(A) SETTING THE LIMITS

The purpose of this thesis titled "Narrative Technique in the Novels of Arun Joshi" is to study the novels of Arun Joshi (1939-93) in the context of his narrative technique to show his importance and achievement as an Indian English novelist in this regard. In all, in the course of its five chapters, the researcher has incorporated a synoptic survey of the narrative technique in the Indian English novel besides focusing on the main currents and cross currents of Arun Joshi's age and the specific forces and factors of his life that influenced his genius. Besides this, the researcher has also comprehensively established the theoretical perspectives of Arun Joshi's narrative technique. In broad terms, the narrative technique itself being a vast discipline may imply numerous forms and perspectives. Narrative technique signifies the way a story is
told. It is a perspective established by the novelist through which he brings the characters, actions, settings and events to the reader. The novelist chooses and develops a narrative technique into a means of developing reader involvement. Narrative techniques must be understood in the way it fosters both emotional and intellectual involvement within the reader, by provoking specific mental acts of perception, cognition and judgement. Various modes and means of expression are at the disposal of a novelist. The novelist makes a conscious attempt to choose the manner that is most apt and congenial to him. The researcher is concerned here only with an exhaustive analysis of the four constituent features of the narrative technique harnessed by Arun Joshi in his five novels — *The Foreigner* (1968), *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* (1971), *The Apprentice* (1974), *The Last labyrinth* (1980), and *The City and the River* (1990). These constituent features of his narrative technique include the use of autobiographical overtones as a narrative technique, symbols and myths, the
stream of consciousness technique, and humour and irony. Simultaneously, this thesis also evaluates the purpose, implications, effectiveness and value of Arun Joshi’s narrative technique.

(B) A SYNOPTIC HISTORICAL SURVEY

Though narrative technique has never been wholly absent from the realm of fiction in one form or another yet it has taken quite some time to mature and attain to the level of specific technique as it came to be used by Arun Joshi. Hence, it is necessary to have a back glance at its onward movement. In contrast to other forms of literature, fiction was the last to arrive on the Indian scene. And, it is only during a period of a little more than a century, that the novel has occurred and taken roots in India. As to the rise and growth of Indian English novel, it has come to be found that it is an aspect of Indian Renaissance. This renaissance that awakened national spirit to find a new impulse of self-expression, led in turn, to the growth of fiction.
The real beginning occurred with the work of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-94) with his novel, *Raj Mohan's Wife* (1864) on the strength of which he proved to be the first Indian novelist to show quite some awareness about the use of narrative technique, however inchoate.

From the eighteen sixties upto the end of the nineteenth century, stray novels continued to appear mostly by writers from the presidencies of Bengal and Madras and most of them were published in London. The prominent novelists include Ram Krishna Punt, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Wal Behari Day, Anandas, Prosad Dutt, Sanjhi Mull, Yogendranath Chattopadhay besides three women novelists -- Toru Dutt, Krupabai Sathianadhan, and Shevantibai. Incidentally, their models are the eighteenth and nineteenth century British fiction, particularly that of Defoe, Fielding and Scott and their technique had nothing of their own. With the turn of the century there came about winds of change and brought novelists with a more substantial output. The chief among them
include Ramesh Chander Dutt, Sarath Kumar Ghosh, J.K. Gopal Panikar, and C. Parthasarthy apart from S.T. Ram, M.M. Munshi, Svarna Kumari Ghosal who have only stray novels to their credit. Thus, upto 1920 fiction writing was attempted at many novels but, by and large, it still remained in swaddling clothes showing little signs of aesthetic handling in terms of narrative technique.

Life in India and the form of fiction came to receive unprecedented momentum in the nineteen twenties, when Mahatma Gandhi shook India to the core, infused it "with its spirit" and even beyond the twenties the Gandhian whirlwind, as Nehru points out "enabled" Indians "to take deep breaths" in the atmosphere of new ideas and this ferment necessarily led to experimentation in fiction writing as in other things. The Gandhian impact is perceptible in the novels of K.S. Venkataramani, A.S.P. Ayyar, and Krishnaswamy Nagajan. The first is known for his golden phrases, the third for his sharp sense of irony but the second is not concerned about any
narrative technique.

The most significant event in the history of Indian English fiction in the 1930s was the emergence of its major trio: Mulk Raj Anand (1905), R.K. Narayan (1906), and Raja Rao (1908). As in case of the other two, Mulk Raj Anand, in his individual characteristic way, revealed the possibilities of Indian English fiction. His fiction has been shaped by what he himself calls "the double burden" on his shoulders of "the Alps of the European tradition" and the Himalaya of "his Indian past." No doubt, he has put his inherited and personal inexhaustible energies into the texture of his fiction through the course of novels ranging from Untouchable (1935) to Confession of a Lover (1976) yet his art is not rooted in any particular narrative technique as it is in robust earthiness and militant humanism. In contrast, R.K. (Rashipuram Krishnaswamy) Narayan claims attention for his delicate blend of gentle irony, archetypal images and subtle evocative symbols. Narayan’s fictional experimentation from Swami and
Friends (1935) to The Painter of Signs (1976) has entitled him to the status of a rare phenomenon in modern Indian literature. In this, at once broad and specific context, the position of Raja Rao is expected to remain secure as a philosophical novelist and as one whose sense of reality finds myths and symbols as the most appropriate media for his art in the course of his four novels including Kanthapura (1938), The Serpent and the Rope (1960), The Cat and Shakespeare (1965), and Comrade Kirillov (1976). Besides the fictional work of this famous trio, considerable amount of fiction was produced during the pre-independence period though in a minor vein. Such writings include Ahmad Ali’s Twilight in Delhi (1940), D.F. Karaka’s There Lay the City (1942), K.A. Abbas’s, Tomorrow is Ours: A Novel of India of Today (1943), Humayun Kabir’s Men and Rivers (1945), and Amir Ali’s Conflict (1947). However, these novels had very little to do with narrative techniques as such.

