

# Cultural Representation and Hybrid Identity Formation in Punjabi Cinema: Exploring the Punjabi Diaspora in North America

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**ABSTRACT:** This research critically analyses the notion of hybridity in Punjabi cinema to understand how the representation of characters in the selected Films reflects the diasporic nature of Punjabis in North America. It also examines the influential role of Punjabi cinema in constructing and reconstructing their cultural forms and lived experiences. Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said, and Stuart Hall's postcolonial theories have been taken to explain how Punjabi films address new trends and old values in the context of hybridity. Films such as *Aaja Mexico Challiye* (2022), *Pind America* (2023), *Ashke* (2018), and *Jatt & Juliet 2* (2013) are used as texts to explain how media helps in creating and articulating new mixed cultural forms. The research concludes that Punjabi cinema is not merely a source of entertainment but a powerful medium that articulates the lives of people outside their homeland and assists in creating a mixed cultural identity suitable for the realities and evolving needs of the diaspora. This perspective contributes to cultural studies by illustrating how hybrid identity construction can be in the contemporary globalised world. It also illustrates how diasporas constantly change, negotiate, and redefine their cultural identities based on situations.

**KEYWORDS:** Cultural Negotiation, Diasporic Identity, Globalization, Hybridity, Postcolonial Theory, Punjabi Cinema

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## Introduction

Punjabi cinema has been a crucial cultural element that documents the negotiation of conventional traditional values and modern influences among the Punjabi diaspora. Its unique storytelling conventions and visual vocabulary are important in reinforcing and guarding cultural identity. This cinematic tradition provides a rich theoretical model to investigate how cultural identities are contested, re-fashioned and redefined at the site of cultural hybridisation. Building on scholars like Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said, and Stuart Hall, Hybridity is a lens through which it is possible to view the fluidity and complexities of diasporic identities. This paper examines representations of Hybridity in Punjabi cinema, explicitly emphasising the Punjabi Diaspora in North America. This paper demonstrates that film representations are critical for negotiating identity between cultural preservation and adaptation. *Aaja Mexico Challiye* (2017), *Pind America* (2023), *Ashke* (2018), and *Jatt & Juliet 2* (2013) have been selected as key texts for analysis to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the

topic. The main reason for selecting these films is their settings in different parts of North America.

Moreover, this paper examines the profound and complex themes of cultural exchange, linguistic Hybridity, and mutual affirmation of local tradition and modern influences to unveil the transformative potential of hybrid identities in a globalised and cosmopolitan situation. In pursuing this, this paper positions Punjabi cinema not merely as a medium of entertainment but as an influential cultural space where the complexities of identity formation are deeply explored and reimagined. The study contributes to the broader discourse on Hybridity by illustrating how Punjabi films encapsulate the lived realities of diasporic communities, offering insights into the ongoing processes of negotiation, transformation, and belonging that define hybrid cultural identities in a globalised world.

## Research Questions

**RQ1:** How does Punjabi cinema represent hybrid identities within the Punjabi diaspora in North America?

**RQ2:** In what ways do selected Punjabi films negotiate between tradition and modernity?

**RQ3:** How do language and cultural exchange contribute to constructing hybrid identities in Punjabi diaspora cinema?

## Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it analyses how Punjabi cinema serves as a cultural site of hybrid identity formation for the Punjabi diaspora in North America. Applying postcolonial theories is crucial in deepening our understanding of cultural negotiation, particularly in the context of fluid identity in a cosmopolitan world. This research significantly contributes to diaspora and media studies by elucidating how these films mediate between tradition and modernity. It also comprehensively explains how language, representation, and cultural hybridity shape diasporic belonging. These findings offer scholars, filmmakers, and cultural organisations valuable insight into how transnational identity construction unfolds in today's cinematic world.

## Review of Literature

Hybridity has become one of the most essential concepts in postcolonialism theory and Cultural Studies regarding the mixture and fusion of cultures, identities, and ideas as a condition caused by colonialism, migration, and globalisation. On the one hand, it questions purity in the identity; on the other hand, dynamic identities are being reconfigured through these cross-cultural contacts. "The word hybridity originates in biology and botany where it designates a crossing between two species by cross-pollination that gives birth to a third species" (Shah, [2016](#)).

