



A Marxist Analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa's Novel *The Pakistani Bride*

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Abstract— The paper is an endeavor for examining and understanding of multivariate Marxist notions, elucidating multi dimensionally the horror produce by the class conflicts and other capitalist practices with in the light of various texts. Additionally, the paper practically deals with the analysis of *The Pakistani Bride*. This research studies the selected novel from the lens of Marxism. The study illustrate the class conflict and exploitation of powerless. Moreover, the *Unmasking the Hidden Agenda: How Capitalist Interests Exploit Religion to Control the Masses*. However, research on '*The Pakistani Bride*', Bapsudhi Sidhwa poignantly portrays how human relationships are reduced to mere monetary transactions. The novel touches on Marxist themes, such as class divisions and the insidious influence of ideology, but only scratches the surface. The present study collects particular information from the text Bapsi Sidhwa's Novel, *The Pakistani Bride*, the focus of the current research is dealing with Marxist ideas. With a keen eye for detail, the researcher carefully gathers insights and pinpoint areas within the text where the findings can have the most impact. With a deep dive into the data, the researcher meticulously breaks down the collected information, using intuitive and creative techniques to uncover hidden patterns and bring the findings to life. The novel delineates story of various social groups suffering class conflicts, and the pursuit of their aims inspired by economic and financial advancement. It noticeably portrays the assorted social classes and everlasting antagonism in social and economic framework. The novel furthermore, illustrated religious practices, discovering it as an active and conservative force, utilized by the ruling to justify the class antagonism and unnatural with natural. This study can be used to look at literature through different theoretical frameworks.



Keywords— Marxist, class antagonism, financial advancement, *The Pakistani Bride*

Introduction

Marxism offers a powerful lens through which we can examine the intricate web of social, economic, and political forces that shape our world and impact our lives. At its core, Marxism envisions a world where everyone is equal and has a stake in the community's prosperity. Imagine a society where the resources and systems that sustain us are owned and controlled collectively, rather than by a privileged few. In this world, everyone has a voice and a role in shaping their own destiny. Individuals have different social status in the form of social stratification and socioeconomic conflict. One group has a surplus of goods, but limited appetite, while the other

group has a greater appetite, but scarce resources. Marxism look at extremely challenging and unfair financial conditions and consider classless society with no economic disparities. Marxism, developed this ideology, the issue where the average person has to take part, In the realm of economic across multiple economic groups. Marx related this issue through the ages and assert, throughout the entirety of human history of open clash between two opposing classes. Karl Marx also shed light on a heartbreaking consequence of capitalist systems, the erosion of emotional connections. He believed that when people are forced to fight for survival due to unequal distribution of resources, they start to prioritize financial

stability over family bonds. As a result, relationships become transactional, reducing love and connection to mere economic exchanges. In essence, the capitalist machine strips away the warmth and intimacy that makes us human, leaving only a hollow pursuit of profit (Marx, 1887). The matter of doctrine is important to the ideology of Marxism. Marxism works to constantly make us aware of all the ways in which daily wage earners are the result of material and historical conditions of the capitalist doctrine. Karl Marx pulled back the curtain on the subtle yet powerful ideologies that keep the working class in chains. He revealed how these ideologies, disguised as truth, distort reality to maintain the status quo and justify the dominance of the elite. Religion, education, and patriotism, Marx argued, are often co-opted as tools to serve the self-interest of the powerful, perpetuating a system that keeps the proletariat oppressed and exploited. In the *Communist Manifesto* (1848), Marx boldly identified these ideologies as instruments of control, designed to manipulate and maintain the power imbalance (Marx, 1848).

