CHAPTER FOUR

THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS TECHNIQUE

The third aspect of Arun Joshi’s narrative technique comprises the use of the stream of consciousness technique. This technique is used to depict the endless flow of the consciousness of one or more characters within an interconnected pattern. In the context of this technique total human personality is determined, not by acts but by motives and intentions. In 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. Among other things, this technique is broadly oriented in the assumption that very little of ourselves is displayed to the world because our real self is like an iceberg, only a tip of which is visible. Therefore, the acts we actually
perform and the motives we cherish are only pale outlines of some altogether complex thought or feeling. Since experience continually remoulds us every moment and our mental reactions over every given thing are really a resultant of our experience of the whole world upto that date, and that there is a continuing entity of this sort as a necessary condition of personality, the real formidable self lives and functions within. Thus, within the dynamic of this pattern, free play of psychological association, through direct and indirect monologues besides soliloquy, is used to depict and determine the feelings and thoughts of characters. In the total context, Arun Joshi’s novels come out as a study of the inner life of individuals as they exist, first in solitude, and then in society, in their relation to each other but always in relation to reality.

Besides these modes of exploration, certain more specific technical devices including montage, multiple view, panorama and flash back are used. At the same time, in addition to the use of language which is free of linguistic logic, such of the
typographical devices as parenthesis, capital letters, blank spaces, italics especially at the close of chapters, are used to control the movement of the stream of consciousness technique. Arun Joshi uses italic type to indicate, clarify or emphasize some aspect of character, thought or a thing of one sort or the other. What is exclusive about Joshi in this regard, is that he uses a single word in italic type. Different writers using the stream of consciousness technique employ italic type to indicate changes in episodes, or parts of the text but in case of Arun Joshi it is used for purposes of emphasis. Since Arun Joshi’s novels deal with man’s existential dilemma involving alienation, anguish and muddle of concepts which are all matters of inner experience, the use of stream of consciousness method forms a suitable technique for the depiction of such a phenomena. In view of the enormity of the dimensions of this technique it seems a major challenge to control the weight of the details involved but it must be said to the credit of Arun Joshi that he manages his material with admirable dexterity.
Arun Joshi’s *The Foreigner* (1968) constitutes the first example of the use of the stream of consciousness technique. Since the theme of this novel is rooted in the comprehensive dynamic of modern man’s existential dilemma which is essentially an internal struggle, therefore the introspective method has been used with its protagonist Sindi Oberoi at the centre. The consciousness of Sindi has been explored in correlation with other characters in the novel including June Blyth, Kathy, Anna, Babu Rao Khemka his father Mr. Khemka, his sister Sheila, and Muthu, a low paid employee in Mr. Khemka’s factory. The stream of Sindi’s consciousness has been mapped in inter-connection with his experience in such of the places as America, England, Kenya, and India simultaneously interwoven with people and problems capturing many shifting moods and memories. In requirement of the stream of consciousness technique the narration in this “briskly written piece”¹ has been conducted in a series of flash backs
throwing together the past and the present, the real and the remembered, the world of imagination, and the world of reality.

This novel that runs through three interconnected parts and eighteen continuously marked and arranged sections opens out in the present to depict things that happened in the past. Its narration starts with the death of Babu Rao Khemka in a terrible car accident in Boston (America) when Sindi Oberoi was called by the police to identify the body and ends with his realisation of the humanitarian obligation to fellow workers in Mr. Khemka's factory. In so far as the narrative threads and binds places and events in an artistically circular manner, R.K. Dhawan has confirmed the use of the stream of consciousness technique in *The Foreigner* by observing that it "is written in the form of things past", and that its "narration keeps moving from the recent past in Boston to the present in Delhi."²

Among others, the endless flow of the consciousness of Sindi is depicted through his relationship with Babu Rao Khemka. Though right at the start of the novel -- part one,
section-I Babu Rao comes to be introduced when Sindi is called by the police to identify his body in Boston yet in section-3 it comes to be known through Sindi that he had first met Babu at Logan (America) where he had reached via London, and when he had told Sindi that “they had three houses in Delhi and a villa in Mussoorie”\(^3\) and at the mention of this city Sindi imagined that he had never seen Mussoorie. Sindi is also reminded how Babu never stopped talking about girls and also that he had said (to Sindi): “what is the good of coming to America if one is not to play around with girls.”\(^4\) In this way, Sindi’s mind flits about endlessly. Once again Babu Rao’s name comes to be referred through his sister Sheila in contrast to her father, Mr. Khemka who was described as “selfish” and “brutal”\(^5\) by his daughter. Then, “one day a few weeks after Christmas”\(^6\) Babu Rao called Sindi on the phone requesting him to meet him, and on reaching Babu’s residence Sindi discovered that Babu had been drinking because he feared being asked by his professors to leave, and then he recalled how
he met the dean and helped Babu Rao get another chance. At that time June also came to meet Babu and in the course of conversation Babu got reminded of his family in India, and of his father who was “clever and successful” and for whom “he had a deep respect”. Here, it comes to be further revealed that Babu could not concentrate on his studies, continued thinking of his home and sister Sheila and cars and some friends in Delhi, especially thinking a lot about women.