Contemporary applications of Hybridity in cultural studies is borrowed from several scholars, one of whom is Homi K. Bhabha, the most important scholar of postcolonial studies. One of his numerous works is his classic book, "The Location of Culture," in which third space is defined as where two cultures come together, interact, and become something new. For Bhabha, negotiation and translation art are in these spaces, creating a new cultural identity. Hybridity is defined as a "third space" in itself, which can cross the binary opposition of coloniser and colonised, opening up the possibility of new hybrid identities. Through an understanding of hybridities in Punjabi cinema, much can be gleaned about the ways in which diasporic communities in North America negotiate identities. Punjabi cinema is based primarily on the diasporic communities' existence

between cultural survival and cultural synthesis. "Aaja Mexico Chaliye" and "Jatt & Juliet 2" not only entertain but also serve as cultural artefacts defining hybrid cultural identities. The case studies capture this dynamic interplay between cultural interchange and identity negotiation in our globalised world and propose that hybrid identities are perpetually shifting, renegotiated, and remapped.

Edward Said is another influential post-colonialist who lectured on Hybridity. In his work "Culture and Imperialism," Said (1993) describes how imperialism has created complex cultural relationships that intertwine the colonisers and the colonised. Moreover, he has argued that in the long run, such kinships lead to the formation of hybrid cultural forms that show how, in nature, colonial encounters were ambivalent and contested. The premium that Said's analysis places on Hybridity as far as cultures are concerned is also a *sine qua non*-condition through which intricate and often contradictory dynamics of both colonial and postcolonial societies are understood (Said, 1993).

Stuart Hall furthered the idea of Hybridity within his discourses on the processes of cultural globalisation. He holds contentious views, believing that globalisation has increased the flow of people, goods, and ideas across borders, creating hybrid cultural identities (Hall, 1990). He further believes that cultural identities are not fixed but are in a state of continued flux, forever reshaped by the ongoing interactions and interchanges between various cultural traditions (Hall, 1990).

According to Hall (1990), globalisation has given a strong impetus to the fast-tracking processes of cultural hybridisation, which has propelled Hybridity to centre stage in contemporary cultural life. The abundance of case studies and empirical research in these works, while including the theoretical contributions of Bhabha, Said, and Hall, illustrates the ongoing and engaging nature of Hybridity across different cultural contexts. For example, studies by cultural anthropologists and sociologists document new forms of hybrid cultural practices that have made their way into diverse settings, from the mixture of artistic traditions in the arts to the mixing of traditional and Western medicine. In these studies, Hybridity is manifested as part of everyday life, elaborating specific examples of lively interplay amongst various cultural influences.

Hybridity, a term deeply implicated in understanding modern cultural identity and culture change processes, resists identifications of an essential kind by affirming the fluid, contingent, and hence unstable nature of culture and its practices. The promotion of Hybridity in cultures by practitioners and scholars alike leads to more thoughtful, inclusive solutions for managing and taking advantage of opportunities arising from mounting interlinkage in a multicultural world. Fundamentally, hybridity is a cultural studies and theories concept and a postcolonial critical focus on an active, mobile identification process. The work of influential scholars such as Bhabha, Said, and Hall, who have described hybridity as a complex negotiation process and ongoing cultural exchange, is central to understanding how cultures continuously shape one another. These scholars are key in shaping our understanding of cultural identity as an intricate notion that evolves within the framework of global cultural trends. This concept evokes mental curiosity and wonder.

