

**ISSN** INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER

ISSN-2321-7065

**IJELLH**

**International Journal of English Language,  
Literature in Humanities**

Indexed, Peer Reviewed (Refereed), UGC Approved Journal



**Volume 7, Issue 2, February 2019**

[www.ijellh.com](http://www.ijellh.com)

S.Meenakshi Sundareswari

II. M.A. English Literature

Nirmala College for Women,

Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

meenasenthilraj1996@gmail.com

### Clash of Culture in Arun Joshi's *The Forigner*

The work of three pioneers is the root of the Indian English literature. After them, Indian English literature has a massive popularity in their collections of work. Then the Indian writers started to bring the standard and variety in Indian writing in literature. The highly talented writers started to grasp the prestigious international awards. Such writers are Arun Joshi, Amithav Ghosh, Kiran Desai and Arundati Roy.

Arun Joshi is a contemporary Indian novelist. His themes are strongly on the detachment, clash of culture in the most of his novels. His writing also visualized the picture between the two cultures- Indian and American. He received The Sahitya Akademi Award in 1982. His works are *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas*, *The Apprentice*, and *The Forigner*.

*The Foreigner*, is the first novel of Arun Joshi. It was published in the year 1968. In this novel Arun Joshi deals with the cultural clash of the Indian born and Foreigner brought up man. Through the protagonist Sindi Oberio in *The Forigner* with the illustration of clash of culture through the novel and how he turned himself to discover the meaningful life in the modern society. The symptoms of cultural clash in Sindi life are alienation, powerlessness, meaninglessness, cultural estrangement, self-estrangement and isolation. Sindi find himself as a outsider wherever he go to a new place or his own place. The problem of Sindi is that , he is

not able to find his own self. He always have that confusion that he belong to East or he belong to the West.

Sindi's father is a Indian and his mother is a English women. He lost his parents at the age of four. Then he was brought up by his uncle in a Foreign country like Kenya and London. He was a well educated man. But his parents death baffled his whole life. This is the main cause for the culture clash in Sindi's life. This is the main cause for the culture clash in Sindi's life.

I wondered in what way, if any did I belong to the world that roared beneath my apartment window. Somebody had begotten me without a purpose and so far I had lived without a purpose, unless you could call the search for peace a purpose. Perhaps I felt like that because I was a foreigner in America. But then, what difference would it have made if I had lived in Kenya or India or any other place for that matter! It seemed to me that I would still be a foreigner. My foreignness lay within me and I couldn't leave myself behind wherever I went.  
(TF 55)

This lines from the novel shows the protagonist feeling and his problem of feeling the foreignness lay with in him. Sindi had a close contact with June. After getting close to Sindi. They both fall in love with each other. Then, June offer a proposal of marriage. But it was refused by Sindi. Even though he also in love with June. His refusal of marriage shows his detachment with the society when June stated that, "I have a feeling you'd be foreigner everywhere"(29). It shows Sindi's Foreignness everywhere because of his cultural clash.

Guilt is a cognitive and emotional experience that takes place when an individual realizes or believes that he has violated a moral standard and is responsible for his acts. Or sometimes, he cannot help the suffering person or fails in his efforts to relieve that person; he experiences a sense of guilt. The term alienation refers to a person's estrangement from his

own self, his community and others in general. Therefore, the detailed study of *The Foreigner* reflects that the protagonist Sindi Oberoi is a foreigner wherever he goes. Not only Sindi, but many other characters of the novel are foreigners to their own selves, to the society in which they live and to the worth and relevance of value-system. They are unaware of their own needs, the worthlessness of their pursuits and purpose and meaning of their lives. They look for wrong things in wrong places. Their search for wrong things results in alienation, and the realization of their mistake through knowledge and understanding produces the sense of guilt in them.

Realization in the life of the protagonist Sindi comes very late. Anna and Kathy understand it when they leave Sindi; June does so when Babu dies; Babu comes to know when he feels that June is involved with another man; Sindi partly realizes when Babu and June die and partly when Muthu teaches him the philosophy of involvement and detachment; Mr. Khemka realizes when he goes behind the bars due to his swindling of income-tax; Karl does so when his self chides him but he forgets it at the next moment; and prof. White never realizes it. It is not their weaknesses, but it is the impact of the environment upon them in which they lead their lives without values. Moreover, this alienation with the self, the society and healthy values quakes the entire world of the novel from the very beginning to the collapsing of Mr. Khemka's empire.

