describes the cultural conflicts in her novels *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Tariq is the real victim of cultural antagonism as he is forced to flee from Kabul; he is injured in a land mine and loses his family and beloved Laila. There were thousands of young men like Tariq who left their homeland because of political upheaval and threat to life. The youth witnessed political unrest and mass butchering of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Women became the targets of violence, rapes and sexual oppression. Hosseini depicts the existential challenges and dilemmas of the people of Kabul engulfed in cross cultural wars.

Both the novels are set in a turbulent period of the history of Afghanistan when there was exodus and the Taliban had destroyed all institutions. It was a period of emergency as the life had paralyzed and evil doers like Assef and Rasheed enjoyed absolute patriarchal powers to crush the happiness of others. All the protagonists, Amir, Hassan, Baba, Nana, Mariam, Laila are the victims of cultural corrosion. The external forces represented by Rasheed, Jalil and Assef destroyed the peace of their life. People were influenced by the ruthless world of war and oppression. Khaled Hosseini presents psychological case histories of women who are sexually oppressed and tortured by the male protagonists. Laila enjoyed peaceful life in Pakistan but when she returned back to Kabul she had to suffer the physical and psychological traumas.

Hosseini has two objectives in his mind in his novels *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and his *And the Mountains Echoed*; he is seriously depicting the impacts of Afghan conflicts on the life and thoughts of people. In his *The Kite Runner*, this impact is clearly described but in *And the Mountains Echoed* the impact is felt by the people in their life. There are several secondary sources which describe the impact of the Taliban. Ashley Jackson wrote *The Cost of War: Afghan Experiences of Conflict, 1978-2009* is one of them. Hosseini had fresh knowledge about the Afghan conflict, he used fiction as a medium to tell the world the realities of the Afghan life and culture through his novels, *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *And the Mountains Echoed*. The immigrants leave their homeland and in search of green pastures and often come in conflict with the alien culture since they do not merge in the local customs so easily. They feel alienated and often feel nostalgic about their

homeland. Bhabha has remarked that the immigrants are forced to feel the weight of cultural dislocation in the alien land. It is not plain sailing in foreign land; the immigrants have to face tremendous difficulties to adapt to the local culture and often they feel nostalgic about their native homeland. They are confronted to face the problems of race, identity, language and marginality while living in the alien land. The different traditions and customs demand courage to adapt to the changed scenario as their native culture clashes with the culture of the host country. Their diasporic experiences bring untold miseries as we find in the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. *And the Mountains Echoed* is touching story of pain, of rootlessness, homelessness and cultural dislocation. The plot of the novel depicts the loneliness and detachment experiences by exiles and immigrants. Khaled Hosseini published his *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* depicting the political instability, anarchy, terrorism experienced by people of Afghanistan under the rule of the Taliban. The history of Afghanistan is marked by death and destruction particularly during the last 30 years of prolonged war, infrastructure collapse, and restrictive political regimes. The situation of women in Afghanistan has been dismal during this period. Their status was undermined during the Soviet occupation and under subsequent regimes.

Hosseini published *And the Mountains Echoed* in 2007 and more than three million copies were sold. The critics and reviewers eulogized Hosseini as a superb post-colonial novelist depicting the themes of cultural antagonism and dislocation. Windy Smith of *Los Angeles Times* described the novel as “a beautiful written, masterly crafted new book” (Smith 1) investigating the causes and consequences of

the cultural collision that the people of Afghanistan suffered for 60 years. Fran Hawthorne of *The National* observed that Hosseini again narrates a heart rending tale of “war-ravaged Afghan expatriates.” (Hawthorne 2) Kim Hughs in Toronto Star opined that *And the Mountains Echoed* is structured on the metaphor of journey which begins in Shadbagh, continues in Kabul and France and is extended to California and it ends from where it started, What is interesting is the interconnectedness of the characters who suffer; feel alienated; reel under poverty and cultural dislocation but all boldly struggle to survive in a harsh colonized society of Kabul. Philip Hensher of *The Guardian* made a historical statement about the novel that Hosseini deals with the psychological obsession of women trapped in the patriarchal superstructure. On the other hand, Kevin Nance of *USA Today* commented that the life history of Abdullah and Pari is “devastating” Hosseini depicts the cruelty of parents in their struggle to get rid of poverty.

Khaled Hosseini was an Afghani immigrant who belonged to Kabul, his early life was spent in Kabul and he had seen the days of peace and affluence. Hosseini enjoyed all the amenities of life since his father was a reputed diplomat. It was a pride for him to be the son of a learned mother who taught him history and culture of Persia. Hosseini learnt Persian from his mother and read Persian poetry. It is observed that Hosseini borrowed heavily from the real events of Kabul and used his imagination to give them a concrete shape in his novels *The Kite Runner* (2003) and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* occurred in Kabul. The publication of both the novels established Hosseini as a writer in world fiction as the reviews of the novels were very encouraging. The plot of his debut novel *The Kite Runner* is packed with

the episodes of evil and violence. Hosseini brings before our eyes the horrible scenes of death and destruction. He vividly gives a picture of society wrought with conflicts and cultural antagonism. The scenes of violence and patriarchal oppression are indeed heart rending. Hosseini has touched upon the touching scenes of innocence and betrayal depicting the disruption of values and collapse of all institutions. Love, marriage, family are shattered in both the novels and women are the main victims of sexual oppression. The novel is a typical post-colonial novel hinging upon the cultural conflicts and themes of cultural displacement. *The Kite Runner* gives the theme of sin and redemption and the exodus of people who were forced to leave their country because of the gun culture of the Taliban.

The third novel of Khaled Hosseini, *And the Mountains Echoed* is another family drama set in the rural background of a wounded Afghanistan of the 1950s reeling under the pressure of orthodox conventions and rigid patriarchal oppression. The Taliban hegemony destroys the peace and prosperity of Kabul as all the people are the victims of cruelty of Taliban forces. The old values are deteriorating fast in Kabul, the institutions are collapsing and there are episodes of cultural collision in the novel. Hosseini widens his vision setting the plot in Kabul, America, Pakistan, Paris and Greece. His galaxy of characters includes chauffeur, day laborer, war lords, village women, doctors and poets. The power of the novel is lyrical words of Hosseini and the multiple narrators who depict the poignancy and passion of human relationships as well as the horrors of deprivation and separation of Abdullah and Pari. The beginning of the novel is a like a folk tale of Baba Ayub. Hosseini gives fantastic images of “desolate place” “craggy mountains” narrating the scene of

horrible desolation where life was very hard and the “wind was hot, and blew dust in the eyes” (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 6). Baba worked very hard to survive in the harsh environment. The symbolical significance of this allegorical and mythical tale is known to the readers at the end of the novel. The tale establishes the idea of a strong bond between a father and his child. The novel hinges upon the father-son relationship and the disruption of relationship leading to endless sufferings. The fairy tale is narrated by Saboor who narrates this horrible tale of guilt before Saboor actually sells his innocent daughter Pari to Nila Wahadatis. Saboor is a typical Pshtun patriarch. Hosseini gives the destructive image of “hawk” to depict his “callous disposition” (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 18). The appearance of Deo in the beginning of the novel symbolizes mortality. The Deo forces Saboor to take a choice; either he can abandon his youngest son or he will have to endure the loss of his children.

The plot is a blending of so many stories narrated by its various characters giving a running commentary on the dilemmas and uncertainties confronted by the people of Afghanistan. In the plot of the novel there are no monsters with horns and tail and red eyes. But there are scenes of disease, dementia, ovarian cancer and heart disease afflicted by men and women of the novel. The novel spins around family relationships between brothers, parents, children and husbands. The novel presents Saboor and his children Abdullah and Pari who are subjected to harsh patriarchal oppression, Hosseini narrates the heart rending episode that divides them. Hosseini has built the structure of the novel around the patterns of images and symbols blending truth and fantasy. The giant oak tree, the tinkling bell creates an

atmosphere of wonder and romance. The characters are given freedom to have their choices; their choices impact the life of other characters. Thalia and Mannar are crippled intensifying the mood of melancholy in the novel. Hosseini gives different roles to different characters to maintain the interest of the readers throughout the novel. For instance, Saboor is very fond of narrating romantic and enchanting stories; Nila passionately writes love poems with sexual overtones; Markos enjoys photography and the young Pari loves painting ardently.

The new novel depicts two important characters, Timur and Idris who is a doctor in Kabul lost its glory and traditional magnificence. He was very much upset to observe the colonized attitude of the Afghans. The country had become westernized; people were insensitive to the old culture and values of the Afghan society as they were reduced to money hunters only. The values and cultural sophistication of Idris turns out to be ineffectual and Timur gets things done through money. Hosseini once again draws upon old memories of Afghanistan, a country he left as a child. Hosseini illustrates that during the warsome elite families enjoyed all the comforts of life while poor people were starving on the roads. Wahdati family was very rich and they were immune from most of the fighting and resource scarcity. Nabi, a chauffeur to Suleiman Wahdati notes that many families migrate to Europe and America for security and prosperity. Nila moves to France, Abdullah goes to California with his wife Sultana. These families rolled in wealth and escaped violence being highly influential in Kabul while the poor were forced to lead a life of refugees. The prices escalated after the war and their properties “skyrocketed” (136). Not only are the wealthy able to avoid wartime destruction, they are also able to profit from postwar reconstruction. The novel starts in the traditional manner of

the Gothic tradition; Hosseini begins his tale with an exceptional sacrifice that has impact on the life of many generations. The novel hinges upon the sale of lovely Pari; Saboor committed this crime but Nila and Nabi were accomplices to this heinous crime. Hossein gives a serious turn to the novel in which Nila and Nabi must pay for the crime since they disturb the moral order of Kabul society. Saboor is free to act but his action has serious ramifications through generations of families. Hosseini describes about the old oak tree in Shadbagh playing a vital role in the life of Parwana, Masooma, Saboor Abdullah and Pari as all are linked with the tree in one way or the other.

