CHAPTER-V

ART OF CHARACTERISATION

AND

NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE IN

THE FICTION OF

DR. SATENDRA NANDAN

As has been already observed earlier, Nandan is a diasporic writer. Diaspora or expatriation is a novel theme in modern literature. It suggests the search for the self, of character, roots or identity or the existence of ‘I’. The diasporic experience of exile and rootlessness involves deep personal predicament and nostalgia. These elements are also repeatedly discussed in all his works. All the books of Dr. Satendra Nandan reveal the diasporic sensibility and identity quest. Because he possesses a complex identity of an expatriate, a twice–uprooted intellectual, so it is natural that the study of his technique and style will seek to trace the reflection of a way of thinking, looking at the world around him at the Indian life and culture. Nandan’s style is simple, lucid, straightforward and sometimes aphoristic. In his fiction The Wounded Sea, his ideology and thoughts seem to govern his narrative style and characters. In the present chapter, we will discuss the art of characterization and narrative technique in Dr. Satendra Nandan’s novel, The Wounded Sea. In fiction,
language often becomes writer’s unique tool through which he explores his own ‘worlds’, expresses his thoughts and reveals his abiding interest in human behaviour. According to Sudha Rai:

Language becomes a range of society’s development, and simultaneously points back in its creative variety, vitality and command over ironic tone, to the superior status of the expatriate writer’s being. Because the expatriate writer has chosen to remain uncompromised, he operates from a detachment of perspective which crystallizes us the expatriate style.¹

Nandan’s diasporic consciousness finds exquisite expression in his writings. It is his writing technique which gives him the ability to express his thoughts clearly, concisely and meaningfully. Nandan enjoys the reputation of contributing significantly to the variety and scope of the literature of the South Pacific. He possesses unparallel mastery over the technical skill and language. The important aspect of his fictional world is his characterization and use of language through which he depicts the Indian outlook and Fijian fervor. He marvellously captures the indenture Indians’ conflict and dilemma, their sorrows and sufferings. According to Syd Harrex; “Nandan’s skills of narration, characterization, humour and stylistic virtuosity in *The Wounded Sea* that his readers are willingly enlisted as empathetic voyeurs.”² The narrative style gives depth to our understanding for the book. It helps us to provide further interest and eagerness in our reading. The writer’s style and technique gives a unified structure to the book. It also creates an overall image of a writer who writes in certain style. The writer skillfully selects certain literary devices which enhances the effect of prose and clarifies the theme. Characterisation is an art of creating imaginary people in the plot or story, who appear to be real and life-like to the readers. In most of the stories, interrelations and interactions of the characters forms the plot which helps to sustain the interest of the readers. It is an art to develop a character. To bring out the true nature of characters, the writer uses views, minute details, dialogues, thought-process, actions and mannerism etc. He aims to create characters that looks life-like, real and convincing. The writer gives names, appearances, personalities to his
characters. E.M. Forster in his *Aspects of the Novel* classified two types of characters, round and flat. Sometimes a character becomes a mouthpiece of the writer and sometimes the author presents himself as one of the characters in the story. M.H. Abrams also defines a character as; “Characters are the persons, in a dramatic or narrative work, endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say – the dialogue – and what they do- the action.” Characterization is one of the prime elements in fictional writing. The art and mastery of a novelist is displayed through the creation of immortal and memorable characters. Thus, his art of characterization becomes the pivotal aspect of his novel and it is also responsible for his success and effectiveness. A novelist is expected to create his characters in such a way as they do justice to the theme of the novel and appear as real humans. A successful writer attempts to give space to his characters and allowing them to speak and act on their own impulse, so he saves them from becoming only puppets. Nandan presents before his readers a plethora of characters living and breathing Indian air in Fijian soil. It was not possible to draw the characters and their manners according to British diction and so Nandan employs Indian and some Fijian words and speech habit, manners and makes his characters truly Indo-Fijian. Nandan’s characters grow and develop in Fijian soil, but imbibe the Indian roots and culture with all its flora and fauna. He can portray a character minutely because he has ample time and space for it. He takes his time to describe and develop the appearance, behaviour, features, and traits of his characters. He not only put stress on mere portrayal of Indian characters but also presents native Fijian characters to depict the Fijian society realistically. A skillful and successful novelist always conveys and highlights significant details of his characters and he analysis the feelings and thoughts of his characters. So, he has an advantage of appearing as an expositor and critic of his characters. For the creation of his characters, he takes the help of his past imagination, contemporary life, manners of the people etc. So in this way, he must have enough knowledge of the people and the world. He should have first hand experience of the intricate human nature and its complexities. Nandan is
capable of entering into the minds of his characters, grasps their attitude and reveals their personality through their expression. The men and women whom he puts in his novel are shown in their natural life and surroundings. Nandan has made indelible impression on contemporary Indo-Fijian fictional writing. In his novel, he has dealt with the current issues of racial discrimination, social demarcation, alienation, and conflict of cultures. In his novel, *The Wounded Sea*, we can find an accurate and realistic depiction of the different problems of assimilation, transplantation, exile and acceptance of the contemporary people. Giving vent to the traumas and miseries of the Indo-Fijians diasporic community remains the prime focus of Nandan. His novel exhibits remarkable competence in the art of characterization and narration. The characters of the novel keep and maintain our interest right from the beginning of the novel. The way Nandan depicts them with peculiarities provides immense joy to the readers. While portraying various aspects of human life, he has presented all the facets of human nature. No doubt, Nandan is a man social and cultural consciousness. So, he is aware about world’s complexities and social milieu that affects a common man. Through his brilliant depiction of characters from various social strata, he forces the readers to think over the joys and sorrows of the diasporic people. He presents characters practicing Indian customs and traditions, following age-old Indian culture in Fiji. Thus, we can say that it is Nandan’s great skill and dexterity that makes his characters seem real. In the words of Vijendra Kumar:

Nandan is a literary genius and master wordsmith. He writes with great passion and his language is capable of moving one’s soul. He is capable to connect with the reader with the ease of a magician. The elegance of his language and the serenity of his thoughts are captivating.  

In his novel, he presents the world which is full of Indian, Fijian and European characters, colonial traders, simple villagers and evil politicians. His chief aim is to explore and express the trauma of the Indian indenture labourers, so he portrays them as individuals facing single handed, the stark realities of their existence. Carefully depicting the harmonious relationship of the Indians and
the Fijians he makes it very clear that his prime focus as an Indian is to reveal the struggle and suffering of the Indians in Fiji.

