ABSTRACT

Arun Joshi (1939-1993) is one of the finest modern novelists in Indian English fiction. His is an original talent exploring deeper into the moral and spiritual crisis of the contemporary Indians. He observes the chaos and hollowness in the minds of the contemporary younger generation. His novels are full of reflections of Indian ethos, the teachings of Bhagavad Gita and traces of western thought and ideology. Thus he has become an outstanding novelist of human predicament.

The proposed research work makes a comprehensive and perceptive study of the novels of Arun Joshi for various themes of alienation, primitivism versus civilisation, the inner awareness of the human soul, quest for meaning of life and the existential predicament.

The present study is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter, an introductory one, traces out the rise of the Indian English novel and the new dimensions of Arun Joshi and his contribution.

The second chapter examines the theme of alienation in the first novel of Arun Joshi, The Foreigner (1968). The third chapter deals with The Strange Case of Billy Biswas (1971), in which the protagonist searches for culture in the human society. Here the theme focuses on the differences between primitive society and the civilised society.

The political chaos of the city and the existential predicament are discussed in the sixth chapter which is the last novel of Arun Joshi viz., *The City and the River* (1990). The seventh chapter sums up the other six chapters making a brief survey of Arun Joshi as a master novelist. Besides, a section for references is given at the end to help the study of this research work.