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Journey of Soul Towards Expiation: In Arun Joshi's *The Apprentice*

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Abstract:

Arun Joshi's third novel 'The Apprentice' (1974) mirrors the excursion of the hero Ratan Rathore's soul, how it transforms into the casualty of this money-minded oppressive, debased, degenerate society. It is Ratan Rathore's self-examination of his own emergency of soul, personality and awareness. Joshi in his leading character, Ratan Rathore portrays the atonement of the soul through the divine dream of Hinduism. The inspiration driving the present paper is to draw Joshi's vision of life, which is clarified with the depiction of Ratan's journey of the soul from degraded materialistic culture towards appeasement of soul. Ratan finally attempts his recovery through modesty and repentance by cleaning the shoes of the sanctuary guests day by day. The possibility of uneasiness emerging out of confusions, overwhelming in current life is moreover especially separated in this paper.

Keywords: Soul, Selfishness, Materialism Repentance, Redemption Expiation, Selfless service.

“Self-acceptance is a genuine indication of maturity but the most important thing is the soul's acceptance”.

Introduction:

Arun Joshi is one among the very few Indian authors in English who has effectively uncovered the nuances and complications of contemporary Indian life successfully. He has delivered convincing works of fictions. Sympathetically alive to modern man's plight, Joshi has capably outlined the lamentable outcomes of the lack of significant meaning and confidence

throughout everyday life. He has likewise worked out different elements of stresses applied by the mind-boggling character and requests of the general public in which present-day man is bound to live. His books outline the human issues as opposed to the issues emerging out of fleeting loyalties. Joshi marks a clear takeoff from the general run of Indian writer in English and his experimentations in subjects and methodologies, have furthermore added another measurement to the craft of his novel. Searching for new subjects, he has "denied the bigger world for the internal man" and connected with himself in "search for the embodiment of human living".

The author manages the predicament of the more youthful age of Indians who are trapped between the customary methodology of their old societies and the requests of the advanced dynamic lifestyle. Their heroes are people, opposing the superimposed measures of society, shaking off the mind-boggling reasoning of their human progress to decide they are being by themselves. The issue of current man and his life is found in profound established uneasiness and estrangement, this is the aftereffect of man's looking when sticking for what he isn't.

Arun Joshi is recognized from other Indian English journalists in view of his essential enthusiasm for the individual and the mental complexities of his inward world. The author Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K Malgonkar emphasizes on contemporary issues like financial, cultural, political and social, however, Arun Joshi as opposed to, managing the conventional topics as taken up by his ancestors manage the emotional and mental issues of his characters.

'The Apprentice' (1974) transcendently manages the "New Servitude" that appeared in post-independent India with new supervisors, lawmakers, authorities and the rich. Ratan Rathore the protagonist is caught in the ambiguity of ideas and spiritual chaos. The tale, *The Apprentice* dives profound into the inward awareness of the person with the ultimate objective of examining the cryptic universe of the human soul. It is a sort of affirmation between the perfect and genuine that must be experienced so as to go to one's own self. Ratan is a man tossed back upon him, disregarded totally to battle with an internal still, small voice. He is by all accounts a setback, a victim of a solidified and advanced society in the propelled world all through the novel.

Arun Joshi portrays the profound vision of Hinduism through driving character Ratan Rathore. *Swami Vivekananda writes*: "Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy — by one or more or all of these — and be free". "All wisdom and all purity are in the soul already, dimly expressed or better expressed- that is all the difference"

The tale 'The Apprentice' is probably the best novel of Arun Joshi, which centres around the materialistic parts of the contemporary world and its effect on the soul of present-day man for different reasons. A tale that speaks of the pattern of the excursion of the soul, from debasement, atonement, and regeneration that is an invaluable piece of legendary Indian tradition.

