



## Reflection of Rural life in the Novels of Arun Joshi

Mohd Muzamil Sohil (Researcher)

School of Comparative Languages and Culture

Devi Ahilya University

Indore, Madhy Pradesh, India

### Abstract

Joshi came into limelight with the publication of a very first novel *The Foreigner* which appeared in 1968 and after this novel Joshi has written four more novels. Here in this research paper we would like to have a deep insight into *The Foreigner*, *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* and *The Apprentice*. All the novels of Joshi reflect the complex sphere of rural and urban society. These novels present the different themes through the different characterization. Joshi himself says that he has depicted the real life of the society. The present research paper examines the lives characters which reflected the rural view of life. The rural reflections in the characters of Arun Joshi's novels give enough proof of social and cultural rural society. There are various things by which we can identify through their conditional recognition. Joshi has put everything that the life is possible only in peaceful and contented way, which we don't find in the congested society of today but in the rural and traditional society of yesterday India. Joshi has shown that India has rich cultural and social values in its ancient era that's why he has portrait the interest of primitiveness in the character of Billy Biswas. Joshi has also presented another view of backwardness of our society which is enough proof given by Muthu's family. In *The Apprentice*, Joshi has imbibed the love for country in the character of Ratan's father. Ratan, the central character in the novel initially preached by his father to have good in future, you must always do good things in the present life. While his mother insisted him that money is everything and man is nothing worth without money. Ratan becomes victimised by this philosophy of his mother. But at the end he realised that what I have done was not worth but was futile. Now he goes daily to the temple for forgiveness. It shows that Joshi has also highlighted the connectivity of religiousness gives the peace of mind and a satisfactory life. This is all possible only in rural society of India not in urban diverged society. Values are still attached in the rural society not in urban society but the need of hour is to make the awareness among the masses of the Indian rural society which frame the 70% population of the country.

**Key Words:** Rural, Urban, Characterization, Society, Victimisation, Attach, Future, Philosophy, Religion, Sphere, Congested, Identify, Depicted, Awareness, portrait.

### Introduction

Arun Joshi has successfully revealed complexities of modern man and has noticed the absurdity and meaninglessness through his characterization. He has portrayed the real picture of Indianess in his novels. Vachaspati Divedi has remarked while Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan and raja rao concentrate by and lie on the social scenario in the nature of country and endeavour to underline its inadequacies. Joshi's main thrust is on the individual psyche and social life of the protagonist. The sources of most novels of Arun Joshi are actual experience of life. He has portrayed the social values and has given consisted form to the phenomenal world. *The Foreigner* Arun Joshi's first novel, it explores in depth the

problem Sindi Oberoi "The Foreigner" can be viewed as an attempt to plumb mans perennial dilemma. Sindi lives in "a strange world of intense pleasure and almost equal intense pain". Joshi points out the condition in which a person feels satisfaction and the life condition which still ask hundreds of questions. Sindi notices the kind of affluent life in India, when he happens to visit his friend." The house was old and single storied with a magnificent lawn that contrasted beautifully with the red gravel of the drive". (Joshi 9)

Sindi saw the luxuries of life and richness of Mr. Khemka. In contrast of the above Joshi has made it clear by Sindi's visit to Muthu's family towards the end of the novel which makes him aware of the poverty amidst



which these people live. On the one hand are Khemka who have “three houses in Delhi and a villa in Mussoorie”. (Joshi 21) On the other hand is Muthu a low paid employee in Khemk’s office who lives in a one-room tenement with a dozen other people. This is evident that the population explosion and poverty in India is a burning question. It still seems that the people are not aware about the possibility of future life in rural areas. Another example is which is suitable for the reflection of rural thinking in the characterization of Arun Joshi, when we come to know about that Babu who has been sent to America for higher education but he is unable to cope with the American system of education and write to Sheela “we had an exam this morning and I did not do well. I never seem to do well in these exams. They are very strict here.” He is thrown out of college when he fails in all his courses the second time. His emotional involvement in and belong to orthodox Hindu family. This entire covey that the rural ideology which is present in various characters in the novel. All through the novel we come to know that Muthu having a good approach to make some pathetic influence on the Sindi to save the life of labours and their families. This is a sort of bravery which is shown by the author of the novel.