Then, Sindi’s stream of consciousness continues (flowing) through his relationship with June Blyth. Though the reader comes to know June in the very first section of this novel when Sindi informed her about the death of Babu Rao yet in section-4 shows how Sindi’s mind goes back into the past and he recalls his first meeting with her at a foreign students dance party when he was attracted by her sensual, affectionate feminine ways. Again, in section-7 June is reported having visited Sindi after three days following his asthmatic attack (in the open woods) where June had taken him in her car.
Meanwhile their interaction developed even to the level of physical relationship. In the next section Sindi felt quite attached to June (when he allocated one drawer to her in his apartment, kept her blouses well-folded and bought food that she liked, bought small presents for her, missed her when she was away) but he could not accept her repeated proposal and pleas for marriage because of his philosophy of detachment. However, he needed yet more time to realize that “objectivity was just another form of vanity”\(^8\). The very idea of detachment reminded Sindi of Kathy, a married girl whom he had met in London and in that context his mind moved from America to London. Then, in section-9 winds of existence brought Babu Rao in June’s life. Here again, time is indicated through a question of June to Babu as to how long he had been in America and he replied: “it will be two months next Monday”\(^9\), and significantly it comes to be mentioned that Sindi had already spent five years of his life in foreign countries out of the twenty five years of his life. June invited Sindi to her house on
Christmas. On that occasion, even as he was dancing with a Japanese girl invited by June, Sindi's thoughts kept floating away. Meanwhile that June was dancing with Babu, he chanced to look at them and his mind at once moved from America to Nairobi as he was reminded of the little dancing school there which he used to attend when he was eight.

Then, in section-10 Sindi, while staying in New York, received a letter from June referring to the state of her mind and the plight of Babu Rao and that she wanted to talk to him. After about a month Sindi reached June's apartment and learnt from her mother that she had gone out with Babu. Meanwhile, Sindi thought of his dinner and of taking a shower. Significantly, as the tepid water poured down Sindi's back his "mind flitted from object to object, in space and time, and then came to rest on June." After waiting in vain to meet June, he reached his apartment and before he lay down to sleep and switch off the past he could not help recalling numerous events of the past. Then came June who eventually proposed marriage
which Sindi could not accept. After her departure Sindi felt that he had lost her (June) to Babu, and stopped calling her. In section-12 after parting from Sheila in the preceding section Sindi was reminded of June especially after she had refused to meet him, and when emptiness would have been unbearable had he not been lucky to have work to go back to. Despite his best efforts Sindi could never manage to forget June and whenever he ran into such places which they had visited together Sindi would say unto himself: “my heart would sink with the burden of my memories.”11 In case of his love affair with Anna and Kathy, among others, Sindi had remained free but in case of June he could not remain uninvolved.

Like June, Babu Rao too could never get out of his mind. Sindi recalled his chance meeting with Babu in a student cafeteria in Boston when he had informed that he and June were “getting married”12, and how on Babu’s pressing invitation but more out of his desire to see June, Sindi went to attend the party for Babu’s engagement and his desire to be near June as long as
possible though "it was like an opium-eater's addiction."¹³ Later, Sindi chanced to visit Boston (from his place of work in New York), met June in a restaurant, she felt very sad and depressed at Babu's strange attitude and confided that she did not love Babu. Then, in section-13 there is a reference to June's letter to Sindi stressing that things were reaching the breaking point; Babu had been asked to leave the university and she wanted his advice. Significantly, the succeeding statement has been mentioned in the parenthesis ("It must have been about this time that Babu wrote the last letter to Sheila"¹⁴), his sister, referred to in section-6 of this novel. Sindi recalls having heard about this (last) letter from Sheila much earlier, and this is how the past gets connected with the present.