Joshi's books depend on the interior and outer clashes of humankind from themselves and with the general public, particularly the conflict between the East and West. The novel *Apprentice* uncovers the emergency of the human spirit, unfurling the excursion of its hero Ratan Rathore that begins from the hopeful versus materialistic to the profound world. The novel concerns the miserable plight of the contemporary man "sailing about in a confused society without norms without direction without even perhaps a purpose" (74). The difficulty of Ratan Rathore is a decision among starvation and traditionalism. Joshi delineates the emergency of character in the figure of Ratan Rathore who bounces on the encounters of life. Though the confessional note is present in Joshi's four novels, but the mode becomes more persistent in *The Apprentice*. As Thakur Guruprasad remarks: "The narrator in this novel is an insistent confessionalist; and confession is a factor in his redemption". (p.58). It is the tale of a person's feeling of remorse, "a man without honour..... without shame..... a man of our times" (147) attempting meticulously to recover his lost honesty and respect.

The novel is, in reality, a disclosure of present-day man's inclination of missteps for which one atones for a mind-boggling span. The hero's life runs on the track of recovery of recuperation of his soul from authenticity to otherworldliness. The epic wanders around the different shades of life. Joshi addresses the emergency of the human spirit's, character and wretchedness by going up against an abnormal and degenerate society. The tale delineates how an individual in a circumstance of trust and certainty hoodwinks or breaks the relationship with others, regardless of whether intentionally or accidentally by following an inappropriate way of life. Joshi further adds how an all-around acculturated man transformed into a mammoth by beguiling that one who leaves everything for somebody's advancement of life.

In spite of the fact that Ratan Rathore was the child of an optimist, a saviour of Indian freedom struggle, yet he has to make an arrangement with the demon just to get by in the degenerate universe of free India. While battling for endurance he submits various sins and is spooky by the familiarity with his bad behaviours. His own corrupt demonstrations continued

frequenting him and his life is diminished to hopelessness. How he recoups his spirit and moves back gradually and consistently on the way to goodness, humble compensation and administration is the focal tale of the *Apprentice*.

The *Apprentice* is an incredible analysis of the rotting estimations of a ruffian's human progress. It is an account of a youngster who, out of sheer fatigue of joblessness and yearning is compelled to shed the optimism and ethical quality of his father to transform into an *Apprentice* to the degenerate human advancement.

So as to mirror the advanced situation of the Indian state Joshi utilized the method of an emotional monologue. The novel is an admission of Ratan, the hero who was raised in non-independent India. As an offspring of twofold legacy Ratan, on one hand, had a solid impact of his father who was murdered in an Insurgency for Independence. His father's vision trained him to be an enthusiast for his nation and his fellow human beings. His father thought about that seeking after employment for Individual preferences was the same as "Bourgeois filth"(Joshi, 32)

Ratan's excursion of life takes another shape after his father's passing. All the expectations and sureness's of life were wrecked thus. In any case, later on, he is helped by the Brigadier's family. Ratan's mother consistently proposes him to watch the truth of life through his bare eyes yet his brain was at that point filled by his dad's beliefs. What's more, as indicated by his mothers' standards, "It was not Patriotism but money that brought respect and bought security. Money made friends. There were many laws she said, but money was law into itself" (Joshi, 19). His mother knew the hypothesis of 'endurance of fittest', as per her one can get the influence and arrive at the stature of life just by storing money. Because of opposite thoughts, he turned into a man of twofold character which drove towards an emergency of the spirit. Thus, his words don't coordinate with his activities and he feels self-estranged from self just as his surroundings.

To make his life simpler in the cutting edge world, he goes to Delhi looking for work where he meets numerous individuals; some of them were a dear companion of his dad. He discovers every one of them childish who didn't want to extend to him any employment opportunity. At that point, he understands that his dad's penance for the nation has been futile. He needed to endure a great deal in the city like Delhi even he feels exceptionally mortified at such a large number of spots.

By pursuing the optimism of his father, Ratan being an unsophisticated youth, jobless show up in Delhi looking for a vocation with the intention to acquire a reputation and a prosperous future Ratan remarks, “And I had no doubt that, with their help, I should make a mark on the world, a mark as visible and striking as my father's” (Joshi, 23). He observes the fall of the country and corruption of social moralities. His morals and beliefs were tried at every single step by the degenerate and materialistic culture. So as to continue his growth and expert development, he forfeits enthusiasm and respect. His tempted soul only for materialistic qualities took a chance with the lives of blameless individuals by taking hush-money from Himmat Singh to clear debased arms transfer for the Indo China war. His life experiences of significant change as he says, “I had become.... a hypocrite and liar; in short; a sham.....I had become a master faker.....a faker soon forgets who he really is...Do you see what I mean? That is when all starts to crumble.” (Joshi 27)

Ratan goes up against the truth of life during his quest for work. He figures out how to live in Delhi in a Sarai alongside some others who helped him in the hour of need. While driving his life in Sarai he believed that he would make another universe of optimism, goodness and harmony. However, very soon he understands that something is dying everything he could ever hope for from the root; his expectation is being expelled by some odd force. He portrayed it to the boy, "What hopes we start out in! Beggars in princes grab. Heads bursting with dreams"(T.A 23).