Babu, turns out to be a split personality in America. He enters the scene fascinated by the fantasies and illusions of much publicized glamorous dreamland of America. Sindi finds Babu only a kid, as an innocent little rich father's boy and tells Babu's sister, Sheila, "innocence concocted by you and your father" (51).

Sindi feels it was not so much for Babu and his interest but for his father's needs and social prestige that Babu has been sent to America. It is perhaps because a son is a proud possession of an Indian family. Sindi tells Sheila, "He sent Babu to America so he would

come back and add that much more weight to your family's social status. He could talk to friends at the club about his foreign – returned son.”(51)

The nature of BABU's upbringing makes him unfit to face America in the absence of his father and sister Sheila. For Babu's world is confined with these both. Babu loves his elder sister Sheila, but, he is terribly afraid of his father. As a result, there was a lack of communication between Mr. Khemka and his children. In the absence of his mother, the family is low-keyed and unemotional. The filial awe of Babu was remarkable when he failed in the examination and passed it, whereas, in America he had to be serious from the beginning itself as teaching and testing went together.

Babu came in contact with Sindi's beloved June and finds an emotional anchor in her love, but, Babu conscious of the attitude of his father towards love and marriage. When he tells Sindi, “His father, he said, was very strict. He would be very angry if he found out that his son was running with strange women”. (20)

Babu was afraid for his father could never agree him marrying an American girl, because he is a terrible sort of a father, and sister Sheila, is comparatively very progressive. When June asks Babu to marry her, he expresses his helplessness. When June asks Babu to marry her, he expresses his helplessness. When June asks Babu the reason he says he is afraid of his father, Sindi feels, “he was not at all afraid of his father; it was just that he had a deep respect for him.” (97) Finally, his foreignness in London end up with a death. Then the minor character June, she tries to marry Sindi. But his refusal and next relationship with Babu end up her life in death after aborting Babu child from her womb.

By comparing with the above two character Babu and June. Sindi protagonist survive in the society by facing his problem of cultural clash which result in detachment. Later through the character of Muthu, Sindi finds a solution for his problem. Muthu tells sindi: “Sometimes detachment lies in actually getting involved” (188). After his meeting with Muthu, a major

change is discernible in Sindi's attitude towards the real pursuit of human life. He shows a positive attitude to various situations and problems in life. Then he start to attach with the society by Muthu's advice. Sindi's attachment bring a peace and happiness to his life. This is how he short out his problem of cultural clash by adapting and attaching to the reality in life.

## Work Cited

## Primary Source:

Joshi, Arun. *The Foreigner* (1993). New Delhi: Orient Paperbacks, 2010. Print.

## Secondary sources:

Singh, Abnish. "Sense of Guilt and Alienation in Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner*." *Cyber Literature* 37.1 (June 2016): 67-76.

Sinha, A. A. *The Novels of Kamala Markandaya and Arun Joshi*. Jalandhar: ABS Publications, 1998. Vi, 149.

Prasad, Hari Mohan. "From Alienation to Arrival: *The Foreigner*" ,Arun Joshi. Hari Mohan Prasad. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1985. 28-45.

Bhatt, Indra, and Suja Alexander. *Arun Joshi's Fiction: A Critique*. New Delhi: Creative Books, 2001. Print.

Sharma, Susheel Kumar. "Philosophical Reverberation in *The Foreigner*." *The Novels of Arun Joshi*. Ed. R.K. Dhawan. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1992. Print.

Dua. "Introduction" . *A Critical Study on Arun Joshi's Novels*. Ed. K. Mohan. Salem: M.S.K. Publications, 2009. Print.

Kierkegaard, Soren. "Introduction: Random Thoughts on Identity" . *Self and Identity in Indian Fiction*. Ed. S.P.Swain. New Delhi: Prestige, 2005. Print.

Narasimhaiah. C.D. "Crisis of Identity in Indian English Fiction and Arun Joshi: A Critical Study". Ed. Shankar Kumar. New Delhi: Atlantic, 2003. Print.

Pathak. R.S. "The World of Buisness and Personal relationship in the *Foreigner* and the *Last Ladyrinth*". *The Novels of Arun Joshi: A Critical Study*. Ed. Shankar Kumar. New Delhi: Atlantic,2003. Print.