A patriarchal society is featured in the main plot of the novel. Saboor sells his daughter for money because daughters are deemed to be less useful as compared to sons in Afghan society. The title of the novel was inspired by a line written by William Blake, “And all the hills echoed”, Hosseini changed the word hills to “mountains” to suit the imposing terrain of Afghanistan. Hosseini didn’t imagine or thought that the poetical title of the novel would be a grand success as the novel proved one of the best sellers. The plot of the novel is constructed as series of stories, each set in a different place and time and told from a different perspective. The most interesting part of the novel is the storyline, there is less war torn Afghanistan and conflicts and wars as we find in his previous novels. Hosseini gave a new structure with a new setting as Kabul is not defined by war, conflict and turmoil. Hosseini observed in an interview that the novel is written to depict the traumatic sufferings of the displaced people of Kabul. Once again the main focus in the novel is the fragile relationship between father and son, as well as mother and daughter. Like *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* the novel *And the*

Mountains Echoed is packed with scenes of heartbreaking emotions and the theme of guilt and redemption. Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed* gives the themes of love, hate, guilt, betrayal and dreadful wrong doings. All the characters have a wish to know their roots as they value belongingness. They struggle to find roots but they suffer alienation and rootlessness, the haunting memories of Abdullah, Nila and Pari are poignant in the novel. Hosseini captures the emotions of the readers evoking poetic images in the multiple tales. Hosseini begins from Afghanistan and very soon takes the readers to Europe and America to articulate the diasporic experiences of the emigrants and their fractured identities. No character in the novel is able to forget the scenes and sights of Afghanistan that always remains in their heart. Hosseini writes about a life there that is multi-dimensional, colonized and culturally dislocated. He knows the western opinion about Afghanistan, a war -torn, an opium-growing poverty-ridden but the plot of the novel brings a different view of Afghanistan as all his characters still have valued lives, they live in muddy huts with crisp grapes and clear mountain water to drink and survive. The novel *And the Mountains Echoed* gives the picture of colonization and westernization of Afghanistan through the erotic character of Nila Wahdati. Nila is modern fashionable doll who is a rebel against the patriarchal Afghan society. She writes erotic poems of love and sex, she wears modern sleeveless dresses, wears modern glasses and has no moral scruples. Her love marriage with Suleiman generates heat in the streets and social circles of Kabul. She has free ideas of love and sex and she is a modern romantic beauty. The cultural clash in her life is quite apparent as the Afghan society is highly critical about her. She flees to Paris deserting her husband Suleiman who suffers stroke left to be looked after by Nabi. In Paris, Nila is an alien

diaspora suffering from indifference and cultural dislocation. She hosts parties for her wealthy friends to end her alienation. Nila is a passionate woman who enjoys the liberal environment of France in writing poems of love, and sex. She writes poems about lovers whispering across pillows, touching each other, about pleasure” (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 188). One of the dominant themes of the novel is love and sex and modernity in the post-colonized Afghanistan. Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini and Richard Lannon in their book titled *A General Theory of Love* (2000) have explained thus:

That love can “deliver us to understand our self, and it can also shape our personality. From the beginning till the end of human life, love is not merely centered to the activity we have but also to the life power of the mind, decide our feelings, balancing the bodily rhythms, and reconstruct our brain arrangement” (Lewis 25).

It is argued thus:” Human beings are like a shattered knee or a scratched cornea, relationship ruptures deliver agony. Most people say that no pain is greater than losing someone they love” (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 93). Love of Abdullah for Pari is in spiritual plane, she is like an oasis in the desert for him since his father Saboor doesn’t love him much. Abdullah is beaten by his father all the time, forces him to go to Kabul to sell Pari to Nila Wahdati family through Nabi. Abdullah feels lonely and desperate as he finds no purpose in life. He feels guilty that he couldn’t take care of Pari because her mother passed away. Love between two siblings form the core of the novel, their struggles, shattered hopes and aspirations in the background of the war-torn Afghanistan spellbound the readers. Freudian sense,

Abdullah's love to Pari is a "storage love", it is affection as parents to a child. Abdullah was a child only ten years old when he had awakened at night with Pari in his lap as he walked and bounce her in the dark. Abdullah performed the role of her mother as he felt no hesitation in her spoiled diapers. He showered on her all his love as he considered her the princess of the house.

Even though he was a child himself. Ten years old. When Pari was an infant, it was he she had awakened at night o had walked with her squeaks and mutters, he who had walked and bounced her in the dark. The entire care f Pari had fallen to Abdullah (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 31).

Khaled Hosseini has depicted the cyclical nature of love between Pari Wahdati and Pari Abdullah who meet after long time. Their generation is different, time has changed, Pari Abdullah is twenty years old and Pari Wahdati is in fifties but both feel an eternal attachment. Pari Wahdati in the shape of little girl was life in Pari Abdullah's daily. They have done many things together, wherever; whenever. Hosseini has further highlighted the true and spiritual relationship of two women:

Sometimes, when no one was around we ate grapes and talked and talked- about toys, which cereal was tastiest, cartoons we like, school kids we didn't, which teacher's we mean. We shared the same favorite color (yellow), favorite ice cream (dark cherry), TV show (Alf), and both want to be artist when we grew up (347).

Hosseini used all his imaginative ideas to conceive the subtle character of Nila Wahadati who is the main pillar of the novel. She is a talented woman; with her

modern outlook and a victim of Afghan oppressive patriarchy. She is passionately interested in writing poems of love and loss of the people of Kabul reeling under the Taliban oppressive rule. Nila is married to a very rich Afghan and buys a daughter from poor Saboor through Nabi who conducts the deal setting in motion all the important events of the novel. Nila Wahdati spent her early life in Paris because her mother moved to France. She had strained relations with her husband in Kabul and she decided to shift to France where she could lead a liberal life. Both Pari Abdullah and Nila Wahdati are the victims of cultural collision as Hosseini comments:

We were interlocked, I sensed, through some unseen order in ways I couldn't wholly understand, linked beyond our names, beyond familial ties, as if, together, we completed a puzzle (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 317).

Nila Wahdati had been telling lies to her daughter about her birth and about everything. Her lies erased Pari's past, she has been raised to believe she is the real daughter of her drunken mother. No wonder, she doesn't remember her lost brother. Yet all her life has been haunted by "the absence of something, or something, fundamental to her own existence" (347). Older Pari meanwhile, has enjoyed complete French inculcation. She enjoys all the amenities of life in Paris but there is "something missing" in her life. She goes to Kabul after the death of her mother to find out her roots because her mother had created false illusions about Kabul. She never discussed about her father and home in Kabul with her. Hosseini evolved a new narrative technique introducing a new narrator in each chapter; all the stories are brilliantly woven together into one coherent whole. The main action of the novel set in Afghanistan but soon the action takes place in California, Paris and the Greek

Islands. The reviewers of the novel hailed this novel a family drama depicting a story about family, separation and sibling relationships. *And the Mountains Echoed* is a novel not about politics and war but deals with the sensitive theme of cultural dislocation, poverty, and humanity: Hosseini describes in simple language the struggles of the People of Afghanistan confronting the forces of terrorism of Al-Qaeda: “Security has been tightening because of Kabul’s support of Bush’s war in Iraq and expected reprisals from al-Qaeda” (130). Abdullah is a teenage boy whose loss of his beloved sister Pari. Hosseini depicts the tragic scene in a very touching style exciting love and a deep sense of hope. Hosseini evokes very powerful images to depict the triangular relationship between Saboor, Abdullah and Pari. The family of Abdullah is uprooted because of poverty and cultural collision. The story telling oeuvre of Hosseini contains all the beauty of writing. In the first few pages we become certain of the narrative sway. Hosseini observed thus about the art of storytelling ‘A story is like a moving train: no matter where you hop onboard, you are bound to reach your destination sooner or later’. Hosseini describes the miserable condition of Ayub Khan whose son is kidnapped by a cruel demon. Ayub Khan was a poor farmer who lived in this desolate village described thus:

But Maidan Sabz was a desolate place, and it didn’t resemble in the slightest the image that its name, Field of Green, would have you picture. It sat in a flat, dusty plain ringed by a chain of craggy mountains. The wind was hot, and blew dust in the eyes. Finding water was a daily struggle because the village wells, even the deep ones, often ran low (6).