## Theoretical Framework

The present study draws inspiration from Homi K. Bhabha's notion of Hybridity, which powerfully captures cultural identity-making as a dynamic phenomenon. Bhabha's idea portrays a 'third space' as a semiotic spatial shift, where negotiation and transformation are prevalent. It is within this 'third space' that new hybrid

identities, released from conventional binary oppositions such as coloniser/colonised and native/foreign, occur (Bhabha, 1994). Further into the discussion, Stuart Hall gives a contrasting view of the identities continuously in flux, shaped by constant encounters with host cultures. Cohen (2008) throws light on the mechanism through which these diasporic communities remain connected with their homeland while accommodating themselves to new anchorages for all her theories in collaboration to frame the discussions on the operation of Punjabi cinema as more than just a medium of entertainment but a cultural instrument that constructs and enjoys the hybrid identities of Punjabi-North Americans.

The discussion and findings of this study, especially with the case study of "Aaja Mexico Challiye (2017)", further support the theoretical framework and illustrate how Punjabi filmmakers use cinema to represent a soft image of their culture and negotiate hybrid identities within a global framework. The film is an example of Bhabha's 'third space'; the negotiation between Punjabi characters between the anchors of their traditions and the pulls of modernity creates a complex cultural identity that can resonate with global audiences. The film's representation of cultural flow, bilingualism, and negotiations of belonging dovetails with Stuart Hall's description of identity as the journey along cultural routes rather than roots. Furthermore, the movie acts as a cultural bridge for flowing unity and understanding among the Punjabi diaspora in North America. This accords with Cohen's notion that diasporic communities are those whose lives embody lived heritage-embedded and adaptable dualities. Thus, "Aaja Mexico Challiye" is a motion picture that forensically reads into the events of its narrative, which also serves as a cultural and diplomatic effort. Moreover, media creates and, importantly, celebrates hybrid identities, fostering a sense of inclusion and value within cultural diversity.

## Methodology

The study claims to adopt an unusual and broader qualitative research methodology based entirely on interpretation and thematic analysis. It discusses the concept of Hybridity in Punjabi cinema and its effects on diasporic identities, a topic of significant relevance. Therefore, the selected films analyse the negotiatory Hybridity in detail in terms of culture, language, and narrative elements.

## Qualitative Analysis

The research employs qualitative methodologies to analyse selected Punjabi films critically: *Aaja Mexico Challiye*, *Jatt & Juliet 2*, *Pind America*, and *Ashke*. In these contexts, films are not just cultural texts but powerful tools that actively shape the experience of the Punjabi diaspora. This perspective dives into how cultural negotiations and identity transformations unfold through narrative, image, and embodiment and are inscribed, visualised, and enacted in the community. The cinematic role in constructing cultural identity is a core concern of this research, necessitating precise care for detail and context. This entails the significant deconstruction and reconstruction of various film representations and identity layers within film-making. This analysis not only adds depth to the research but also takes the reader on a captivating journey of discovery. This research critically evaluates the film's symbolic and cultural aspects with its interpretive method. This approach creates space for subjectively interpreting narratives, dialogue, and visuals to arrive at an in-depth meaning and cultural relevance. The interpretative process is important as it involves the audience comprehending how such films influence the dynamic negotiation of cultural identity in the context of the tension between tradition and modernity and the blending of cultural influences.

## Interpretative Analysis

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## Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis systematically identifies and interprets recurring themes and motifs within the selected films. Key themes include:

- ▶ **Language and Hybridity:** Using multiple languages, such as Punjabi, English, and Spanish, highlights the fluidity of hybrid identities and the negotiation of cultural boundaries in the Films.
- ▶ **Tradition versus Modernity:** The tension between preserving Punjabi cultural heritage and adapting to modern, globalised influences is a recurring motif in the narratives.
- ▶ **Belonging and Identity:** The films explore the challenges and opportunities of belonging within a diasporic context, emphasising the continuous redefinition of identity.

## Data Collection and Sources

The primary data is taken from the selected films' narrative, audiovisual, and auditory elements, focusing on scenes, dialogues, and character development processes that highlight Hybridity. Secondary sources, scholarly articles, reviews, and theoretical texts of postcolonial theorists like Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said, and Stuart Hall have provided context and secondary support to the analysis. These sources provide a theoretical foundation for interpreting how the films engage with Hybridity and cultural negotiation.