In his characterization, we can find various groups of characters. There are Indian, Fijian and European characters from different class, caste and social strata. These multi-layered characters are the result of his keen observation of human psyche and minute comprehension of Indo-Fijian life. He has not only explored the specific mannerism of Indian life but he also knows well the Fijian way of life. Certain characters like; Birbal, the Pundit; Sukhu, the Taxi-driver; Priu, Zhaman, comes in the story in a very interesting way. There are also students, peasants, teachers, etc. These common people of Indian origin provide a complete and realistic picture of girmitiya life in Fiji. He not only expresses the brutalities of the colonial masters but also presents the pitiable conditions of the girmitiya men and women. He focuses on their life and problems. The exploitation of the peasant men and women portrays a tragic aspect of the human life. He also brings out the pathetic conditions of the Indian women living in the constant shadows of death and dilemma. Through his penetrating and sharp characterization of women, Nandan stirs our emotions. In the novel, the saga of an individual from roads to riches revolves around several other characters. In his novel, we can see humanitarian zeal, realistic projection of life and social awareness. His characters firmly believe in the universal theory of *Karma* and suffer their fate. Living in the cruel and brutal life of the plantations, these Indians demonstrates heroic resilience and stature. These characters are living in exilic conditions, longs for their return passage. They reiterate the Indian rites, rituals and traditions. The innate trust in life and existence is the core principle in his characterisation. Because these characters are the semi-literate girmitiyas living in alien surroundings and they experiences alienation, nostalgia, and longing for their ancestral land - India. They are dissatisfied with their lives in marginalized Fijian society. They are deprived of social recognition and acceptance, so, they spend their lives in utter despair and gloom. They receive inspiration from the mythological characters like Rama and the Pandvas, and thus compare themselves with theses
personages of mythology which provides them solace and satisfaction in their traumatic days. For this reason, Nandan has projected the theme of alienation and diasporic consciousness in his novel in order to register the experiences of the Indo-Fijian Diaspora. Nandan himself is a male protagonist of the novel where his family and colleagues also involved in his struggle for identity. In fourth part of the novel, he fully reveals his identity as a minister in Bavadra government. And he becomes one of the characters of the novel. So, he expresses his own thought process, directly in the pages of the novel. He also makes frequent comments on the conditions of other Indians. Nandan becomes the narrator and protagonist both at the same time. Throughout the novel, he introduces the story of the novel and becomes an active character. Birbal, the village pundit is an interesting character who comes frequently in the novel to attend some religious functions like funeral, puja, marriage, etc. He is fond of eating sweet dishes. He possesses good knowledge of *The Bhagvad Gita* and often chants slokas from *The Gita* and *The Ramayana*. Nandan also notes his memorable moments as a boy with his grandfather. He also depicts his school days and friends like Nandu, Pratap, and Rama. He portrays realistically the clandestine encounters between various characters like Zhaman and Sukhi Ram, Jagat Mahajan and Pauline, Chotaka’s wife and Rama. He also adds autobiographical touches that add realism to his characters. In the fourth part, he depicts few other characters like Rabuka, Prime Minister Bavadra, Militoni etc. from real life. In fact, the fourth part depicts events and characters from real life situation of the coup. He reveals the difficulties of the Indians in Fiji and how they struggled, fought and survived. The different Indian characters in his fiction reflect Nandan’s inherent knowledge of Indian rituals, traditions, philosophy, ethics and religion. Though his novel is based on the events of the coup, he minutely describes the Indian life throbbing in Fijian huts.

Nandan often creates characters with whom, one can identify and relate quickly. Nani, Zhaman, Birbal, Ratu Reddy, Pritu and other minor characters are easily recognizable because they are conceived on real life models. These extraordinary characters are convincing and life-like because they are taken
from the writer’s own life. These are the people among whom he was born, lived and brought up. The mythical allusion imparts better understanding of the characters. One cannot fail to appreciate the vivid varied panorama of characters in the novel. He reveals his deep understanding of human psychology in his art of characterization. By using exquisite depiction of their actions, thoughts, etiquette, personality, he gives them real life quality. He also uses certain Hindi or Sanskrit words in the speech of these characters which adds the element of Indianness. Throughout the novel, the concern for the Indo-Fijians remains in the centre of the plot. Realism is the hallmark of his characterization. He presents their virtues and vices, pathos and pride, love and hatred, longings and sufferings, and so, they maintain close resemblance with ordinary human beings. His personal vision and attitudes towards life very well expressed in his characters. Indeed, Nandan’s uncompromising realism and probing of human nature makes him a genius delineator of great characters. Apart from characterization, Nandan’s narrative technique is a unique and rare gift which, which makes him a skilled and perfect writer. The present chapter discusses in detail the narrative style and structure of his only novel The Wounded Sea. The story-telling art or narrative enables the writer to tell his story in convincing and effective manner. The word narrative is derived from the Latin verb ‘narrare’ which means “to recount.” For the further systematic study of narrative, a theory has been formed called ‘narratology’ by a Bulgarian philosopher, Tzvetan Todorov in 1969. Gerald Prince, another prominent critic defines narrative as “the recounting (as product and process, object and act, structure and structuralism) of one or more real or fictitious events communicated by one, two or more narrators to one, two or several narrates.” The writer needs technique to make his work more relevant and meaningful. Technique helps the writer to tell his study in a particular way. It is a valuable means of literary writing which helps the writer to develop his story, character and plot. Thus, a narrative technique is a kind of tool by which the writer conveys events and stories indirectly with the help of fictional characters. Thus, points of view, stream of consciousness, dialogue,
manipulation of time, interior monologue are some of the examples of narrative techniques. The narrator of the novel, *The Wounded Sea*, remembers his past memories of childhood in Fiji, during his stay in Delhi. On the surface the narrative looks episodic or fragmented, broken in different time-space. We jumps from one event or incident to another. These jumps occurs in the story because of narrator’s employment of his memories, thoughts on a specific day. But this is the real greatness of Satendra Nandan. He has employed in the present novel two time structures or time-frames. One time structure is presented by his childhood memories and the other time frame is his present state. Both his memories and his present state runs parallel in the narrative of the novel. The narrative of his childhood activities is intermixed with the narrative of the present time. So, sometimes it becomes complex or intricate to separate both the time frames of the story or narration. With the help of his past and the present, he creates a magical realism in his narration, which gives the novel a unique image. During his departure from Fiji, at the Fiji Airport, he answers a news reporter’s questions and his mind quickly jumps into the ocean of his past memories. From the present state, his mind travels back to the distant land of memory, when he was wandering into the sugar cane fields and swimming with Fijian friends. He remembers his grandfather and family, his teenage attraction, and early education. He remembers his stay at Delhi, when he received educational scholarship from the Government of India. He also remembers his career as a journalist, teacher, writer and a politician. He was going away from the land of his birth-Fiji, and still he was thinking about his golden days which he spent in Fiji. This parallelism gives extra dimension of time to his fiction. Going back to the past, makes him able to reconstruct and revisit the lives of the his forefathers and his childhood days. His expression, so that, becomes more sharp, contextual and powerful and thus, presents before the readers a sharp blending of the past and the present. By reviving the past, he wants to make and depict a close contrast between the situation before the coup and the same after the coup of 1987. The past days of happiness are contrasted with the days of brutality and discrimination. He not only exposes
the racial marginalization of the Indians in Fiji but he also depicts the happy union of the native Fijians with the Indians, before the 1987 coup. On certain occasion, the time frame of one narrative mingles with the other. To understand the narrative of the novel closely, the narrative belonging to the period of the narrator’s present state will be called the first narrative while the narrative related to his memories will be called the second narrative. The story statrs with the first narrative depicting the trouble-tossed state of Fiji and the upheavals of the coup. He was going to Canberra, Australia, leaving Fiji, with his wife and two daughters. The socio-political unceratainities during and after the coup compelled him to do so. He writes: 'I was leaving my country.' At this time, we came across the narrator’s identity as a politician and who was leaving his own country. This narration begins shotly after the coup of 1987, in the year 1989. He, sitting at the airport lounge, remembers his childhood days, his Indian parents living in Fijian surroundings. Here a shift in time frame occurs and first narrative changes its course into second narrative. This parallel narratives gives unique pattern to the whole narration of the story. In the three parts of the novel, this paralleism gives the story a double framework. This paralleism provides an opportunity to the author to tell stories of both the generations. In the second narrative, he describes the saga of his forefathers and in the first narrative he depicts the trials and tribulations of the generation of his time. He not only narrates his life from childhood to maturity but he also presents vividly the story of his father and grandfather in all the three chapters of the novel. In this way the middle of the novel is a kind of two threads of a single story, which runs parralel to each other. In the fouth and final chapter of the novel, the second narrative again merges into the first narrative and the author returns from his childhood world to his own present state. The fourth chapter *The Night of the Mongrels* vividly presents the events and incidents before and after the coup. The novel which was started with the division of the two narratives ends with its confluence. It is also an important fact that with the two narratives, there exists different levels of time which portrys the events and times of the writer’s life faithfully and autibiographically. Nandan exhibits
subtle mixture of the narrative I and the narrative II in many passages of The Wounded Sea. In the last chapter, he writes:

