Chapter: 4 Narrative Technique in Selected Indian English Novels.

1. Plot-Construction

The plot in a fiction is constructed by its actions and Chronicles. Combination of these two cultivates the theme of the work and instilling peculiar artistic and emotional effects plot is a casual sequence of events of the story, a sequence that reveals cause and effect t of the events. In 1927, E.M Forster defines the plot with reference to the cause-and—effect relationship. According to him, “The King Died”, and then the queen died of grief’ is a plot’. (Whales, 320) According to Freytag Gustav plot as a narrative structure divides story into five parts: Exposition; rising action; climax; falling action; and denouement. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/plot-narrative cite-note/5/2/2014/5:56 am) As per this theory, exposition introduces characters, especially the main character; rising action includes conflict in any form that builds up the events; climax includes action that resolves the problem of the main character.

Mulk Raj Anand’s the Morning face has episodic and simple plot. The narrative has been divided into the three part: “City Of Dreadful Nights”, “The Prison” and “The Regiment”. Each part begins with significant epigraph that heightens the sincerity of theme. Having propaganda of social reform, he has created plot that has realistic elements, that elaborates social evils and predicament of an individual in the society. “Anand is Dickensian in his ultra-sensitivity to the existence of social evils in Protean forms” (Paul, 1) From the beginning to the end of the novel traits of bildungasroman can be noticed. Anand has duly maintained equilibrium between plot and character.

Above allusion reflects the major themes of the part-1 of the novel. “Anand is Dickensian in his ultra-sensitivity to the existence of social evils in protean forms”. (Part1) Hence his plot has realistic elements that elaborate social evils and predicament of individual. Through the main character of Krishan, Mulk Raj Anand has recreated the experience based on his own childhood. From the beginning to the end of the novel, character of Krishan gets mature and the novel thus have bildungasroman tendency.
Anand has duly maintained equilibrium between plot and character. Title of the novel, *Morning Face*, symbolic and represents the innocence and freshness of a child at the early stage of his life. The novel is an embodiment of psychological journey of Krishan from childhood to the age of adolescence and encompasses conflicts he felt among the world of grownups. The action of the novel takes place in various Indian cities where Krishan experiences bitter truth of life and various man-made catastrophes namely religious prejudiced, inadequate education system, untouchability and money minded elders and their hypocrisy. Through the conscience of Krishan, Anand has revealed various social exploitation dramatically.

The plot of the novel is compact, well-knit and organic. It has linear description of traditional style. However Anand has made use of stream-of-consciousness technique to reveal conflict and inner turmoil of Krishan. But the use of this technique is done at preliminary stage. He does not follow stream-of-consciousness technique like that of Joyce or Woolf. His narration is non-fragmented and full of story element. It is utilized to represent the thought-current of the main character. At one point in the novel, Krishna’s thought current are reflected in following manner:

> oh, if only I could extend all my thought! If only I could get out of the whole into which I had been plunged, because I was the little un grownup son….My campaign against the elders, against the supreme God, and against my father, now become an insidious fury… I said very little to anyone but only burnt inside me,… (MF 138/139)

Anand has made use of this technique to portray tension and emotional process of the main character.

Anand has successfully developed his individual style of writing. Instead of following western models of novel writing he has switched over Indianizing his literary canon with confidence. “He applied various methods, techniques and stylistic devices as diction and dialogues to impart an Indian identity to his English” (Agarwal, Kulshrestha,173)
His adoption of English language creates picturesque portrayal of Punjabi middle class and lower class mass and their regional, cultural sensibility. As a means to reveal character and his background he has freely made use of common Indian words like “roti”, “sahib”, “choohiya”, “vey”, “ni”, “Bazar”, “fakir”, “pakhand”. While revealing cunningness of priests and fakirs, he adopts satiric tone. On the other hand his style becomes full of pathos and compassion while describing exploitation and pain of untouchables.

Mammaries of the welfare state (2000) by Upmanyu Chatterjee is a follow-up to his novel *English, August*. The novel has been widely acclaimed for its witty satire on Indian government, revealing corruption, malice and exploitation and incompetence of Indian beurocrates. The text has illusive plot construction as from the surface it seems to be divided into twelve chapters neatly but in reality it contains no plot in strict sense. Mammaries of the welfare state (2000) by Upmanyu Chatterjee is a sequel to his novel *English August*. The text has illusive plot construction as from the surface it seems to be divided into twelve Chapters neatly but in reality it contains no plot in strict sense. In the words of R.P Singh: “The plotlessness is, as it appears, deliberate.” (06)

Like many modern Indian English writers, Chatterjee does not follow traditional style of plot construction. Loosely constructed plot reflects on Chatterjee’s complete detachment while exposing vulgarity and corruption of the Indian bureaucracy. Narration of the story indulges and merge into each other. First part of the text concentrates on struggle faced by Agastya while second part chiefly aims at portrayal of heart rendering corruption.