Bapsi Sidhwa, a renowned Pakistani writer from the Parsi community, has been identified as a feminist, postcolonial, and South Asian author. In the novel "*The Pakistani bride*" she intricately weaves Marxist themes. The Marxist notions are a slapdash arrangements and form the narrative thread, the most apparent perspective is class conflict, social stratification, extremist ideology, ideological functions, hopeless and the deplorable state of women stems from economic dependence. The story explores the theme of Hindu-Muslim hostility. The two classes are locked in an inevitable struggle for dominance. Russell commented that the creation of this divide was a purposeful endeavor, leading to the proletariat being disproportionately impacted and suffering the most severe economic consequences. Similarly, Zaitoon, the main character, was caught up in the turmoil surrounding independence, resulting in the loss of her parents.. This story shines a light on the heartbreaking reality of women trapped in economic dependence. Forced to rely on their husbands for survival, they're left vulnerable to every whim and cruelty. These women, desperate for security, often surrender to loveless marriages, sacrificing their dreams and desires for a life of quiet desperation. They're reduced to mere commodities, their emotions and sentiments traded for financial stability. The harsh truth is that, for many women, marriage is not a union of love and mutual respect, but a means of survival. This poignant portrayal highlights the cruel consequences of a system that reduces human connection to a mere economic transaction. Marx was of the view that capitalism bring down social relations to monetary transactions a theme

more evident in the Novel, *The Pakistani Bride*, evidently, as shown in the novel, Qasim is unsympathetic to Zaitoon's troubled state., he disregards Zaitoons well-being, and thus sold her for 500 rupees, exemplifying how economic interests overshadow human sentiment.

Karl Marx shed light on the devastating consequences of the capitalist economic system, revealing its inequality and suffering among the most vulnerable members of society. He argued that economic crises, fueled by the capitalist machine, unleash unimaginable hardship on those already struggling to make ends meet. Marx's astute observations highlighted the stark contrast between two warring social classes, the affluent bourgeoisie, who enjoy unparalleled access to life's necessities and luxuries, and the impoverished working class, who are systematically denied even the most basic human needs. This glaring disparity, Marx contended, is the powder keg that fuels class antagonism and social unrest. Marx poignantly highlighted that, the bourgeoisie's ideology creates a toxic dynamic that erodes the emotional bonds between working-class individuals. By reducing relationships to mere economic transactions, the bourgeoisie strip the proletariat of their humanity, leaving only a hollow dependence on money to sustain their connections. This dehumanizing effect is a direct result of the grossly unequal distribution of resources, which perpetuates a system of exploitation. Marx also lamented the loss of individuality among the proletariat, who are forced to surrender their autonomy and creativity to the whims of their capitalist overlords. Like soldiers in a war, they are reduced to mere cogs in a machine, toiling under the relentless pressure of their corporate commanders. This soul-crushing system denies them the dignity of self-expression and the freedom to forge their own paths.

Bertrand Russell, in his essay "A Case for Socialism," critically examines the far-reaching consequences of the capitalist economic system on individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds. He argues that capitalism creates significant barriers in various aspects of life, including education, family, and art. Russell highlights the plight of a gifted child from a wage-earning family, who, despite possessing exceptional intelligence in mathematics, music, or science, is unable to nurture their talent due to limited access to resources. Russell also sheds light on the exploitative nature of capitalism, particularly in relation to women's economic inequality. He emphasizes how economic disparities perpetuate the oppression of women, exacerbating their vulnerable position in society. He pointed out that women are often forced to rely on men for financial support, which can be even more suffocating than the dependence of an employee on their employer. While an employee can quit their job, many women are trapped

in unpaid labor with no escape. Russell's words highlight the cruel injustice of a system that denies women economic freedom and autonomy.

In his iconic novel "Metamorphosis," Franz Kafka lays bare the harsh realities of social class. The wealthy elite hold power, while the working class is crushed under their oppressive rules. We see this vividly in the character of Gregor Samsa, who begs his manager not to fire him, knowing it would devastate his family. But the manager, blinded by his own privilege, responds with heartless disdain. His words, "Sit at your desk and talk down to your employees," reveal a chilling lack of empathy, highlighting the dehumanizing effects of class inequality.

Karl Marx said that the wealthy elite reduce human relationships to mere financial transactions, ignoring emotional connections. Franz Kafka's works bring this idea to life. He shows that money can poison relationships, making it the measure of intimacy and emotional attachment. In his story, Gregor Samsa's family brutally rejects him after he loses his job. No longer able to support them financially, he's cast out of his own home. This heartbreaking scene reveals the dark truth that, in a world driven by money, love and loyalty can be cruelly discarded.