After India secured political freedom in August 1947
there began an era of changes and challenges in Indian life and literature. However, despite knotty problems about which no less a sociologist than Selbourne had “a pessimistic view”, India registered commendable progress. The very aura and atmosphere of independence widened the vision of Indian English writers and sharpened their faculty of self-scrutiny. Besides registering significant gains in poetry and criticism the genre of fiction too “grew in both variety and stature”. The tradition of social realism established by Mulk Raj Anand continued through Bhabhani Bhattacharya (1906-89), Manohar Malgonkar (b.1913), and Khuswant Singh (b.1918) down the decades. It was Bhattacharya’s Credo that “art must preach, but only by virtue of its being a vehicle of thought.” In terms of narrative technique, he continued using symbols, irony and allegory right from So Many Hungers (1947) to A Dream in Hawaii (1978) though without any pattern or consistency. Then, unlike Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar is governed by the belief that art has no purpose to serve except pure
entertainment and therefore he felt “special allegiance to . . . the entertainers, the tellers of stories.” Despite this assertion he has made discreet use of symbols from his *Distant Drum* (1960) to *The Devil’s Wind* (1972) to add to the richness of his novels. Further, Khuswant Singh has a distinct place in the galaxy of Indian English novelists. Though his realism has its “roots in the dunghill of a tiny Indian village,” yet the swift tempo of his narrative, enriched with apt symbols and irony, takes the reader along both in *Train to Pakistan* (1956) and *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* (1959). Still further, G.V. (Govindas Vishnoodas) Desani (1909) whose *All About H. Hatter* (1948) is easily one of the most daringly experimental novels, blends western and Indian narrative forms.

Significantly, the first two decades after independence brought certain novels with quite some evidence of narrative experimentation in symbols, irony, satire and fantasy. These include Dilip Kumar Roy’s *The Upward Spiral* (1949) Sudhindra Nath Ghose’s *Cradle of the Clouds* (1951), and *The
Flame of the Forest (1955), Aubrey Menon’s The prevalence of Witches (1955), Victor Anant’s The Revolving Man (1959), the Cartoonist R.K. Luxman’s Sorry, No Room (1969), and Dilip Hiro’s A Triangular View (1969). Then, during the 1970s there occurred a sudden spurt of fiction. Notable titles among these include B.K. Karanjia’s More of an Indian (1970), V.K. Gokak’s Narhari: Prophet of India (1972), Raj Gill’s The Golden Dawn (1974), B.S. Gidwani’s The Sword of Tipu Sultan (1976), Rohit Handa’s Comrade Sahib (1977), Saros Cowasjee’s Goodbye to Elsa (1978), Kasturi Sreenivasan’s Service with a Smile (1978), and Shive K. Kumar’s The Bone’s Prayer (1979). This trend bode well for Indian English novel despite the pessimistic prophecy by Uma Parameshwaran that it is the time of “lamentable demise”. It is, however, another matter that considerable fiction by this period hardly shows any remarkable handling of well devised narrative techniques.

Then, there emerged a significant group of women novelists including Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Prawer
Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal and Anita Desai. Standing at a significant turn in the line of narrative artists, Kamala Markandaya (Purnaiah Taylor (1927-) has treated her quintessential theme of East-West encounter in the course of her nine novels beginning with *Nectar in a Sieve (1954)* down to *The Golden Honeycomb (1977)*. She has evinced quite some originality in her narrative technique despite the charge that her style sounds like a mixture of William Faulkner and the later Henry James. Then, the nine novels of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala (1927-) including *To Whom She Will (1955)* on one side and *East Into Upper East: Plain Tales from New Delhi and New York (1999)* on the other constitute ironic studies of the East-West encounter in which she uses gentle irony and good-humoured satire to bring out the comedy of what she observes in intricate human relationships.

Still further, the five novels of Nayantara Sahgal (1927-) with *A Time to be Happy (1958)* on one side and *A Situation in Delhi (1977)* on the other, show “admirable treatment of her
obvious political theme.\textsuperscript{10} and evince a definite advance in her narrative art. All the same, she has yet to make a beginning in the handling of specific narrative devices as such. Then, came Anita Desai (1937-) who, unlike Sahgal or Jhabvala, shows keener interest through her seven major novels in the interior landscape of the mind in the process of man's facing "the ferocious assaults of existence\textsuperscript{11}" than in political and social realities. However, in terms of narrative technique, Anita Desai does not have any high claims but she has certainly enhanced the aesthetic value, enriched the textual density of writing through use of effective symbols, and artistic parallels.

Meanwhile, newer voices came to be heard, and the most notable include those of Chaman Nahal (1927-) and Arun Joshi (1939-93). Chaman Nahal is a novelist of painful odysseys depicted in different contexts in such of his novels as \textit{My True Faces} (1973), \textit{Azadi} (1975), \textit{Into Another Dawn} (1977), and \textit{The English Queens} (1979). However, he has hardly been credited with mastery in the realm of narrative technique. In
contrast, as it were, Arun Joshi has concentrated on the deft use of his specific narrative technique creatively in depicting the pervasive theme of alienation in the course of his five novels. In this regard, what George Woodock has qualified a sound practitioner of narrative technique as one "who does not dwindle into a recorder nor a mere embellisher" in general terms, aptly applies to Arun Joshi. And, for the remarkable harnessing of his narrative technique Arun Joshi has secured a distinct place of his own.