*Seth’s The Golden Gate* even though written in a verse form, has a well-structured plot. The plot is clearly divided into thirteen chapters and the events that took place during the course of novel are in chronicle sequence. The story begins in the month of September when John realizes his isolation and craves for a company and ends in the month of November. The basic theme of the novel’s brutality of industrialism, human failure and loneliness and failure to communicate. Action of the plot has theme brilliantly. Plot has rising action when John is highly lonely and searches for a company and falling action when at the end the family of eight members is represented as an epitome of completeness and happiness.
Chaman Nahal’a Azadi also has traditional plot that has an opening, a mid and a proper ending. The novel is divided into three parts and each part has significant titles. They are: ‘Lull’, ‘Storm’ and ‘Aftermath’. These sub-titles signifies the action of that particular part. The novel opens with an important date, 3rd June, 1947, when the viceroy Lord Mount Batten, was going to make important announcement about freedom of India. And novel ends in the month end of November of the same year. The time span narrated is of six months approximate.

R.K Narayan is a master of good and constructive plot. His every novel has an illustrative plot. In his novel The Guide plot and actions became complicated as he has used modern technique of narration. The chronicles in the novel constantly moves backward and forward. The novel has been divided into eleven chapters but none of the chapter is entitled individually. This gives unifying objectivity with the main title of the novel. Narayan has knitted the simple folk in the story of his novel.

His plot construction is strengthen by psychological insight to the character of Raju and sequence of the chronicles are also arranged in the same way. As Danhich points out; “In The Guide, the sequence is more psychological and presentational than chronological.” (Danhich, 151) Most notable feature about the narrative is that it contains an open end. Readers are left with many questions about the end of Raju: Is he really dead? Or alive? Does it rain? Or it was only hallucination of fainting Raju? Thus, end of the novel is highly ambiguous. Narayan’s narration is very realistic. It reflects life style of South Indian families who are deeply rooted into tradition. While narrating the story, with such an ease, Narayan portrays a picturesque description of the locality, street when Raju took Rosie at the bank of river:

He drove through the market road, honking his horn impatiently through the crowd. It was a crowded hour. Lots of people were moving around. The lights were up. Shop lights sparkled and lit up the thoroughfare. He took a sharp turn at Ellaman street that narrow street in which oil-merchants lived, the oldest street in the city, with children playing in it, cows lounging, and donkeys and donkeys and dogs blocking the passage so narrow that any passing car almost touches the walls of the house....street

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ended with the last lamp on the road, and the road imperceptibly
merged into the sand.(G.145)

Narayan has also depicted the conflict between modernity and tradition with the
portrayal of character of Raju. He has subtly make use of humor with irony. At the
moment s of crisis in the novel, Narayan is able to create humor.

The plot also consists of the dual narrative structure. The novel opens in the third
person with Raju taking refuge in the village temple. While in the first six chapters the
point of view alternates between the third and the first person narration. Nirmal Mukherji
rightly comments that:

The dual narrative structure and the consistently braided time
scheme contribute towards a better and deeper understanding of
the hero who is both swindler and a holy man. By altering the two
time scheme at sharp interval, Narayan has been able to bring into
focus those aspects of Raju’s character which are essential for the
analysis of the inner confusion….within these sections of Raju’s
confessions are embroidered the strands of the narrative which are
related by the omniscient author(372-73)

2. Symbolism:

In Mammaries of Welfare World, welfare state becomes metaphor and symbol of
world nation that reflects beastly power of politicians, institutionalized religion,
corruption and in process inflicted violence and poor masses. As Paranjape observes
about Indian political scenario is that India; “Is just another tried, poor, dirty and hungry
third world country, though not devoid of unexpected and memorable compensations.”
(405)

The world “Mammaries” in the title of the novel is suggestive as it reflects
exploitation of the entity welfare state which in the canvas of the novel reflect the
symbolical scenario of whole nation being exploited by politicians. Sexual exploitation of
poor tribal boy by Bhupen Ragupati symbolized exploitation of poor mass Chamundi is
as the Indian mass without proper literacy, advancement and resources.