They sat patiently in their chairs, waiting for the pearls to arrive. As soon as they did, chaos erupted: they haggled, fought, and shouted, determined to drive the price down to the lowest point the fisherman was willing to accept. George Orwell's powerful writings exposed the harsh realities of capitalism, where the vulnerable are exploited and left to struggle. In his iconic novel, *Animal Farm* (1945), Orwell painted a stark picture of a society where the powerful prey on the weak, creating a world of stagnation, oppression, and economic chaos. But Orwell didn't just critique capitalism - he also championed communism as a fairer, more compassionate alternative. He believed that communism could create a more equal society, where everyone had a chance to thrive. Through his writing, Orwell urged us to imagine a better world, one where the exploitation and injustice of capitalism are replaced by the kindness, equality, and freedom of communism. The ultimate goal of communism is human brotherhood, a notion deeply felt by many, though often left unspoken. It is not the promise of a luxurious, high-tech utopia that drives individuals to dedicate their lives to the cause, or to make the ultimate sacrifice in the midst of civil war, or to endure the brutal torture of regimes like the Gestapo. Rather, it is the pursuit of a world united in solidarity and compassion but, George Orwell's heartfelt dream was for a world where people loved and cared for each other, rather than exploiting and harming one another. He passionately believed that the root of all suffering was

the unfair class system, which perpetuated inequality and oppression. Orwell's words were a cry for justice, a plea for a world where the working class wasn't forced to endure endless hardship and struggle. He longed for a society where everyone had the chance to thrive, free from the shackles of exploitation and greed. In *Animal Farm*, George Orwell vividly portrays the stark contrast between the oppressors and the oppressed. The wealthy and powerful pigs, symbolizing the "haves," ruthlessly exploit the vulnerable and marginalized animals, representing the "have-nots." Through the pigs' cunning manipulation of ideologies, Orwell exposes, the bourgeoisie cleverly exploited the proletariat's desire for revolution, using it to serve their own selfish interests. The animals' rebellion against the farm's owner was, in reality, a mere pawn in the pigs' game of power and control. The pigs cleverly deceived the other animals with slogans like "All men are enemies, all animals are comrades," convincing them to work tirelessly for the benefit of their pig masters. But as the pigs' exploitation grew more ruthless, they needed to justify their actions. So, they tweaked their original mantra of "All animals are equal" to a more sinister version, "Some animals are equal, but others are more equal." This subtle yet devastating change revealed the pigs' true intentions to maintain their grip on power and privilege, while keeping the other animals in a state of subjugation.

In his novel "A Case of Exploding Mangoes," Muhammad Hanif sheds light on the stark struggle between the privileged elite and the marginalized underclass. He exposes the cruel irony of those in power, the bourgeoisie, exploit and betray the vulnerable lower class. Hanif argues that the ruling class uses deceptive ideologies and manipulates religion to maintain their grip on power and justify their lavish lifestyles. By distorting religious teachings, they claim a divine right to their privileged position, while denying the lower class access to even the most basic necessities. This scathing critique reveals the deep-seated injustices that perpetuate inequality and suffering. Muhammad Hanif's scathing portrayal exposes General Zia-ul-Haq's cynical manipulation of religion to control and deceive the masses. Hanif reveals how Zia, once hailed as a champion of Islam, used faith as a tool to serve his own sinister agenda. With searing clarity, Hanif strips away Zia's pretenses, revealing a ruthless leader who exploited people's deepest beliefs for his own gain. The image of a "wolf in sheep's clothing" hauntingly captures the essence of Zia's duplicity, leaving readers with a profound sense of betrayal and outrage. Muhammad Hanif describes Zia as a shallow, self-serving leader who exploited religion for personal gain. Hanif writes: "The generals who had called Zia a 'Mullah' behind his back felt ashamed at having underestimated him: not only was he a