Ratan Rathore's genuineness, vision and confidence decreases after his experience with the materialistic world. After his underlying wavering, Rathore yields totally to the debasement of current society and blossoms with it. In his hot quest for progress, Ratan submits himself to a wide range of defilements- penance is supplanted without anyone else intrigue; mental fortitude and genuineness are supplanted by misrepresentation, misdirection and thoughts by the arrangements. The thoughts of his mother seemed prophetic when he watches the decay of virtues and interruption in goodness, Excellencies, truth and integrity in like manner people.

Ratan neglects to understand that cutting edge materialistic life is overwhelming his sentiments, feelings, minds dreams and thoughts. His savage game plan closes at the expense of the passing of his dear companion 'Brigadier'. Ratan feels a vicarious duty regarding the Brigadier's passing. His feeling of dharma clashes with his life of fraud. He gives an anguished upheaval that “There is nothing in the world as bad as the end of hope. Not even death..... The slow leakage of hope does other things, things corrosive and irreversible. "(TA 25)

Not long in the wake of handling the situation on contract premise he initially loses his father's optimistic idea and began proceeding onward the materialistic way. In this enthusiasm to locate an unending profession and grab money, his soul deals with the game plan picked by the ace of his association 'to marry his daughter'. His aspiration in life was to accomplish a high position, he tells the boy. "I was of different cut; educated, intelligent, cultured and it was my right that I should raise in life, to the levels higher than others aspired for". (TA 31)

Ratan's propensity towards life changed from open to private not long after finding a new line of work. The materialistic world overwhelms him when he leaves the place that is known for characteristic vision and guiltlessness of life. With the progression of time, Ratan Rathore turned into a senior official and ascends the stepping stool of triumph. He turned out to be absolutely materialistic individual driving a childish way of living and so improper, heartless and charlatan that even his associates began thinking about him as a marked prostitute and a bold individual. With the progression of time, he turned into a thoroughly degenerate individual, accepting hush money, accomplishing illicit work to hold increasingly more cash. As *Sri Ravi Shankar* expounds about want the man's desire that, "the desire to be strong makes you weak. The more ambitions you have, the weaker you become. When there is fear in mind, there is no strength. If you have strength, there is no fear". (Web)

Ratan took hush-money not in view of any need but rather because of perplexing estimations of the general public in which he lives. He wanted to be satisfied however truth be told, he didn't have a clue about that one day all his crazy demonstrations will lead his soul towards obliteration. As *Shri Aurobindo* composes that, "Sin is the working of the lower nature of the crude satisfaction of its own ignorant, dull or violent rajasic or tamasic propensities in revolt against any high self-control or self-mastery of nature by the spirit. And in order to get rid of crude compulsion of the being, by the lower Prakriti in its inferior modes, we must have recourse to the highest mode of that Prakriti, the Sattwic, which is seeking always for harmonious light for knowledge and for the right rule of action".

In the subverted and materialistic world, he loses his own genuine personality that creates a sort of dread in him. Subsequent to entertaining himself into the materialistic world he here and there feels in solitude after he had left the hopeful way of his father now on. After viewing the horrendous demise of officers just as his dear companion Brigadier, his dejection turns into dread and fear.

Ratan's ethical goodness of soul gets totally disintegrated towards the end and he thinks that it's hard to admit even so as to spare his dearest companion, who he considered as a sibling. It is said that the peak of realism is the start of mysticism which is plainly noticeable in the changing demeanour of Ratan. The constrained thrashing of the Indian Armed Forces; several troops were executed on account of the impact of their own bombs, and Ratan's dear companion Brigadier endured masochistic problems. Brigadier faces a difficult situation. The key person, behind the incident was Ratan whose egotistical thinking and arrangements of harmed war materials prompted such a precarious event, Ratan was summoned by the city's S.P to confess his slip-up, but his public eye issue and reputation prevented him from accepting his guilt.