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The title of the novel *Azadi* has ironically imagery. The word connate the meaning of freedom along with progress and happiness. Ironically, the long cherished dream of India’s freedom came in disguise of violence, migration and massacre. The newly gained freedom gave a wound that cannot be healed ever. After partition communal riots proved to be a never ending gulf between the two communities. So ironically *Azadi* does not fulfill dreams of thousands of Indians. The novel begins with an epigraph of Rabindranath Tagore’s poem; “where the mind is without fear and head is held high into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake” *(Azadi, epigraph)*

This poem stands out as a metaphor to the real meaning of freedom. Nahal has chosen this song symbolically to represent sharp contrast between ideal freedom and the freedom that is depicted in the novel with its horrifying consequences.

Image of “serpent woman” in the novel *The Guide* is typical Indian that belongs to Indian mythology and patriarchal notion of Indian culture. Raju’s mother calls Rosie “a serpent girl” because she is involved with Raju even though she is married. Here Raju’s mother reflects biased and patriarchal notions of Indian society. Raju and Rosie both are equally responsible for their relationship but only Rosie is called as “serpent girl” that symbolizes venom and cunningness. Symbols are used by a novelist to stress the priority of suggestion and evocation over direct description. Symbols evoke subtle affinities which are held to exist between the material and spiritual words. *(125, Mohod)*

*The Guide*, the title, of the novel symbolic. Raju was playing the role of “railway-Raju” at physical reality only. After his imprisonment innocent and poor villager helps him to realize his inner self. At this point of juncture, velan plays the role of guide-the one who shows the real path.

3. **Characters**

There are eight sub-characters who plays important role in the scheme of the novel. First among them is Daya, heavily influenced by yoga and veganism represents the mass of highly educated urban women who have lost touch of tradition and leading a life of rootlessness and alienation without realizing it. Another female character of the novel is Lina natesan Thomas working at Aflatoon welfare state. She submits a thirty-page
memorandum on the subject of plague which ends up with a confidential letter that exposes the sexual trauma a lady has to confront as a subordinate officer. Among other minor male character are Bhanwar Virbhim, Makhmal Bagai, Bhupen Raghupati, Kum Kum Bala Mali, and Bhuavn Aflatoon. These characters together reflects mutilated idealism, corruption, sexual exploitation and reveals dingy corridors of Indian bureaucracy. The main character of the novel, the character of Agastya has not changed much since his last appearance in the *English, August*. He has grown more alienated and aloof from the world.

Agastya (*Mammaries of a Welfare State*) is portrayed as an anti-hero. His character remains static throughout the novel, reluctant to change personality or his own circumstances. Every time he tries to change his job and resents the idea by confessing: “one cannot you know leave one’s mother’s lap. The outside world is much less funny and far wicked”. (342) Modern man in his social milieu is unable to change the circumstances and his dialect between self and society remains incomplete. Agastya is rootless and alienated like never before but his attitude towards alienation is that of meek acceptance. Chatterjee in one of his conversation confesses:

He is a morally loose man in a morally loose world. It’s been 12 year since English, August, and my first objective is to set Agastya Sen in his place. He is a misfit, so how does he survive. (Chatterjee I)

Additionally with the anti-heroic mind he is trapped by system. R.P Singh comments:

Agastya Sen is a passively guilty victim hero, trapped in an absurd situation and unable to extricate himself from there …he does not think of fighting for courage, selfhood and a sense of moral human grandeur…. a man who has been rendered impotent to react morally. (Singh)

John, in the Verse-novel *The Golden Gate* is isolated one. His situation can be compared to Agastya Sen (*Mammaries of a Welfare State*). Both the male protagonist are suffering with a syndrome of alienation in metropolitan cities- Delhi and California. Seth has not provided physical attribution of his characters. It is noteworthy that female
character- Liz, Janet are stronger than male characters- Phil, Ed and Jack. Seth has portrayed all male characters emotionally depended and lost in zigzag ways of life. Characters are realistic and Californian life- style, characters are surrounded by loneliness at more or less extent:

[...] The loneliness within our souls, our febrile clawing for mean goals, our programmed cockfights and retraces, our dreary dignity, false pride And hearts stored in formaldehyde [...] (GG,20)

Characters are portrayed with psychological insights. He has successfully connected the link of character past and family life with present condition and ideologies. For an instance, John’s disbelief in family life is a consequence of his unhappy childhood. Liz, Phil, Ed and Janet belongs to same age group and emotional confusions their main concern. Janet helps John Brown to find out a good companion with the matrimonial advertisement:

Young handsome yuppie, 26. Straight, forward, sociable but lonely, cannot believe that he’s the only well-rounded and well-meaning square, Lusting for love. If you out there . Are friendly, female, under 30, Impulsive, fit, and fun, let’s meet. Be rash.