Mullah who merely parroted what he'd heard from others, but a Mullah in a four-star general's uniform, with the instincts of a corrupt tax inspector." These biting words underscore Zia's cynical misuse of religion to maintain his grip on power. Furthermore, through the exploitative use of religion, the dictator (Zia) aimed to solidify his social standing, rendering it unassailable and impenetrable. In her novel 'Ice Candy Man', Bapsi Sidhwa exposes the stark contrast between the privileged elite, who remain insulated from financial hardship, and those who bear the brunt of economic catastrophe. This deplorable state of affairs is the reality for Lenny's family struggle, particularly his father, who has become emotionally distant due to the crushing weight of financial stress. His dire circumstances have forced him to prioritize earning a living over nurturing his family relationships, leaving emotional scars in its wake. Lenny's father is emotionally drained, and his frustration boils over as he lashes out at his wife, saying, 'She's determined to destroy us, and money is her only motivation. I'm sick of hearing about it from morning to night. This desperate outburst reveals the suffocating grip of financial stress on their relationship. But it also hints at a deeper issue: the wife's economic dependence on her husband has left her vulnerable to his control and exploitation, stripping her of her autonomy and dignity.

In "Ice Candy Man," Bapsi Sidhwa vividly portrays, the uneven distribution of resources creates a stark social divide. One class basks in luxury, with every need met, while the other struggles to survive, lacking access to basic necessities. Sidhwa poignantly illustrates this contrast, writing, 'Rich men's wives and children escape to the cool hills of Shimla or Kashmir in summer. We, too, flee, but to the lesser hills of Murree, at the foot of the Himalayas.' This poignant comparison highlights the vastly different worlds of the haves and have-nots. This research is a personal interpretation of Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, "The Pakistani Bride". The researcher focused on specific parts of the book that relate to Marxist ideas. They gathered relevant information and analyzed it using a subjective and descriptive approach. In other words, the researcher carefully selected and examined certain aspects of the novel to better understand its themes and messages through a Marxist lens. To deepen the analysis, the researcher carefully examines the gathered ideas and aligns them with the research objectives. To achieve this, the researcher: Analyzes the content of "The Pakistani Bride" to gather essential information. Supplements this analysis with additional insights from relevant books and research papers written by other critics, ensuring they align with the research topic. This comprehensive approach enables the researcher to build a richer understanding of the subject matter. This study delves into the world of

Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, "The Pakistani Bride", through the lens of Marxist theory. With a keen eye, we examine how the principles of the bourgeoisie shape the plot and characters of the story. Our goal is to uncover the subtle yet powerful ways in which capitalist ideologies influence the lives of the characters, particularly those from the working class. By doing so, we hope to shed light on the struggles and injustices faced by the marginalized, and to spark a deeper understanding of the social and economic forces that govern our lives. This study employing subjective techniques for exploration and investigation of information throughout the text in support of present tendencies. The researcher, primarily, brings up information suitable to Marxism. The researcher hold attention to class hostility and showing them how the masses creates perturbation in the name of religion with due emphasis on that, how they are driven by a upper class with religion to fulfill their goals.

The Pakistani Bride is profusely abounded in Marxist theme. The most obvious and prominent are the class antagonism, religious extremism (as the opiate of the masses), exploitation of the impoverished class, and economic dependencies of women causing some unbearable catastrophe upon them. These formulate the plot of the novel and covers almost of the events. The aforementioned themes are analyzed through the text with the example of the dialogues and quotes of the characters. The analysis is conducted within the light of different stalwart figures of Marxism.

Class Antagonism

The novel, *The Pakistani brides* demonstrates the hostility between various economic classes. The distention is made in the form of the oppressed and the oppressor, The haves and the have not, economically dependent male and the subdued and dependent social statics of women. Pertaining the class antagonism Marx had argued that, the entire history of all the existing societies is the tension between classes. There are the proletarian and Bourgeoisie, oppressor and the oppressed one, class possesses the availability of all the fundamental as well as the lavish requirement whereas the other is bitterly deprived of the basics. This very portrayal is given by Bapsi Sidhwa in the novel *The Pakistani bride*, for instance the struggle for the achievement of autonomous and separate countries feuded the class hostility. The different nation driven by the premise of differences never neglected an opportunity of inflecting wounds upon each other. The novel witness's portrayal of this description "a train is leaving at four o'clock from Ludhiana we must take it". (Sidhwa's 19). The aforementioned statement is an obvious indicator of ethnic

cleaning, the enmity between, and distinct social classes.