At the point when the S.P reveals to him that in the event if he doesn't admit his blame, his lone companion Brigadier will be court-martialed or could stop his life. Ratan's central core shakes for a second. Yet, he was so narrow-minded individual that he generally pondered himself. His postponement to admit his off-base deeds drives his companion Brigadier to end it all. The reality was that he would not like to confront reality and was scared to be separated from everyone else. *J. Krishnamurti writes*; "If you do not follow somebody, you feel very lonely. Be lonely then. Why are you frightened of being alone? Because you are faced with yourself, as you are, and you find that you are empty, dull, stupid, ugly, guilty and anxious..... Face the fact, look at it; the moment you runaway fear begins (24).

Ratan felt scared, everything appeared to his preposterous and like a no man's land. He felt no beam of expectation in life after Brigadier's passing. His demise shakes Ratan's cognizant to the roots. He becomes like a stone when nothing is by all accounts, alive in him. He felt as though he was living on the heaps of death. Henceforth, a definitive acknowledgement of the otherworldly solidarity of people starts inside him.

Because of his uncontrolled psyche, he begins grieving once again over Brigadier's passing. It is his companions' passing that opened the door of salvation and soul otherworldliness. So as to atone over his deeds, he admits to the little youngster. "So you see my friend, here I am, a man without honour; A man without shame.... Anyway, here I ama man without shame or honour To die at past is difficult". (TA 141 -142)

The Apprentice's feeling of worthlessness causes him to endure internally and he turns out to be depleted to the point that he discovers importance even in zero, "But let me tell you something that a colleague of mine used to say. Life is a zero.... you can take nothing away from zero...of

late, however, I have begun to see a flow in the argument..... you can take things out of a zero! You can make it negative.... and it becomes negative when you take out of it your sense of shame, your honour. "(Apprentice 148)

At long last, Ratan understands the utility of following the way of acknowledgement and expiation. Ratan, at last, understands that one can't live for oneself in light of the fact that no human demonstration is acted in segregation and without result. Subsequently, each demonstration ought to be performed with an awareness of other's expectations..."Be good, I tell myself. Be good. Be decent. Be of use. That I beg forgiveness."(TA 143)

Accordingly, he might want to appease his transgressions of weakness, unscrupulousness and even backhanded homicide. In the wake of learning the exercises of quietude, he looks for his satisfaction in the emblematic demonstrations. He feels that the main supporting reason for activity is to be useful to other people, without vanity and without desires and furthermore without cleverness. He tells the youthful boy, "I am learning to be of use. I know it's late in the day. But one has to try to not lose heart, not yield to despair at any cost "(TA 143). His spiritual penance opens the path of salvation. He honestly pleads the young boy that "there is nothing wrong in making a second start".

Conclusion:

The difference between the prior Ratan, the apprentice, who has been ascending the stepping stool of accomplishment having respect for none, and Ratan, the apprentice, who has gone through the dull night of the spirit is successfully brought out in the account. Joshi's vision of life investigates the portrayal of Ratan's excursion of the spirit from debased realism to mysticism.

Arun Joshi in his novel 'The Apprentice' assaults on spirit's foolishness which initiates present-day man to satisfy their egotistical needs. Through Ratan's character, Joshi presents how individuals want to get rich and are prepared to do anything for satisfying their goals. Joshi exceptionally portrays the grave characteristics like material mentality, shrewdness, debasement of soul and how to achieve expiation. In this way, my research paper has demonstrated and illustrated, all things considered, that how Arun Joshi, through the character of Ratan Rathore has illuminated the excursion of the soul towards expiation, atonement and redemption. As quoted by Siddhartha Sharma, Gandhiji writes, "A clean confession, combined with a promise never to

commit the sin again, when offered before one who has the right to receive it, is the purest type of repentance” (p.58)

Wikipedia says, “Spirituality refers to a religious process of reformation, which “aims to recover the original shape of man...”. *Mahatama Gandhiji* said, “Confession of one’s guilt purifies and uplifts. Its suppression is degrading and should always be avoided”. (Web)

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