

An Analysis of Feminism in Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride*

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Abstract

The *Pakistani Bride* is Bapsi Sidhwa's most outspoken feminist work. Through an array of different characters, Sidhwa explores women's conditions of life, love and self-worth in Pakistan. The *Pakistani Bride* is a novel of women in marriage, women, and sexuality women as objects of male control, and women as subjects of their own feelings. All through the novel, the focus is on female bodies. Whether looked at by men or experienced by women, the female body is the most important image in *The Pakistani Bride* and this image links with the most important theme, Women's condition in Pakistan.

In *The Pakistani Bride*, the female body is focused. She suffered a lot after her marriage and she was not even through the exploration of Marriage, Gender Segregation, treated as a human being by her husband. Zaitoon's Violence, and Sexuality. The men in *The Pakistani Bride* are husband treated her as an object. Zaitoon, according to her characterized between the women of their respective family husband is just a sexual desire.

and the women on the outside. Women who are relatives are protected, guarded and kept secluded from public life and women's position in male dominated society. The village of from men who are not family. Women who are not relatives, tribal society consider women as an invaluable commodity and who, for different reasons, are not protected by their men, which is used as a material in the marriage. Women are are viewed with lust. In both cases, women are treated as transported from one man to another. Men are always superior to women. Women are not allowed to follow their own path as per their wish. They suffer a lot in this patriarchal society. Zaitoon's husband like other tribal men locked her freedom and oppressed her.

The *Pakistani Bride* traces the internal development of the protagonist. It tells the reader how women are treated in a wrong way by the men. Tribal men in Pakistani follow their own rules and they consider women as an object to have sexual pleasure and to do works for them. Young girls lost their freedom in the name of marriage.

The novel conveys the dark future of Pakistani women. It deals with the sufferings if women without giving any suggestions or solutions for their problem. The love and friendship between women is vital than the love and friendship between a man and a woman. Even women who come from different city to this tribal village they are asked to follow the rules of that tribal village and obey the words of their husband without disapproving.

The novel mainly deals with the destruction of women in the tribal society. In *The Pakistani Bride*, the three major women characters are Zaitoon, Carol and Saki's mother, Hamida who represents the problems faced by women in the patriarchal world. Even the minor female characters are also the symbol of oppression who suffers a lot in the male dominated society.

The Pakistani Bride conveys the pain that is visible in every woman by sexual difference. It deals with the story of a young girl Zaitoon who is an orphan but adopted by a tribal man, Qasim. She lived happily in the city of Lahore but lost her happiness by marrying a mountain tribe man.

The stories of Zaitoon and Carol highlight the issue of The stories of Zaitoon and Carol highlight the issue of

Zaitoon, Carol and Saki's mother represent issues of all stages of woman such problems of girl, daughter, wife and mother. Zaitoon as a girl has to follow her father and husband. Saki's mother has to live a tragic life. Carol, an American woman who marries a Pakistani engineer suffered a lot. Women have to respect men whether they are educated or not.

Carol is not a central character of the novel, but she plays an important role to show the problems faced by every women in their life. Carol follows her westernised attitude which sometimes irritates all those tribal people. Even Farukh gets jealous of her westernised behaviour. Carol tries to change her attitude but without her knowledge she goes behind westernised culture.

In the novel Saki plays an important role. Saki makes everyone believe that a man considers a woman as an animal, and he is the master of the both. A woman should perform her daily task given by a man, and she should complete it without neglecting the order of her husband. A man has the right to treat his wife in a cruel way if she does any wrong. The incident of the beating of Hamida and Zaitoon shows the position of women in the male dominated society.

Younger women, who are not yet married, but who have reached puberty, wear a shawl to cover their heads, and sometimes their faces and upper bodies. Women don't have freedom to as per their wish and none of the women in the novel go far on their own, only a short walk to their close neighbour is the farthest they may go alone. Women are not allowed to talk to male strangers, and are not allowed to stand in any place without having any work.

When talking to elders or to men outside the family should cover their heads with a shawl to protect them from the male gaze. According to the tribal people women are considered inferior to men.

Reference

Sidhwa, Bapsi, *The Pakistani Bride*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1990.