(C) AGE OF ARUN JOSHI

It was in this comprehensive context that Arun Joshi came to be interacted upon at once by the bewildering contemporary chaos and creative ventures as a result of which he ruminated, experimented and evolved a narrative technique which he incorporated in the weft of his novels creatively. As an experimenter and innovator Arun Joshi happens to be the product of the specific events, atmosphere, and influence of his
age as also of his inherited proclivities and cultivated attitudes. Immediately preceding the start of Arun Joshi’s creative career he was nurtured on the contemporary trends of the nineteen sixties and seventies. Those decades compounded a period when science and faith had come into violent opposition and when man had lost his moorings in nature, succour in ancient wisdom, traditional values and sustenance in simple human relationships. Consequent upon this upheaval it came to be felt that the new phenomenon could not be depicted just through a merely related story. In a time like this which constituted a turning point, it was impossible for a sensitive soul like Arun Joshi, with all his keenness for experimentation, to live without being profoundly influenced by it.

The most striking characteristic of the twentieth century is the extreme diversity and puzzling complexity. Probably never before in the entire journey of Indian English novel any specific period of time witnessed almost a complete transformation of the major factors that condition man’s life
and fiction writing as it occurred in the late nineteen sixties and seventies. This general phenomenon and predicament of man occurred as an off-shoot of a perturbing socio-economic and politico – ideational development. Understandably, it was in the wake of rapid urbanization, increased industrial activity that there came about a drastic change in the life style and thinking of man. In one sphere the financial recession resulted in deteriorating economic scenario and virtually culminated in abject poverty of the masses. Then, the economic squeeze of the middle class on the one hand and the ever growing affluence of the newly rich on the other, precipitated the imbalance further. Since novel depicts the essential form of life giving it a fuller representation of real life than anything else can provide and in virtue thereof plays the role of “a pocket theatre”13, it needed the suitable narrative technique and this requirement led to an itch for experimentation. Owing to all these factors and urgencies, it was indeed now that the essential spirit of the age came to co-exist with experimentation on the
narrative front. As such, Arun Joshi came to treat and create fiction with at once the urgency and mission of depicting reality through specific narrative techniques.

Concomitant with this overwhelming human condition when man was gripped by the feeling of loneliness, failed to perceive any purpose of life or relevance of existence in a hostile world, there came the irresistible impact of the philosophy of existentialism. In one of his interviews with Purabi Bannerji he lets us know that he had read the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55), the French Albert Camus (1913-60) besides the Nobel Laureate Jean Paul Sartre (1905-80) and that he “might have been influenced by them.”

Arun Joshi’s familiarity with *Being and Nothingness* (1956) that explained how man is a unique and isolated individual in a meaningless and hostile world, free to choose his destiny but responsible for his own actions, resulted in considerable influence on his thinking as also came to be the most remarkable impacts on the twentieth century. It was also the
heyday of Mahatma Gandhi and Arun Joshi was influenced by him, and the *Bhagwad Gita*. Naturally, therefore, he came to be passionately immersed in existentialist issues faced by man. In this way, the spirit of sociology came to be permeated by philosophy.

This general drift in the composition of society in the attitude of man, and philosophical speculation had a very wide impact and Arun Joshi was most susceptible to it. Consequently, he realised that under the circumstances, novel must deal with the existentialist situation which necessitated a shift of emphasis from the external to the internal, etching the contours of the interior landscape of the individual’s mind. In this regard, Leon Edel has pertinently observed that the most characteristic aspect of the twentieth century fiction “is its inward turning to convey the flow of mental experience, which has been loosely called the stream of consciousness.”

Therefore, the interest of the novelists shifted from the public to the private sphere. They began to delineate the individual’s
quest for the self in all its varied and complex forms. In this connection Robin White has made a significant observation:

"If any thing is to be distinguished in Indian fiction... it would be the varied literary attempt to portray the conflict of the individual."\(^{16}\)

This shape of things lends credence to the common place observation that the spirit of the age and the personality of the writer are potent factors in shaping the literary activity of a period. Significantly, it is fully applicable in case of Arun Joshi since these regard, these factors have shaped his vision as also his narrative technique which, through experimentation and innovation, found ever-matching form that eventually came to be woven in the texture of his novels creatively. Thus, interacted upon by the total reality of the times Arun Joshi absorbed the potent impacts of his age, experimented on the necessary narrative technique of novel writing and eventually felt the pulse of the time, diagnosed its inadequacies and judged its potentials, probed and explored human consciousness within
the dynamic of the comprehensive twentieth century situation. As such, the entire corpus of trends and factors comprising the twentieth century exercised a tremendous influence on Arun Joshi’s mind and art. And consequently, both the comprehensive milieu of his times and the fruits of his innovation have come to be reflected in the tone of his writing and harnessed through a highly devised yet dynamic narrative technique.

(D) LIFE OF ARUN JOSHI

In this way, Arun Joshi (1939-93) was immensely and profitably interacted upon by the atmosphere of his age of great commotion and ferment that was virtually governed at once by the spirit of science, and loss of faith when moral was replaced by reason, gripped by economic recession, ruffled by crumbling values, swayed by existential philosophy and experimentation in literature. Now, with a view to further know the outlines of the mental picture of Arun Joshi it seems essential to trace the major turning points in his intellectual, professional and literary
career.

