



Representation of Seclusion, Torment and Foreignness in Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner'

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Abstract

Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner* (1968) offers an insightful investigation of hostility, moral encounter and the pursuit for belonging in a fragmented contemporary universe. It focuses on the protagonist Sindi Oberoi, a man of diverse inheritance and unreliable uniqueness. The novel embodies the themes of isolation, exasperation and foreignness in physical and emotional manner. Through Sindi's sensitive impartiality, Joshi portrays the spiritual segregation of an individual alienated from human associations and moral standards. The novel discloses the journey of inner confusion and foreignness of Sindi Oberoi who becomes the representative of the contemporary existential adversity in a progressively avaricious society. His disinterest leads to responsive irritation, liability and self-realization as he tackles with enquiries of love, obligation and persistence.

The prime objective of this research paper is to portray seclusion, torment and foreignness in Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner'. It mirrors the human fight to reunite identity and ethics in a world marked by dislocation and disappointment. Joshi competently indicates the essentials of existential attitude and Indian spiritual belief, bestowing solitude not merely as social estrangement but as a pathway toward self-awareness.

Keywords: Arun Joshi, the foreigner, isolation, torment, foreignness, hostility, eccentricity, morality

Introduction

Arun Joshi (1939–1993) born in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, was a well-known Indian English writer. The characters in his novels are metropolitan and English communicators. Throughout his life, he lived an isolated life and kept himself away from publicity. He came under the influence of national leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jayprakash Narayan and existential exponents Sartre and Albert Camus. His works are as under: Novels: *The Foreigner* (1968), *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* (1971), *The Apprentice* (1974), *The Last Labyrinth* (1981) ^[6], *The City and The River* (1990). He obtained the Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel *The Last Labyrinth* in the year 1982. Short Stories: *The Survivor and Other Stories* (1975), *The Only American from Our Village*, *The Boy with the Flute* and *The Homecoming*.

Literature Review

Literature review is the significant feature which explores the former researcher's clarifications on the hypothetical subject. The present study focuses on the significant thematic concerns such as seclusion, torment and foreignness in Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner*. In support of this, the researcher has attempted to depict the opinions of several academicians and research scholars. The indispensable evidences are demonstrated as per the precondition of the occurrences.

1. Sudarshan, Aditya. 'The Strange Case of Arun Joshi', *The Hindu*. Retrieved 14 February 2014 ^[7].

This article examines the life and work of the secluded Indian novelist Arun Joshi. It suggests Joshi's isolated nature contributed to his under-appreciation. It highlights for its astuteness, edifice and investigation of existential themes.

2. Dr. Anjan Kumar, 'Existential Angst in the Novels of Arun Joshi', *Ashwamegh*. Retrieved 17 August 2016 ^[2]

Arun Joshi's novels depict protagonist's contending with estrangement and an exploration for meaning in an avaricious contemporary world. He offers an Indian perseverance through rational impressions like Karma, leading characters toward understanding and self-realization.

3. Dr. Shankar Kumar, 'The Novels of Arun Joshi A Critical Study'. *Atlantic*. 2003 ^[8]

This book shows the greatness of Arun Joshi as a sensitive writer. It reveals his instinct ability to project the glimpses of Indian ethos and western influences. It reflects his psychological insight and understandings of his protagonists.

4. Prasad, Madhusudan, 'Arun Joshi: The Novelist'. *Indian Literature*. Volume-24, Issue-4, p. 103–114. *JSTOR*, 1981

This essay depicts a perceptive precarious estimation of Arun Joshi's imaginary world, underscoring his emotional complexity and ethical alignment. Prasad highlights how Joshi's novels discover the existential quandaries of contemporary Indian personages, their sense of estrangement, rootlessness and pursuit for meaning amid covetousness and moral deterioration.

5. Dr. Abnish Singh Chauhan, 'The Fictional World of Arun Joshi: Paradigm Shift in Values'. *Authorspress*, 2016 ^[3]

The book offers an acute enquiry of Arun Joshi's novels. It also argues that a paradigm alteration in values is a key leitmotif in Joshi's work. It comprises with eight chapters

which explores the concept of isolation through each of his fictional works.

Research Problem

The present research problem lies in Joshi's use of thematic concerns such as seclusion, torment and foreignness to echo the predicament of individuality and belonging in a morally disorganized world. The study scrutinizes how these circumstances outline the protagonist's realization, his associations, and his quest for self-realization. It further investigates the emotional, customary, and existential forces that detach Sindi Oberoi from both his milieu and himself, making him a symbolic representation of the estranged modern individual.

Theoretical Framework

This study deals with psychological and existential theoretical perspectives. Psychological theory helps in understanding Sindi's inner conflicts, identity crisis and trauma. His emotional torment and seclusion can be interpreted as symptoms of psychological fragmentation and existential anxiety. Existentialism theory offers philosophical foundation to analyze Sindi Oberoi's sense of alienation, moral confusion, detachment, guilt and search for self-questioning.