The central theme of parable of Baba Ayub is that “a finger had to be cut to save the hand” (5). This has symbolical link with the main plot of the novel. He gives a hint narrating the long story of Deo that often family has to make sacrifice to survive in society. His sacrifice has impacted the generations of families. The selling of Pari is a family compulsion since Saboor has nothing to feed the children. The novel begins in a traditional manner telling a folk tale about a horrific monster called a div who comes to an Afghan village to demand the sacrifice of a child. The parable of Ayub Khan gives the message that “cruelty and benevolence are but shades of the same colour” (12). On the next day, Abdullah begins his journey into daze losing his beloved Pari. His journey becomes historical taking him into different parts of the world forcing him to experience the cultural conflicts. Abdullah and Pari are unaware of the reason of the journey to Kabul; they follow their father and Uncle Nabi to the Wahdati household. Uncle Nabi is a driver of the Wahdati family. Like Henry Fielding who became popular with his classic *Joseph Andrews* Hosseini introduces a galaxy of characters and multiple stories to give a panoramic view. The novel may be called a multigenerational saga as Hosseini weaves many stories into an Afghan family. Interestingly, the focus of Hosseini is multicultural perspective, depicting the life of the poor and the backward Afghans struggling in a global world. Hosseini has touched upon strong cultural themes, the marginalized status of women during the 1970s of Afghanistan, the issue of homosexuality in orthodox society of Kabul. The novel is packed with wonderful characters such as Parwana and her beautiful sister Masooma, Parwana’s brother Nabi who becomes a caretaker to his ailing boss, Suleiman, Timur Bashiri, Idris, Markos and Thalia who looks after Markos’s aging mother. His characters suffer by their being Afghans; they carry

within them nightmares that shape their lives. Hosseini depicts their cherished memories thus in his most lyrical prose:

Pari looked at the old photographs and all her old memories stirred up in a flash. She looked at her father's face and strange feelings gripped her psyche. A flood of old memories haunted him. Strange feelings made her serious and thoughtful. She felt a void in her life; an absence of something which she couldn't calculate but that made her restless. She felt the absence of something in her life; some loss that gripped and tortured her (189).

The struggles, hopes and aspirations of these characters enhance the beauty of the novel. *And the Mountains Echoed* introduces us to Saboor and his children Abdullah and Pari, and the shocking, heartbreaking event that divides them. Saboor had lost a son due to the cold winter; he decides to sell his daughter Pari to a rich Mrs Wahadi who is a barren lady. Saboor will get the financial security and Pari will get good life in Kabul far away from the backward village of Shahbagh. This fairytale narrated to Pari and Abdullah sets the thematic and structural plan of the novel. The plot of the novel begins with the heartbreaking bedtime story where survival, sacrifice and enduring love spellbound the readers. Hosseini is a keen observer of human nature as his novels deal with all the problems of Afghan people. The plot unfolds the struggles of four generations spanning over fifty years. Hosseini takes a comprehensive view of the rise of power of Taliban in Kabul and its impact on the life, mind and sensibility of people of Kabul. The plot of the novel documents all the experiences of Hosseini that he accumulated during his stay in Kabul.

Hosseini structures his plot integrating many voices and also by giving a running commentary on the life and struggles of the people of Kabul. Abdullah is the eldest brother of Pari. He loved her very much and Pari also enjoyed the company of Abdullah. Hosseini has given two very important episodes to depict the eternal love of Abdullah and Pari. The novel begins with a tale of extraordinary sacrifice that has ramifications through generations of families. Abdullah traded his shoes for the peacock feather which he gifted Pari. She loved Abdullah from the core of her heart. Abdullah and Pari visited Kabul for the first time in their life. They were excited to see the glamorous scenes and sights of the city:

They watched the city stream by as Uncle Nabi drove. He said he would take a longer route so they could see a little of Kabul. He pointed to a ridge called Tapa Maraanjan and to the dome shaped mausoleum atop it overlooking the city. He said Nadir Shah, father to King Zahir Shah, was buried there. He showed them the Bala Hissar fort atop (35).

The relationship between two siblings forms the core of the plot of the novel. They live in a village of Shadbagh with their father and step mother. Saboor, Abdullah's father is passing through financial crisis; poverty compels him to sell his lovely daughter a rich lady of Kabul. Abdullah is more like a father to his little doll Pari. "that they guilelessly adore each other and something difficult is going to happen" (18) in Kabul. Abdullah lost his mother giving birth to his lovely sister Pari. Parwana is their step mother. Abdullah wishes he "could love her as had his own mother" (21). Abdullah knows that his step-mother does not love her. He notes: "It

couldn't be helped that he and his sister didn't belong to her, They were another woman's leftovers" (22). Parwana is always jealous of her sister Masooma who is very beautiful. Parwana is in passionate love with Saboor. Parwana thinks that Masooma is in love with Saboor. She pushes Masooma out of a tree causing her to be paralyzed. Parwana is now guilt-ridden. She becomes Masooma's caregiver for many years to atone for her sin. Masooma commits suicide to clear the way of marriage of Saboor and Parwana. Abdullah suffers the second stroke of tragedy when his father Saboor gives away the little Pari to a rich man just for money. Now selling of girls is a common tradition in Afghanistan as women do not enjoy respect and status in Kabul. Pari is sold through Nabi who is the step uncle of Abdullah. Saboor sold Pari under mysterious circumstances but after the sale he was under stress and shock:

He shrank into long silences, his face closed off. He didn't tell stories anymore, had not told one since he and Abdullah had returned from Kabul. ...Father had sold the Wahaditis his music as well (48).

In chapter four of the novel Hosseini tells about Nabi and his relationship with Nila and Suleiman Wahdati. In this chapter Nabi gives his confession and narrates all the events that led to the tragic sale of Pari. Nabi is a parasite who enjoys the confidence of Wahdati family. Nabi writes a long letter to Mr. Markos giving his confession as to what led up to Pari's "sale". He narrates all the events that led to the divorce of Nila and Suleiman Wahdati after unhappy marriage. Nabi tells how he used to drive the Wahdati being his chauffeur. One day he was amazed to see a beautiful young girl Nila who soon got married with Suleiman Wahdati.

Unfortunately Nila couldn't give birth to any child so Suleiman took his services to get Pari. Nabi tells that Suleiman and Nila were quiet with each other and rarely spent time together. Nabi would enjoy the company of Nila and often took her for a long drive. Nabi loves Nila as he enjoys her company. As he says:

Nila was a strange woman that I ever met. She was a very impressive character; the way she spoke and the in the style she walked. All were quite interesting to me. Her dressing style was quite fascinating, her smile was wonderful and there was a unique confidence in what she said. ... (87).

Pari was also under shock; she felt nostalgic and always cried recollecting the sweet memories of love of her brother Abdullah. She became a victim of cruel and oppressive attitude of her father. She was helpless; in her new home all material amenities were available but she couldn't enjoy them. Hosseini depicts the plight of young Pari thus:

She was in the silences that had become so frequent at the house, silences that welled up between their words, sometimes cold and hollow, sometimes pregnant with things that were unsaid, like a cloud filled with rain that never fell (49).

Nila becomes a victim of cultural dislocation in Paris. She is unhappy half French woman that writes poems about lovers, she wears modern clothes. Nila is portrayed as a young stylish housewife who writes impassioned erotic poetry to gain cheap popularity in France. Pari couldn't understand her mother since she had many faces. A patriarchal culture is again seen where Nila grew up not enjoying freedom

of speech and is oppressed by her dominant father. Nila's activities are absolutely monitored and her father controls her life, which then triggers Nila's rebellion and feminist revolution. In real life she was different but in her poems herself was depicted in a different way. Pari always felt lonely Nila and often asked questions about her roots:

Nila was curious to know about her roots from her mother. Her most of the queries revolved around the life of her father. She asked her mother how he looked? What he liked most in life? Did he like swimming? Was he a boring man or an entertainer with lovely jokes? (168).

Pari struggles to capture her memory that is "disjointed". Pari fails to understand her Mom though she reads every word that she wrote. Pari Wahdati has high regard for her Mom but she remains puzzled to know about the mystery of her Mom. Nila praises her Mom for her aesthetic tastes and gifted passion for poetry: "My mom had been an excellent poet who wrote in French. Her poems written in Persian were translated in French. She was a powerful writer who wrote on very bold and unconventional themes of love and sex" (170). Pari defies all norms and social conventions and goes against the status quo of how woman is supposed to act in a family as a wife. Pari rebels against the society through her nonchalant attitude expressed in her poems, which strike as "polemical as angry indictments of Afghan gender roles" (212). Life in Kabul is not comfortable for Nila as Suleiman becomes terribly ill and disabled. Nila shows her insurrection again by moving to France. Life in Paris brings a battalion of sufferings as she grows older and feels threatened by Pari's charm and intelligence. Nila's beauty charmed many men in

Paris, her ideas about love and sex charmed many men including Julien, the man Pari long loved. Nila becomes a rival of her daughter in love making. Very soon Nila comes to know the truth about Julien Pari relationship. Nila feels guilty and in desperation Nila commits suicide leaving Pari alone in the lonely streets of Paris. Hosseini depicts Nila Wahdati as a victim of divine retribution as the climax of the novel develops. Her adopted daughter Nila remains in illusions about her Maman. She suffers the loss of her identity living in France as she feels culturally dislocated. She feels that she has become a shattered piece of self. Nila Wahdati told many lies to her. She painted her character in new bright colors in her interviews. She had become a controversial figure in France. Hosseini depicts mother daughter relationship in simple language. There was no one who could solve the dilemmas of life. In desperation Pari cries in a lyrical voice thus:

Was my Mamon a trickster or a magician? Was she honest with the words that she used in her sensational poems? She took the pen and she could write on bold and unconventional subjects. Pari remained ignorant about the real past of her Maman. She remained a stranger because Mamon never revealed her heart to her. It seems as if Pari was wandering in the desert for a long time at night (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 170).

Nila tries her best to dig out the inner layers of her Mom who is depressed and a mystery to her. She loves a French boy Julien and wants to marry him but her Mom doesn't like her to marry Julien because she herself loves the boy very much. Nila has observed that her Mom led a lonely and desperate life after the suicide of her her father. In spring of 1977 she married Julien against the wishes of his parents.

