

LONLINESS, ALIENATION AND SUFFERING CAUSED BY LOVE EXPERIENCES OF SINDI AS PICTURIZED BY ARUN JOSHI'S THE FOREIGNER: AN ANALYSIS.

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to present Sindi's loneliness, alienation and sufferings caused by his love experience with June Blyth in Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner*. The article traces how Sindi Oberoi gets a sudden realization after the death of his beloved in this novel. The novel is the life story of Sindi which revolves around June, his love. The love, tenderness and affection has changed the mind of the man who has detached himself from the society. The sense of loneliness, alienation and suffering was well projected through the character Sindi by Joshi. Being born in Kenya and educated in USA and England, Sindi settles down in India after experiencing all the bitterness in life. Thus, this novel proves that the death of one's beloved could create a tragic peripetia in one's life.

Key Words: lonliness, alienation , detachment , love, sufferings, death, tragedy.

Indian English literature is the result of colonialism. Though colonialism ended decades ago but its ashes are still there in the sky of India. India got its Independence politically but the people are still trapped in cultural colonization. Majority of Indian English writers are graduated from the west so they were almost caught in confusion whether to share their experiences in their mother tongue or in English. Indian English literature flourished as the fruitful response to the western influences in 19th and 20th century. English was emphasized in writing to d-orientalise the cultural regeneration of Indian society. With the use of English many writers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Kashi Prasad Goshe and Michel Madhusudan Dutt tried to bring social, religious, and political awareness.

Indian English writers were highly preoccupied with the politics but they often wrote for the readership until the thirties. Post-Independence writing focused on social, religious, and political awareness but post-colonial literature focused on the sufferings of men in 20th century. Arun Joshi's fictions are the representatives of modern predicament of human suffering. A new trend of social and political realism started between 1930s and 1940s the freedom movements were so much active during this period and works like K.S Venkatramani's *Murugan the Riller* (1927) and Kandan, *The Patriot* (1932) were written on the inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi. Even after independence, the writers like R.K NARAYAN, K.A. Abbas, N.Nagarajan, Raj Rao, Manohar Malgonkar, Nayantara Sahgal and Chaman Nahal were inspired by the ideas of

Gandhi. But the Indian English literature took a great leap after the entry of the 'trios', Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K Narayan. William Walsh rightly says thus:

"It was these who defined the area in which the Indian novel was to operate. They established the suppositions, the manner, the idioms, the concept of character and the nature of the themes. Which were to give the Indian novels its distinctiveness" (P 247)

Mulk Raj Anand gave a definite tone and texture to Indian English literature. He gave his voice for the oppressed people in his novels like *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) and *Two Leaves and Bud* (1937). He proved himself as "the advocate of the downtrodden and the unprivileged" (Iyengar 335). The other writers who presented social realism are Bhabani Bhattacharya, Kamala Markandaya, Kushwanth Singh and Chaman Nahal. Post- Colonial novelists focused much on private individuals than the public issues. Arun Joshi wrote about the inner sufferings of individuals and the human psyche in his novels. He projected the loneliness of human mind and the dilemma of mind caught between powerlessness, meaninglessness, formlessness, cultural estrangement, social isolation, and self-estrangement. By focusing on these themes, he clearly brings out the truth of human life on Earth.

Arun Joshi not follow Mulk Raj Anand, R.K Narayan and Bhabani Bhattacharya. He was unique in his writings as he presented the psychology of human mind, the inner and outer consciousness of human mind in his novels. Arun Joshi was born On 7th July, 1939 in Varanasi, where his father worked as the faculty of science department in Banaras Hindu University. He started his education at Varanasi and graduated in Lahore and later acquired scholarship for USA and pursued his higher studies in USA. Joshi has written five novels such as 1. *The Foreigner* (1968), 2. *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* (1971), 3. *The Apprentice* (1974) 4. *The Last Labyrinth* (1981) and 5. *The City and the River* (1990) and published a collection of short stories. He was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi award in 1982 for his novel *The Last Labyrinth*. Arun Joshi had a great love for Indian scriptures, The Bagavadgitha, The Upanishads, Vedanta, and Mahatma Gandhi. In an Interview with Pier Paolo Picuco, he confessed his love for Indian tradition. He says thus:

"It certainly have some affinity with this country I have found it lately. One is the affinity of sensual kind and there are offers, too. Each country in India is unique and all India remain unique. You know, historically, India has always been inner- directed and never outer directed like many other countries... There is no other country like this for the religious size, for the spiritual, the Bhakthi movement. India then has dealings with God which are peculiar" (89).