Research Methodology

The research comprises with qualitative, descriptive, contextual, analytical and interpretative methodologies. The researcher has used primary and secondary sources for the better interpretation of the text. He also prefers close reading of the texts with respect to the concerned research.

Index Terms

The present research highlights the basic key concepts such as seclusion, psychological torment and foreignness in Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner'.

Seclusion

Seclusion is a state of separation, removal, or disregard, either corporeal, emotive, or psychosomatic. It is practiced by the characters who feel disaffected from humanity and interactions. It explores the inward mechanisms of the human cognizance, existential nervousness, and the pursuit for identity. It is a space where characters provoke their deepest uncertainties, culpability and yearning for connection. It reveals the stiffness between the individual and culture, emphasizing ethical, national, or mystical spaces.

Psychological Torment

It delineates profound sensitive or intellectual anguish caused by internal or external influences that interrupt a person's harmony of mind, uniqueness, or responsive equilibrium. It often demonstrates as disquiet, fault, anxiety, unfriendliness, or inner battle and can be discovered through both emotional and mythical viewpoints.

Foreignness

It refers to the state or sensation of being a foreigner, of not belonging to a specific place, nation, or community. It often includes a sense of hostility, dislodgment, and distinctiveness crisis, both in corporal and emotional terms.

Textual Analysis

Seclusion in Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner'

'Seclusion' is one of the fundamental psychosomatic concerns in Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner' (1968). Sindi Oberoi, the protagonist of the novel, is the symbol of sensitive, mystical and communal seclusion. Joshi employs alienation of Sindi to highlight the contemporary situation of hostility and the search for belonging in a morally patchy world. He feels detached from his environments and fights to search meaning in his life. He contends with a sense of isolation in his personal relationships and in society. He experiences a deep exploration for his uniqueness and persistence. He enquires his role in the world and seeks to comprehend his place amidst the intricacies of modern life. Joshi reveals the several kinds of seclusion through his prescribed novel.

Sindi's sense of detachment starts from his bereaved childhood. Basically he is parentless, rootless and homeless. He has no fix identity of his own. He belongs to of several cultures: India, Kenya and England. He feels alienated and inwardly empty which affects directly on his emotional background. He deliberately escapes deep responsive bonds, dreading pain and accountability. His relationships with the characters June Blyth and Babu are marked by impartiality and reluctance. His seclusion becomes a defense instrument against emotional susceptibility. He discloses his identity and confesses the intensity of his self-imposed isolation, 'I am a foreigner everywhere. I have no roots. I am parentless, rootless and homeless.'

Sindi felt the rootlessness after his uncle's death. He asserts, 'Now I suppose I existed only for dying.' (TF: 56).

Sindi's worldwide background makes him socially hybrid but communally estranged. In England, he is seen as an Indian outsider. In India, he feels Westernized and disengaged from his roots. His in-betweenness echoes the postcolonial predicament of many Indians who studied overseas but could not reintegrate into Indian civilization.

'The novel reflects existentialist philosophies of the impulsiveness and illogicality of human experience.' Joshi represents this seclusion as indicative of contemporary identity crisis, a man evacuated biologically and existentially.

Sindi's disinterest extends to his ethical life. He adopts a thinking of non-involvement, rejecting to necessitate authoritatively. After Babu's tragic death, his loneliness from moral obligation leads to existential hopelessness. Through this, Joshi reveals modern man's separation from ethical and divine values. This seclusion represents the hostility of the postcolonial, contemporary individual ensnared between avariciousness and moral barrenness. Finally Sindi's seclusion transforms into self-awareness. He comprehends that unbiasedness without sympathy leads to desolation. The moral arousal he experiences marks a measure from sterile separation to expressive contribution. Joshi tells that,

'Mystical development lies in balancing objectivity with human understanding. Seclusion reflected in the novel is a burden as well as a lesson. Seclusion is a state of loneliness and a philosophical existential criterion.'

Oberoi faces choices that underline the existentialist prominence on individual autonomy and the escorting obligation to make meaningful decisions. His journey involves traversing these choices and their concerns. Author projects the absurdity and vagueness,

'The novel shows an apprehension and desolation curtailing from the consciousness of one's own humanity and the vagueness of existence.'

Oberoi's internal skirmishes mirror this existential trepidation. It raises the questions of existence, identity and the human condition through an existentialist lens. Through his narratives, Joshi offers readers to imitate on the significances of arranging material improvement over spiritual and existential serenity. Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner' is an influential evidence which reveals the complications of human survival. It navigates the labyrinth of dispassion, love, and self-discovery within the milieu of a frenzied world.