There marriage ceremony was very simple only attended by her friend Collette as witness. Julien's father was a rich banker; a money loving guy who would give loan to her son to finance the marriage ceremonies. Pari tells him that she is an adopted child and even tells Julien that she plans to take him to Kabul. But soon she becomes pregnant and is unable to move to Kabul (172). Nila lives with void as Hosseini observes: "Her life lacked of something or someone vital—has dulled" (172). She raises many questions before her Mom in mood of desperation and disgust:

What was I supposed to be, growing in your womb—assuming it was even in your womb that I was conceived? A seed of hope? A ticket purchased to ferry you from the dark? A patch for that hole you carried in your heart? (170).

Nila found Maman a lost intellectual who suffered from her fractured identify. She tried her best to forge her Afghanistan Muslim identity in France but she remained an alien as the French society never give her recognition. She was in the press and media; her poems were published but they were dubbed as sexual; erotic and pornographic. She desperately struggles to explore (170). Pari comments thus:

All the dead ends pursued and abandoned. Each lash of disappointment leaving Maman more damaged, more derailed, and happiness more illusory (170).

Nila wore sleeveless mini-dresses, and white framed glasses assimilating in new colonize culture. She lost her Afghani identity in the whirlpool of French

culture. Her erotic poems about sex and love remained controversial and even her father had condemned her thus:

People didn't like me in Kabul as they flayed and assassinated my character calling me bad woman for indulging into considered, debauchery; regarded me as a an immoral character. Even my father condemned me and called as the ramblings of a whore. . . . (188).

Nila's marriage with Suleiman had been a controversial topic in the family as her husband's family never approved of it. But Nila was a rebel who rejected the patriarchal conventions and flouted all moral decency. Nila divorces Suleiman and moves to Paris with Pari. After Sulaiman is crippled by a fatal stroke in 1955, Nila leave Suleiman to free herself and her daughter from the patriarchal oppression imposed on Afghan women. Nabi cares for Suleiman in his hour of crisis through the 1990s civil war. The house of Suleiman was attacked by the Taliban by rockets and looters who damaged a major portion. Nabi donated this house to doctors and a hospital was built to give treatment to injured children. Suleiman dies leaving all property to Nabi. In 1974, Pari and her mother Nila get a chance to visit Kabul. In Paris Pari studies Math in college. Nila and Pari live like strangers in Paris. Pari is very much worried about the health of her mother, her pill and bottles of liquor. Nila thinks that Pari is a strange person:

I look at you sometimes and I don't see me in you. Of course I don't. I suppose that isn't unexpected, after all. I don't know what sort of person you are, Pari. I don't know who you are, what you're capable of, in your blood. You're a stranger to me (160).

Julien loves Nila but he warns her to be careful revealing the vindictive and mean nature of Nila Wahdati. He calls her “astonishingly vindictive” (159). Nila Wahdati is a modern woman hungry of love and sex French society. Her interview horrifies her daughter Nila. Nila Wahdati has strange revelations about her past, her love affairs, her lies about her husband and her father made Pari sick and restless since she couldn’t believe that her mother could be a woman with double faces. The story of Nila Wahdati is very traumatic; she enjoyed sexual liberty and her immoral attitude brought her bad reputation in Kabul and in Paris. Nila Wahdati confesses thus:

Thus I fell in love being passionate and of a modern woman belonging to elite class of Kabul. I fell in love with wrong people. To my father’s horror I fell in love with a housekeeper’s son; and then with a low-level civil servant who worked for my father. All my actions were the outcome of my foolhardy, wayward passions (162).

Nila Wahdati alleges that her husband Suleiman was homosexual and this was the primary reason why she deserted him: “My husband was in love with the chauffeur” (166). In Paris, Nila gives an interview about her poetry and gets involved with a handsome boy Julien who uses Nila to get Pari entrapped. Julien dates with Pari and this awareness upsets Nila Wahdati who committed suicide in desperation. Pari feels guilty all the time and feels responsible for the death of her mother. Pari blamed herself for the tragic death of Nila Wahdati. One day Pari meets Eric brought by Julien. Pari portrays Eric thus:”He couldn’t be called handsome. Eric looked smart, impressive and a dashing guy with a lovely smile and

cheerful disposition (170). Pari missed her mother who opposed her marriage. She gave birth to a daughter Isabelle who fell ill when she had gone to Munich to present her paper. She received a phone call from Erick at night. She cried all night but there was no one to console her. She could never forget the night “she spent in the hotel room in Munich” (174). Pari became a mother of three children, Isabelle, Alain and Thierry. She accepted an offer to teach at a university in Paris. Pari enjoyed this job of teaching as she was the youngest professor at thirty six. Pari remained active in teaching job, “attended all university events.” In one of the parties Professor Charteland confronted her to face the reality about Afghanistan:

“Will your people find peace, Madame Professor?”

“I wouldn’t know,” she says. “Practically speaking, I’m Afghan only in name” (174).

Hosseini depicts the fractured identity of Pari in the simplest possible words. Pari lost everything, her culture, religious norms, her rituals, dressing sense and Afghani grace and purity. She had become a French woman given to fashion, dances, drinking and parties. Her cultural dislocation is pathetic indeed. Pari had her husband, her children; she had everything except good health and peace of mind. Pari’s health was breaking down everyday; she was virtually “suffering from deformity” (178). Eric died of stroke leaving Pari a widow at 48 years old. Soon Dr Markos hands over a letter from Nabi to Pari giving information that he had left Pari his home in Kabul. Pari is excited and recollects the old memories of her life in Kabul. Nabi’s heart rending episode is the nucleus of the novel. Abdullah feels depressed in life as he finds a big hole in his heart. The separation of Pari

disintegrates his self and often he feels restless and crazy. He fails to comprehend the complexities of life and cruelty of patriarchal system; He is heartbroken not knowing where Pari is and what has become of her. Alexander Linklater the reputed editor of the *Observer* commented thus on the theme of *And the Mountains Echoed*:

Hosseini gives a web of multi-layered relations focusing on the themes of cultural conflicts, poverty and cross-cultural connections. It is a tale of many generations taking us from Kabul to France, Greece and America. Parwan is a victim of false illusions; Nabi is a broker who buys Pari for Nila Wahadati. The step daughter Nila moves to France and learns smoking, drinking and flirting. Her mother loves her own fiancé and commits suicide (Linklater 1).

Michiko Kakutani of *The New York Times* commented that the new novel of Khaled Hosseini once again touches upon the theme of cultural conflicts like *The Kite Runner*. Hosseini lived in Afghanistan and experiences the torments of the Taliban. In all his novels his main thrust is on the portrayal of the life and struggles of the Afghans in a bewitching style and charming language that is irresistible. In the last section of the novel, Abdullah is aging in California. He is suffering from the loss of memory and dementia. Young Pari struggles with the contriving traditional Afghan upbringing of her parents while living in modern America. In 2010, Abdullah is in California living with his wife Sultana and daughter Pari. Abdullah lost Pari in his teenage and the separation of Pari made him sick and restless throughout his life. He left Kabul and moved to America but he never got peace and rest. A deep loss that Abdullah felt impacted his psychology in his old age. His memory of Pari always haunted him even in the colorful environment of California.

His wife Sultana and daughter Pari are helpless as no herb or medicine is effective to cure his dementia. Pari gives up a scholarship to study art in Baltimore to look after her broken father who is haunted by his past memories and lives in his own fantasy world. Pari is trapped into his life because her father did not want to lose her like he lost his sister Pari. Hosseini once again punctures the gothic patriarchy of the Afghan society depicting the sufferings of Afghan women. The women characters dominate the main action of the novel. Hosseini uses the details of emotional lives to humanize figures that have been hollowed by the varied agendas of warfare. Nila is the dramatic Kabul socialite who becomes a Parisian poetess in desperation. Parwana is the guilt-ridden woman who is condemned to a life of grief in life. Her jealousy brings her degradation. Roshnai is war-maimed woman whose story is written into an archetypal tale of woe for mass consumption by American readers. D. Bhattacharjee observes thus:

The storyline of *And the Mountains Echoed* covers long history of Afghanistan; the story spreads across families and many tribes narrating the old tales, fables and tales of the old culture. The strength of the novel is on the multiplicity of human relationships within families. The plot of the novel is unfolded through many speakers who actively participate in the novel. The story line is about the diasporic experience of the migrants who travel from Kabul to Greece, then to Parsi and California and then back to Kabul. The presence to Pari and her sale and her movement to Paris and her strained relations with her mother Nila Wahadati add to the structural beauty of the novel (Bhattacharjee 123).

Hosseini uses his rich characters as the medium to describe old Afghanistan. From Uncle Nabi, the lovelorn chauffer of renowned poet and liberal Afghan woman Nila Wahdati (the adoptive mother of little Pari) and the introverted and eccentric man of the house, Mr. Suleiman. Hosseini makes the plot subtle introducing the theme of sin and redemption. Abdullah is guilt ridden because he finds himself responsible for selling his little sister Pari to a rich man, it remains with him a lifelong burden. Parwana, the stepmother of Abdullah too is guilt-ridden; she feels guilty of ill-treating Pari and Abdullah and fears the divine retribution. Nabi's boss is punished by God since he becomes paralyzed. He is deserted by his wife fleeing a loveless marriage. This fairytale told to Pari and Abdullah sets the tone for the entire novel. Hosseini uses his rich characters as the medium to describe old Afghanistan. Uncle Nabi, the lovelorn chauffer of renowned poet and liberal Afghan woman Nila Wahdati and Mr. Suleiman are such characters.