The tension between Hindus and Muslim is so, terrible heightened that even killing each other was not considered a crime. The conflict was fundamentally triggered by material and economic pursuit which was the attainment of separate country. This pursuit indoctrinated such an ideology that harming one another looting, murdering, and vandalizing each other properties were not tested by the general codes of ethics and consideration of morality. For instance, Qasim, killed a baboo notwithstanding. The concept of religious distinction, the people (Character) novel (Muslim community) from the same community appeared bearing grudges to each other. They had conflict with each other for economic motives. These financial drives aggravated the tension between them and they neglected no opportunity to oppress the less powerful in the race of their achievements. For instance Nikkah would always wick the less powerful street venders, if they ever dewed to sell around is camps while rebuking the weak merchants Nikkah, says "you incestuous lover of your Mother, lover of your sister, son of a whore, imbecile owl, dog, how dare you peddle this staff here" (Sidhwa). Thus, it is an obvious clue of one class taking advantages of other class, one has freedom and individuality while the other totally rely on the will of the dominant.

Communism keeps no individual deprived from the power to appropriate the products of society. All that it has to do is to deprive a person of the power to subjugate the labor of other by means of such of appropriation. (Marx, 1887). In the novel, Nikkah being powerful, representing the bourgeoisie's class which exploits the other and never let them attain equal economic opportunity. He ransacked other's property, subjugate them, dishonor them but, they are unable to react and depend themselves. For them God is the last resort, for example the miserable merchants after beaten by Nikkah Everyone beseechingly request him to let them go.

"Ha, Maf Kar – forgive me brother for God's sake" (Sidhwa, 19).

The upper strata people utilized prejudicially the poor for their self-reserved objectives. The proletariat were "organized like solders", as pirates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants, not only they are captivated by bourgeoisie's class but bourgeoisie's state" (Marx, 1887). In this regard Nikkah and Qasim were paid to help the dominated class of the social rank for the fulfillment. They were both illicitly enticed and coaxed to assassinate sardar, Ghulam Ali Hussain. Being coaxed with a sizeable portion of money Nikkah and Qasim clubbed him to death. Therefore, Marx claimed that the proletariat are like

soldiers managed by the ruling and very cleverly exploited for their personal and prejudiced aims.

Women and Social Inequality

Bapsi Sidhwa has represented women as weaker and economically dependent. They are totally controlled by their male counterparts and their actions are measured as per the patriarchal standards. The women don't have the same economic and social freedom, which is entertained by their dominant male counterparts for instance, Zaitoon was not meant to learn or write. She had to uphold the traditional pattern, get married, beget babies and do a nice cooking job. "Now that she's learned to read the Holy Quran, what will she do with more reading and writing – boil and drink? She's not going to become an officer! Nor is Allah willing. She'll get married and have children". This candidly illustrated the weak, dependent and miserable condition of the women class.

The proletariat's relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeoisie's family relatives (Marx, 1887). The character of women in the novel carry some sinks. They are to husbands and fathers as proletariat to bourgeoisies. As bourgeoisies make uses of proletariat for their personal means. Similarly, the women in the novel bears the same common thing to their male. Taking this into account Qasim, had no sentiments for the miserable life of Zaitoon. He didn't deem, how badly she should dwell in the mountains being a city grain up girls, but he sold her just for 500 hundred rupees and some other possession. Qasim asked a greedy merchant and treated Zaitoon as his personal property, which he sold to meet his personal benefits. Mariam resented Qasim's act and said "is it because the Pathan give you five hundred rupees, some measly maize and a few goats? Is that you put up her for sale like a money grubbing Merchant? The economic dependencies cause miseries upon the vulnerable women class. The great majority of them are economically dependent upon their dominant male counterparts. This dependence is inadequate than that of a wage worker upon his master. An employee can get rid of his job, but for a wife that is difficult (Russell 1935). The female class, portrayed in the novel is encountered with the same unbearable issues, For instance Zaitoon had no personal opinion and liberty to take decision about her marriage. It is exclusively arranged by the will of her father, thus her personal interest is sacrificed. She negated Monam proposal of getting her married to a decent Punjabi by saying "I cannot cross my father". So, in the light of the above statement it can be claimed that the women class of the novel is suffering from goal inequalities. They have no self-esteem and self-standard, rather they have to sap their