## Cultural and Media Contextualization

This study positions the research results within a vast cultural and media framework, acknowledging the integral role of the audience. Punjabi cinema serves as an avenue for the diasporic community of that culture to participate in their heritage while grappling with the influences of globalism. The consideration will include the role of digital spaces and transnational cinema in constructing the reception and impact of these films among the diasporic audience, making the audience an active participant in the research.

## Result and Discussion

### Aaja Mexico Challiye

The film "*Aaja Mexico Challiye*" is an effort by the Punjabi Indian diaspora to soften the image of their culture through storytelling in the cinema. Instead of showcasing a cultural mix-up, the movie accentuates how Punjabi filmmakers use cinema as a weapon in their cultural arsenal, representing the community's values, traditions, and aspirations in a larger international context. Through narrative and visual strategies, "*Aaja Mexico Challiye*" aims to counter negative perceptions of the Punjabi diaspora and create a space for positive cultural identity. Notably, the film's engagement with a global audience ensures that everyone, regardless of their background, can be included in this cultural narrative. By placing themselves within the diasporic experience

and negotiating hybrid identities, *"Aaja Mexico Challiye"* contributes to the larger discourse of cultural diplomacy and the work of media in creating a nuanced understanding of the Punjabi community in North America.

### Hybridity

The film *"Aaja Mexico Challiye"* shows Punjabi friends undertaking a journey in Mexico. With narrative comedy and intriguing characters, the film features the influence of cultural intercourse, friendship, and identity, thus giving much insight into Hybridity. According to Smith (2004), Hybridity refers to the melding and mixing of different elements of culture, where new, hybrid subjects emerge. This film is a perfect example of how Hybridity is played out amongst members of the Punjabi diaspora in North America. It reflects on the complexities of retaining one's cultural heritage with the adaptive strategy of people in the Diaspora. Taking these characters to epitomise people who work upon these two dimensions in mind, *"Aaja Mexico Challiye"* mainly highlights the dynamic nature of preserving cultural heritage and accepting a new cultural context, illustrating the third space of Bhabha, where people form hybrid identities.

### Cultural Exchange and Identity

The film *"Aaja Mexico Challiye"* narrates an adventurous story of Punjabis who belong to India, Pakistan, and other countries in an attempt to enter the US through Mexico for a better life. The symbolic meaning of this journey is to deal with the diasporic experience of negotiating between cultural heritage and immediate surroundings. Characters in the film have hybrid identities drawn from their Punjabi heritage and mingled Mexican life. The language, traditions, and interaction among people have exhibited this phenomenon of cross-cultural exposure. In this respect, there is a scene where Pamma, the Protagonist, celebrates a festive occasion with his friends at a local Mexican festival, where they perform a Punjabi Bhangra that earns applause and admiration from the locals (Dhawan, 2022). This brings about a fraternity and understanding between them, highlighting the warmth and camaraderie among the characters. It also shows that hybridity nourishes cultural experience by creating new and embracing identities.

### Hybridity and Language

Hybridity is central to the Film and is connected to language. Using Punjabi, English, and Spanish in dialogues lets the protagonists negotiate different linguistic environments. This bilingual hybridity highlights the fluid nature of identity and reinforces the characters' empowerment in using language as a tool for identity formation. By seamlessly shifting between languages, the characters demonstrate how linguistic hybridity is a powerful tool for cultural negotiation and identity formation. In other languages, some even facilitate communication and contact with the local population, which is in Mexico, thus showing the cultural gaps the protagonists fill. One of the memorable scenes features one of his Punjabi friends attempting to order some food in a mix of broken Spanish and English. This scene creates humorous and poignant moments that bring out the challenges and rewards of intercultural communication, making the audience feel the complexity and richness of the characters' experiences. Mixed languages represent the real-life experiences of the Punjabi diaspora because many people negotiate several linguistic and cultural spheres daily.