To conclude, Hosseini's novels *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and his *And the Mountains Echoed* depict the theme of cultural collision. His *And the Mountains Echoed* begins in Afghanistan, moves to Europe and Greece, and ends in California, gradually widening its perspective. In the entire plot of the novel a red the red thread of cultural collision is running as Hosseini gives a confrontation between native culture of Kabul and the alien culture of France and America. Hosseini uses lyrical simple language to explore the cultural dilemmas and uncertainties confronted by Saboor who spins the plot by the sale of his daughter. Nila Wahdati, and Suleiman Wahdati suffer divine retribution as they have to experience divorce; disease; death and suicide. Nila and her husband are unable to enjoy the domestic happiness as happiness remains elusive to them. Parwana and her sister, Masooma; Idris and

Timur also suffer the traumatic experiences because of social and cultural transformation. In interview Hosseini admitted that *And the Mountains Echoed* is a “multigenerational family story” dealing with the themes of life, love, grief, conflict, duty, and sacrifice” (Hosseini, *Mountains Echoed* 3). Hosseini observes that he is interested “in the manifest complexities of the relationship, its contradictions, its tensions, its inherent push-and-pull nature, and the early-life experiences that either rupture or intensify bonds between brothers and sisters” (3).

Mariam and Laila are forced to confront the Taliban culture which is oppressing and dehumanizing. Taliban destroyed the history and culture of the people of Kabul, which resulted into rootlessness and disruption of life. The novels hinges on the clash between the culture of Kabul symbolizing decency, nobility, love sacrifice and humanity represented by Mariam, Laila and Amir who become the victims of the Taliban culture representing cruelty, violence, oppression and denial of rights.

Conclusion

The thesis “*The Impact of Colliding Cultures and Displacement: Reading of the Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini*” depicts the interface of Western and Indian sub-continental cultures and the impact of cultural collisions on the characters of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, and Khaled Hosseini. In this study the texts of four post-colonial novelists of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan have been analyzed and investigated from the perspective of cultural collision and cultural wars. Interestingly, Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini have experienced the traumas of the imperialistic forces. They lived in different political environment but all experienced and witnessed an upsurge of cross cultural fertilization of societies which resulted into untold miseries of the people. Homi Bhabha has aptly remarked that migrants suffer cultural dislocation when they leave their native land. Diasporas not only connote demographic dislocations but also cultural reorientations as the foreign culture impinge upon the native culture. In the present study the main focus has been on the themes of cultural dislocation, plight of men and women who are forced to leave their homes because of the imperialistic hostile policies of the colonizers. The loss of identity is a major factor in all the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. This study has explored the various socio-economic forces which brought about tremendous changes in the cultural outlook. The rise of militancy in Afghanistan, the growth of patriarchal oppression in Bangladesh, and the policy of liberalism, the galore of media and television industry are some of the factors that led to the growth of cultural collision.

In the *Introduction*, the researcher has discussed in detail the rationale of the research and the gap that is there in the books, journals and research papers available in the libraries. The review of past and present literature has been intensively done and found the gap in contemporary history of criticism. No comprehensive study is available on the topic “*The Impact of Colliding Cultures and Displacement: Reading of the Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini*”. There may be stray references on the issue of cultural collision but full length study is taken up in this dissertation to open new vistas. The diasporic theories of Homi Bhabha, Gyatri Spivak Edward Said, Paul Gilroy and Bill Ashcroft have been applied on the themes and identity crisis of all the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Socio-political and historical perspective has helped the researcher to depict the fractured identities of the protagonists who become the victims of harsh colonial policies of the colonizers. Lack of education, rural domination and the despotic policies of the British rulers led to the marginalization of women They suffered subjugation and male domination because of the hegemony of patriarchy which denies woman an existence apart from that of her husband. In this dissertation Bapsi Sidhwa’s *An American Brat* (1993), *Pakistani Bride* (1984), *Cracking India* (1991) have been investigated in detail. Taslima Nasrin’s *Lajja and French Lovers*, Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane* (2003) and Khalid Hosseini’s *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) are discussed to highlight the dilemmas, tensions, cultural dislocation of people. The cultural studies is a popular area of research in these days as the major focus is on the diversity of cultures, languages, places and times and their impact on the life style of the protagonists. Paul Gilroy in his historical defense of the multicultural society in *Postcolonial*

Melancholia (2002) analyzes the impact of race, politics and culture on the colonized people, their multilayered trauma ; economic, cultural, political and psychological tensions of the people. Bhabha begins by contending that colonial discourse depends on the "concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of "otherness" (Bhabha 18). Franz Fanon in his famous critical book *Wretched of the Earth* discussed in detail the destructive impact of the hegemonic devices used by the colonizers. Their main purpose was to exploit the natural resources of the colonies and to rule over them. Their imperialistic policies obliterated the culture of the colonized as they encouraged their own traditions, culture and language. Sartre also lashed at the Western tendencies of disrupting the cultural values of the colonized. The colonial powers sapped the natural resources of the people and destroyed, and disfigured their history and culture. The protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini are the victims of barbarity of the colonial powers and their process of dehumanization is vividly investigated in this dissertation. In the "Introduction" of this thesis, all the objectives of this project have been clearly stated. In all the chapters that follow all the objectives have been achieved. In all the chapters the texts of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled have been investigated and the issues of cultural collision, displacement of people have analyzed relying on the post-colonial theories of Bhabha, Spivak and Edward Said. The protagonists suffer because of their migration, repatriation and exile. Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the plight of women who become the victims of cruel patriarchy of Muslim society. The discriminatory laws in Pakistan resulted into the oppression of women. The partition was a great political event that forced millions of people to leave their homes because of political

compulsions. The partition was one factor but there were other forces that led to the plight of people. All the political and historical forces and the main objectives of the research project have been fully explained in the “Introduction” of this dissertation. The “Introduction” chapter is quite exhaustive as it would supply the broader area of research, the main objectives and how they are achieved. Sadaf Fareed’s theory of women subjugation is applied to analyze the women protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa. Frederic Jameson wrote *The cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodernism* in 2009. In this book she discussed in detail the problems of gender discrimination and the forces that led to the marginalization of women. Eric Hobsbawm wrote *Fractured Culture and Society in the 20th Century* in 2013 in which he analyzed the main causes of cultural collision and the resultant plight of people. All these cultural theories are discussed in detail while analyzing the texts of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled.

In the first chapter all the aspects of cultural collision have been explored investigating the cultural theories of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Paul Gilroy and Bill Ashcroft. The chapter is focused on the conceptual study of the theme of cultural collision taken up by the post-colonial novelists. Certainly the craze in the young generation to go abroad to earn dollars is increasing everyday and when they leave their home country cultural collision is inevitable. Homi Bhabha and other cultural theorists observe that when the migrants go abroad they are confronted with many challenges; they have to face the language problem to comprehend the cultural beliefs and religious norms of the host country. Often they are compelled to abandon their rigid religious beliefs, customs and rituals to assimilate in the alien culture.

Bhabha calls this process hybrid or cross-fertilization resulting into the loss of identity and individuality. In this chapter the nature of cultural collision has been explored. Richard D. Lewis and Samuel P. Huntington have discussed the tools employed by the migrants in the alien country to survive confronting the harsh environment of the colonized society. Lewis's book *When Cultures Collide: Managing Successfully Across Culture* Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* depict the sensibility of the migrants in coping with the harsh environment of alien land. The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini depict the theme of cultural collision in the life of the protagonists. The growth of science and technology has accelerated the pace of cultural collision. In the present chapter the terms "culture", "cultural collision" and "multiculturalism" are investigated in detail. In the modern world there is a growing trend toward globalization as the continual changing demographics offer many challenges to the migrants. They are forced to with the alien people of multifarious societies. The intersection of the various nationalities results into cultural conflicts. The various theories of identity propounded by Putnam, Wondolleck, Ashcroft and Mael have been investigated. The ideas of Northrop Fry, the theory of multiculturalism propounded by Moller Okin have been used as tools to investigate the protagonists of Bapsi Sidhwa, Taslima Nasrin, Monica Ali and Khaled Hosseini. Freud, Lacan and Dr Karen Horney opine that the migrants have a strong urge for inclusion and differentiation in the alien land. Susan Moller Okin in her book *Justice, Gender and the Family* (1989) strongly contend that there is a tension between feminism and multiculturalism. Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Gaytri Spivak and Paul Gilroy talk about the growth of multiculturalism and globalization.

Multiculturalism has a number of different meanings. The term means appreciation, acceptance, or promotion of multiple cultures. It calls for the celebration of diversity of cultures in a society – a diversity which is usually brought about by immigration. Bapsi Sidhwa is a prominent writer of diaspora of Pakistan. Her *An American Brat* reflects her personal experience of the Partition of Indian subcontinent, subjugation of and immigration to the US.

In this study the researcher has discussed the views of the famous cultural theorists such as E.B. Taylor, Robert Bierstedt and Geertz who believe that culture is a “complex whole”. Culture is not a biological heritage but is a social construct and the cultural clash is inevitable when the migrants leave their native place for green pastures. The clash of culture is observed in all the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa. For example, the Pakistani patriarchal society is rigid and oppressive. In the famous novel, *The American Brat*, Bapsi Sidhwa has depicted the force of Parsee patriarchy which compels Feroza to break off with David and return to her cultural fold. Sidhwa brings all the cultural rituals and norms in her novels invoking the spirits of Ahura Mazada, Kusti, Sudra, Avasta, Gatha and Asha. Bapsi Sidhwa brings all these Parsee rituals to defend the spiritual power of the Parsee religion. She traces the historical evolution of the Zoroastrian religion and the socio-historical forces that led to the evolution of the religion in the world. In her novel *An American Brat*, Sidhwa gives the force of Parsee religion which doesn't allow any Parsee to sever from its roots. The present researcher has written two chapters on the force of Parsee religion. Feroza goes to American; tastes the freedom but she is pulled back by the religious forces. The cultural clash between David who represents the Jew religion and Feroza representing Parsee religion are examined and investigated in detail.