self-interest for their dominant men. The women from Pakistani society are not flourished like the American women coral, representing American women is having freewill independent in choice of her life particularly taking the grim and major decision such as of marriage while, on the other hand Zaitoon representing Pakistani society and an absolute symbol of Pakistani women is captivated and hindered by the patriarchal norms and values. The American Lady Coral describes her pathetic condition by saying "the girl had no more control over her destiny than a caged animal" this describe the women class and their feelings are not of serious concern but, they are altogether exploited for the prejudicial interest of the ruling men.

Violation of Relation by Money

The existence of class conflict between the upper and the lower, the haves and the have not, flourishes one, the deprived and the other from equal and last possession. The haves (bourgeoisie), curtail economic opportunities for the proletariat to prosperity, consequently the financial miserability compel the have not to exceed every limit in the struggle. They lose their social and moral consideration, cut and adrift their family ties. "The bourgeoisie has conflicted its emotional links and abridge the family relation to mere money relation" (Marx, 1887). The feelings for close knitted individual is diminished. As a result, impoverished proletariat resignedly give preferences to capital over the cast of avoidable interconnectedness of the family members. The novel squarely witnessed similar things. The major character Qasim who always remained in need of money was enticed by the same drive. He sold the Zaitoon in tribal area, are without taking any consideration for her feelings, her choice, her like and dislikes. Money shrinking Qasim and Nikkah sentiments. It morally corrupted them. They lost the relation to society and care for any particular family, but the only thing they desired over the cast of social norm and ethical consideration was money. When the bother was given the illicit offer to club Sardar Ghulam Hussain to death they entirely ignored ethical standards and assassinated him. In the beginning Nikkah was hesitant to kill Sardar Ghulam Hussain but, the Qasim coaxed him with the compensation they had to receive. Nikkah said "Why should I kill a man who has done me no harm". Qasim replied: "because you will receive thousands of rupees. Therefore, it is concluded that money curtails relations and avoids sentiments between the individuals.

Honor and Female Oppression

In *The Pakistani Bride*, Bapsi Sidhwa presents a scathing

critique of the patriarchal and tribal societies that perpetuate the oppression of women. Through the narrative of Zaitoon, a young woman forced into a marriage that shatters her dreams, Sidhwa exposes the ways in which the concept of honor is used to control and exploit women.

From a Marxist perspective, the concept of honor in *The Pakistani Bride* can be seen as a tool of ideological control, used to maintain the dominance of the ruling class over the working class. In this context, the patriarchal and tribal societies depicted in the novel can be seen as a manifestation of the ruling class, using the concept of honor to justify their exploitation and oppression of women.

The notion of honor is deeply intertwined with the concept of female chastity, which is used to control woman's bodies and reproductive labor. This reduction of women to their reproductive bodies is a classic example of the fetishistic woman's labor under capitalism, where woman's bodies are treated as marketable goods, subject to exploitation and commodification. The concept of honor is used to justify the exploitation of women's labor. Zaitoon's marriage is arranged by her adoptive father, Qasim, who sees her as a commodity to be exchanged for economic gain. This transactional view of woman's bodies and labor is a stark reminder of the ways in which capitalism reduces human relationships to economic transactions. Sidhwa's portrayal of the patriarchal and tribal societies in *The Pakistani Bride* is a critique of the ideological state apparatuses that perpetuate the oppression of women. It highlights the ways in which the state, the family, and the community work together to control and exploit women's bodies and labor.