Adi Kuini, Dr. Bavdra’s wife, was there in the bure with a few of her family members. A prayer was said: first in Fijian then in Urdu, then in Hindi and finally in English. Adi Kuini produced a meal from somewhere and we began talking.

Food in Fiji does wonders in crisis! For some absurd reason I began to think of my village and the younger members of the Fijian koro. We had a very affectionate relationship, sharing our roti and curry in exchange for pawpaws, coconuts and bananas.7

In the same chapter, we notices this twist in the narration in another passage also:

So on the morning of 14 May 1987, I sat in the studio of the Fiji Broadcasting Commission, I remember reflecting that, one hundred and eight years ago to the day, the first indentured Indians had sailed into the Fiji archipelago in the Leonidas from Calcutta. They were crossing the dark waters: unknown, unknowing. The journey had begun in 1879.8

The narrative structure gives the novel a unique solidarity and framework. Most of the actions of the narrative takes place in Fiji. The events and situations are captured with great tenacity, vividness and realism. This technique of juxtaposing two parallel narratives not only shows the writer’s engagement with Fiji and Fijian landscape but also shows the sense of betrayal, shock and truma he find in this land. The narrative of the story is not just a story but it says a complete personal saga of a man, who is twice-banished from his own land of birth and land of adaption. The writer narrating his own story, he gives insight into the psychology of the expatriate as the narrator himself is dislocated from his original land. He presents himself as the central figure, and thus reveals the diasporal anguish and pathos, the tears and the fears of the Indian diaspora, realistically. He not only faithfully records the actual details of his life and events of the 1987 coup, but he also notes his impressions about India and her culture. The whole narrative starts with first
person narrating the effects of the coup and using the flashback technique, he goes back to discuss the causes and factors responsible for the coup of 1987. The use of the two parallel narratives within one compass provides a comparative study of the socio-political conditionas of Fiji. He presents before us the dynamic Indo-Fijian culture and consequent disruption of the same after the coup. The first three chapters narrates the playful activities of a Fiji born Indian boy, who is living harmoniously with the native Fijian friends, his study and stay in Delhi, his career as a teacher, family and love. He explores the emotional bond between the two communities. Thus, the novel has been widely praised for being an eloquent expression of the racial discrimanation of the Indians in Fiji. The novel acclaimed as a veritable voice of the problems of the Indian diaspora in Fiji. He uses the flashback technique with great control and dexterity. The story of the novel starts from when he was going to left Fiji forever. Sitting at the airport lounge his mind goes back to his land of birth, where he had spent his childhood and youth. He ends the novel raising serious questions of race, identity, ethnicity and culture. In its inception, the novel presents before us the picture of the coup, the feeling of insecurity and violence, the exodus of the Indians and shrewd politicians.