Torment in Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner'

Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner* is a metaphysical novel that investigates into the inward struggles, disaffection and ethical predicaments of its protagonist, Sindi Oberoi. The novel deals with mystical, expressive and transcendent torment. It permeates the entire description of modern existential situation of the individual who feels itinerant in a world mourning of implication and belonging.

The protagonist Sindi is preoccupied by a sense of disinterest and emptiness. Though he lives in the countries like India, Kenya and London, he feels he is alienated. This rootlessness establishes a psychological torment. He is continuously beleaguered by self-doubt and misperception about his dealings and ethical choices. His powerlessness to unite deeply with June and Babu, generates a responsive nothingness that leads to culpability and inner struggle. He lives in the world of non-involvement and avoids discomfort. He becomes the basis of greater nuisance as it detaches him from unpretentious human understandings. Sindi Oberoi is a man as an outsider and rootless. He is a child of diverse paternity. He lives in the world of loneliness and detachment. He is a foreigner resides in London, Boston or in New Delhi. His father is Kenyan and mother is from an English territory. He becomes an urchin at the age of four when his parents decease in an air – crash near Cairo. He is brought up by his uncle in Kenya who also expires soon. He is totally fragmented and lacking of parental love. When he comes to United States, the feeling of foreignness is greatly experienced by him even when he is among foreign students. He confesses,

'I am outlandish everywhere, materially and symbolically. I am a born refugee. My foreignness lay within me. I born without family ties and country. I have been denied of love and cultural roots.' (TF: 3)

Thus he becomes a nomadic extraterrestrial and rootless.

Sindi's association with June and Babu reveals his moral feebleness. He reassures June to marry Babu, yet feels distrust and guiltiness when Babu expires in an accident. Sindi's endeavor to vindicate his objectivity only strengthens his emotional misery, as he comprehends that meaninglessness cannot defend one from moral accountability. His responsibility over Babu's bereavement becomes a form of ethical atonement, forcing him to challenge his own barrenness and moral vagueness. Sindi Oberoi may be a man without roots so he feels lost, alien and alone wherever he goes. He says in a mood of frustration,

'I fail to perceive any meaning or purpose in life. Against this background of emotional rootlessness, the assorted incidents of my life appear more comprehensible.' (TF: 4)

'The Foreigner' is one of the leading and convincing existential works of Indo -English Fiction. It depicts the human anguish and existential torture. It is the story of a displaced young man who looks out moorings in his drifting life. Sindi Oberoi proclaims,

'I live an unhappy and meaningless universe. My existence is absurd and my anguished consciousness of isolation is revealed through my social conventions.' (TF: 10)

Arun Joshi's novels are comprises with existential thinking. It is predisposed by the thinkers like Sartre and Camus. Sindi's irritation stems from his quest for meaning in a world that offers nothing. He embodies the existential interloper, surrounded between the longing for association and the terror of assurance. He reveals existential anguish by asking himself:

'What is the objective of existing if one must live unaccompanied?'

Sindi is a person of mixed origin as he born in Kenya to Indian parents and graduated in the West Country. Here the readers observe his fragmented identity. He feels outlandish both in the West and in India. Thus he signifies the postcolonial catastrophe of identity. His tussle to resolve Eastern unworldly standards with Western avarice adds to his inner confusion. This identity nuisance represents the broader situation of contemporary man, caught between custom and modernism.

Finally, Sindi's torment leads him toward self-awareness. He understands that true impartiality is not withdrawal, but compassionate engagement without selfish desire. His recognition of obligation and emotional connection marks his spiritual emergence.

'Torment is not only a suffering but also a pathway to self-discovery. It becomes the catalytic agent for his alteration from a disconnected spectator to an ethically stimulated individual.'

According to Joshi,

'Mental, ethical and existential struggles reflect the modern individual's search for identity and meaning in an isolated world.'

Through Sindi's torment, Joshi captures the essence of the human condition—a restless journey from confusion to clarity, from alienation to awareness.

Foreignness in Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner'

Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner* explores the concepts like foreignness, estrangement, rootlessness and the search for distinctiveness in the modern universe. The protagonist Sindi Oberoi represents the foreignness and existential circumstances. Through his experiences, Joshi scrutinizes the meaning of a foreigner in a cultural, divine, emotional and terrestrial sense.

Arun Joshi highlights Sindi's spiritual foreignness. He reveals his condition of being alienated from his own self and ethical center. His agitated travelling across regions reflects an inner journey toward self-understanding. He eventually comprehends that true autonomy and belonging come not from outflow but from recognition and association. By accepting sympathy and accountability, he overpowers his mystical unfriendliness and achieves inner harmony.