## Traditional and Modern Influences

"Aaja Mexico Challiye" (2020) is an idea that reverberates with discord and harmony between traditional Punjabi values and modern influences received in Mexico. The viewer will remember the flow of the characters on screen with the concept of cultural inheritance, which consists of everything from dressing sense to food habits and social behaviour, denoting the firm belief in opening up and trying new things for acceptance in Mexican culture. This is the dynamic play in which tradition runs, and change continues to be a feature of Hybridity, rebirth's identity through cultural exchange on an ongoing basis. For instance, one scene shows Pamma and his fellow Punjabi friends cooking traditional Punjabi food with local ingredients from Mexico, hence devising a fusion meal that imprinted a hybrid identity (Dhawan, 2022). It is a vibrant and dynamic narrative of the hybrid identities vis-à-vis the blending of cultural elements. This also includes the mobility of characters and the coexistence with this swirl of multicultural influences: class fluidity in hybrid identities and how they can enrich somebody's identity and sense of Belonging.

## Meaningful Negotiations

The question of Belonging has always undergirded the film's explorations of Hybridity. The character's journey to Mexico is not merely a physical exploration but also a vast symbolic digression for identity and Belonging. While this trip's challenges and joys have them questioning their cultural identity, they are thrown into the turbulent tides of globalisation. The movie depicts their strife and success in balancing heritage and new artistic influences. In a poignant scene, Pamma reflects on his identity while standing in a picturesque Mexican Panama Forest, contemplating ways his sense of Self, from all he could gather, is made richer by living in Mexico (Dhawan, 2022). This negotiation of Belonging, a central feature of most hybrid identities, is emphasised to make the audience feel the characters' struggle and growth as they seek to reconcile their multiple cultural affiliations. Their travel communicates the complexity of living between cultures, thereby defining how Hybridity can let one know more about them and, in turn, give them an even broader view of where they belong.

## Impact on Diasporic Identity

"Aaja Mexico Challiye" is relevant to the viewers on the grounds of diasporic identity, especially for the Punjabi community of North America. Indeed, the cinematic representation of the in-betweenness of the diasporic identities shown by film allows the audience to relate to a storyline depicting Hybridity, which involves cultural negotiations. The film, by its characters who are prone to teeter-tottering between various cultural landscapes, presents a positive representation of Hybridity and its ability to enhance one's identity. The film is a cultural bridge that may establish bonding and solidarity toward the Diaspora, stressing the unity and understanding it fosters. It also propagates further that hybrid identity is not only viable but also highly valuable, thereby establishing a more inclusive and flexible understanding of the concern of cultural Belonging. Done through an amiable narrative and characters that can be easily related to, "Aaja Mexico Challiye" helps to build a different kind of diasporic nature, which pays homage to Punjabi heritage. At the same time, several of the cultural influences of the Diaspora's new environment are equally considered.

"Aaja Mexico Challiye" performs itself as echoes of Hybridity, rich in the performance of cultural exchange, language, tradition, and Belonging. Thus, the film shows how the Punjab diaspora constructs and

simultaneously negotiates hybrid identities, in a way, a mirror of the challenges and opportunities of living between cultures. An examination of the Hybridity of the film in this regard gives valuable insights into how the Punjabi diaspora navigates identity in the globalised world and achieves an inclusive sense of belonging toward its heritage and new cultural influences.

## "Jatt & Juliet 2"

### Hybridity

*Jatt & Juliet 2*, ' a 2013 Punjabi romantic comedy directed by Anurag Singh, is a cinematic exploration of Hybridity within the Punjabi diaspora. The film, starring Diljit Dosanjh and Neeru Bajwa, follows the story of a Punjabi boy, Fateh Singh, who brings home a girl, Pooja, with a culturally different identity shaped by her experiences in Canada. This narrative serves as a rich canvas for the theme of Hybridity, particularly in the context of the Punjabi diaspora's experiences in multicultural Canada.

### Cultural Intersection and Identity

Hybridity is an idea that has been upfront in "Jatt & Juliet 2" since it transcends the cultural intersections that characters go through. Fateh Singh is a straightforward Punjabi policeman who goes to Canada on an assignment, taking all the traditional values and cultural practices with him. Pooja represents the modern diasporic identity, which fuses her Punjabi roots with life in Canada. The two thus exemplify all the challenges and negotiations involved in hybrid identities. Fateh's experiences in Canada underline his cultural dissonance in getting used to a new environment, different social norms of understanding, and living in a multicultural society. This symbolises what most immigrants go through to reconcile their traditionalist cultural values with the demands and influences of their new surroundings. This is the inherent balancing act identities undertake with and between cultures, eventually forming part of Hybridity.