There are definite stages in the comprehensive growth of Arun Joshi’s personality before he came to be recognised as a novelist who made a signal contribution to the genre of fiction in respect of narrative technique in Indian English novel. In broad terms, perceptive and brilliant, solemn and sensitive inherently as Arun Joshi was, he evinced remarkable eagerness for studies in his early days. This child of Sumitra Joshi and Dr. A.C. Joshi born at Banaras, Uttar Pardesh, seems to have inherited passion for books, science and technology from his learned father, an eminent botanist who was Vice-Chancellor of Punjab University, Chandigarh, later adviser in Planning Commission, and then appointed Vice – Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University. The mind of this young man, from an enlightened family, blessed with a passionate nature, and a hungry intellect came to be leavened by numerous factors and forces in the form of men, movements, and trail-blazing ideas of a wide variety.
Arun Joshi's avidity as a reader, fascination for science coupled with instinctive craze for experimentation placed him in an enviable position to further nibble at the thick-rinded fruit of the tree of knowledge. Scientific orientation as he had, he was a practical-minded man. And, preparatory to pursuit of specific studies as it were, he took up an assignment in 1957 at a mental hospital in America. He studied for and obtained an engineering degree from Kansas University, America in 1959, and then specialized in Industrial Management from M.I.T. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, U.S.A. in 1960). The pursuit of academic degrees also yielded him practical experience of life. And this experience was bound to create and leave a potent impression on his young, sensitive and responsive mind. Through his study of the records of Arun Joshi's life, R.K. Dhawan has confirmed that "right from the early stages Arun Joshi . . . was solemn, sensitive and perceptive" and he has had a brilliant academic career."
returning to India in 1961, Aran Joshi joined the Delhi Cloth and General Mills Co., widely known as DCM, in a managerial capacity, as chief of its Recruitment and Training Department. Simultaneously he held the position of Head of DCM Corporate performance Assessment Cell, Secretary, DCM Board of Management. Though he resigned from DCM in 1965 yet he continued to be Executive Director, Shri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources, and continued to be associated with Shri Ram Centre for Art and Culture and Hindu College, Delhi as member of their Governing Bodies till 1992. After 1965, Arun Joshi set up his own industries and manufactured Diesel engines, machine tools, foundry products and automotive parts besides writing fiction.

The numerous potent influences during his formative years include those undergone in America as a student, in India through his numerous assignments and engagements with DCM and literary influences by way of reading such of the existential philosophers as Kierkegaard, Camus, and Sartre, and a great
mind as Gandhi, and such of the great scriptures as the *Bhagwad Gita*. Yet another rich dimension came to be added to his personality and necessarily to his deeper understanding of life through his marriage to Rukmani Lal, a cultured lady having deep “respect for writers” who also happened to be an entrepreneur and his being blessed with three children—two daughters and a son—equally well added to his yet deeper understanding of man’s sense of fulfilment. In one of his interviews with Purabi Bannerji Arun Joshi admitted having read these writers and scriptures though he did not understand them thoroughly and in equal measures. All the same, he clarified that he “did read Camus and Sartre . . . liked *The Plague* and read *The Outsider*” and that he “might have been influenced by them.” Arun Joshi was equally well influenced by Mahatma Gandhi and the *Bhagwad Gita*. As a result of such an interaction and impact he came to develop the conviction that individual actions have effect on others besides one’s ownself. One cannot therefore afford to continue with an
irresponsible existence but has to commit oneself at some point, he was also interacted upon by Hinduism which, in his perception, is highly existential—oriented philosophy since it attaches so much value to the right way to live and exist.

As stated above, Arun Joshi’s new-found interest, and engagement with the industrial world did not remain his only absorption but equally well, if not more intensely, profitably claimed his energies in writing fiction and polishing his ideas that continued maturing as he advanced in years. Meanwhile, his narrative technique grew in intensity in the process of fictional cultivation. And, following his rich, vast and varied experience in America and in India when he dealt with varied human element in discharge of managerial assignments, coupled with his own exceptional gifts and acquisitions Arun Joshi could turn his experience and studies to account, and depict the inner self of the modern man lost in labyrinths of existential dilemma through his narrative technique. It is worth noting that Arun Joshi’s continued unravelling of the facets of
crisis in modern man’s life, his creation of characters that come to be “not merely in Jamesian dilemma of dual cultures”, but as “walking metaphors of alienation”, that with him the “Indian English novel makes departures and catches up with the modern western novel.”

This comprehensive background shows that most of the Indian English novelists do not seem to have made any appreciable progress in regard to experimentation on the narrative front but Arun Joshi stands apart because of the subtle use of his narrative technique doing no violence to the surface meaning of the story and nothing is super imposed. Therefore, in terms of Arun Joshi’s comparison with other great writers in at once the western world and the Indian stream including Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, James Joyce, Franz Kafka, Raja Rao, and Anita Desai in respect of the use of narrative technique, it becomes evident that he has a distinct place of his own.

Arun Joshi continued writing novels and short stories for
a quarter century (1968-1990). Besides his five novels and a collection of short stories titled *The Survivor* (1976) he has also written business history entitled *Lala Shri Ram: A Study in Entrepreneurship in Industrial Management* (1975). Then, eventually his exceptional creative gifts and his narrative talent came to be acknowledged. In 1979, he was invited by the East-West centre to participate in the World Writer’s Conference held at Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A. In 1983, he was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award for his fourth novel *The Last Labyrinth* (1981) which marks the fructification of his treatment of man’s inevitable if not mystical urge and search for meaning of life.

With the writing of each new novel Arun Joshi’s narrative technique gathered new overtones, showing a rising graph of perceptible fictional development, both in theme and technique. The intensity and richness of his technique supports the view that the growth of his thematic complexity was integrally related to the growth and refinement of his narrative
skill. Comprehensively seen, both in his own right as also in contrast to other Indian English novelists Aran Joshi has broken a new ground in handling and harmonizing his narrative technique. In this way, the significance of the researcher’s studying Aran Joshi’s age and life becomes evident when things crystalize only through perceiving the connection between Arun Joshi’s life and his fictional creativity.

INTRODUCTION TO ARUN JOSHI’S NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

PRELIMINARY

As such, the years of apprenticeship of Arun Joshi in regard to his age and life give a definite peep into the modes and processes of the formation of his mind and evolution of his technique. Experience had made him know numerous ideas, trends and situations which formed the seed-bed of his intellect that got fertilized by the potent environment, meaningful varied
impacts in which his intellect matured, and from which vision of life grew. He had come to know that the feeling of futility of life, sense of isolation, despair and agony and search for meaning in existence which were earlier taken to have terrifying roots in Western life had become an undeniable universal experience. And therefore, he came to explore the torments of man in at once the Indian and the universal context. However, creative imagination made Arun Joshi penetrate them with the result that he could be on his own in terms of theme and technique of his novels. In that respect he came to be at once the meeting ground of experiences and influences and the starting point of the formation, maturing, and harnessing of his narrative technique. In this total context, it seems essential to have a detailed analysis of the salient features that characterise his narrative technique.