*The Wounded Sea* is a product of his literary technique which tries to give voice to the hope and yearnings, cries and tears of a race of the Indo-Fijians, who sacrificed themselves to give an island the identity of a nation. The novel breathes an air of felt life and the power to inquire, in a concrete way, the menace and comfort of discovering roots. The present novel articulates, in a magnificent way, the intricate imagination and sensibility of the indenture Indians and also their disillusionment, betrayed experiences and uncertainties. Earlier Subramani and Raymond Pillai, the two literary giants of the Indo-Fijian literature had attempted other forms of literature like essays, poems, but it was Satendra Nandan who reigns supreme in the field of novel and used the form to investigate and focus the innermost experiences of the Indo-Fijian community. *The Wounded Sea* is the first English novel of Fiji.
written by an Indo-Fijian writer. Through the use of magnificent skill, appealing characters and brilliant story-telling method, he catches the national sentiments. He uses the novel form which exquisitely expresses his thoughts. No doubt, it is poetry in which his emotions are expressed delicately and perfectly but in novel he reflects his own self. It helps Nandan to express elaborately his diasporic consciousness and nostalgia of the Indo-Fijians. His masterpiece, *The Wounded Sea* is a semi-autobiographical novel in which he attempts to make a direct response to his subject, allowing his other materials to determine the tone. Nandan’s narrative technique is compact, neat and full of sarcasm. He often uses humour and satire which sustains the interest of the readers. He can be considered a typical novelist because of his avoidance of mystery and suspense. He projects the story directly to the readers and the character grows independently. The varied features of his novel writing technique make him noteworthy in the Indo-Fijian diasporic literature. Brevity or compression can be called the chief feature of the novel. He uses minimum words to draw a pen picture and with the use of realism he can describe any moment or event in small amount of words. Nandan can narrate an incident in a paragraph or a page what other writers can depict in several pages. So, we can say that compactness is Nandan’s forte. He avoids excessive use of dramatization of events and episodes. It is important to analyse his fictional work to grasp and understand fully his style and technique. He is undoubtedly a skillful and prolific writer. In his personality we can find a unique blend of a poet and a politician. It is rare combination. Even when he removed from his ministry in 1987, he accepted writing as his sole profession. Nandan is an exceptional writer in this sense, that he is a man of totally dedicated and devoted to the writing and academic activities. Nandan’s chief concern in his narration is realism. He always guides his writing to depict the contemporary realism. In *The Wounded Sea* he makes sarcastic remarks on Fijian politicians for overlooking reality around them. In all three initial chapters of the book
gives a graphic depiction of the life of the Indians in Fiji. He narrates how the Indians mingled with the Fijian people and culture and in the final chapter he poses a vital question about the identity of the Indo-Fijians. He uses his powers of narration to recreate images of the past and colonial world out of the men and women around him. His narrative style helps us to develop our understanding of the predicamental state of the Indians in Fiji which can be considered his significant contribution in the literature of the South Pacific. Nandan has an excellent art of narrating the scene minutely and realistically. Using the lucidity and simplicity of his style, he reconstructs a whole picture before our eyes. He is a gifted craftsman presenting each and every detail with technical accomplishment. His pen pictures are vividly portrayed with dint of realism and imagination. His brilliance can be seen in his perfectly portrayed scenes and events. His narration encompasses the minutest details and tremendous observation. His pictures bears the quality of lifelikeness that we can see it before us as moving and breathing like a living entity. His depiction of Mr. Krishna Rao is a perfect example. He narrates;

Mr. Krishna Rao was our English teacher. He always, rain or shine, wore a broad tie immaculately pressed, and carried a black umbrella with a red handle. I remember how he taught us *The Merchant of Venice* in the simmering heat and the breeze wafting from the river Nandi, the sweat trickling down his round rasam face. Mr. Rao, confusing Portia with his own Christian wife from Suva, told us in great and exciting detail how he and she had eloped one night and escaped to Nadi town. He carried his wife’s snap in the pocket closet to his heart.

Nandan possesses an excellent style of writing which not only includes realism, simplicity, lucidity and brevity but it also includes imagination, humour and romance. Nandan creates an excellent mixture of imagination and realism. There are many passages in the novel which have imaginative quality. Another example of his graphic description of minor details reveals Nandan’s inexorable power of keen observation.
Jaddu’s house sat on a small hill—the highest spot in the village. From the top of the hill, from behind the tree, he could survey the movements of many women. He spied on them working in the sugarcane field, sweeping their yards, trudging with their children in the midday heat to catch a bus to Nadi town, taking food to their husbands and sons tilling the land…but his one particular spot of interest was the well: any well where women washed their clothes and bathed naked behind the cover of a bush or a banana grove.

Here, Nandan describes each and every activity of Fijian women during their day-to-day routine. It also reveals the plight of women in Fiji. His observation provides us a complete picture and knowledge about the activities of women, especially of the Indo-Fijian women. He gives an excellent pen-portrait of Karuna. With great skill and dexterity, he chooses certain words and phrases to describe the character of Karuna that she begins to appear before our eyes. He depicts the beauty of her face, hair and lips which attracts the narrator.

Karuna, too, came looking radiant in her saree. She was the girl “I was I was trying my luck with”, although we called her “sister”. Her lips were most alluring, her eyes seductive and her long black hair cascaded over her beautiful buttock. Once, in Birbal’s class, my hand brushed against her breasts—a sensation that threw me in to a quivering ecstasy.

Apart from depicting human activities minutely, Nandan brilliantly gives, in the pages of the novel, marvellous pictures of natural scenes and activities of birds, animals, and insects.

Evening had now, set upon the village. Frogs croaked, bats flapped on the mango tree, and the occasional hooting of an owl could be heard in a distant orchard. There was the smell of the earth after rain; the air clean and refreshing.

Another device which Nandan uses in his writing is pun. It is a figure of speech chiefly used for the production of deliberate confusion by using a word or phrase which has two different meanings at the same time, serious and humorous. “The use of pun depends on the various similar looking words (homonyms), different shades of meaning of one word (polysemy), or of a
To use pun effectively in writing, a writer should choose language which must have homonyms which also can be misinterpreted as synonyms. Nandan uses pun to produce humorous effect of a character or incident. Nandan’s language proves an excellent specimen of Indo-Fijian English which is a unique blend of Hindi, English and Fijian words. Sometime he uses carefully polished language and sometime uses the native Fijian or Hindi words which help to create different aspects of different societies. His language is enwrapped into feelings and emotions, when he describes the plight and dignity of the Indo-Fijian people. His prose is alive with sustaining images, symbols and creates memorable characters. Here, the writer also uses certain images and symbols with deeply charged feelings, sometimes certain words and phrases have clever overtones. Thus, the book achieves an adequate narrative form. In the present novel, Nandan has used third person narrative with the omniscient point of view. He has also used like interior monologues, stream of consciousness, autobiographical, flashback techniques in his novel. Indianness is also there in both dialogues and descriptions. The narrative structure of *The Wounded Sea* reveals a skillful construction of the different tools of narration in the novel. The novel clearly exhibits how the marginalized Indian community of Fiji lived and survived in the brutal and inhuman circumstances and also was subjected to worst kind of subjugation, humiliation and strife. The novel *The Wounded Sea* is divided into four segments. The four parts are; i.) Landscape of the Little Ruins, ii.) Love in the Orchard, iii.) The Day of the Colonel, and iv.) The Night of the Mongrels. In the all the four chapters, we come across major and minor characters and multiple of stories, all interwoven around the main theme of the novel, which is, Nandan’s exile from Fiji. Every chapter gives a kaleidoscopic view of Nandan’s life. Though he has written numerous essays and poems, the novel remains very close to his heart. It is a work rooted deep in his emotions. The novel provides cinematic view of his life in Fiji, India and Australia. In the
novel, the writer narrates in detail his own childhood and his journey from road to riches, from primary schooling to parliament and then persecution.