### Language and Hybridity

One of the primary signifiers of Hybridity in the film is language in "*Jatt & Juliet 2*." The movie is linguistically a mix of Punjabi and English because it represents a bilingual reality for most Punjabi immigrants living in Canada. This linguistic blend goes to the fluidity of hybrid identities, often where the individual is fluent in languages with cultural value. Fateh's initial problems with the language and his ultimate adaptation speak to the linguistic challenges that immigrants face and bridge identities born from such experiences. Pooja, drifting quickly from Punjabi to English, bespeaks the ease with which second-generation immigrants move about in their bilingual reality. The film uses two languages to reflect hybrid identity sites' fluidity and easy adaptability while characters shift between linguistic spheres to communicate and connect with others.

### Tradition vs. Modernity

Tradition and modernity remain two of the principal binary oppositions that floridly play out to create the representation of Hybridity in "*Jatt & Juliet 2*." Fateh stands for traditional Punjabi values, while Pooja stands for a more noisy modernity with a multicultural touch. Their relationship and interaction dramatise the negotiation between these two value systems, reflecting the broader experience of the Punjabi diaspora. Fateh adheres to traditional customs, whether in terms of attire, food, or social behaviour, which differ from Pooja's (See



Figure 1). Pooja lives a very modern lifestyle, replete with Western fashion, a multicultural social circle, and a reasonably modern set of values. This contrast reveals these characters' nature and identity, thereby striving for a conciliation between their traditional heritage and modern avatars. For example, Pooja's attempts to integrate Fateh into the Canadian way of life while still recognising his Punjabi heritage was a dynamic interplay of tradition and modernity. This is characteristic of negotiations in the Diaspora, where people struggle to preserve their cultural heritage while accepting other cultural input in the new land. In showing this process as mutual learning and accommodation, the film focuses on the more optimistic elements of Hybridity.

**Figure 1**

*Fateh (Diljit Dosanjh) and Pooja (Neeru Bajwa) in Jutt and Juliet 2 (2013). Scene Time: (37:00- 41:23).*



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGFJe9e18os>

## Belonging and Identity

Hybridity goes hand in glove with the belonging theme. Fateh's mission in Canada is professional and personal because of his urge to belong there. Starting with Pooja and moving on to all other links, his fate brings forth much of the diasporic experience of finding a place within this realm of multicultural society. Fateh's struggle to fit into the Canadian context yet stay true to his Punjabi roots is polemically located within the lived experiences of many immigrants who negotiate their multiple cultural affiliations. His gradual adaptation and acceptance of a hybrid identity are shown, such as when he learns to blend traditional values with new cultural experiences. On that note, this journey of hybrid identity was empowering and enriching; it demonstrated possibilities for growth and belonging in a multicultural environment. Pooja, already a hybrid identity, serves as a bridge between the traditionalism of Fateh and the modernity of the Canadian context in which they live. Her character shows us the positive result of blurring, in which a person can access multiple cultural sources to create a more inclusive, dynamic sense of Self. One feels that the film proposes that belonging is not about choosing one identity over another but finding a balance that includes diverse cultural influences.

## Effect on Diasporic Identity

Jatt & Juliet 2 establishes a hyper-real engagement with the representation of the diasporic identity of the Punjabi diaspora. It provides daytime drama regarding the nuances through which the hybrid identities spiel themselves out in varieties that circumstantiate the diasporic experience. The movie has made the audience imagine a positive depiction of Hybridity and its enriching properties in one's life by showing successful characters transacting with multifaceted cultural landscapes. The movie tends to instil a sense of bonding and fraternity among different members of the Diaspora. In this regard, it upholds the view that hybrid identities are feasible and worthwhile. Jatt & Juliet 2 helps construct this particular diasporic identity with the unique attributes accorded by its engaging storyline and relatable characters. Finally, it reverifies Punjabi heritage while blending in and being receptive to the multiple cultural influences from the Diaspora's new environment. Jatt & Juliet 2 is a fascinating study of hybridity, cultural intersectionality, language, tradition, and belonging. It illustrates the structuration and negotiation of hybrid Punjabi diasporic identities and the challenges and opportunities involved in living between cultures. The film finally posits that belonging must be negotiated in an identity matrix that engages both rooted heritage and new culture by initiating the creative complexities of negotiating identity in this globalised world