(1) Autobiographical Overtones as a Narrative Technique

The first characteristic feature of Arun Joshi's narrative
technique is rooted in autobiographical overtones. This significant aspect of the total narrative methodology of Arun Joshi deals with the actions or participation of the protagonist or a leading character in a piece of literary creation. This basis for reasoning is used on the presupposition that the writer himself comes forward to introduce incidents and present characters in the total context. The teller of the story refers to himself as "I". Thus, we have "first-person participant" and "first-person observer" points of view. The reliability of a first person narrator's observation and judgement is critical. It defines the distance between the reader and the "I" of the story and it determines the reader's perceptions of all characters, including the narrator. However, in case of the first person narrative as such, the "I" point of view, may represent the author himself, but it is more often through the point of view of a character in the story that best serves the author's purpose. Thus, the first person narrative, with all the variations, establishes a friendly relationship between the narrator and the
reader, but this in no way implies that the “I” of the narrator represents the author merely for the reason that the incidents which happen to the narrator, actually took place in case of the writer. This first person narrator implies a knowledge of events though this knowledge is limited to what the first-person narrator himself knows. And as such, it can be imagined what the author is attempting to achieve when he clearly stands at once removed from the narrator. As in case of the omniscient narrator technique, this device of the first person narrative also forms a part of the three principal categories of the ‘point of view’ narrative method or a point from which a story is seen or told. The three categories include the omniscient point of view, the limited point of view and first-person point of view. It has been clearly stated by Karl Beckson that in this type of narrative “the point of view is really that of the character telling the story.”21 In view of this crucial fact, it becomes amply evident that for Arun Joshi, this technique is not a medium of mere self propagation.
This mode of narration has certain evident advantages. First, this method ensures intimacy and adds to the credibility rather than authenticity of the narration. It is natural that experience from the inside, indeed from the heart, is vastly more intense and intimate than that communicated from outside by way of external physical description. The use of the “I” as fountainhead of narration promotes intimacy and vividness. It evokes confidence in the narrator and leaves the impression of accuracy and hence reliability. This device has the benefit of warmth and interest a person may be supposed to feel in his own affairs. Secondly, even if the story happens to be strange, supernatural or otherwise hard to believe, it will have chances of easy acceptability and authenticity for the understandable reason that it has been told by the one central figure who has gone through the experience himself. According to Marjorie Boulton, this technique “may well heighten the sense of reality, in that we all experience life through one pair of eyes only.”22 The third advantage of this aspect of Arun Joshi’s technique
ensures structural unity. Fourthly, “the first-person narrative is superbly flexible, as Dorothy Van Ghent has significantly added that it “moves easily from character to events, from meditation to rapid action as also from humour to solemn pathos.”23

At the same time, this technique suffers from a number of lapses. In the first instance, the protagonist can narrate his own thoughts, and not those of other characters. Its second defect lies in the phenomenal fact that he cannot portray himself objectively the way he appears to others. Thirdly, the device stands the danger of distortion of facts because of the possible glorification or pretentious humility. Another defect related to the experiential phenomenon that it is not easy to impersonate every character. Probably, as a via media to obviate these lapses, the task of narration is delegated to a character who is not the hero but who is competent enough to narrate the hero’s ventures closely and competently. This alternative is expected to be tinged with credibility. Rene Welleck and Austin Warren
have also dropped a word of caution about the element of carelessness in the use and understanding of this technique: "If we do not know precisely what is autobiographical and what is not, we are likely to read the novel too autobiographically."

However, the one big difficulty about this method is that it is very difficult to come anywhere near putting ourselves imaginatively in the other person's place. It would not be an exaggeration to say that in regard to the use of the autobiographical overtones as a narrative technique Arun Joshi belongs to the tradition of St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) who is credited with presentation of *Confessions* (400) that evinces an early mode of considerable standard in the use of autobiographical overtones. He equally well belongs to the tradition of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) in the context of his mode of narration in *Confessions* (1781–88) and of William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in *The Prelude* (1805, 1850) which constitutes a kind of internal epic having autobiographical overtones without dragging Wordsworth down as an
autobiographical author. In point of fact, Arun Joshi joins this stream as a fictional narrator of considerable potential. As a narrator evincing autobiographical overtones he avoids all extremes, believes and practises what Marthe Robert suggests that different modes and studies of narration are “all equally valid and significant so long as they create the illusion of an unknown author for whom the real one only acts as proxy.”

It seems, Arun Joshi has acquired a niche of his own in the galaxy of narrators in so far as he had used his creative activity through rigorous investigation of his own experience, memory, psychology etc by way of depicting his sense of values in the matrix of his five novels.

(2) Symbols and Myths

The second salient feature of Arun Joshi’s narrative technique pertains to the use of symbols and myths. There can be numerous perspectives and connotations of symbols in general but in the context of this thesis symbols imply their
qualitative use and organisation through characters, incidents, images, objects or complexes of these to provide vesture to the comprehensive fabric of his novels. Since Joshi has delineated the contemporary complex existentialist predicament of the modern man when he has got anmeshed in the maze and tangle of alienation, despair and hopelessness, and because symbols involve and evoke objects and reveal qualities and moods little by little suggestively and indirectly and concretize into "a leit motif of the thematic concern."\(^{26}\) he has found the element of symbols an appropriate and suitable mode for the aesthetic depiction of this fact of life.