The first chapter opens with writer’s encounter with a female reporter from Radio New Zealand who questions him about his present state in politics and contemporary Fijian political scenario. In his answer, Nandan’s mind peeps into his childhood days in Fiji. Here, he remembers the lives of the girmitiyas, his birth and upbringing, education, his days in Delhi, love, marriage and career. He expresses his deep concern for the Indians in Fiji, living under the racial discrimination. The images of the masked gunmen still haunt his mind which suggests the uncertainty and danger. He wants a quick exit from the place because he doesn’t want to be caught by the Fijian army again. His plane for Sydney was about to take off and he was going to left Fiji because of the humiliation, inhumanity and injustice which he suffered from the hands of Fijian Colonels and politicians. He was betrayed in the place where he was born and brought up. When the departure of the flight announced, he feels relieved. From the window of the plane he could see the cane fields, coconut trees, foam filled beaches and the village where he was born. He uses simile to describe Nadi, the village – compared with “an overturned box of jewels.”

And when the flight departs, “the right wing of the plane - glowed like a burning pyre seen from the distance of a wounded sea.” Even the title of the novel, suggests the socio-political conditions of the Fiji. The present Fiji is like a bloody, wounded sea, where everything is uncertain, insecure and hazardous. Nandan often uses sensuous descriptions which appeals to our senses. Using his brilliant narrating technique and vision he makes the objects definite to be seen through our eyes. Sounds become audible and also sensitizing our nose which can smell various fragrances. Here, is a unique example of his sensuous description:
The sun dazzled my eyes as it glinted from the top of a sea mountain. The smoke rose into my nostrils, and the three-piece suit felt an inelegant burden. Birbal hurled several Sanskrit *shlokas* into the wind to pacify the planets, and then began in his monotonous tone the story of faith, pride, betrayal and ultimately grace. I’d heard it repeated so often since my childhood that by now it had lost all its freshness and sounded banal. As Birbal’s voice droned on and on, I looked beyond the house. A few black birds were flying across the benign evening sky towards the setting sun and I saw that the glory of God lay rippling in the silver-blue waves only a mile away… voices from the past drifted into my consciousness, drowning the droning mantras.¹⁶

The vividness, realism and imagination all comes in his narration with a certain ease and flawlessness. Indeed, he excels in his masterly dialogues, descriptions and character-sketches. It is his rare achievement that he describes a fine and marvellous picture in a realistic manner, a scene from man’s day to day life. A routine scene turns out to be successful treat for the readers, which they have never observed. Nandan gives exquisite description of the homecoming of his Baba:

> After washing himself and sprinkling water in the four directions, he would stand facing the moon, or when the moon was not visible the brightest star, and when it was a moonless and starless night, he would look at the flame burning steadily inside the hurricane lamp and chant a few mantras. What he echoed I didn’t understand: to me he was an illiterate old man. Slowly he would plod his way to the bure with the broken door. Kallu would make way for him at the entrance; I would be inside waiting expectantly on his bamboo plaas.¹⁷

His mind again goes back to his early childhood days. He remembers his school days and his Fijian friends. With accurate realism, he depicts his journey as a school boy and the various characters of his village around him. Mentioning the brutal consequences of the coup, he remembers the arrival of the Girmiitiyas on the shores of Fiji, and his old, golden days of childhood. He also depicts the brutality and reality of the village life where the Indo-Fijians were living with the help of Indian customs and traditions. The early pages of
the novel shows that the writer wants to draw our attention to two particular situations-first he was leaving Fiji with a heavy heart and second, the factors responsible for his exile.

The second chapter deals with amorous and clandestine adventures of various characters. The writer introduces some more Indian and Fijian characters like Jaddu, Zhaman, Ramu, Chanchal, Mr.Karia, Nitya Reddy, Ratu Reddy, Bhaskar, Chotka Singh, Jagat Mahajan, his son Gautam and wife Joan. He narrates the sexual encounters of Jaddu who wants to seduce Chanchal. When Jaddu caught red-handed, village-panchayat gives him punishment. At this juncture, the writer mentions about his higher studies. He depicts his interview at the Indian High Commissioner’s office for the scholarship to study at Delhi. He also depicts his brief career as a school teacher. He portrays an excellent pen-picture of Jagat Mahajan and his family. His son Gautam, after completing his LL.B. from Delhi returns Fiji with his newly married wife, Joan. He stars his profession as a lawyer and the protagonist-cum-narrator starts his career as a teacher. Gautama’s wife, Joan and the writer both are working at Tilak High School where they come close to each other. Finding no emotional response from Gautama, she appreciates the narrator’s company and one day they enjoyed pure bliss in the form of sexual intercourse in the primeval forest near Sawani Hills. Nandan’s pen excels in the use of imagination and his passages give poetic quality to the novel. Another passage from the novel is also an evidence of his poetic prose style and draws a sensuous picture of the climax of the sexual act;

I saw the sky through a virginal forest, vertiginous blue.
And high above, white clouds floating in a vast, empty space, a bird or two, flying in naked freedom. The sun shone gloriously loving the slightly wet earth.¹⁸

Nandan boldly records the sexual encounters of the protagonist. These passages are also the excellent example of his graphic and sensuous prose style. In the second chapter of the book, Love in the Orchard he depicts the protagonist’s sexual act with Gautama’s newly married wife, Joan:
Then Joan looked at me and offered me her beautiful mouth, wet as the fresh earth, to kiss. My tongue instinctively explored the inner sides of her full opening mouth. She lay in my lap. I kissed her hair, her forehead, then her eyes, nose and once again, her opened, waiting mouth. Then gently as she pressed against me, I undid her blouse, then her bra, and her skirt, until she lay utterly naked under the forest canopy. I was surprised by her pubic hair, growing like luxuriant grass next to the source of a small spring. I explored her navel so neat and clean. My hand slid down her thighs, warm, wet and welcoming, opening with the ripples of the sun across the morning waves...then my first clumsy attempt - breath to breath, breast to breast, when both became one, and one both. That moment still haunts me.¹⁹