### The Strange Case Billy Biswas

Billy’s central character in this novel belongs to rich family and having brilliant intellectual. The narrator of the novel is Rumi friend of Billy. Billy is sent by his father to do Engineering; however he earns his PhD in Anthropology because that is his first love. Billy is basically an Anthropologist and studies deeply the tribal attitudes and customs. In fact his whole life is organized “around his interest in primitive man.” (Joshi 14)

This is what Billy wants to know about the ancient world and has interest to live with primitiveness. Joshi has developed a sense of respect for primitive man and has put him to value the tradition of Indian ethos. Billy’s disappearance in the Saal forests make us

understand that he is not happy at all in the congested society. He never feels at home in the sophisticated life. Billy does not find the meaning of life either in America or in the upper class of Indian society, but feels comfort ability in Indian rural environment. Billy rejected all western values and gives certain respect to the rural and ancient values of primitive Indian ethos. He moves from Delhi to MP hill. Billy find himself satisfied and feel the calmness and silence in the rural life. He adopted primitiveness and starts new life with native mistress. He told Rumi that he has been dragged by primitive world and wants to settle in the primitive existence. Joshi has portrayed the possibility of life living area in the ancient Indian social and cultural existence which is clearly reflected in his characterization.

### The Apprentice

The Apprentice is set in Indian familiar to the urban middle class. Ratan Rathod is both hero as well as anti hero. Though Sindi Oberoi and Billy Biswas had rejected but Ratan not against but he is becoming a victim. He is a child of double inheritance and his mother is different as she likes money and thought it is everything. His father told him that he was only ten year old when he responded the call of Mahatma Gandhi. Joshi has imbibed the love for country in the character like Ratan’s father and made him preach about the love to be developed in his son, while Ratan’s mother advises him not to befool himself, because “man without money is a man without worth. Ratan initially follow the philosophy of his father but later on become the victim of his mother’s philosophy as she believes in money. Ratan realises the futility and hollowness of his whole life. Having lived for twenty years as he says “in smog, confused, exploited, exploiting, deceiving”(Joshi 138) He is tired of body and spirit. Now he is changed each morning, he goes to temple and begs forgiveness. The love for religion and country is inherited in Indian culture and ethos as Ratan lastly adopted his father’s philosophy of life. It seems that life is only



possible when we are having ancestral and traditional view of life, Arun Joshi has infused in the protagonist of the novel.

### Conclusion

In the conclusion we can say that Joshi has presented different outlooks through his characterisation in the novels. Joshi has made Sindi sometimes an observer of the situations like when he visited and saw the rich lifestyle of urban society and felt deeply pathetic over the lifestyle of rural society. There are still such conditions which are prevailing in rural areas of our country. Joshi has traced the hazardous and dangerous conditions of life of the people where the need of the hour is to come across over all the problems. We come across different examples like how to control the increasing population and how to separate the educational facility. We must develop the interest over the education in the society by providing awareness and guidance to the people like Babu, Muthu, Billy and Ratan. In *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* we come to know about the interest of Billy to love traditional and primitive society of India. Billy lastly find himself contended in the lap of rural environment as he is not settled in America and in upper class of society.

In *The Apprentice* Joshi presented the different philosophy of life through his characterisation like the philosophy Ratan's father and mother. The father of Ratan is pure identification of rural Indian character of the society and the mother of Ratan is fully affected with affluent and luxuries of life.

In the novels of Arun Joshi we come across various examples of rural Indian traditional values and cultural ethos of the Indian society. Arun Joshi has portrayed the real picture of Indian rural society in his novels by putting different inspirational aspects in different characters of the novels. We find different philosophies of life which have been embedded in the intellectuality of the characters presented in different novels. The characters having value for religion and patriotic enthusiasm are being presented by Joshi by which we come to know that the

reflection of rural life is total face of Indian society.

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