



A PERFECT BLEND OF IMAGINATION AND REALISM IN THE NOVEL THE FOREIGNER BY ARUN JOSHI

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Abstract

Being one of the most prominent novelists of Indian English novelists, Arun Joshi presented the realistic picture of the modern world. By using his extra ordinary power of imagination, he depicted the problems of modern man like the problem of crisis of identity, meaninglessness of life, sense of alienation, problem of corruption in post independent India etc. in the novel The Foreigner. He gave the solution of the problems of the modern man based on the Karmik principles of the Srimadbhagvad Gita as preached by Lord Krishana to Arjun. He represented the realistic picture of corruption in India after Independence by his noble power of imagination. Through the fictional character of Sindi Oberoi, he presented the journey of a common man in the world, as the common man got disturbed about his existence in the universe, suffered from crisis of identity etc. Arun Joshi gave the solution as redemption is in the involvement of the right action or selfless service of whole mankind.



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Through the fictional character of Sindi, Arun Joshi attempted to explore the major universal problem of modern man. His fiction highlights the fact that joint families are being scattered today, and there is a sense of loneliness in the life of man. In the modern world, man suffers from the problem of alienation, meaninglessness of life, and rootlessness because of loneliness, anxiety, depression, angst and disintegration. By his excellent power of imagination, he presents the character of Sindi who is an alienated character who believes in the negative philosophy of detachment. Actually, he did not have the right sense of detachment. He said,

“ I had wanted detachment but I did not know what kind of resolution were necessary to achieve it.” (The Foreigner p. 67 by Arun Joshi Orient Paper Back 2010) 1

He wanted detachment in his life but he did not know how to achieve it. By having negative philosophy of detachment, he became disintegrated from the society. Both Sindi and

June had great love for each other. She wanted to marry with him. He thought that marriage is social system of possessing someone and being possessed. Since, he did not want involvement, he did not marry her and lost her for forever. After being disintegrated, he became the victim of inaction, and began to run away from social responsibilities. When June proposed him for marriage, he imagined,

“ I tried to imagine myself living in one of those inexpensive suburbs outside Boston, driving ten miles everyday and going back to June and the children I had given her.” (*The Foreigner* p. 75 by Arun Joshi Orient Paper Back 2010). 2

At that time, he did not have enough courage to look after his family. He had a sense of fear imagining living at poor house and going ten miles every day and having his children. That was his inaction and run away Arun Joshi explored the realistic problem of modern man through Sindi's problem in a very impressive manner by using his extraordinary function of his imagination. He gave a perfect solution of Sindi's problems by using fine blend of imagination and reality. Muthu, an illiterate poor worker, taught Sindi that real detachment is in involvement of selfless actions of life and service of whole mankind without greed, and lust. These actions lead a man to redemption which is an ultimate goal of life of man according to ancient and sacred scriptures of the Hindus. Then, Sindi involved himself to regenerate the bankrupt business of Mr. Khemka only for sake of poor and deprived workers.

By the power of noble imagination, Arun Joshi creates a scene of the realistic picture of poor and the deprived workers in India who use to work very hard in rags and sweat fell down from their bodies like a shower from their bodies. He describes

“ It was a sad sight. The workers' clothes were falling off in rags and sweat poured off their backs as if they had just had a shower... And all for three rupees a day.”(6 *The Foreigner* p. 166 by Arun Joshi Orient Paper Back 2010).

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These poor workers were paid only three rupees by which they could not lead their life properly and faced miseries of life. Muthu had to look after eleven members in his family and his wife suffered from tuberculosis. But on the side, corrupt business man Mr. Khemka had a lot of money earned by unfair means. Using his extra ordinary imagination, the novelist digs into the realistic problem, the economic inequality in Indian which is like a curse to a developing country. He presents the bitter comment over those corrupted and rich business men through the character of Sindi. He answered fearlessly to him and claimed that those corrupt people misuse the skills and talent of their workers for earning only money by unfair means. Unfortunately, Mr. Khemka considers Sindi as he was responsible for all these bad

days. At this, Sindi gathers his self-respect and self-confidence and answers fearlessly to him. He tries to calm down his anger with great patience and says that he is only himself responsible for all misfortunes. He further says that Mr. Khemka misused his skills and talent for flourishing his business for maximum benefit by hook or by crook. At this, he became much angry and orders Sindi to get out from his house soon. At this, Sindi remarks

“ I’ll go Mr. Khemka. But you can’t get rid of your sins by just turning me out. They will stalk you from every street corner just as they slaked me. We think we leave our actions behind, but the past is never dead” .”(7 *The Foreigner* p. 181 by Arun Joshi Orient Paper Back 2010). 4

By saying this, Sindi wants to make him understood that in greed, hatred, and anger the bad actions always bring suffering to the wrong doers. They may have to face poverty, misery, and disappointment. No one can save oneself from these effects of bad deeds. Everyone tries to hide one’s bad deeds, but it is useless, the bad deeds done in the past may bring misery, disappointment and poverty in future. By blending imagination and reality, he presents poetic justice when Mr. Khemka was about to be declared bankrupt as he was a corrupt businessman as a result he was sent to jail. . At the request of Muthu, Sindi decided not to go to Bombay and determined to re-establish the business of Mr. Khemka which was about to be declared bankrupt. In these unfavorable conditions, he was ready to revive the business for the sake of thousands poor workers. Without thinking its result, he was ready for selfless service for the poor and deprived workers. As sindi says

“ I spent the whole of the first day going through papers that had accumulated during the two months when no decisions were being made. It was a big pile of work and I had to stay at the office until late at night. But the whole staff stayed with me. When we went along, the trouble spots became clear.” (9 *The Foreigner* p. 190 by Arun Joshi Orient Paper Back 2010) 5

Sindi was totally devoted to the business with whole staff. He worked hard at late nights with whole staff. There was much work, but by the help of all of them, he was able to solve all the problems step by step. As Sindi says

“ as I had always been and to concentrate on decisive action. The fruit of it was really not my concern. (10 *The Foreigner* p. 191 by Arun Joshi Orient Paper Back 2010) 6

The above statement shows that having great faith in *Karmik* principle of Bhagvadgita, Sindi only concentrated on systematic and hard work, he did not care about result or outcome and from the very first month, there was an improvement and sales began to rise gradually. Thus,

we evaluate Arun Joshi as an implied author having great faith in Karmik principle of *Bhagvadgita*

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