## Pind America

### Hybridity

"Pind America" takes us to the centre of the life paths of the Punjabi Diaspora in America. The story revolves around Kartar Singh and Amar Kaur, a family transitioning from tradition to modernity. Moreover, with this transition naturally comes the further exploration of cultural hybridity in coping with the role of belonging to two worlds. The characters are conflicted between the reality of their tradition and their host nation's progressive reality, signifying the conflict and negotiation of cultural identity among the diaspora. Keeping Traditions in a New World Kartar and Amar belong to a generation that values and keeps Punjab's culture and traditions close to its heart, and they preserve their culture in America. Village life sounds, colours, scents, and smells are a part of their soul. They have houses in America filled with common Punjabi patterns and stick firmly to employing the Punjabi language. In their view, this language is vital for conserving their culture. This allegiance is, however, bound to conflict with the American way of life adopted by their children. The younger American-born and American-raised generation tends to be in a bicultural struggle with their mixed identity. Nauv, Kartar, Amar's son, and Khushi, his American wife, speak English effortlessly and have assimilated into American culture. They dream for themselves and their personal financial well-being, occasionally contradicting their parents' vision. Language is a rich signifier of this generational tension: Kartar and Amar use Punjabi, while their children and grandchildren have no trouble speaking English, underscoring the cultural transition and redefinition of self within immigrant families.

## Blended Identity of the Younger Generation

The younger American-born and American-raised generation tends to conflict with their mixed identity. Nauv, Kartar, Amar's son, and Khushi, his American wife, speak English effortlessly and are assimilated into American culture. They dream for themselves and their personal financial well-being, occasionally contradicting their parents' vision. Language is a rich signifier of this generational tension: Kartar and Amar use Punjabi, while

their children and grandchildren have no trouble speaking English, underscoring the cultural transition and redefinition of self within immigrant families.

### Conflicts Between Tradition and Modernity

The dives into the universal clashes between modernity and tradition. For example, Kartar and Amar's insistence on fixating Tejpal in marriage contradicts his dream of having a love marriage. Likely, they have differing assumptions about career expectations and gender roles compared to their children's desire to pursue those things. Those personal clashes exemplify the more general problem many immigrant families face: maintaining heritage versus living up to the expectations of their host nation.

### Managing Hybrid Identities

"Pind America" deconstructs the negotiation of hybrid identities, dealing with people as dynamic beings and not static characters. They are living beings who catch and throw back every moment between the two worlds of culture they are born into. The story culminates in an optimistic ending where both generations can enjoy and respect each other's views, and there is mutual understanding and compromise.

### "Ashke"

#### Hybridity

The 2018 film "Ashke" reflects on Hybridity through the narrative of Pamma, an avid Bhangra dancer who immigrates to Canada. His life as a Bhangra-lover is vividly portrayed as an ardent Bhangra enthusiast caught between the passion for Bhangra and a relatively new social-cultural context in a different country. One can read the theme of Hybridity in "Ashke" through the intersecting characters. His experiences in Canada exposed him to many cultural norms and practices. This is called hybrid identity, born from the collision of modern Canadian life with traditional Punjabi values, which are concerns many people can relate to.

### Language and Hybridity

Hybridity in 'Ashke' is extensively represented through language. In this respect, characters often intermix Punjabi and English, showing unstable rhetorical situations and bilingual communications. These situations, such as the dinner scene where Pamma speaks to his nephew in Punjabi and the nephew responds in English, testify to two realities and the constant negotiation of one's Self. This bilingualism pointed out generational differences in cultural adaptations and tension between tradition and modernity.