Displacement from the homeland results in variable social and cultural practices, resulting in hybridity. Sidhwa has projected the clash of two cultures in the novel, the conservative culture of Pakistan and liberal American culture. In *The Pakistani Bride* Sidhwa depicts the social and political unrest. The novel is loaded with the scenes of savage cruelty as women are treated as the tradable commodities. The cultural wars and conflicts form the core of the plot. This chapter discusses the perception of Sidhwa in dealing with the issues of gender discrimination and the aftermath of partition. Sidhwa probes into the issues of female sexuality; female oppression and the theme of marginalization. The struggle of survival of Zaitoon in the patriarchal society is the main focus of the novel. Sidhwa penetrates into the psyche of woman who becomes a victim of oppression and suffers traumatic experiences because of cultural dislocation. She is married to a tribal man who abuses her and uses her in a cruel manner. Zaitoon is the main protagonist in the novel who becomes a victim of the collision of alien tribal culture which thrives on sexual domination and subjugation. Zaitoon is sold for five hundred rupees to Sakhi who abuses and tortures her constantly. Zaitoon struggles to escape from the clutches of the brutal marriage. She escapes from the clutches of the tribal but gets raped and killed. Sidhwa raises the cry of women who are subjected to oppressive patriarchy and their sexuality is abused. The cruel people like Qasim sell their daughters for money and goats. The speeches of Mariam in the *Pakistani Bride* are investigated to highlight the sexual oppression of women. Sidhwa has depicted the episodes to highlight the impact of cultural invasion on their psyche. In the second chapter of this thesis: “*Cultural Collision and Its Impact on Characters: Perspectives of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini*” the main issues of sexuality of women, their oppression and the plight of the

colonized people are discussed in the context of the rupture of culture. Bhabha observes that the migrants often suffer dehumanization because of the hegemonic policies of the colonizers who use every tactic to exploit and subjugate the colonized. The process of feminizing, marginalizing and dehumanizing is discussed in detail in this chapter. The partition of India was a big political event which disintegrated the life of people of India and Pakistan. The political holocaust led to the horrifying episodes of burning, mass killing, rapes and exodus of masses over the borders. Bapsi Sidhwa wrote her *Cracking India* depicting the traumatic experiences of women who were the worst victims. Written Millions of people became homeless, women became widows and children lost their parents. The main concern of the researcher in this chapter is on the plight of people who suffered agony and alienation because of the loss of parents. The dilemmas of the colonized people and the displacement caused by the power politics are investigated in detail. Anita Desai, V.S. Naipaul, Shashi Tharoor, Hari Kunzru, Salman Rushdie, Bharti Mukhrjee, Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini wrote novels depicting the new pattern of post-colonial societies. These writers used images and symbols to describe the historical and cultural events. Sudesh Mishra in her book *From Sugar to Masala: Writing by the Indian Diaspora* wrote about the issues of “nausea, schizophrenia, hysteric, violence experienced by the colonized people. The Pakistani and Bangladeshi fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin have portrayed the dilemmas of the colonized women. They have taken the issue of women who are subjected to all forms of oppression focusing on the events of partition and cultural collision. They were subjected to injustice, oppression, and exploitation by the colonizers.

Bapsi Sidhwa is a Pakistani novelist belonging to Parsee community. Her novel *An American Brat* depicts the problems of the Parsee women who migrate to America. The main protagonists such as Maneck, David and Feroza are trapped in the cultural whirlpool and suffer alienation, displacement, and cultural dislocation. The post-colonial theories of Bhabha, Spivak, Taylor and Said are applied to explore their hybridity and mimicry. They lose their identity while living as migrants in the alien land. Parsee religion is known for adaptability and assimilation but in this novel the Parsee is facing cultural extinction; Bapsi Sidhwa deals with the theme of cultural collision in the novel. Bapsi Sidhwa depicts the hidden fears and threats of threats of the Parsee community. Many episodes of the novel depict the hopes and ambitions of the Parsee community. The Parsee are in minority and are seen facing pressures of living in a multicultural society like America. Sidhwa knew that her community is facing physical and cultural extinction. She took up the challenge to record their cultural dilemmas, problems of assimilation in an alien culture. Sidhwa has taken up the challenge to unfold the Parsi psyche in the contemporary scenario when Parsee youth migrating to other countries to make dollars. They are deviating from the traditional religious rituals. Sidhwa wrote about half a dozen novels in which she depicted the dilemmas and uncertainties gripping Parsi psyche. These fears are the product of growing cultural collision, and trends towards displacement are the main causes of emerging fears in the Parsee community. It is quite obvious that the Parsee people are treated as the “Other” when they cross the borders. Sidhwa touches upon the themes of the fear decimation of the Parsi community. Youth today is grappling with the loss of financially opportunities and psychological insecurity.

Two great novels of Bapsi Sidhwa *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) and *Cracking India* (1991) bring to life the horror of the partition vividly portraying the complexities of life in the subcontinent after Independence. In *The Pakistani Bride*, Sidhwa depicts the cultural clashes of the Pakistani people and of the Parsee community. *Cracking India* represents the psychological and social realities of Lahore in 1942–1948. The plot of the novel give a touching story about love lost, trust deceived and the subjugation of the mind and the body of women. Indeed, in *Cracking India*, Sidhwa grapples with the realities of the pre-independence period, and the impact of the neo-colonialism in Pakistan. Her dual perspective in her novels is based on the Parsee and Muslim cultural traditions. Sidhwa's re-writing of history in *Cracking India* is complex and subtle since she re-writes history not just from the Pakistani but also from the Parsi point of view. Sidhwa goes back thirteen hundred years to the significant moment in Parsee history to describe the Parsi dilemma at the time of the Partition. The historical perspective of Bapsi Sidhwa is given special consideration in this thesis. Originally the Parsee people belonged to Persia who were forced to migrate to India. They had to face many trials and tribulations to settle down in Bombay and Lahore in pre-partition India. Parsees are known for their assimilation; they are competent to maintain their separate identity in a multi-cultural society. The short account, whether true or not, highlights the dilemma the Parsis have faced over the centuries, the dilemma of assimilating themselves into an alien culture and risking the loss of their identity.

Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) and *Cracking India* (1988) are examined in this chapter to elucidate the dilemmas of women during and after partition time. Sidhwa exposes the double standard of morality of the patriarchal

society that uses culture and religion as tools to oppress women. The main focus in *The Pakistani Bride* is on Zaitoon who lost her parents in the partition violence. Munni was only three years old at that time when the rioters attacked the train killed many people including her parents. It is her good luck that Qasim took her to Lahore and gave the name of his deceased daughter Zaitoon whom he loved her very much. The plot of the novel depicts the cultural conflicts between the Panjabi culture and the tribal culture. Qasim belongs to Kohistani tribe of Karakorum region, Zaitoon is brought up by Mariam; the wife of Nikka Pahlwan who lives with Qasim and gets loan from Qasim on a high rate of interest for his business. Nikka's wife Mariam is childless; she gets an opportunity to end her isolation looking after Zaitoon. The plot is packed with the episodes of gender discrimination; sexism and oppression of women. Zaitoon is sold to a cruel Sakhi for five hundred rupees and treated as a commodity by Qasim. It is a heart rending tragedy of a Punjabi girl who is sexually assaulted by her husband Sakhi and is killed at the end. In this chapter all efforts are made to explore the the themes of cultural collision and its impact on the lives of women. Sidhwa deals with the female body, her oppression and cruelty of the patriarchal laws. In this chapter the researcher has relied on the feminist theories of Mohanty, Ritu Menon and Urvashi Butalia. All these prominent theorists explore the traumatic experiences of the migrants who cross borders. There are sociological thinkers such as Turner, Scott and Morgan made sociological research on the issue of gender discrimination. Grosz observes that "women are somewhat more biological, more corporeal and more natural." (Grosz14).

Cracking India is based on Bapsi Sidhwa's own experience of Partition in 1947. The novel is a direct representation of the violence and cultural collision of the

Hindus and the Muslim cultures. The theories of Gyanendra Pandey are applied to investigate the representation of the Partition and its violence in Sidhwa's novel. *Cracking India* reveals the plight of women trapped in the cultural wars of the Hindus and the Muslims. Lenny is a younger heroine in the novel who narrates all the episodes in her simple and dispassionate style. Lenny is eight years girl child, disabled and belongs to the Parsi religious minority. The plot is loaded with horrifying scenes of rapes, murders, cruelty and abduction. The most terrifying episode is the kidnapping of Ayah in the novel. Nilufer E. Bharucha, in her article 'From Behind a Fine Veil', agrees that Lenny is a marginalized character, representing all the women who suffered cultural dislocation. Sidhwa depicts a world in which male aggression, rapes and the sexual objectification are very common. The most horrifying is the scene of the amputation of a woman's breasts symbolizing the destruction of reproductive power of women.