The Pakistani Bride also suggests that resistance and subversion are possible, even in the face of overwhelming oppression. Zaitoon's act of defiance, as she attempts to flee her marriage, is a powerful testament to the ways in which women can challenge and resist the ideological control of the ruling class.

Identity and Cultural Conflict

Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, *The Pakistani Bride*, shows how people's identities and cultural backgrounds are shaped by their economic situations. The story highlights the struggles of characters like Zaitoon and Qasim, who are torn between the modern city life and the traditional rural way of living. Zaitoon's forced marriage is a heartbreaking example of how women are treated like commodities, stripped of their autonomy and freedom under patriarchal and feudal systems.

Imagine being forced to marry someone you don't love,

just to satisfy your family's honor or financial needs. This is Zaitoon's reality, and it's a stark reminder of women's bodies and lives are controlled by men in positions of power. The conflict between modern urban life and traditional tribal customs is more than just a cultural clash - it's a reflection of a deeper class struggle. Those with economic privilege, like Carol, have the freedom to make choices and resist oppression, while those without it, like Zaitoon, are trapped in a cycle of poverty and subjugation. Zaitoon's failed attempt to escape her marriage is a powerful symbol of the futility of individual resistance against systemic oppression. It reinforces the Marxist idea that true liberation can only be achieved through collective action and structural change. This novel critiques the ways in which feudal remnants in postcolonial Pakistan continue to stifle personal identity and cultural evolution, making it nearly impossible for those without economic power to resist oppression.

CONCLUSION

As we conclude our exploration of Bapsi Sidhwa's powerful novel, *The Pakistani Bride*, through the lens of Marxist theory, we're reminded that the rigid structures of class and oppression have a profound impact on human lives. Literature has the unique ability to transcend academic analysis and speak directly to our emotions, prompting us to reflect on the human condition. Through the struggles and triumphs of Sidhwa's characters, we see that Marxist principles aren't just abstract theories - they're lived experiences that shape the destinies of individuals and communities.

At the heart of the novel lies a stark reality: those born into lower classes, particularly women, are often at the mercy of a system that denies them agency, opportunity, and basic dignity. *The Pakistani Bride* doesn't just depict class struggle as an economic issue, it exposes the existential burden that forces individuals into predetermined roles. The protagonist, Zaitoon, embodies the struggles of the proletariat, her life dictated by forces beyond her control - honor, tribal customs, and a patriarchal society that reduces women to mere commodities.

The character of Qasim is a poignant example of how even those within the lower classes can become complicit in perpetuating systemic injustices. As a father, he's bound by tribal codes that turn his own daughter into a bargaining tool. His moral compass is skewed by economic necessity, illustrating how capitalism reduces human relations to economic transactions. Qasim's tragic story challenges the simplistic view of oppressor versus oppressed, highlighting the nuances of systemic

oppression. Beyond individual characters, *The Pakistani Bride* presents a scathing critique of how ideological state apparatuses - particularly religion and patriarchy - function as tools of control. The novel illustrates how religion is weaponized to subjugate women, justify class distinctions, and create a sense of divine order that discourages rebellion. The character of Carol, an American woman, serves as a stark contrast to Zaitoon, highlighting the disparities between women of different socioeconomic backgrounds.

While the novel exposes the brutality of class oppression, it also offers a glimmer of hope. Zaitoon's attempted escape - her defiance against a system designed to break her - symbolizes the resilience of the human spirit. Her story represents the revolutionary consciousness that emerges when oppression reaches its breaking point. However, the ambiguity of her fate forces us to confront a difficult question: is resistance enough, or is the system too deeply entrenched to allow true liberation?

In analyzing *The Pakistani Bride* through a Marxist lens, we're reminded that class struggle is not just an intellectual debate - it's a lived reality that defines the trajectories of countless individuals. The novel urges us to see the human faces behind economic theories, to understand that class oppression is not just about wealth, but about dignity, agency, and emotional well-being. Sidhwa's work is not merely a condemnation of systemic inequalities, it's a call to recognize the human cost of those inequalities and to imagine a world where economic justice is a tangible reality.

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