Still further, though in section-13 itself, June took Sindi to his past while sitting in a hotel room called "the Little Hut" where, after taking some drink, she asked Sindi to let her know something about his life in London. He narrated to June that after finishing high school he had felt bored with life in
Nairobi, eventually his uncle arranged for him to join London University to study engineering. However, quite soon he got bored with class-room lectures, and since he “wanted to know the meaning of my (his) life”\textsuperscript{15} he got an evening job as a dish washer in a night club in Soho, and then as a bar tender. It was at the bar that he met Anna, who was a minor artist of about thirty five who had separated from her husband and who always “yearned for her lost youth”.\textsuperscript{16} And, it was at one of Anna’s own parties that Sindi “met Kathy”\textsuperscript{17} who gave him the feeling that she was in love with him but parted company when she came to think that “marriage was sacred and had to be maintained at all costs”.\textsuperscript{18} At this, Sindi let June know that his separation with Kathy marked a new beginning in his thinking and that “the essence of my (his) life in London lay in what I had learnt from Anna and Kathy.”\textsuperscript{19} On this background Joy Abraham pertinently points out that right from “the very outset of the novel” Joshi has “gripped our attention”, and he goes on to create Sindi Oberoi’s background and his relationships
“throwing together the past and the present thereby maintaining a . . . chain of his own.”¹²⁰ That evening, after knowing Sindi’s experience in London June went away but only to ring up about Babu’s driving out of the flat blindly. Babu died and the following morning the police (had) asked him to come to the morgue and then, it is significantly mentioned: “I went to the morgue as I have described earlier” (i.e. in part one, section-1, p.5) “and identified Babu’s body”²¹, telephoned June to break the news and also cabled Babu’s father in India.

Then, the final phase of Sindi’s experience is narrated in the closing five sections (14-18) of the third and final part of this novel. In section 14 it is reported by Sindi that it was finally decided by flip of a coin by an old bar tender friend that he would go to India. It was felt that India will bring Sindi “a new kind of experience”²² and would also mean a sort of escape from himself. The latter part of his visualisation proved wrong because thereafter he could never forget Babu Rao and June Blyth who, along with the experience in Boston, stood for
“irrevocableness of the past.”23 On reaching Boston Sindi learnt from June’s neighbours that she had died in an operation for abortion. Sindi felt not only depressed but even held himself morally responsible for the tragic end of Babu and June. Sindi recalls how during the few weeks he stayed in New York before moving to India his laboratory provided him a sanctuary quite the way it had done at the time of Babu’s death. Sindi, however, lets us know that whenever he was not engaged in his work June’s memory troubled him like the pain of cancer but at the same time he continued experiencing a sort of internal purification. He “felt as if some indefatigable surgeon was cleaning up” his “soul with the sharp edge of his scalpel.”24

Then, finally from section sixteen onward Sindi’s mind oscillates between the past and present experiences when his concepts of detachment and involvement undergo metamorphosis. Sindi moved to New Delhi, got a job in Mr. Khemka’s factory and it was here that he learnt the real meaning of his concept of detachment. Meanwhile, Mr. Ghosh,
the tax man and his team raided Mr. Khemka’s factory sealed the documents and had the owner arrested for evasion of income tax. Afterwards Sheila, Mr. Khemka’s daughter requested Sindi to take the accusation against her father on himself. This simple looking request of Sheila made things terribly complex for Sindi. The heat of Sheila’s suggestion made him leave his bed at four, and he started roaming about through deserted streets, his foot falls echoing in the streets like his thoughts echoing from his different experiences. His mind reels over and he observes: “I had a funny feeling that I was walking back into my past.”\textsuperscript{25} In the flow of the stream of consciousness, the bitter experiences of the past get connected with the equally bitter experience of the present. Sindi correlates the situation and points out that his shifting to India meant only “a change of theatre; the show had remained unchanged” because he “had met new people with new vanities.”\textsuperscript{26} On this realisation Sindi could answer Sheila’s request in the negative.
Meanwhile Sindi had secured a job in Bombay. Sindi’s servant informed him that Muthu had come to see him when he was away. Before leaving for Bombay Sindi went to meet Muthu and saw his wretched existence. Sindi shared Muthu’s feelings that he was frightened at the prospect of losing his job and of the sure starvation the other workers in Mr. Khemka’s factory faced. Therefore, Muthu requested Sindi to take charge of the office and save the workers from starvation. Sindi, however, told him as usual that he “had no desire to get involved.” At this Muthu added quietly but firmly: “sometimes detachment lies in actually getting involved.” This weighty argument convinced Sindi and he learnt the one meaning of detachment from Muthu, the man of long and real experience. This line of reasoning led Sindi to “the inevitable conclusion that for” him “detachment consisted in getting involved with the world.” Consequently, his thinking changed and he decided to stay on and work for the well-being of workers in Mr. Khemka’s factory.
Likewise, the second novel of Arun Joshi, *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* (1971) is also built on the stream of consciousness technique. Since the narrator Romesh Sahai called Romi, has no detailed knowledge of his friend Billy’s personality and has to unveil his character, therefore he tries to explore and bring out the truth hidden behind the events in Billy’s life by leading the reader through his recurrent introspective memories, analysis of deep feelings, thoughts, and intimate relationship with other characters. Arun Joshi has relied on this component of his total narrative technique -- the stream of consciousness -- in the form of direct and indirect interior monologues because nothing meaningful can be revealed merely through direct narration especially when events cannot be put into any chronological order. At the same time, Arun Joshi has made deft use of the central vision or point of view in order to protect monologues from being a one-sided affair.