Definitionally, a symbol is conventionally regarded as something that typifies and recalls something else in virtue of its possessing similar qualities referable to ideas, attitudes and significance. Symbols are essentially words which are not merely connotative, but also evocative and emotive. In addition to their meaning they also call up or evoke before the mind's eye a number of associations connected with them, and are also
rich in emotional significance. In one sense, a symbol is a comparison between the abstract and the concrete with one of the terms of comparison being a mere substitution of one object for another. Besides depicting reality symbols help "penetrate beyond reality to a world of ideas." Sigmund Freud qualifies symbols as "unconscious ideation." Charles Chadwick defines and clarifies that symbols imply a methodology "to describe any mode of expression which, instead of referring to something directly, refers to it indirectly through the medium of something else." Accordingly, a symbol does not imply "the mere substitution of one object for another, but the use of concrete recurrent imagery to express abstract ideas and emotions." In the judgement of Peter Hutchinson "literary symbols aim to suggest -- by an indirect means -- an idea, a relationship or an emotion." Hutchinson further adds that concrete object, a gesture or an event, is used to convey something broad and intangible. At a still higher plane a symbol is defined as "translucence of the eternal in and through
the temporal."  

In view of various shades of meaning attached to symbols these have been put into different categories. Broadly, there are the archetypal symbols, colours as symbols, geographic symbols besides symbolic numbers. Archetypal symbols are rooted in the images of water in the form of river and sea that stand for the mystery of creation, fertility, growth, Eternity, purification and redemption. Then, the symbolism of colours occurs most commonly in showing contrast of light and dark with white as a symbol of life, purity, innocence or truth, and black as suggestive of chaos, terror, death, evil ignorance, mystery, primal wisdom, the unknown. Then green and its shades are used to suggest sensation, hope, fertility and even decay whereas red symbolises courage, sacrifice, disorder, violent passion and blue stands for the sky, transcendence, and the infinite. It is also associated with security, religious feeling and spiritual purity. Again, geographic symbols have their own peculiar significance. For example, characters from the ‘East’
may prove to be 'wise'. On the other hand, the 'East End', whether of London or Boston can function just as plainly to symbolise persons who have been deprived in their early years. Characters from northern lands - - or possibly even those who have visited them - - are more likely to be robust, patient and common sensical. Those from the South are more likely to be sensuous or artistic. Still further, numbers too function symbolically. For example, number three symbolises light, the Holy Trinity, spiritual awareness and unity, male principle. Then, number four is associated with life cycle, earth, four seasons, four elements, earth nature; number seven symbolises the union of three and four, the union of the divine and the noumenal, and hence indicative of perfect order. Besides these, there can be certain other symbolic connotations having moral or symbolic significance. For example, a black and brazen door may symbolically suggest a black and brazen soul. In the same way, with some background relevant to a scene or a character, the writer enlarges on its meaning and significance enormously,
so that a gas fire can become an inferno, some milk-bottle tops and a duster may become demon eyes and monster fur, and eternity can be hinted in the tilt of an egg-cup. And, within these very dimensions Arun Joshi has equally well used myths to suggest and reinforce deeper intended meaning to the surfacial narration of his novels. In specific terms, myths add to the depth of meaning and aesthetics of presentation in the narrative dynamic of fiction. There are numerous and wide-ranging definitions of myth suggesting anything from a fabulous invention to a deeper interpretation of the world and its issues than can be provided by rational or scientific explanation. Myths are generally rooted in comparable tales either from folk-lore or the scriptures used in modern literature "for a particular thematic or structural purpose." In this regard, a myth presents a design holding together all the digressions, and tales within tales enriching the main structure of the novel. In sum, a myth is at once a mystery and a mode of deeper and vaster clarification. It is, in fact, an act of
apprehension and an articulation of vision. The articulation, by the very fact of the limitations of human speech, falls short of the vision. Hence, the myth as verbal form only indicates the vision it seems to capture. Indeed, the reality behind the vision still further eludes language and understanding. Thus, the myth can never be understood nor explained, it can only be apprehended, not comprehended. Even so, however, it can be appreciated and meditated upon, and sometimes appreciated better with parallel references to other and inter cultural acts of the mythical imagination.

The myth of the cave and the sun can be rewardingly appreciated in the Indian context, with a parallel reference to Upanishadic exploration which is concerned with both the existential reality and the ultimate reality. The Ishopanishad says that the face of truth (reality) is hidden; it is covered with a golden veil. The seeker prays to the Lord: Remove the cover and reveal the truth. When the cover is removed, the truth shines as the sun. But even the sun is a medium, a
manifestation of the reality that shines through the sun. When
the veil is fully removed from the spirit of man, then he gets a
vision of the real sun and attains to the centre of all existence.
The myth of man tied with limitations and imprisoned in the
cave, to the exclusion of the vision and then breaking through
them is rendered in the story of Vamdev, a saint. At the time of
his liberation he told how he was tied in a hundred fold house
of iron (the body) but after his freedom the secret was revealed
to him. He realised that he had broken through the cage and
could fly like the eagle.

Thus, a myth "functions as an aesthetic device which
reaches into the deepest layers of personal, religious, social and
political life,"34 and hence, when used consciously, it directs the
reader's attention towards certain features which the writer
wishes to stress. The one narrative advantage of the use of
mythological frame-work accrues by way of the linking of
characters by means of repeated use of striking characteristics,
and it yields a quite unmistakable symbolic aura to certain
characters. And thus, it serves a central, structural device in a novel. In case of numerous writers, use of myth reveals the author’s desire to amplify by means of analogy, in others, however, it is prompted possibly by subconscious desires to suggest universal, archetypal qualities in character and situation and creates a sufficiently new reading dimension thereby suggesting timeless and universal patterns in human activity and thinking.