Box....(GG, 2.3)

This advertisement has humoristic as well as ironical tone. Through the portrayal of modern and educated characters, Seth has pointed out their inability to communicate. Portrayal of the character of Phil and his relationship with Ed. reflects on a very sensitive issue of homosexuality. Phil suffers with ethnic conflict and at the end settles life with Liz based on faithful matrimony. Character of Jack and Phil both are dynamic as they achieves maturity and better understanding of life at the end of the novel. As das observes each character in the novel “is defined within the parameter of profession, personal ethics, eccentricities, and family and social connection” (Das, 15) To create a multicultural milieu, Seth has selected characters from various regions. Janet Hawakaya has Japanese descent while Liz Doroti belongs to a family of Italian immigrant vine growers. Through the marriage of Liz and Phil, Seth has suggested the significance of companionship in marriage rather than romance or physical pleasure.
In Azadi Chaman Nahal has followed traditional style of characterization. He has described physique, looks and disposition of main characters and events that took place in the novel justifies the personality of each character. Female character are attributed to domestic household activities only yet they are strong and having sufficient will power of their own. On the other hand male character relies on female for the psycho-emotional strength. Among the major female characters, there are: Prabhavati, Madhubala, Bibi Amavati, Sunanda and Chadani. While among male protagonist there are: Lala Kanshi Ram, Arunkumar.

Nahal has portrayed these individual characters with such poignancy that they often voice collective trauma.

Character of Arun and Munir, Lala Kanshi Ram and Chaudhari Barkat Ali stands for communal unity between Hindu and Muslim that cannot be compromise by fanatics. On the other hand character of Abdul Ghani, inspector Rahmat-Ullah Khan represents the common mass who are fanatics and gullible by politicians. Women character are easy targets during communal riots. Sunanda and Chandni like many other women falls victim to exploiters. But Sunanda is not heartbroken after rape, she with enough boldness fights for her existence and lives with dignity. Arun gets inner strength and maturaty after passing through the traumas of partition and losing his beloved.

Character of Raju in the novel The Guide is a dynamic character that has gathered wide attention of critics. From the beginning to the end of the novel Raju’s character passes through various changes positivity to negativity and vice-versa.

Raju’s character can be well analyzed through peripeteia. “In drama or narrative, a reversal in fortune, either, as in occasional, from bad to worse”. (Abrams, 253) In The Guide Raju’s journey from childhood to his death has been involved. Yet it is controversial that either Raju died or not at the end of the novel. As Shiv Girla puts it, “...Saint who is neither born nor made but simply happens almost like the weather” (49) Raju gets saintly status at the end of the novel, critics like Uma Parameshwaran believes that from beginning to end Raju remains a rogue only. First part of the novel portrays Raju’s childhood, Malgudi slowly turning into a modern town, Raju’s growing popularity as guide, his affair with Rosie and imprisonment while second part narrates his growth into Swamy in Mangla. Raju’s involvement with Rosie is not only emotional but practical
also. Twist in a story comes when he is sent to a prison. After realizing from prison he reaches Mangala as he has nowhere to go. Here also he starts playing the role of a sadhu which was provided by velan; “he must play the role that velan had given him (G, 30) Narayan has portrayed his thought process in following words:

Raju’s soon realized that his spiritual status would be enhanced if he grew a beard and long hair to fall on his nape. A clean shaven close-haired saint was an anatomy. He bore the various stages of his make-up with fortitude, not mounding the prickly phase he had to pass through before a well authenticated beard could cover his face and come down his chest (G, 47)

Till this point Raju is playing with the Role of being a saint. He is frightened of his outcome; “Raju, hungry and frightened, undergoes a process of inner purification”(Mohad, 119) Faith of villagers transformed his heart. As Meenakshi Mukharjee indicates; “At last the collective faith of the people transforms Raju from what he really is into a worthy object of its devotion” (Mukharjee, 124) Raju at last achieves the stage of selflessness and learns to sacrifice for the innocent villagers who have deep faith in him.