The narration by Romi evinces no conventional
chronology and only concerns general things preceding any discussion on Billy (Bimal Biswas). The novel opens with a reference to “a song among the bhils of Satpura Hills”\(^{30}\) which refers to a perennial and hence dateless or timeless situation in life as it is sung both at births and funerals. Romi moves back in time and informs that he had met Billy in New York when he was searching for an accommodation. The use of the element of time as flux is made in this novel as Romi first refers to the later activities of Billy who is currently reported to be thirty eight years of age and then moves back to the past - - his early education at the age of fifteen when he studied at an English Public School, and to New Delhi where his family had lived for the past two hundred years.

Going further into the past of Billy it is also informed that Billy’s father was a “judge of India’s Supreme Court”\(^{31}\) when both he and Billy were in America. Even before his physical disappearance into the jungles Billy ceased to belong to the world. It is recalled by Romi that once Billy’s mother
had mentioned that around the age of fourteen he had spent a few weeks in Bhubaneshwar at his maternal uncle’s house, and had attempted to “run away from home.” Then, still later in part II of the novel Billy narrated to Romi that about twenty five years ago, now that he was thirty eight he felt as he and his mother emerged from Bhubaneshwar railway station he had thought “as though a slumbering part of me had suddenly come awake,” and then all this experience turned into “a sudden interest in my own identity.”

As almost always, so also through Billy’s chance meeting with Romi, his past gets connected with his present in the Satpura Hills and this incident further substantiates Arun Joshi’s effective use of the stream of consciousness technique in this novel. It was ten years after Billy’s disappearance from the so called civilized world that Romi chanced to meet him in the forest on his tour as collector of one of the worst drought-hit districts of Madhya Pradesh. On enquiry why he renounced the civilized world Billy explained to Romi that he was left with
two choices -- either to "follow this call, this vision, . . . or be condemned to total decay." This incident too takes the reader into the past of Billy in terms of narration. This back and forward movement of time continues throughout the book. Billy takes Romi back in time by telling him that he chose to respond to the call of the tribal girl Bilasia who was "the essence of that primitive force that had called" him "night after night, year after year."35

Then, narration moves along the perennial scheme of time which is inalienably connected with the archetypal pattern. In this regard, the narrator points out that to Billy Biswas, Bilasia "is the embodiment of that primal and invulnerable force that had ruled those hills, perhaps this earth, since time began."36 Again, at the time of emerging from Bhubaneshwar railway station Billy had felt the call of the primitive as also the very sight of the sculptures at Konark that held out the assurance that he was to find himself, the real place and the secret of happiness lay with the Adivasis who constitute "a
world of meaningful relatedness." It was, to him, the place of secret happiness; in fact it lay with the Adivasis who carried it in their inscrutable faces. Once again going back, it is discovered that Billy had responded to the call of that primitive force in his childhood at Bhubaneshwar, also again when the little Negro girl was moved sexually to him, playing a pair of on go drums. It was in response to this very call that he did to Rima what he never wanted to do. The narrator equally well provides a glimpse of Billy’s personality through the account that as a student in America, Billy was less interested in books on anthropology than in places described in them. Eventually, Billy’s life comes to end and so does the narrative. Significantly, this novel closes on a note of general, dateless observation that “Billy’s case had been disposed of in the only manner that a humdrum society knows of disposing its rebels, its seers, its true lovers.” Thus, the tone and intent of the close of the book is as general as is its beginning, and a sense of archetypal continuity of life and its varied manifestations is the
underlying motif. In either situation the human mind gets connected with the stream of consciousness that recognizes neither a beginning nor an end.

Certain other minor technical devices including capital letters, ellipses, hyphens, italics and parenthesis have also been used to maintain the specific form of the stream of consciousness technique. It is a book in two parts and these have been set down in bold capitals. Then, there are sub-sections which are not marked by digits or numerals but simply and uniformly indicated by blank spaces both in the beginning and at the end of each sub-section. Again, capital letters have been used to mark the start of a section in the beginning of the first sentence of each of the un-numbered fourteen sub-sections of the novel. In addition to the use of ellipses (only once at page 5), of recurrent hyphens, a single parenthesis placing (Bimal), within it at page four has been used. Then, italics have also been used. He has used them in placing one or two words (in Italics) on almost every page of the book.
Then, the narrative in Arun Joshi's third novel, *The Apprentice* (1974) runs like a long monologue which is an essential part of the stream of consciousness technique. Its protagonist, Ratan Rathor narrates the tale of his life throughout the length of the book to a silent, non-participating young N.C.C. cadet from Punjab who has come to Delhi to rehearse for the parade on the Republic Day. This perspective of the novel has been confirmed by V.V.N. Rajendra Prasad in whose judgement "the narrative runs like a monologue of Browning, in which there is an audience where participation is just passive." Essentially, Ratan's listener quite resembles the wedding guest in S.T. Coleridge's "the Rime of the Ancient Mariner" who is mesmerised into hearing his tale though he intermittently reminds him of his urgent mission to attend a marriage party. Here, it merits mention that the story of this novel is vastly told in retrospect. The narrator takes the tale back to Rattan's own early days when he was ten years of age, whereas now, he had been a government servant for the last
twenty years and when his father has been dead for "nearly twenty five years". Ratan recalls that his father stood more than six feet in his shoes, had cascading hair and a powerful voice. Ratan further recalls that his father was a successful lawyer before he became a freedom fighter and grew so penniless that he had no money even for the treatment of his tubercular wife who felt terribly miserable.