The Hindu scriptures recommend three different ways to attain the state of liberation. They are, Janyoga, Bhathiyoga, and Karmayoga. Arun Joshi described all these ways in his novels. Joshi's works had an influence from Arnold and Wordsworth. Hari Mohan Prasad says thus m" Joshi is a novelist in the tradition of Kafka, Camus and Sartre. He says thus: "I did read Camus and Sartre, I like *The Plague* and *The Outsider*. I might have been influenced by them" (P4). He was strongly influenced by the existential themes and ideas spoken by these two writers. His novel *The Foreigner* has the traces of Camus's heroes and has the influence of Conrad R.K Dhawan rightly says thus: Arun Joshi's fiction conforms to Conrads's conception of the novel"

(P17). Joshi have presented the problems of human dilemmas and he admitted to Purabi Banerjee during the conversation on *The Foreigner* thus,

“It is largely autobiographical. I am... a somewhat alienated man myself... some parts of *The Foreigner*, my first book was written when I as a student in America. I gave it up then and completed it later in 1966” (P4).

The Foreigner presents the essentially serious contexts of the present-day writings. This story traces the life of Sindi Oberoi and young man who is detached from the society and feels alienated. Being born in Kenya, gets educated in England and USA but finally he settles down in India, His alienation continued even when he changed his geography, nationality and even culture. His short- lived affair with June, an American woman and the encounter of Babu who loved June was the example of his detachment from the society. The story of protagonist revolves around the female characters such as June, Blynth and Shiela Khemka in this novel. Joshi gave much importance to the female characters in his novels. C.D Chingre in his article says thus,

“There are two forms in which this mysterious power manifests itself in Arun Joshi’s novels- i) Woman as mother and ii) woman as beloved or to use, a more appropriate word, enchantress. Looked from a different point of view, they represent two different forces – the centripetal, unifying forces that try to maintain or establish the protagonist’s relationship with the world around him and bind him to accept it and the centrifugal force that tries to tear him away from that world or from his own self” (P155).

The importance he has given to the female characters in his novels proves that his male characters are highly susceptible to the influence of woman. The focus he gave on the female characters shows his interests in presenting the problem of women in the society as well as home. Sindi Oberoi was an Indian but was born in Kenya, educated in Uganda, USA and England and finally settles down in India. He came across several nations but could not locate himself into any nationality. He met June, an American girl in a foreign student’s party and falls for her as she was beautiful, passionate being, sensual and affectionate. As Joshi was influenced by the Indian tradition, he found Sita, Draupadi, Ahalya, tara and Mandodari in June. Sindi comments on June thus,

“ I stayed awake, counting the broken pieces of my detachment. I counted the gains and losses and the losses mocked me like an abominable joker” (*The Foreigner* 84).

Sindi developed a sense of tenderness for June in his heart. He even bought her little gifts and started admiring her. He loved her presence and missed her when she was not around. June also loved Sindi deeply. Sindi sometimes failed to reciprocate her love and created some problem among them. June was a simple girl who lived with her mother. She desperately wanted to marry someone and settle down in life. When she asked him to marry her, he replied:

Whatever I had been so far in life seemed to indicate that marriage was more often a lust for possession than anything else” (*The Foreigner* 67)

This made her move away from him. But Sindi could not forget her. June refused to meet him after that and decided to marry Babu. When Sindi asks her to dine with him, she avoided him by saying that,

“I am sorry, Sindi I will not be able to see you anywhere. I mean not as used to Babu and I are getting married soon” (*The Foreigner* 111)

Though Sindi felt bad for June, he still doesn't want to marry her. Though Babu Loved her deeply, he hesitated to marry her because of his father and the fear of June might be in affair with Sindi. One night when June had to go to Babu's place, she ends up being with Sindi. This made Babu and June to quarrel at the end of the conversation. June admitted that she had slept with Sindi Babu being an Indian mentally, he could not accept the American standards of life and broke up with her. Babu in the peak of anger, ended his life himself in the car accident. K. Radha observes thus “Sindi and June know the Babu that Babu had really committed suicide. He has been sent out of his college as he failed in all his examinations. He has been disowned by his father for intending to marry June” (111) June soon came to know that she is pregnant with Babu's Child. She sent a letter to Sindi saying all these when he was in New York. She even requested him to come back and help her to solve the situation. When Sindi came back, he found that June was not found in her place. When he enquires her neighbors, he comes to know she died in the operation held for abortion. Mohanty Says thus,

“June first loves Sindi, then Babu and Sindi. But what she wants is not only love but motherhood. When there is the threat of her illegitimate pregnancy caused by Babu, she becomes panicky and decides to abort it. She dies of abortion. The absence of father in Mrs. Blynth's family leads it to a destruction” (P 117).

June's death left Sindi in depression. His story revolves around June but she had met such a tragic death. Radakrishnan rightly says thus, “She could be described to be simple woman who wants to be of use to others and who desperately wants to belong to someone and marry him and settle down with him” (P64). Thus, her love for him made him a tender person but her death is surely a tragic peripetia to him.

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