Just like character of Raju, Rosie also gains meaning at the end of the novel. Rosie from the beginning of the novel is described as depended entity her individuality. She is passionate for the art of dancing. Art of dance runs in her blood. Narayan has suggested this with the description of snake-charmer episode. Rosie can capture smallest gesture and tune as a brilliant dancer. One of the reasons behind her involvement with Raju is that Raju encourages her dancing talent. But at the end she is again dominated by Raju. Character of Rosie is one of the modern women characters of Narayan. She can be called a silent rebellion as she at last becomes individual person.

4. satire

Satire is a technique employed by writers mainly to exposé folly, vice or foolishness of an individual or a society. In other words it can be described as the subject by making it ridiculous and holding up attitude of scrod, derision, or ridicule. Indian
English Novelists have made use of satire as major literary device to expose and ridicule corruption and social evil prevalent in the society.

Mulk Raj Anand has made use of light satire ridicule bigotry of religion. His characters, in the novel *Morning Face*, are portrayed to be stuck between two different faith. On the side he has portrayed ill-effects of other side he has ridicule superstitions and rituals that exploits poor people and fulfills greed of priests or fakirs. As it is noted by Paul; “Anand’s satirical attack on fake saints and fake priests stems from his abhorrence of exploitation of any kind, be it religious, social or economic.” (Paul, 62)

Anand has satirized that India n women, like his mother Sundari, are gullible to fake sadhus and fakirs. Such women spends their hard cash on such hypocrites to serve delicious food or to offer them something. In the novel Krishan’s father makes bitter comment on such sadhus that: “they are rogues and scoundrels, affecting holiness!.....Beggars!” (MF, 24)

Krishan, protagonist in the novel, is continuously in dilemma about existence of God and religious rituals. Anand, through his character, has questioned and Mocked at rituals like animal sacrifice, black magic. When Krishan is seriously ill various fakirs and pundits exploits the opportunity to grab economical benefit by offering to perform so called rituals. His satirical attitude do not aim at Hinduism in particular. He targets all religion which are fraudulence. He satires at Aga Khan by commenting on his western outfits +extravagant mannerisms. Similar effort has been made by R.K Narayan’s *The Guide*. Raju assumes false sainthood and poor villagers trust him blindly without knowing his past and imprisonment.

Upmanyu Chatterjee has utilized satire to expose and ridicule corruption that is prevailing in Indian bureaucracy from top to bottom. The main theme of the novel moves around politics, power and exploitation of poor mass. Through the character of Agastya Sen he has satirized on vacuity of higher education and urban life style that leads man nowhere. In a huge city, Agastya is not able to make himself from sordidness. Even though he is highly educated, he is unable to settle himself with a home and family due to his meager pay. Chatterjee has satirized on the futility of metropolitan cities. Dr. Harihara Kapila, a celebrated economist says:
Caste is a much more reliable factor than merit, you know.... because merits? Every Tom, Dick and Harry has merit, but how many have the right temperament, the right ethos, genes, lineage, morality, attitude, biases, hang-ups-in short, the right caste- for a job? (MWS, 238)

Having a ‘merit’ is quite common phenomenon but having “the right caste” is most important factors in the competitive world. This is a bitter satire on today’s reality. Character of Baba Mastram heightens the satire as he is highly involved in politics and corrupted systems of bureaucracy even though he belongs to religious institutions. The novel has been widely acclaimed for its witty satire on Indian government revealing corruption, malice and exploitation and incompetence of Indian beauracrates,

5. Settings

Settings, in the novel play almost a role of mirror character hinting towards many hidden, untold details, revealing the nature of character. Setting is a canvas that combines perception of writers regarding sights, sounds, colors and textures. The physical details of setting reflects the value system, attitudes, past, present and future of the events happening in the novel. It is an important dimension to interpret and decode meaning, character and embodying theme. Setting is created by language-words chosen by the author and imagination of the reader. The golden gate by Vikram Seth is set in California of 80’s. Seth has brilliantly explored the life style of the place. As Gupta notes:

......the great Californian novel, because the themes it treats of: disillusionment from love, estrangement, discontentment at the workplace, silicon valley, nuclear bombs, one night stands, homosexuality, rock-music- all these coalesce into a very detailed picture of life in coastal, cosmopolitan city of San Francisco. (Gupta,55)