Sindi's helplessness to form sensitive acquaintances further emphasizes his foreignness. His associations with June Blyth and Babu are spoiled by dispassion, fear of familiarity and guiltiness. He reserves himself from emotive

connection, trusting it to be a form of servitude. However, this impartiality only expands his sense of remoteness, making him ardently extraneous even to those closest to him. June makes an insightful remark about Sindi especially when they are in relationship with each other, 'There is somewhat bizarre and reserved about you. I would predict that when people are with you they don't feel like they are with a human being. Maybe it's an Indian characteristic, but I have a sensation you would be a foreigner everywhere.' (TF: 29)

Sindi resides in multiple worlds as he was born in Kenya to Indian parents, educated in England, and later lived in India. Yet he remained everywhere alienated, foreigner and without belongingness. His personality is disjointed across nations and cultures. In England, he is observed as a stranger due to his race. In India, he feels indifferent from the traditional communal order and moral prospects. This cultural dislocation mirrors the postcolonial disorder of hybridity and rootlessness, where the self- struggles to find steadiness between East and West.

Sindi's sense of foreignness shoots mainly from his existential isolation. He feels separated from societies, relations and even himself. His way of non-involvement makes him an outcast to unaffected human sentiments. This inner separation reflects the modern man's existential quandary: to live among others yet remain intensely unaccompanied.

Thus Sindi's foreignness becomes representative of existential destitution, where the individual is cut off from significance and belonging. Arun Joshi uses Sindi's foreignness as a representation for the modern humanoid dilemma. In a world of shifting individualities and moral reservations, every individual is a foreigner.

'The novel suggests that foreignness is not merely peripheral but an integral part of human survival. It is the replication of the soul's rupture from meaning, affection and actuality.'

Thus Arun Joshi transmutes the idea of foreignness into a rational investigation into individuality and belonging.

'The journey of Sindi Oberoi from hostility and unbiasedness to consideration and engrossment shows that foreignness is both a blasphemy and a promoter for self-realization.'

Through Sindi, Joshi portrays the modern man as a everlasting foreigner, seeking home not in natural features, but in the complexities of the self.

Pedagogical Implications

Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner* offers rich pedagogical implications to discover existential, mental, and cultural magnitudes of human understanding. The research can help apprentices recognize how individual isolation replicates broader metaphysical and communal issues. Students can evaluate the protagonist Sindi Oberoi's psychological tussles as a means to understand emotional practicality and the effects of sensitive objectivity, culpability, and ethical fight. Through this study, students can discuss on individuality, dislocation, and cultural hybridity. It also allows the learners to see how literature interconnects with human sciences. Sindi's journey from impartiality to understanding offers a valuable context for ethical and demonstrative edification and motivates them to oppose the penalties of segregation, self-interest, and moral indecisiveness.

Major Findings and Results

The major findings of this research are as follows.

1. The study reveals that Sindi Oberoi's seclusion stems from his failure to establish emotive closeness, replicating his inner emptiness and separation from society and self.
2. Sindi's emotional objectivity and self-centered choices lead to deep emotional nuisance.
3. The sense of foreignness in the novel encompasses beyond the somatic limitations of nations.
4. Sindi's journey signifies the existential search for legitimacy, proposing that consciousness of one's foreignness can lead to inner development and understanding.
5. The novel mirrors the postcolonial consciousness, where individuals trapped between Western rationalism and Eastern religiousness experience transposition and moral misunderstanding.
6. The tenacity of Sindi's irritation lies in his apprehension of human connectivity and moral answerability.

Scope for Further Research

- a. Present research can be compared with Arun Joshi's other novels such as 'The Strange Case of Billy Biswas' and 'The Apprentice' to trace the recurrent pattern of existential isolation and emotional irritation across his works.
- b. Scholars may discover how Joshi's depiction of foreignness imitates postcolonial uniqueness disasters, ethnic hybridity and globalization's influence on selfhood and belonging.
- c. Further studies could inspect the rational foundations of Joshi's thought, how Eastern religion and Western existentialism outline Sindi's ethical and divine transformation.
- d. Researchers can investigate the constant significance of seclusion, torment and foreignness in today's context of digital hostility, immigration, and identity disintegration.
- e. Future scholars may discover how Joshi's themes can be incorporated into didactic, emotional, or sociological backgrounds to substitute compassion, moral likeness and self-awareness among learners.

Conclusion

Thus Arun Joshi's 'The Foreigner' presents a thoughtful examination of the human consciousness, apprehending the deep sense of seclusion, torment, and foreignness that defines modern survival. Through the character of Sindi Oberoi, Joshi discloses how hostility arises from physical displacement, demonstrative disinterest and moral hesitation. Sindi's emotional torment echoes his struggle to reunite longing, accountability and the exploration for meaning in a disjointed universe. His sense of outsider signifies the worldwide human condition, an inner expatriate that surpasses cultural and nationwide restrictions. However, Joshi suggests that restoration lies in self-awareness, moral liability and human connectivity.

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