The narrative is full of flash backs in reference to Ratan’s father, mother, their ideas and contextual incidents. It is learnt through Ratan’s narration that he starts his life with all the attributes of Mr. Clean despite a mixed parental legacy. His father was a man of sacrifice, but his mother was thoroughly pragmatic. As a collegiate, Ratan was haunted by the memory of his father that virtually remained with him till the end. His father used to advise him to be good, to be respected, and to be of use. His mother, on the other hand, always hammered the pragmatic idea that “man without money was a man without worth. Many things were great in life but the greatest of them
all was money.⁴¹ To his boyhood friend Brigadier, after he had joined the army, the world looked beautiful but to him “it appeared “as a bundle of mirrors, tempting and somehow held together, but on the brink always of falling apart”.⁴² Ratan continued narrating that his mother emphasized: “Money succeeded where all else failed. There were many laws . . . but money was law unto itself⁴³, but he became aware, all of a sudden, that he was probably boring the listener. Therefore, he begged his pardon adding: “There are days when the past crowds you . . . from every side,”⁴⁴ and this awareness led to further narration. In this way, the narration shows and R.K. Dhawan pertinently points out that the novel is rendered “with sporadic flash backs interspersing”⁴⁵ the otherwise known chronology, and for this purpose a sort of psycho-narration has been used.

In the second phase of his experience Ratan takes to corrupt ways though more as an unwilling victim and never as a rebel or a villain. In his case, the central issue gets polarised
into the exploration of the self and the mechanism involved is comparable with a great therapeutic process. Even before getting confirmed in his job Ratan aspired to rise in life as an “educated, intelligent, cultured” person. Quite soon, however, he falls into the trap of corruption and devoted himself to building his career by hook or crook. He goes back into the past and informs the listener that he became increasingly fraudulent, and grew into “a master faker.” Ratan also recalls how he had become increasingly determined to “enjoy life.” Sooner than expected he became convinced that “the world runs on the basis of deals” and things so worsened about him that he accepted bribe even when he least needed money. In this way, the system became his master.

Consequent on Ratan’s full encounter with corruption he felt that he was “at the peak of the dung heap that” he “had been climbing” all his life. At this realisation, Ratan once again moves “back in time and takes the cadet down the memory lane to emphasize that after the shattering event of Brigadier’s
suicide, he was “shaken out of his moral inertia.” His conscience reawakens and he grows reminiscent of his father’s words: “whatever you do touches someone somewhere.” Realising the deep significance of these words of his father who was an extraordinary example of altruistic feelings and actions, Ratan grew penitent on his limitless, and often avoidable selfishness. Governed by this frame of mind Ratan felt stunned to know that even a temple priest was prepared to give bribe for the release of his contractor son’s held up payments. He felt disgusted with himself and with things around and resolved to undergo penance without informing his wife. He started the humble practice of dusting shoes of the congregation in front of a temple each morning on his way to office. In his heart of hearts he would beg forgiveness of his father, his mother, the Brigadier and all those he had harmed “with deliberation and with cunning.” In this way, Ratan narrated to the N.C.C. Cadet, through reminisce and flash backs, his acts of aberrance from the virtuous path of his noble father besides the
process of learning the ultimate lesson of humility. Each day he started repeating to himself the words his father used to address to him when he was a boy: “Be good. Be decent. Be of use”\textsuperscript{,}^{54} and regained his conscience, and his peace. At the same time, the reader comes to perceive inter-connections in the strands of the story, characters, and events that have been organized in the framework of the stream of consciousness technique.