Both the descriptions are the evidence of Nandan’s skilful handling of the narration of sensual scenes. He uses brief, apt and emotive words to create a realistic scene. The choice of words is so excellent that the narration becomes a veritable motion picture. The words like; luxuriant, welcoming, naked, glorious, virginal, freedom, fresh, instinctively etc. depicts the tenderness and beauty of the intimate relations of the lovers. His mastery over narrative technique doesn’t need any further explanation. Both the paragraphs catch the visual and auditory effect of the scene very poignantly and realistically. It is a rare gift for which Nandan deserves immense praise. The wounded Sea is a picturesque novel. Through his deliberate knitting of the words, Nandan succeeds in making the novel picturesque. So that we can call Nandan’s style is picturesque and life-like. The various scenes and narratives in the novel give ample proof of his elegant, tenacious observations and brilliance. Nandan’s experience of different communities, cities, races and landscapes makes him an able and accurate delineator and narrator of the heart-rending stories and tales of human psyche. This kind of word-pictures gives birth to the photographic effect on readers’ mind. For example, Nandan’s remembering the past is depicted with great care and in apt words:
I sit on the bank keeping an eye on a boy and a girl and peer into the water. The ripples stir like memories. The faces in the water rise. My mind races and the live of the flowing river fills the desolation of my spirit with remembrances like drops of rain in the afternoon sun casting a rainbow across the brooding hills. And fragments of my memory shine like pebbles where the water is shallow, swift and broken into bits by stones and stars…

He depicts the thought process of the protagonist and compares memory with ripples in the water. His picturesque description is the outcome of his keen observation of people and landscapes and his maturity of style. His in-depth and minute readings of the human mind, behaviour and surroundings make Nandan a master artist of picturesque presentation.

The third chapter of the novel, *The Day of the Colonel* opens with pathetic news that his brother, Nimi had died in an accident and crushed under the tires of his tractor. Suddenly the death notices announced on Radio Fiji, which reveals the coup affected Fijian conditions. The ‘Day’, which he has used in the title of the chapter, suggests the day of the Coup of 1987, that is, 14th of May. He accurately and minutely describes the wretched conditions of the Indo-Fijians after the Coup. Everywhere there was widespread agitation against the Indians. Incidents like stabbing, rape, racial attacks, and robberies were routine incidents and thousands of Indians became victim of it. He poignantly describes the violent and disturbed state of Fiji in small amount of words: “…after the coup: shock, betrayal, uncertainty and anguish were killing many peasants Indians.”

Like Bacon, Nandan gives exquisite picture of the aftermath of coup with economy of words. Then he remembers the death news of his brother and elaborately talks about his brother’s life and affair with a Fijian girl, Anna. Anna, who lives across the river, comes often at the writer’s house to help his mother in household works. One day, shocking news arrives that she was expecting Nini’s child. Her two brothers, Lesu and Blooma threaten the family. But after a dangerous fight between them, the whole affair settled and reconciled. In another digression, the writer gives a romantic description of his
infatuation towards a girl named, Karuna. She was the girl whom he admired during his school days. He portrays a delicate picture of Karuna:

I had loved the way she smiled – shy but full of radiance. Her long black hair had flowed into my dreams and during my English classes she had seeped into my consciousness as a sad Hindi film song.22

During his stay at Delhi, he writes letters to Karuna, regularly. Karuna also responds to his letters from Fiji. He describes the lovelorn feelings of a youth in following words:

Rarely to my parents or sister or Nandu, she had become my one obsession in my loneliness in a difficult land. Every poem I read, every letter of Keats, every phrase that expressed love, became mine and I included it in my letters. And the letters came: warm, loving, expressing both the sorrow and joy of loving…23

Unfortunately, three years later he received a letter from his close friend Nandu informing that he was going to marry Karuna. In the letter, he saw the death of his passionate and lovelorn feelings for Karuna. In the third episode of the chapter, he describes the character of a rich businessman, Gautam and his voluptuous life with his secretary, Pauline. He depicts the lavish life of Gautam and Pauline in excellent style:

But even before Joan’s death, Pauline had trapped Gautam between her thighs, and he had been there instantly at her beck and call. Pauline’s sexual lust had added a new luster to Gautam’s life in the semi-darkness of the afternoons. And when Joan died Gautam has merely redoubled his efforts. Green curtains drawn, the main door bolted, he would plunge into her like a long-starved creature with a loaf of meat. Writhing, whispering, wriggling, wobbling, their bodies hot and gleaming with sweat, Pauline would scream with ecstasy: “Take me any way, take me…Paul.” 24

Nandan achieves an excellent audio-visual effect by the brilliant use of words. Words like: Writhing, whispering, wriggling, wobbling, muffled cries, etc. narrates the sexual act realistically and poignantly. In the end of the present chapter, Nandan raises serious questions regarding race and identity of the Indians in Fiji. He also prepares the readers for the last chapter in which he
brings before them the gruesome and terrible circumstances of the 1987 Coup. By giving the examples from the tales of Indian mythology, which his father was used to tell him during his childhood, he explains the complexity of the question of race. He also quotes the reference of some Sri Lankan citizens who demanded refugee status in Fiji, which was rejected by the Labour Government. Today, Sri Lankans increased in population and makes important decisions about Fiji. To explain the fact Nandan depicts a beautiful fable of a tender dove and hungry hawk from The Mahabharata. A generous king saves a frightened dove from the clutches of a hungry hawk. Remembering his Dharma to protect the weak, the King sacrifices the flesh of his body and gives it to the hawk in place of the dove. The king convinces the hawk and offers his own flesh, equivalent to the dove’s weight instead of the dove. But after endless slicing of his body and placing it on the scale, the king found that the weight of the dove increases after every slicing of his flesh. In the end, he puts his whole body on the scale but the scales did not tipped in his favour. At last, Lord Shiva appears and blesses him. With the help of this fable, he compares the plight of the Indians with that of the dove. He also wants to highlight the qualities like charity, equality, benevolence and protection. The fourth and final chapter The Night of the Mongrels, the narrator reveals his true identity as Satendra Nandan who was a minister in Bavadra Government at the time of 1987 Coup. He describes realistically the events and proceedings of the coup when thousands of the Indians were marginalized, discriminated racially and subjugated. Employing ingenuously the flashback technique, he states the exact date and time- December 03, 1987 when he was leaving Fiji with his wife and two children. His mind and heart were filled with a sense of betrayal and shock praising the work, Prof. Chelva Kanaganayakan says:

A splendid book writing is precise, insightful and very compelling. As always, the diction is a pleasure to read. For a South Asian and a post colonialist like me the book is invaluable. An excellent work. 25

Nandan was sitting in the passenger lounge with his wife and two daughters, frightened and furious and waits for ‘a maligned airline which was their “flight
to freedom, from a country’s Royal Military Forces which has abducted and
detained a whole government”. He feels enormous pain and trauma by the
idea of leaving his own country of birth. On behalf of the indigenous Fijians,
Colonel Sitveni Rabuka staged a military coup on 14 May, 1987. He toppled
down the Bavadra Government in which Satendra Nandan and many other
Indians are the ministers. Taking the support of few army personnel, Fijian
ministers, and businessmen, Rabuka raised the question of the indigenous
Fijians’ rights. He condemned the Indians and their superiority over the Fijian
markets, politics and power. Nandan, like other ministers was removed from
his position and confined into an army building. Because of this reason, he was
living the country to save his family from the brutality of the coup. Brevity is
the key with which he depicts the reality; “Thirty thousand feet above, I was
facing the one terrible reality of my life: exile.” He not only reveals the
consequences of the coup but he also mentions the causes and factors
responsible for the coup, in very few but apt words.