The novel contains picturesque description of bay life style of California. Silicon valley is portrayed as an ulcer valley ass high professionalism has influenced human psyche that he has lost sensitivity and relationships have become subjugatory. John
exemplifies this statement at best. Seth has cleverly chosen the setting that is the metropolitan city trapped between modernity and loosing old world charm. The setting of the novel and Azadi is Sialkot (now Pakistan) and Delhi. These two cities have historical significance with reference to position of India and Pakistan. Nahal has beautifully portrayed peace before partition. He has described various parts of Sialkot Trunk Bazzar, Ramleela Maidan, Cantonment, and manners of shopkeepers, living style of people. These overall description adds pain to the events followed by the news of partition. With this new riots spread in both parts:

The first riot took place in Sialkot on the twenty-fourth of June
.....there were large scale killing and looting in Lahore, Gujrat, Gurjanwala, Amritsar, Ambala, Julundur, Rawalpindi, Multan, Ludhiana and Sarogdha. (A.125)

Nahal has followed linear sequence of the chronicles in his narrative. As soon as Sialkot was caught into the fire of communalism, Hindus start migrating towards India. Delhi, after newly gained independence, has been caught among chaos, corruption and overpopulation.

In the novel Memories of Rain Sunetra Gupta has dealt with two cities- one occidental and another oriental. The novel is set against the beautiful city of Calcutta in 80’s and England. Protagonist of the novel Moni is bread and brought up in Calcutta and after marrying an English man Anthony moves to England.

One striking feature of these narrations is that description of Calcutta is done in depth while there is no such detailed description regarding England. Through the conscience of Moni streets, hotels, collage, theatre halls are portrayed one of the motif behind such setting is to create diasporic sensibilities. Diasporic subject is unable to have the process of rerooting hence suffer with nostalgia. Character of Moni, at psychic level, keeps on living her life at her nation home at Calcutta. Her conscience is unable to respect the new location. Gupta has wonderfully given voice to diasporic issue with proper setting.
6. Style

The golden gate is widely acclaimed novel for its unique style. While working on his doctoral dissertation, he happens to read Pushkin’s Eugene Onegin and it inspire him to write a novel in verse. As Roopali Gupta observes:

After reading Onegin, Seth realized that he had found a medium for the story he had been wanting to tell about California. In reading Onegin, three things came together: the idea of the novel, the actual structure and the classical structure of the stanzas. (36)

Seth has classified the source of inspiration behind the style of the novel. But as Sahana Das remarks:

…the most obvious consequence of the sonnet-form is that it prevents audience empathy. When a narrative uses the language of everyday speech, the reader tends to forget the conscious, creating mind of the artist, and gets immersed in an illusion of reality.(183)

It is truly observed that narrative style of the novel, makes it hard to indulge naturally with the character and theme. But Seth has chosen verse style deliberately and he has handled current socio-cultural issues effectively.

The narrative style of The Golden Gate is written in “iambic tetrameter and follows the fourteen line stanza pattern of Eugene Onegin” (Pandurang, 72-73). The Novel contains 594 sonnets in total. Following the theme of modern milieu, Seth has not chosen the traditional style of sonnet. Jha has correctly observed that sonnet style; “…dramatizes existential anguish within the framework in verse” (Jha, 63)

In the novel Azadi Chaman Nahal has adopted realistic and poignant style of narrative that move the reader at once third person narrative of the novel gives the narrative touch of socio-historical documentary. At the hard cover of the novel there is a quote by Carlos Baker. He comments:

The power Nahal displays in his sympathetic human involvement, his ability to show that in spite of wide difference in social mores between India and the west, man is man wherever you find him. (From Azadi, FrontPage)
With very simple diction and humanistic approach, Nahal has narrated the tell of most shattering historical event. Even though English being a second language, Nahal has utilized it with much confidence and flow. He has chosen vocabulary of the narrative as per the age, background of the character. Nahal has portrayed partition issue not only with superficial description but with moving insights. Kanshi Ram’s pain of being driven from own native and place is narrated with following words:

But to leave Sialkot? Lala Kanshi Ram ran his hand over the wall of his room and something in him snapped… could he, really? To begin right from scratch? …now wasn’t that asking a little too much a middle-aged man? And where precisely would he begin? In what city? How much capital did he have in cash? How early, at how short a notice, could he withdraw it from the bank? What of the shop—the grain stored there? How would he dispose of it? Would anyone give him any price for it? (A132)

This is the psychological conflict felt by Lala Kanshi Ram while planning to leave Sialkot. Nahal, in a fluid style narrates the physical downfall of the characters. His style become more subtle and languid as he does not involved into unnecessary and exaggerated description. The tone adopted by Nahal is full of irony and tragedy that suits the chronicles of the novels.