Besides handling the thematic level of the book through a long monologue Arun Joshi has also used a number of other technical perspectives within the broad dimensions of the stream of consciousness technique in this novel. Unlike the first two novels of Arun Joshi this book has not been put into parts. The different twelve chapters of sections have been numbered consecutively without any headings or sub-headings. Then, use of a single word in capital letters in the opening sentence of each of the chapters has been made throughout. Also, capital letters in bold print have been used intermittently.
As in case of the earlier novels the use of italics has also been made as indicators of emphasis one way or the other. Again, apart from the use of capitals in general, and in a manner different from the earlier novels, use of a single capital letter - first letter or a word - has been made in *The Apprentice* in the course of a sentence. For example - Grounds, Rally, November, Future. In the same way, single word sentences or a sentence having two words, have been employed. For instance, words such as Good (p.7), A Career (p.40), Deals (p.51), A No Body (p.73), Forgive me (p.99), Help me (p.122), Forgive me (p.130), For every one (p.146) have been used as a part of the technical side of the stream of consciousness technique.

The stream of consciousness technique has once again been used in *The Last Labyrinth* (1981) to probe into the turbulent inner world of Som Bhaskar. Arun Joshi once told Sujata Mathai that through his novels he tried to “explore that mysterious underworld which is the human soul.” In this context, Som Bhaskar, the narrator – hero, who seeks to know
the meaning of life, is seen relating the events of his life in flash back. Som's narration passes through three, at once distinct and inter-related situations indicative of the three significant phases of his life - - his muddle and loneliness, his experience with Dr. Sabnis, Anuradha, Aftab Rai, and finally his new perception about his wife, Geeta and eventually insight into the nature of his knotty problems. These stages and situations are interlinked with Som’s mind through psychological associations. This interrelationship gives rise to a design of images and motifs which are continually used for psychological exploration of different characters in the book with Som’s consciousness at the centre.

Initially, Som Bhaskar was at war with himself. Though he had become a millionaire at an early age, had a good wife and was blessed with children yet he was tormented by a great roaring hollowness inside his soul which he qualifies as his “orchestra of discontent”.56 For all his efforts in “analyzing”, and “correlating” things he was “getting nowhere”.57 Som felt
bothered about the "core of loneliness around."\textsuperscript{58} Then, he was always chased by undefined hungers and "suffered from vague fears."\textsuperscript{59} However, he continued to satisfy his desires by possession of an object, a business enterprise or a woman but all such efforts "had not settled anything"\textsuperscript{60} for him. Rather the world continued to look irrelevant and meaningless. In such contexts Arun Joshi has thrown significant light on the mysterious functioning of human mind which continually journeys into a labyrinth. This process is comparable with the "going forward and backward and sideways"\textsuperscript{61} of Som's mind. Besides encountering the dilemma of pain and happiness in this world he felt equally bothered by the phenomenon of death. As a grown up man he recalled how as a student he had begged the Headmaster's wife "to explain the meaning of it all."\textsuperscript{62} However, he could not get any satisfactory answer to his questions. As a rational human being Som could not accept any ready made solution to his problems. In this connection he is reminded of his father who firmly believed that "every thing
happens in cycles. Birth, Growth, Decline and Death." Then, Som's mind goes still back to his grand father who remained "happy" and "unburdened by philosophical speculation."

Despite having the benefit of these guiding precedents in understanding the essence of life and his constant efforts to comprehend the causes and meaning of vagueness in things around Som failed to find any resolution to his own problems. With the passage of time he had become all the more convinced that life was nothing short of a labyrinth. Still further his convictions sharpened and he came to perceive that "one was always running a hurdle race." In despair and hopelessness Som tried to seek help from some external agency that could effectively resolve his problems rooted at once in matter and spirit. The psychologists whom he had consulted also told him that things might be peaceful for him when he comes to "meet the right soul". Among such souls came Dr. Leela Sabnis, Anuradha, and Aftab Rai. After their worst, this trio betrayed their inadequacies or at best could tell Som things most of
which he already knew. According to Aftab Rai, Som could not reach the root of things because he always worked “by logic.” After close observation and quite some meaningful interaction Leela Sabnis came to look on Som as one who is absorbed in his own self without knowing it. On his part Som too realised that he was “just idling about like a stationary engine, getting involved with nothing.” Som’s stream of consciousness gets connected with the mind of his friend Kashyap who felt that Som’s myopic adventures were bound to lead to frustration because of his “blowing things larger than life.” Similarly, his efforts to solve his problems through Aftab Rai proved ungainful because he too, like his other counterparts proved no better than “frogs stuck in their ancient marshy wells.”