### Traditional vs. Modern Influences

The film treads between tension and synergy derived from traditional Punjabi values and modern Canadian influences. Pamma is deeply devoted to Bhangra and believes in passing this tradition on to the young Punjabi Generation. However, His nephews and all the other young characters are much more at ease with adopting the modern Canadian way of life. This dynamic interplay of tradition and modernity has become the hallmark of Hybridity, where identities get reshaped through continuous cultural interaction. In the central moment, a school structures a Bhangra competition to involve the local Punjabi community and inspire them about their roots. Their efforts to include more contemporary elements in the traditional dance form dramatise his struggle to find a hybrid identity that does not fail him for any culture.

## Negotiating Belonging

The theme of Belonging stands at the core of the film's exploration of Hybridity. Pamma's journey allegorises his holding on to his cultural heritage while trying to fit into the new environment. In this respect, individuals balancing their cultural affiliations represent the continuous negotiation process. Such negotiation is best manifested in Pamma's condition and his struggle for suitable accommodation between his Punjabi roots and Canadian society. One of the events during which Pamma arrives is in association with some community members, where folks play typical Punjabi music, a cultural element that profoundly resonates with the characters while touching hints that influence their contemporary lifestyles in Canada (Singh, 2018). This provides a perfect set point for evaluating outcomes for the Diaspora relating to how it sustains relations towards heritage but negotiates the new environment. How the characters feel and relate to being and making identity through these events describes how hybrid identities are constructed and bargained for, leading to a sense of belonging with heritage and the new cultural influence.

## Diasporic Identity

The film "Ashke" significantly contributes to forming a diasporic identity, particularly for the North American Punjabi community. The movie's portrayal of hybrid identities, a narrative element previously absent in films, gives a voice to the diasporic experiences in a profoundly relatable way, allowing them to share a story about their cultural negotiations. The picture delves into characters who navigate cultural boundaries, thereby providing a rich fabric to build arguments that celebrate the impact of hybridisation on legitimising cultural choice.

"Ashke" is a cultural celebration for solidarity and unity among the Diaspora. Hybridity is conceived through the lens of hybrid identity formation, whereby individuals adopt elements from various cultures to form a new identity. In this context, the films' representations prompt a more dynamic and expansive idea of culture and belonging. With its captivating story and relatable characters, "Ashke" constructs a distinctive diasporic identity sensitive to Punjabi tradition. It unites its audience base through the confluence of different cultural influences of the Diaspora's new home.

## Conclusion

Through an understanding of hybridities in Punjabi cinema, much can be gleaned about how diasporic communities in North America negotiate identities. Punjabi cinema is based primarily on the diasporic communities' existence between cultural survival and cultural synthesis. "Aaja Mexico Challiye" and "Jatt & Juliet 2" not only entertain but also serve as cultural artefacts defining hybrid diasporic identities. The case studies capture this dynamic interplay between cultural interchange and identity negotiation in our globalised world and propose that hybrid identities are perpetually shifting, renegotiated, and remapped.

Media are central to the deliberations. A case in point is the analysis above showing how Punjabi films establish a link along which diasporic audiences negotiate their cultural heritage while simultaneously embracing and internalising their newfound cultural diversity. This dual process involves interpreting and applying cultural attributes depicted in the films to the situation of the diaspora and, in turn, adapting these films to the cultural plurality of the host country. The process thus provides the glue to bring together the elements of the home country with the host country and modifies the diasporic experience.

Future research could build on this foundation by analysing new films from Punjabi cinema or by examining these connections alongside several other diasporic film traditions worldwide. Further, this would contribute to a more thorough critical understanding of the global and local aspects of cultural Hybridity within the film. Such further work will illuminate how cultural identities are represented, contested, and authenticated in an increasingly interrelated world. Therefore, Punjabi cinema remains a lively field for further investigation by scholars. At the same time, it also offers important perspectives in the current debates around identity, culture, and Hybridity concerning postcolonial studies.



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