Sidhwa has described the scenes of sexual oppression of women in the novel caused by cultural collision. The plot of the novel is packed with the incidents of violence. The body of the woman is treated as a toy which can be mutilated and broken at any time. The scenes of mutilation, rape, and murder are indeed terrifying. In *Cracking India*, the focus is on partition violence and the evil effects of cultural collision. In Chapter 16 of *Cracking India* a horrible scene is depicted, the Sikh mobs run berserk as they carried the head of a dead child on the spear to exhibit their "animalism" (144). This frightening scene of a child being turned into a "flag" symbolizes primitive savagery. In this chapter Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride* is also investigated from the perspective of cultural collision. The main scenes in the novels are Qasim's marriage, the death of his family adoption of the Punjabi girl Zaitoon.

Sidhwa also gives details about Zaitoon's childhood. Zaitoon's marriage to the tribal Sakhi is an important episode in the novel. Carol is an American woman who is liberal in her views. Zaitoon's escape her violent husband is quite thrilling. Bapsi Sidhwa takes up the issue of patriarchal oppression, marriage, gender segregation in her novel *The Pakistani Bride*.

The Second Chapter: "*Causes of Cultural Collision of the Colonized Women: Alienation and Cultural Dislocation in Cracking India, The Pakistani Bride and An American Brat*" deals with the analysis of the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and her perception of cultural clashes. Bapsi Sidhwa has depicted the themes of cultural antagonism between the colonial and the colonized. Her *The Pakistani Bride and An American Brat* explore the diverse sexualities experiences by the immigrant women of Pakistan.. Ritu Menon in her book *Borders and Boundaries* (1998) observes in the post colonial society a woman is treated as a "buffalo or car" She is often raped or brutalized in the broad daylight by men who think they are superiors with all rights. Ritu Menon and Urvashi Butalia have depicted the miserable life of the South Asian women suffering from alienation because of the migration and exile. Bapsi Sidhwa exposes patriarchy's use of culture and traditional morality in her *The Pakistani Bride and An American Brat*. She writes about the plight of Pakistani women in this novel who subjugated, sexually molested, raped and brutalized in the name of traditional morality and religion. *The Pakistani Bride* is focused on the theme of Zaitoon's quest for identity. Sidhwa has depicted many touching scenes of intergenerational conflicts and racism. Sidhwa has described the horrifying scenes of domestic violence, sexuality, prostitution and marginalization of Zaitoon and Feroza. *The Pakistani Bride and An American Brat* bring reality of the causes of

cultural dislocation and dehumanization. Zaitoon is caught in the net of crule Qasim who treats her like a a slave. He doesn't allow her to express her wish in matters of marriage and sells her of like a tradable commodity to Sakhi. The pressure of cultural collision is so heavy that women of Lahore are forced to follow polygamy and indulge into prostitution The cultural clash between the Lahori culture and the tribal culture is imminent. Feroza leads a slavish life in Lahore; se is sent to America for a broader putlook. In America she is treated as a second class citizen. Feroza has traumatic experiences in America as her rigid Parsee culture clashes with the liberal culture of America. Bapsi Sidhwa seriously depicted the scenes of cultural collision through her life in Lahore and America. Feroza has diverse experiences; she is insulted by her rigid Parsee mother and she loses her freedom.

In the Third Chapter: “*Borders, Partition and Migration: Impact of Cultural Collision on the Thoughts and Ideas Protagonists of Brick Lane*” deals with the analysis of Monica Ali and her perception of cultural clashes. Monica Ali has depicted the themes of cultural antagonism between the colonial and the colonized. Her *Brick Lane* explores the diverse sexualities experiences by the immigrant women of Bangladesh. Ritu Menon in her book *Borders and Boundaries* (1998) observes in the post colonial society a woman is treated as a “buffalo or car” She is often raped or brutalized in the broad daylight by men who think they are superiors with all rights. Ritu Menon and Urvashi Butalia have depicted the miserable life of the South Asian women suffering from alienation because of the migration and exile. Monica Ali exposes patriarchy's use of culture and traditional morality in her *Brick Lane*. She writes about the plight of Bangladeshi women in this novel who subjugated, sexually molested, raped and brutalized in the name of traditional

morality and religion. *Brick Lane* is focused on the theme of Nazneen's quest for identity. Ali has depicted many touching scenes of intergenerational conflicts and racism. Monica Ali has described the horrifying scenes of domestic violence, acid attacks, sexuality, prostitution and marginalization of women. Hasina and Nazneen's flashbacks bring reality of the causes of cultural dislocation and dehumanization. Nazneen lives in London like a slave of Chanu who doesn't allow her to go out. The pressure of cultural collision is so heavy that Bangladeshi women are forced to commit suicide; follow polygamy and indulge into prostitution. The cultural clash between the Bangladeshi Nazneen and the British woman living near her apartment is imminent. Nazneen leads a lonely life in London; she is treated as a second class citizen. Nazneen has traumatic experiences in London as she sees ugly things around her environment; a defecting dog, the boring cook, the tattoo lady and loneliness of life and she loses her innocence. Monica Ali has seriously depicted the scenes of cultural collision through her life in London. Nazneen has diverse experiences; she is insulted by the British people; she loses her freedom and innocence. Chanu refers to local Bangladeshis as "uneducated. Illiterate Close-minded, Without ambition". Nazneen is in a dilemma because she feels confused since she feels dislocated. Nazneen identifies her with the metal frames, her heart has become stiff, and there is no sunshine in her life as she feels metallic about everything. She recollects the glorious days when she enjoyed a life of bliss and innocence in her village, Mymensingh, Bangladesh. Monica Ali's vision of cultural collision is critically investigated in this chapter. Monica Ali vividly describes the apartment of Nazneen as she is seen fed up with the rugs, files and papers and other pottery animals collected by Chanu. She is always seen dusting her room and books and furniture

but inwardly she is suffering from a void; her inner soul remains dusty and cramped. Monica Ali uses the concrete images to portray the inner landscape of Nazneen. Her metaphysical loneliness contributes to insecurity and loss of self. She is trapped between two cultures, she feels nostalgic about the scenes and sights of Bangladesh and she also tries to settle in Brick Lane. She always feels that she is locked and this consciousness crushes her. Her closet is symbolized as her coffin where she is buried all the time. She hates her wardrobe and dreams of her aunt's bird and longs to fly over in the sky. She is very sad to know that someone has broken its neck symbolizing her trapped. All these traumatic experiences of Nazneen springing from her cultural collision are examined in detail in this chapter.

In the fourth chapter: *Contextualization Homelessness and Displacement: an Analysis of Taslima Nasrin's French Lover* Taslima Nasrin depicts the plight of Nilanjana who leaves Calcutta and goes to France in quest of her sexual liberty and liberation. Nasrin generalizes the plight of women by introducing various women characters in parallel situations where in the experience of one woman happens to be that of other women. Ultimately the culmination becomes the liberation or emancipation of women from men. This may be like Nilanjana leaving her husband to live with her friend or like Danielle leaving her father to live alone in the company of friends of her own. The heroine removes herself from her family and her husband because she feels she has an identity of her own that cannot be related to anybody else. Nasrin wants to show that her women characters have liberated themselves from their subordinate status and the cultural collision is imminent when a migrant leaves his homeland.

In the fifth Chapter: “*Displacement and Cultural Alienation: The Psychological Trajectories of the Protagonists in The Kite Runner and A Thousand Splendid Suns and And the Mountains Echoed*” depicts the forces of cultural disruption. The researcher has examined two novels of Khaled Hosseini depicting the scenes of cultural collision and displacement. Hosseini himself was an Afghani immigrant who came from Kabul with his wife Saroya and father, Baba. He aspired to become a writer as he tries to settle in America since Kabul was in turmoil. It is pertinent to note that cultural and political tensions of the colonized people result into dislocations, displacements and fractured identities. Paul Gilroy took the historical perspective in *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2002) and analyzed the impact of race, politics and culture on the colonized people and their multilayered trauma. Afghanistan is a culturally mixed nation, a crossroads between the East and the West. *The Kite Runner* made Hosseini as an international celebrity. Hosseini’s prime concern is to depict the conflict between good and evil, innocence and betrayal of the the protagonists. The main strength of the novel is cultural collision and its destructive impact on the psyche of the psyche of the characters. The people of Kabul are forced to leave their homes as the Taliban capture power and destroy all institutions. The evil forces represented by Assef wreck the life of Hassan and Amir who migrates to America. He is caught in the trap of alien and native culture. Amir has to go back to Kabul to save the life of Hassan. His journey to Kabul is packed with the episodes of pain, shock and dislocation. Hosseini’s description recreates the intense disorientation and terror of experience. The novel begins in Afghanistan and Amir’s journey is fraught with danger and uncertainty.

Hosseini has covered the entire history of Afghanistan in a dramatic way depicting the internal cultural conflicts confronted by all the protagonists. Hosseini has reported all important phases of Afghan history and culture. Hosseini is much interested in the political events but he vividly portrays the social condition of the people during the Afghan conflicts. The story of the novel becomes the representation of Afghan life and culture. The plot of the novel unfolds the impact of conflicts and the various phases of cultural collision. The Afghan conflicts brought untold miseries to people. People of Kabul witnessed rapes, sexual oppression of women. Afghan conflicts resulted into the traumatic experiences as people were tortured and killed. The worst happened when people started fleeing from Kabul. This set in the process of cultural corrosion and the beginning of the inner trauma of the people. Their journey from Kabul to America via Pakistan result into pain and privation. They suffer alienation and homelessness because of dislocation.