Eventually when Som’s business was in a shambles, he continued to be eaten by what he calls his “mad thoughts”, and all his problems persisted as acute as ever, he felt frustrated and tried to kill himself. In that act, he was stopped by his wife
Geeta, who shook him "gently as though rousing a man from sleep." Som’s putting his revolver on his temples probably to end his life and his wife’s instinctive action to shake him to safety remind him of the prediction of Gargi, the deaf – mute daughter of a Sufi Pir who had told him in writing that "God will send some one to help you . . . someone who has known suffering". Evidently, Geeta came to be the person who had known intense mental suffering and Som realised the meaning of her help and the worth of her character. Significantly, here as elsewhere his mind moves like a stream in the waters of memory. Som’s mind in the present that now tends to trust by faith rather than reason, takes him to the earlier stages when he was envious of those, including his wife, who had belief and trust without any reason, particularly his mother, who had died of cancer trusting the idol of Lord Krishna whom he called just a “wooden creature.” Before this crucial incident occurred Som’s mind, as he admitted to Anuradha, was so “out of focus” that he could not see even if something stood right in
front of him. After this occurrence, Som’s mind goes back and he recalls how earlier he saw no worth in his wife. Now, however, through long and intense experience he could recognize her set of values as also the significance of faith and trust in life. Thus, Arun Joshi has made sincere endeavour to throw significant light on the human mind’s journey into a labyrinth involving the quest for meaning and significance of life, love, God, and death and its unceasing effort to come out of it. In this regard R.S. Pathak has pertinently observed that in this total context “we are given to believe that the unquestioning trust of his intelligent and understanding wife will restore peace to his life.”

Among other technical features of the stream of consciousness technique Arun Joshi has used capital letters and Arabic numerals to indicate parts and chapters of the book to indicate and maintain the (uninterrupted) flow of the consciousness of characters throughout. It is a novel in three parts but the word part is not mentioned. Instead, it is indicated
by the single word - - ONE - - in capital letters. Part one has eleven (11) sections or chapters that have been marked in Arabic numerals. The second part, like the first, has been marked TWO - - once again in capital letters and its three chapters or sections have once again been put in Arabic figures (1-3). In the same way, part three is put in capitals – THREE – and its five sections find indication in Arabic numerals.

Like the other four novels of Arun Joshi, the fifth and the final book, *The City and the River* (1990) has also been patterned on the stream of consciousness technique through a diversity of characters, ideas and events. With the book’s action oriented in an imaginary locale the entire narrative is wrapped in an ambience where fact merges with fantasy; and significantly where the time present merges with the time past to project its legacy into the time future. Rather than restate experience in a merely scientific manner Arun Joshi recognized and projected reality beyond the merely phenomenal world through the act of imagination by capturing and giving a
poetically aesthetic form to the actual facts of human existence. Seen in this broad context, the stream of consciousness technique for Arun Joshi worked as a medium to "carry on" his "exploration" of the self through a story. The ostensibly simple tale of a city and a river put into a socio-political crucible and handled through a subtle and detailed exposition of the psychology of masses gets connected with such of the broad questions as the authenticity of the self, and how human, mind functions at the sub-conscious level. This long-drawn-out communication through significantly titled but unnumbered nine chapters beginning with the prologue and closing with the Epilogue presenting an eventful account of the ruin and resurrection of a city by deluge interwoven with the threads of myths and legends has the over-all framework of the stream of consciousness technique.

In the prologue, at the time of evening prayers the Nameless-one is shown standing in knee-deep icy water. In the course of the prayer that was in a language which only he or his
teacher, the Great Yogeshwara understood, he “became lost to the world and to the fetters of space and time.”\(^{78}\) After the prayers he sat thinking of the coming night when he was going to complete the thirtieth year of his life and at midnight of which he was to present himself before his great teacher with whom he had lived all this while and who had taught him almost all the essential things about life at different stages of his physical growth though it was yet to be taught who he was. The Great Yogeshwara told his disciple that he had prepared for him an effective elixir the use of which might bring to his “eyes a sharper vision of times past”\(^{79}\) and he might as well know for himself who he was. After consuming the elixir the disciple felt as vast as the sky and as tall as the mountain and also heard “the sound of a melody” besides “the dancing of a god”\(^{80}\), and then the teacher -- the Great Yogeshwara -- narrated the tale that constitutes this novel.