Since symbols and myths are closely connected with archetypes, here it seems relevant to refer to this device C.J. Jung applied the term “archetype” to “primordial images”, the “psychic residue” of repeated types of experience in the lives of our very ancient ancestors which, Jung, said, are inherited in the “collective unconscious” of the human race and are expressed in myths, religion, dreams, fantasies and works of literature. Broadly, an archetype means prototype or an exemplar. For instance, Satan is the archetype of evil doers. Archetype is that quality or the “essence of those primal tendencies or traits that
have descended to us." Archetypes are rooted in cultural continuity and reveal basic human instincts. In one sense, symbols are rooted in images and their operation assumes deep suggestiveness and reveals archetypal roots in the form of fantasies beneath the apparently innocent surface. However, the archetypes like the basic and effective symbols come close to having roots in the treasure house of the past and hence hold meaning for the present. Archetypes transcendent the limitations of words yet speak a language that can be understood by all. Seen in this light an archetype means an image, a concept, tradition or quality of character that unites us with our gene in the past. In point of fact, symbols and myths constitute a significant media for expressing some lasting account of the meaningful experience of man because of their apparent spontaneity and collectivity. Besides this, symbols and myths add a significant set of elements "in the aesthetic unity" of a literary work.
(3) The stream of Consciousness

The third characteristic feature of the narrative device of Arun Joshi comprises the use of the stream of consciousness technique. The stream of the consciousness is used to depict the endless flow of consciousness of one or more characters within an inter-connected pattern. In the stream of consciousness novel the reader is taken directly into the mind of a character and is given a peep into his soul. The omniscient author is still there, but once he has placed his readers within the pre speech level of consciousness of his characters, he withdraws himself and so allows them to watch the flow of sensation and impression as they rise without any logical organisation. In point of fact, it is used to present all the contents of a character's mind — memory, sense perceptions, feelings, intuitions and thoughts in relation to the stream of experience of characters through random associations to produce rhythm of consciousness within the orchestra of infinitesimal thoughts and feelings. Within the dynamic of this
pattern free psychological association is used to depict and determine the feelings and thoughts of characters. With a view to maintain this association five inter-connected and basic devices are used. These basic devices include direct interior monologue where the character expresses his own thoughts, indirect interior monologue when other characters talk about him, authorial intervention in the form of comments, and soliloquy representing the psychic content and thought processes of a character directly from character to reader with an audience tacitly assumed.

Besides these areas of exploration and depiction, this technique involves such of the cinematic devices as Montage—a method to show composite or diverse views on one subject to control the movement of the streams of consciousness, multiple view, slow ups, panorama, fade-outs, cutting, flash backs, and Panorama involving a series of scenes. Thirdly, it uses mechanical devices such as typographical—parenthesis, italics, capital letters besides the normal type and punctuational
innovations. At the same time this technique is free of linguistic logic or any proper grammar. It is argued that since the scenes, incidents and characters are held together by psychological association, and that this technique presents the illusion of flux, no linguistic discipline is used.

No doubt, this technique offers immense opportunities for exploration into the deepest recesses of a character’s mind, but it suffers from numerous lapses. First, it disregards rational thought and flouts the commonly accepted rules of grammatical construction. Secondly, the reader has often to strain his mind to comprehend the writer’s meaning. Third defect emanates from the fact that it is neither possible nor always desirable to limit the action of every novel to a single day or to a very limited period of time. Finally, this technique admits of no story in the conventional sense. And, with a view to emphasize the importance of story and plot, Manohar Malgonkar qualifies it only as “a phase”\(^37\) in the journey of the novel. Extreme condemnation of this technique comes from Beach who thinks
that this method is confined “to persons of an extremely ‘introverted’ type, to neurotics and those of unbalanced mind.”38

In the interest of comprehensiveness and balance, it seems relevant to refer to the device of the interior monologue, which also deals with the deep, inner thoughts, and feelings of characters in fiction. It may be mentioned that in case of this device, thought associations, unlike those in the stream of consciousness, are dealt within a more logical progression though it forms an integral part of the latter. In short, the interior monologue is a modification of the subjective point of view and is used when the writer wants to “show from the inside how a character’s mind works.”39 Since this device reproduces thought in its original estate, it is expressed by means of direct phrases reduced to the minimum of syntax. In this regard, Leon Edel pertinently observes that in this device:

The writer himself narrows down the stream of consciousness and places us largely at the ‘centre’ of the character’s thoughts— that centre where thought often uses words rather than images.40
This device further differs from a reverie, which is the silent condition of being lost in thought. It is also not synonymous with soliloquy which implies speaking one’s thoughts aloud before an assumed audience. Similarly, it is not to be equated with a dramatic monologue because it is not conditioned by the presence of a silent listener as a precondition in case of the latter.

Most of the stream of consciousness writers move between outer narrative and inner investigation of the thoughts of characters without the intrusion of connecting links. This technique is based on the fact that clearly life itself is not divided up into chunks of talking and chunks of thinking isolated from external action. Contrary to this, these processes go on occurring continually and simultaneously. In point of fact, this technique is rooted in and exploits the element of incoherence in human conscious process. Beach has aptly observed that “human psyche is such an imperfectly integrated bundle of memories, sensations, and impulses that unless sternly controlled by some dominating motive, it is likely to be
at the mercy of every stray wind of suggestion. In the use of stream of consciousness technique Arun Joshi takes the reader into the mind of one or the other of his characters and the reader remains clear as to whose thoughts he is following. The story progresses through the thoughts of characters as their experience passes in the form of interior monologue showing in the process how human beings are bound by memories, reactions and obsessions. And, for this matter, the mind of his characters switches frequently between the episodes.