Hosseini portrays Assef as an agent of evil in the novel who brings untold miseries to people in Kabul. He represents the ideology of Taliban and is a pure villainous character. Amir- Assef conflict forms the core of the novel as Hosseini depicts the disruption of civil and cultural life through this confrontation. Assef kidnapped Sohrab from the orphanage. He had raped his father and killed him later on. Rahim Khan, the uncle of Amir writes a moving letter to Amir to save the life of Sohrab. Amir had betrayed Hassan because he couldn't save Hassan when he was being raped by Assef in the alley. He had exhibited his cowardice at that that time. Amir went to America but his guilt always haunted him. Amir returned Kabul to atone for the sin; it was an opportunity for his redemption. Amir saved the life of Sohrab who was the only son of Hassan. Assef was a drug addict; he sexually

abused the young children of orphanage. He was a rapist and a fanatic Sunni Muslim who wanted to kill all the Hazaras believing in the destructive policies of Hitler (35), Assef has mission such as stoning adulterers, raping children, flogging women for wearing high heels and butchering Hazaras. In this chapter all the Taliban activities and their destructive ideology is critically examined.

In the second novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* Hosseini narrates the struggles of Nana, Mariam and Laila who suffered multiple displacements and loss of identities. They lived under the shadows of fear and violence. Afghanistan has been an arena of war, disruption and political turmoil. People witnessed political instability, infrastructure collapse, violence and hegemony of the Taliban who used every possible weapon to destroy history and culture of Afghani people. The dramatization of the scenes of cultural collision is indeed heart-rending. Women become the victims of Taliban cruelty and the novel depicts the harrowing tale of the plight of women. The Taliban culture adversely impacted the lives of women. New culture of Taliban imposed draconian laws on women reducing them to sex dolls, children-producing machines

The plot of the novel focuses on cultural displacement and migration of the people of Kabul. Nana is the first victim of sexual oppression of Jalil who believes in subjugating female body. He holds Taliban ideology opposing rights to women. For him a woman is like a tradable commodity. Nana is badly affected by the Taliban rule because of cultural clashes. The novel projects the intersection of several aspects of cultural corrosion, Afghanistan itself was war torn and demolished by conflicts. The episodes of war, terrorism, gun-fighting bring lawlessness and political anarchy in the country. Thousands of people run away from Kabul to

escape from the bullets of Taliban. Schools and colleges are closed, houses are destroyed, women are raped and there are horrifying incidents of death and destruction everywhere. This led to homelessness and cultural dislocation of people. Women lead an alienated life; they are emotionally and psychologically oppressed by the religious bigots. Hosseini has given the image of a “battered country” in this novel. The lives of Laila and Mariam are also battered and disintegrated. Laila and Mariam perpetually struggle to escape male domination of Rasheed. Hosseini has portrayed Rasheed as an instrument of evil and patriarchy who is violent, cruel, diabolical and oppressive. Hosseini describes the events of the lives of Mariam and Laila who are trapped in the events of cultural wars and political factions. Hosseini tells the story of women impacted by domestic violence and cruelty of patriarchy.

The plot of the novel begins with the sufferings of Nana who loses her freedom in society and family, and feels psychologically tortured. Jalil doesn't love her, there is no scene of physical assault but she always bears deeper wounds in her soul. Jalil segregates Nana and forces her to live alone with her daughter Mariam. Mariam too is forced to live like a fatherless daughter. She becomes the victim of cruelty of her father; she is married to a cruel man Rasheed double of her age. She is confined to a lonely cage with her mother by her father and is denied freedom. She is subjected to all forms of tortures because she cannot give birth to a son. Her miscarriages bring untold misery to Mariam. When Rasheed realizes that Mariam cannot have children, he sinks into hatred and contempt. He resents Mariam and beats her. Hosseini has depicted the plight of the people who are tortured by the Taliban. Strict laws are enforced; all sorts of entertainment are banned; no body

dared to write books, watch films or indulge in paintings. The native culture of Kabul is destroyed by the Taliban; the old history and monuments are destroyed and people are victimized. Tariq narrates to Laila of a person who had been publicly flogged for painting flamingoes. Tariq is compelled to leave Kabul because he is fear-ridden. Nana, Mariam, Laila, Aziza are all victims of a cultural clashes. To conclude, *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *And The Mountains Echoed* depict the scenes of cross cultural wars and their impact on the life of Nana, Mariam, Laila and Tariq. Tariq represents the youth of Kabul who were forced to migrate to the other countries because of the reign of terror of the Taliban.

In Khaled Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed*' the researcher has further elaborated the scenes of cultural disruption because of the clashes and wars and political instability. Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini have highlighted the themes of dislocation and assimilation as the immigrants confront multiple problems of adjustment and survival. In his novels *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and his *And the Mountains Echoed*, Hosseini seriously describes the impact of Afghan conflicts on the life of Amir, Tariq, Mariam, Nana, and Laila. In his *The Kite Runner*, this impact is clearly described but in *And the Mountains Echoed* the impact is felt by the people in their life. There are several secondary sources which describe the impact of the Taliban. Hosseini had fresh knowledge about the Afghan conflict, he used fiction to tell the world the realities of the Afghan life and culture through his novels, *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *And the Mountains Echoed*. The immigrants leave their homeland to earn dollars but in this process they suffer hybridity and alienation. They often come in conflict with the alien culture. They feel alienated and often feel nostalgic about their homeland.

But as they live in the host country they are confronted with so many challenges. Their diasporic experiences bring untold miseries as we find in the fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrin and Khaled Hosseini. Hosseini's latest novel *And the Mountains Echoed* is touching story of pain, of rootlessness, homelessness and cultural dislocation. Khaled Hosseini's main purpose is to expose the political instability, anarchy and terrorism experienced by people of Afghanistan. The history of Afghanistan is marked by death and destruction particularly during the last 30 years of prolonged war, infrastructure collapse, and restrictive political regimes. The situation of women in Afghanistan has been dismal during this period. Their status was undermined during the Soviet occupation and under subsequent regimes.

Khaled Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed* is about the rural background of a wounded Afghanistan. Hosseini has focused on atrocious impact of the hegemony of the Taliban. Kabul is reeling under tyranny of Taliban; the old values are crumbling and the institutions are collapsing because of cultural collision. Hosseini has faithfully described all the episodes in the novel to reveal the cultural disruption in Afghanistan. Hosseini takes the readers from Kabul to America, Pakistan, Paris and Greece. His galaxy of characters includes chauffeur, day laborer, war lords, village women, doctors and poets who become the victims of clash of cultures. Hosseini once again draws upon old memories of Afghanistan, a country he left as a child. The main focus in the novel is on Suleiman Wahdati, Nila, Abdullah and Pari who is sold to Mrs. Wahdati by Saboor. Nila moves to France, Abdullah goes to California with his wife Sultana. In this family drama, Hosseini touches upon the themes of love, hate, guilt, betrayal and dreadful wrong doings. All the characters are seen struggling to find roots but they suffer alienation and

rootlessness. The haunting memories of Abdullah, Nila and Pari are poignant in the novel. Hosseini begins from Afghanistan and very soon takes the readers to Europe and America to articulate the diasporic experiences of the emigrants. Hosseini writes about a life there that is multi-dimensional, colonized and culturally dislocated. In Paris, Nila is an alien diaspora who struggles to assimilate in the French culture. But she is soon caught in the whirlpool of cultural clashes. Nila spends money lavishly, hosts parties for her wealthy friends to end her alienation. Her guests beg her to recite some of her poems. Hosseini doesn't give the scenes of boring politics and war in the novel *And the Mountains Echoed* but he has highlighted the sensitive theme of cultural dislocation, poverty, and humanity. Hosseini evokes very powerful images to depict the triangular relationship between Saboor, Abdullah and Pari. All the sensitive issues of love, sex and poverty are revealed through the plight of a family which was uprooted because of cultural conflict.

The cultural antagonism is destructive in nature, but after having done the textual analysis of all the texts of all the novels, it has been observed that the protagonists like Amir, Nazneen, Mariam exhibit their inner strength. They successfully confront the reality of cultural antagonism and come out of the crisis and emerge as strong characters. The outcome of the research is both positive and negative. The cultural collision results into homelessness, rootlessness, alienation, loss of identity, marginalization. This study has social relevance as its reading will prepare the young or any migrant who is aspirant to go abroad to, should be mentally prepared to face all these inevitable challenges. This study has positive outcome also as, Amir, Nazneen, Mariam, Laila boldly confront the forces of cultural antagonism. If a migrant uses his cultural strength as a weapon to fight with the

external forces of cultural disruption, he can set an example for the society. Thus the study is based on fresh perspective as all the forces of cultural antagonism are examined and investigated.

To conclude, in this study the researcher has explored and investigated the theme of cultural collision and its impact on the lives of the protagonists in the post-colonial fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa, Monica Ali, Taslima Nasrini and Khaled Hosseini. This thesis will give enlightenment to the migrants who are ambitious to go abroad to make money. This thesis will open their eyes about the cultural conflicts they would face in the alien land. It is pertinent to note that a large number of Indians and Asians go every year abroad to make easy money. This study will bring them the awareness about the consequences of the cultural clashes and the inevitable loss of identity in the alien land is inevitable. The thesis has modern relevance and will be a part of cultural studies. The cultural clashes, wars, political instability and anarchy brought about havoc in the life of the people. In the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Monica Ali the researcher has investigated the plight of the women protagonists who became victims of cultural collision. Feroza, Zatoon, Nazneen, Nana, Mariam, Laila, Nila, Pari are the victims of cultural disruption. The perspective of cultural collision will certainly add new dimensions in the area of post-colonial criticism. The present research will inspire the students and researchers to explore further areas of interest.

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