Narratively, this novel which has a story within a story told by the old wise teacher named the Great Yogeshwara to his
devout disciple called the Nameless-one, who had been taught for as long as thirty years ends where it begins and necessarily therefore begins where it ends. Usha Bande confirms this aspect of the novel’s stream of consciousness technique as she points out: “The prologue and the epilogue join the beginning and the end.” The continuity of narration between these two significant extremes gives the book both a linear and circular movement which constitutes an essential structural element of the stream of consciousness technique. In this way, the cyclic nature of the internal and incessant happenings becomes amply perceptible in *The city and the River* wherein the Great Yogeshwara initiates his disciple in the book’s Prologue and it is only at the close of the last and ninth chapter commissions him in the Epilogue, after a gap of about 262 pages, to go in the world and do everything “to prevent” the “periodic disintegration” of the city and its people. It is reported that the City has grown over the years, has passed through vicissitudes and is ruined by human stupidity though to revive
eventually. The deluge seems to cause an end but on its ruins a new city grows like the fabled phoenix. In its totality Arun Joshi has splendidly introduced the two sides of human personality — the dark and the bright — through sets of myopic and altruistic characters. On the one side is the Grand master’s coterie including the Education Advisor, the Police Commissioner, and the Minister of Trade whose psychology is deeply governed by their aspirations to further their own ambitions. On the other hand these characters are contrasted with such of the noble characters as the Professor, the Bhumiputra, the tribe of firm-minded boatmen, and the Hermit. The circular movement of this aspect of the technique is maintained through reference and cross-reference of individual psychology that continually interacts with the collective mind of humanity. For example, the Great Yogeshwara tells his devoted disciple, the Nameless-One that on his visit to the new city he will perhaps be known as another hermit of the Mountain and it is also possible that he “will have a disciple
whose name will be “Little Star.”\textsuperscript{83}

As an artist blessed with psychological insight Arun Joshi delves deep into the inner recesses of human psyche. Whenever he realised that certain things could not be couched in direct terms and words he gave them the form of dreams. For example, the internal working of the Grand Master’s mind about becoming a king after getting rich fraudulently, has been revealed through dreams, which is one of the potent devices of the stream of consciousness technique. The Grand Master in connivance with the Astrologer wanted to secure absolute powers but he found it inconvenient to express it openly and therefore, as Simmon Lasser points out, he was shown cherishing it “in his dreams.”\textsuperscript{84} One fine morning it was announced that during the night the Grand Master had a dream that he had become a king. He dreamt that in the capacity of king he was sitting on top of the hill surrounded by the waters of a river. The Astrologer predicted the crowning of a king in place of the Grand master. As sequel to the scheme a yajna was
performed at the festival of river by the Astrologer and the Grand Master’s son was coronated as his successor. Since the Grand Master knew that the stratagem was full of deception he apprehended rebellion in the event of exposure and this bred fear. His fear has been depicted through another of his dreams. He dreamt that a vast host of naked men formed a circle like a noose around him and the circle tightened until he could feel their breath of a volcano from out of the depths of the surrounding sea, and he shouted at them: “This hill is mine.”

This dream is indicative of his sense of fear for his immoral and unjustified ambition and of the continuance of conflict between him and the boatmen. To keep the masses under illusion and therefore, with a view to leave nothing to chance, a scheme for development called “The Era of ultimate Greatness” was got heralded and launched. As apprehended, the falsity and cunningness behind the plan to befoul the people got leaked and exposed. The act of deception on the part of the authorities was widely decried but most vociferously by the boatmen. The
boatmen were declared rebellious and state repression was let loose. Among the numerous innocent persons put behind bars was Bhumiputra.

The use of the stream of consciousness technique is seen further through the intense and multi-directional interaction of different characters at the deep psychological level. One such phenomenon occurs after the arrest of Bhumiputra, popularly know as Master Bhoma. He was arrested by Dharma, a police officer, because his total loyalty to the Grand Master was doubtful. Bhumiputra's sister reminded the Professor, a devoted teacher of astronomy, that Bhoma was one of his students and had been picked up by a police officer. She dropped at his feet with the request that he should trace out her brother. The Professor moved around but no human agency could give him a clue. Then, he fell into a reverie and recalled how once when he was a student, "the great river had spoken to him" and he wished the river would speak to him again. Next morning, the Professor refilled his pipe, stared at the river with
his arms crossed and addressed his thoughts to Master Bhoma. At that moment a deep voice that “seemed to be a part of his reverie”\textsuperscript{87} enquired what he was thinking about. As he answered that a student of his had vanished and that his own brother feels that he must not look for him, the voice exhorted him: “But you must. What would the vanished ones do if their friends did not look for them?”\textsuperscript{88} In contrast, the supreme ruler and his coterie felt and acted in an entirely different manner.

In so far as the stream of consciousness technique has a circular movement, the spectrum of such of the fictional elements as theme, characters and episodes have been given functional circularity and then language has been handled in consonance with the flow of the consciousness of characters within the dynamic of wholeness. Also, the structural feet of joining the Prologue to the Epilogue further establishes a cyclical motion, and then the prophecy, stated as an epigraph in verse and then reiterated in prose in essential terms at the end of the novel besides leaving blank space at the end of each chapter.
and making frequent use of italics throughout the book, embodies linear as well as circular movements. This process finds its final form and evidence when the Great Yogeshwara delegates his chosen disciple, the Nameless-One to purify the city of its “egoism, selfishness”, and “stupidity”. In this way, all the characters, events, images, and ideas came to operate as interactive elements and unify the entire structural paraphernalia of the book in a lyrical manner which is one of the basic constituents of the stream of consciousness technique.
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