(4) **Humour and Irony**

The fourth and final characteristic feature of Arun Joshi's narrative technique involves the use and analysis of the elements of humour and irony. These constituents are employed to explore and reveal the deeply hidden and vitally significant aspects human character and behaviour through events and situations. In very general terms, humour denotes a quality of being amusing, comic or the laughable. The purpose
of humour is to entertain others by relieving them of mental
gloom or boredom comic sense, comic portrayal of character,
comedies of ludicrous situations, comedy of the incongruity of
character, witty uses of words and sentences etc contribute to
the success of humorous writer. Originally, however, humour
did not concern laughter but was a mere “term in medieval
medicine.”42 In ancient medical theory it was held that human
body had four cardinal humours defined as ‘liquid’ in Latin --
phlegm, blood, choler, and black bile (melancholy) -- and in
Galen’s theory, the predominance of any one of them
determined man’s character. In the modern sense, humour has
nothing to do with the medieval connotation of ‘personal
eccentricity’ but simply means that which causes amusement,
laughter or comicality in a character, a situation, a comment or
an observation. In certain contexts, humour is limited to gentle
and sympathetic laughter and in its meaning and significance
crystallizes, in contrast to ‘wit’ that which evokes intellectual
delight, causes surprises or even derisive laughter. The new
Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines humour as "a quality of action, speech etc. which causes amusement; facetiousness, comicality . . . the faculty of perceiving and enjoying what is ludicrous or amusing."^{43}

Besides the device of humour, Arun Joshi has equally well used the technique of irony in a commendable manner. In terms of definition, irony implies saying one thing but meaning the opposite. In other words, it always asserts the opposite of what is really meant. For example, the desire to insult is conveyed in the form of a compliment. Thus, contrasts are the stuff of irony. According to Martin Gray "irony consists of saying one thing while you mean another."^{44} In other words, it is "a device by which a writer expresses a meaning contradictory to the stated or ostensible one."^{45} Necessarily therefore, the resultant situation gets turned into an entire argument, and in virtue where of irony operates as the technique of purposeful deception with the writer maintaining the element of detachment and aesthetics. In point of fact,
Irony has its roots in Greek Comedy in which the Eiron ('dissembler'), a stock character continually pretended to be stupid, while the Alazon was a stupid and complacent but bullying braggart. Though small and weak, the Eiron, by means of his wit and resourcefulness, was always able to prevail over the Alazon. On this background, it becomes evident that irony is the Eiron's method of achieving meaning via understatement, and concealment. In this comprehensive context irony implies "the expression of meaning using language that normally expresses the opposite; especially the humorous or sarcastic use of praise to imply condemnation or contempt . . . . Discrepancy between the expected and the actual state of affairs; a contradictory or ill-timed outcome of events as if in mockery of the fitness of things." Thus, irony denotes indirection, double-meaning, facetiousness, incongruity, absurdity, reverse state of affairs, and unexpected outcome.

In so far as there are numerous techniques for achieving irony, there are many types of irony. And, the different types
include Socratic irony, Verbal or rhetorical irony, dramatic or tragic irony, irony of situation, cosmic irony, romantic irony and ironic tension. Socratic irony involves apparent self-denigration and derives its name from the method of Socrates who, in the Dialogues, handles arguments in the manner of Eiron, pretends to be ignorant and is willing to adopt the views of his opponents but does so only to expose their flaws. Verbal or rhetorical irony is probably the simplest and the most commonly used type and implies a statement in which the implicit meaning intended by the speaker differs from that which he ostensibly asserts. For example, in Shakespeare’s play, Hamlet, the protagonist of the same name says that his father has been dead for less than two hours, but Ophelia points out that it is twice two month and Hamlet adds: “So long? . . . O heavens! die two months ago and not forgotten yet.”

Thirdly, dramatic or tragic irony occurs in a situation in a narrative or a play when the reader or audience knows more than the characters and can therefore, foresee the impending
tragic or comic circumstances. It is tragic irony when a hero kills his own son not knowing who he is. Irony of situation occurs when a set of circumstances turns out to be the reverse of those anticipated or considered appropriate. A telling example of this type of irony is come across Shelley’s poem, “Ozymandias” where a traveller describes that Ozymandias felt he was “king of kings” but then eventually nothing survives except “colossal wreck” surrounded by a bare and boundless desert all around. The fifth type comprises cosmic irony or irony of fate. This occurs when God, or destiny, or the universal process is shown manipulating events to frustrate the lives of characters, and mock the protagonists. Most of Thomas Hardy’s novels are built around this device. Then, romantic irony is a mode of dramatic or narrative writing in which the author builds up a serious emotional tone and artistic illusion, only to break it, to laugh at his own solemnity. In the process, the artist takes the reader into confidence, reveals to him that he is at a loss for matter to sustain his plot and undecided about
how to continue it. Finally, the seventh type is called ironic
tension by such of the New critics as Cleanth Brooks and
Robert Penn Warren. They have used the term irony in a
greatly extended and as a general criterion of literary value. For
them, a poem is ironic if it takes account of complexities of
experience, showing awareness of opposite and complementary
views, which they call ironic tension.

Comprehensively seen, Arun Joshi’s use of the four-fold
narrative technique helps present the different phases and
perspectives of reality in the form of a set of changes that occur
in his protagonists who, in the beginning start as self-centred
beings lost in self-pity, elusiveness, and confusion but
eventually emerge as tireless or at least sincere seekers and
finally achieve self-fulfilment. As such, narrative technique in
Arun Joshi does not mean a mere theoretical outlook but the
perception and meaningful practice of its specific features that
have been harnessed and harmonised in the weft of his novels.
Naturally, therefore, the aesthetics of his narrative technique
came to serve as a patent medium for unveiling not only the very essential self of his characters but equally well help the reader grasp and appreciate his thematic dimensions. This entire theoretical corpus relevant to the four-fold salient features of Arun Joshi's narrative technique will find discussion, analysis and exemplification from his five novels in subsequent chapters of the thesis.
REFERENCES


36Peter Hutchinson, *Games Authors Play*, p.117.


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