Here, he wants to convey that the Indians have contributed significantly
in Fiji’s economic and agricultural growth. They have cultivated the barren
stretches of land, poured their sweat and blood into the plantations of sugarcane
and coconuts, and above all enriched the Fijian culture with their traditions and
rituals. With their hard work and toil, they carved their niche in the country’s
socio-political and cultural history. Today, the indigenous Fijians were given
more rights, more benefits than the Indians. Government spends more money
on them and high positions were reserved only for the indigenous Fijians. But
the Indians don’t have any racial prejudice or superiority complex. Those were
the days when both the communities were living harmoniously, without any
racial bias. When Nandan was about to left for the parliament, the host asks
about his favourite song. Nandan, unaware of his own fate, tells him to play the
famous S.D. Burman’s song; “O’ Musafir jayega kahan, vianh kawn hei tera. / O, Traveller, where’ll you go now who is here that is yours…” The Hindi film
song reveals the irony of his life because he was going to the Parliament House
to attend the routine session and he was unaware of its consequences. Thus,
the song becomes an indication of the predicament and calamity which was waiting for him in the Parliament building. In the Parliament Building, all the members were present and after the prayer, the proceedings of the parliament start. After a few minutes, Colonel Rabuka enters with masked gunmen in the centre of the building and seized all the ministers. All the ministers with the Prime Minister, Dr. Timoci Bavadra were shoved into an army truck which took them to the Queen Elizabeth Barracks where they kept under round the clock surveillance. Nandan’s pen continuously describes the incidents that took place during their imprisonment in an army building. He realistically depicts the pitiful conditions of the ministers and how they have to struggle for food. He gives a truthful account of their six days confinement and the atmosphere of uncertainty, insecurity and danger. He gives a graphic picture of the incident, during the coup:

On Saturday afternoon, the tension mounted, hundreds of people had gathered outside the gates of the PM’s residence; the army had started to roll barbed wire to keep them away from the entrance…half an hour later the soldiers came asking for Krishna Dutt and Kalou. We refused to hand them over. Someone remarked: this is the beginning; we’ll be shot two by two. With some passion the Indian MPs began singing Gandhi’s favourite bhajan: “Raghupati Raghau Raja Ram…” the bewildered soldiers slinked away when they found the song was unending…Two hours later the soldiers came back asking for Tupeni Baba and Harish Sharma, and later for James Shankar Singh and me. Again we steadfastly refused to let anyone go. All of us would go, or none. If the soldiers had insisted on using force that night we might well have had a tragedy or two. But they didn’t."

Nandan’s prose minutely depicts the tension and uncertainty of the coup, the cruel behaviour of the Fijian soldiers, faith in God, prayers, struggles with the soldiers, etc. As a constant experimenter, Nandan invests different mode of narration and techniques in his fiction and gives proper growth to the narrative in his own way. Nandan’s two short stories, The Guru and A Pair of Black Shoes both are anthologized in schools in Fiji are the stories of his own childhood memories. Both the stories provide humour and pathos at the same
time. Nandan uses first person narrative with omniscient mode. This technique gives the writer full freedom and ample space to peep into the workings of minds of his characters. A keen reader can observe variations in the dialects of the various characters in accordance with their differences in the socio-cultural and economical status. He uses an unending sequence of stories and tales which becomes a continuous process. Thus, a great variety of characters co-exist in the structure of the novel. The novel achieves perfection with the help of the dialectical interplay of different voices. Nandan always uses short, crisp sentences which adds great charm to the language of the narrative. He can be considered the finest writer of English sentences. His pictures are eye-catching, suggestive and meaningful. Because of his direct, simple and epigrammatic sentences, his prose becomes pointed and poignant. The particular scene, which depicts the various activities of lovers, birds and insects, is an excellent example of his command over language, brevity and skill. “It was just that time of midnight tenderness: when drunk men are sobering up to unknot the petticoats of their wives or clutch at their awakened breasts; when young men and women ache in their bones to hold each other, unfold their flesh if they weren’t separated; when most birds and beasts rest with the earth, and only bats eating ripe mangoes are active like thieves and the ancient eyes of the owls shine with a dark distress.”

These short sentences ignite the interest of the readers. Nandan is also able to convey the complete meaning, using small amount of words. His language is direct, simple, graceful and elegant. His sentences attract our attention because of its melody, sharpness and meaningfulness. He freely uses adjective to enhance the effect of words. We can find in his narrations that his narrator often act, talk, and narrate in between. The dialogues of the characters are brief, effective and helps to develop the story. He adds sparkling wit and satire which adds dramatic quality to the narrative. The graphic narration of *The Wounded Sea* comes through the consciousness of a twice-uprooted Indo-Fijian male narrator, means the writer himself. He remembers and looks back into his early days of childhood and tries to interweave his personal saga with
major historical events of postcolonial Fiji. The story is set in the post-colonial Fiji where the writer’s parents had spent their lives. It stretches over four decades and tells us the saga of these generations. The writer is the narrator of the story who presents before us the chronological events that led the situation towards the coup. He provides a plethora of tales and characters, personal memories, reflection and recollections, emotions and experiences. The protagonist-narrator of the novel brilliantly reconstructs the era of the girmitiyas and history of his family; which can be seen as an allegorical representation of the Indian diaspora. He tells the story of three generations in which different characters represents different ages, cultures and class. The development of characters throbbing with life from various cultures, nationalities and religions, adds a great charm to the novel. Nandan uses many digressions so the narration becomes non-linear and thus bears epic like quality. He owes much to the oral narratives to which he had listened during his childhood days. Memories enables him to wonder in the past and relate it to the future. In most of the chapters of the novel, Nandan shows his excellent skill of blending of humour and pathos in his prose. He tries to entertain his readers by telling interesting incidents, jokes and stories of the Indo-Fijian characters. He also highlights the untold gloom and pain in the lives of these characters. Throughout the novel, he holds a mirror which reflects the contemporary Fijian society. Nandan has used certain symbols and images, recurrently in his novel, which helps to express his thoughts, clearly and concisely. Fire, sea, sky, earth are the most important images. Fire represents sacrifice or purification, sea is asymbol for joy, spirit and nation while sky symbolizes infiniteness, freedom and liberty. The Indian texts, *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* are also used as symbols which suggests exile, banishment, conflict and traditions. Nandan also uses figurative languages, when he describes some emotional aspects of a character. Various symbols and images, helps him to depict the scene, realistically. These devices impart a poetic quality to the novel. In his novel, he uses short and aphoristic sentences,
which gives a unique image to the novel. These are some of the examples of his aphoristic sentences:

- “I was leaving my country, at Christmas, with death on my mind” (p.04)
- A doctor trained in India; a man of faith, too. (p.07)
- Revolution, I read later, began with a wink. (p.10)
- The bear in the glass lost its autumnal glow. (p.25)
- Nobody has taught us Fijian Indians that life was like Shylock in a Christian country. (p.26)
- Lines littering my life, illuminating as sunlight after a storm on the landscape of little ruins. (p.34)
- ... the temporary shelters of the fathers had become the permanent homes of their children. (p.36)
- Memories become passion and passion memories. (p.39)
- For five treacherous nights, with all lights blazing, we had glimpsed the heart of darkness. (p.133)
- Thirty thousand feet above, I was facing the one terrible reality of my own life: exile. (p.134)
- Economic indicators or the manipulations of statistics cannot measure the rhythms of heartbeats. (p.146)
- And the rarified racism of the colonial encounter was lost in the myths of Eden in the South seas... (p.138)
- Only now do I know that indigenous racism, like local liquor, is worse than the imported variety. (p.138)
- And no guns can kill certain words. (p.147)
- Every paradise has its Satan- and its exiles. (p.147)
- Every epic, after all, is created from a local row. (p.152)
- It was a typically Fijian-Indian situation: the Fijians all armed, the Indians totally unarmed. (p.157)
- You’re preaching vegetarianism amongst cannibals. (p.159)
- Every dog, I suppose, has his death. (p.168)
- Today, we continue to play the colonial monkey game, with every mongrel wanting to be a Monkey... (p. 170)
- Today’s decision makers are tomorrow’s refugees; yesterday’s refugees, today’s saviours. (p.124)

We can see the alliterative effect in many lines like:
- It must have made an impression on the soliders: outside one or two would make a silent, shuffling noise with their feet, like soft rain on the salt-laden sea. (p.152)

and onomatopoeic effect in:
- He couldn’t help noticing how the chunks of red meat still trebaled with life as the blood dripped.” (p.119)

Nandan also creates an air of humour, portraying Sardar Battan Singh, who was on his way to London. During his journey in a flight, he letout a mighty fart after eating oily parathas and curry. When his fellow passangers questions him, he replies, innocently: “That, madam and sir, was Air India.” His answer creates a wave of laughter among readers. After narrating the humorous episode, the writer quickly changes the course of the narration. He changes the mood, describing the pathetic tales of his girmitiya forefathers. Nandan uses imagination and sensuousness in the depiction of romantic scene. He marvellously uses appropriate words for the expression of love and romance. He is able to depict both love in union and in separation. In the second part of the novel, he depicts the sexual union of Zhaman and Sukhi Ram, without mentioning their physical position. He creates a complete picture using indirect reference; “The jasmine bush was in frenzy as I approached, as if some animal, possibly Mangal’s pig, was ferreting for some filth beneath it. But then I heard a muffled, moaning sound. Heavy breathing. A gulp or two, then a long and satisfied alaap- the sound Bisnath used to make before singing his wedding songs.”

He also presents his love with karuna, which is the example of love in separation. Nandan’s prose is alive with attractive images and fascinating characters. Nandan’s uses of figures of speech gives a linguistic splendour to his fiction. He makes ample use of Indian-Fijian saying and proverbs, which is
effective and creative. He abundantly uses vernacular expression. His language is a rare combination of Hindi and Fijian words, which also suggests a combination of different cultures. Various characters use Fijian, Hindi or vernacular language in their routine conversation. Some of them use broken English with their own Indianised English words. For example, his father’s words, “Tek this grat noosepaper and read, boy. Tell me worl noose. What happenin in India? Gandhi king now? He great man; too much reading he done.”

The novel revolves around the life and career of the writer-protagonist. So, it also can be called a bildungsroman novel. Nandan narrates the harmonious gatherings of the two communities on the occasions like Holi, Dipavali, marriages etc. He also narrates cruel and violent quarrels between the group like; fighting of the Bisnath Gang, Zhaman’s husband’s suicide, events of the coup, street quarrels, Fijian boy tries to kill his brother etc. He presents histories and stories of individual characters. For example, He gives a detailed account of Jagat Mahajan and his son, Gautama’s life and career in Fiji. These personal histories reveal their own success-stories in an alien land; and gives individuality to the characters. Because Nandan has used autobiographical elements, certain places and people, in his novel, are real. For example, Nadi village, Suva point, Wailoaloa Beach Creamation ground, Nandi International Airport, The Pineapple Lines, Tilak High School, Sawani Hills, Belconnen, Delhi, Canberra, Suva Grammar School, Queen Ellizabeth Barracks etc. All these places are taken from real life. His novel, for these reasons, attracts readers of every class. The fine blending of humour and pathos provides entertainment and sustains the interest of readers. By making excellent use of autobiographical technique he reveals the complete picture of his own life. His interior monologues also helps to reveal his true personality and character. He realistically depicts the theme of man’s quest for roots, identity and recognition. He also tells us the confrontation of two cultures and political-racial discrimination of the Indians. His use of certain imagery and symbolism is also an important aspect of his narration which has an universal appeal. By writing about the Indo-Fijians, Nandan had discussed not only the issues of
Indo-Fijian diaspora but also the issues pertaining to the Indian diaspora. So, it is the narrative technique that gains him praise and significance. The novel is also remarkable for its structural innovation, stylistic perfection and linguistic consumption. Thus, we have analysed and diagnosed the chief characteristics and features of Nandan’s narrative technique and art of characterisation. His only novel, *The Wounded Sea* becomes a valuable text for this purpose.
References:

21. Ibid. p.96.
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25. Ibid. p.234.
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