Songs of Rabindranath Tagore is an integral part of not only Calcutta but of whole Indian culture. His songs have seeped deep into psyche of artistic and literature loving Indians. Modern Indian English writers have adopted technique of including songs and poetry of the writers with intention to highlight dilemma, emotions and personality of characters. These poems often work as a patches of decorative patches and heightens the artistic value and sense of the novel. Sunetra Gupta has also made use of Rabindra Nath Tagore’s songs. Her style is poetic which is of described as lyrical prose. Poetry included in the novel are translated from Bengali into English by the author herself. The first song included in the novel comes in chapter—, page no: 07.

You, who stand before my door in this darkness who is it that you seek? It has been many years since that spring day, when there
came a young wanderer and immersed parched soul in an endless
sea of joy.... (MR 07)

The song reflects the events of the novel. “a young wonderer” is no one but
Anthony who has disturbed peace of Moni’s heart and she is feeling attracted towards
him. At the initial stage of Moni-Anthony relationship, these songs become a medium to
bring them closer and abide them into one passion. Anthony loved deep and intense voice
of Moni and he often demanded to sing or translate one. Following song reflects, Moni’s
infatuation towards Anthony:

Oh beloved wanderer, I have flung open my doors to the storm do
not pass me by like the shadow of a dream. (MR, 10)

Again at England Anthony’s infidelity is conveyed by the medium of songs. His
affair with Anna has created many conflicts and questions in moni’s mind. Moni’s
insecurities and pain are thus described:

I lose you, my beloved, so that I may rediscover you. Though of t
immersed in a tide of some other enchantment ... I seek you, my
mind trembles with fear, waves terrify my passion....(MR, 50)

In the course of the novel, Moni returns to India leaving England back forever. On
the way she is filled with nostalgia. She expects Anthony to remember her even though
she has left him:

Even so, remember me if I should move far away, even so if the
old love should be lost in the mazes of a new passion even so,
remember me ....Your eyes might cloud with tears and if one
lovely night this game should end Even so, remember me (MR
197-98)

Sunerta has made use of wonderful, lyrical songs that beautifully reflects mood of
Moni. These songs, within few words, convey many things. They give subtle beauty to
the novel.

From the narration perspective Kiran Nagarkar’s Cuckold has achieved in
distinguished place in the list of Indian English Novels. Nagarkar has recreated the
history with his own perspectives. The novel begins with first person narration. Maharaja
Kumar is conducting the court and he is listening to minor domestic complaints while
other chapters in the novel (3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19, 25, 28, 31, 39, 45) are narrated in third person. Nagarkar has also made use of second person address from time to time. When Maharaja Kumar thinks of his wife, he looks at himself as some other:

You had to admit that she was wizard at sowing confusion and slipping away. Put yourself in her shoes, you are having one hell of a roaring, ... Do you keep your secret to yourself, no sir, you are a plain speaking person. On the night of your wedding you tell your husband the truth, and nothing but (Cuckold 102-03)

Use of second person narrative in this context arouses satire also. Maharaja Kumar is being satirical at his wife as she is involved with God and not allowing Maharaja to have his word as a husband. Use of free indirect speech makes the narration life like some remote historical character instead become caricature of life itself. Yasmeen Lukmani comments:

A subtle mosaic of view points on the characters emerges through the shifts in perspective between first and third person narration, with even the technique of directly addressing the reader or what I have called “second person narration” being brought in from time to time .... The whole tenor of the novel is built on subtle shifts in position between the narrator’s perspective and that of the protagonist. (Lukmani, 123)

Thus, Cuckold has double perspective on narration. Nagarkar has done subtle use of epigraphs to convey upcoming events and psychological state of the character especially Maharaja Kumar. For example in chapter 19, an epigraph goes in following words:

Was ever an outcome so certain? I will wear my saffron safa, the kind one wears when one is going to certain death in war, smear crimson on my forehead and fight the vile God to the death. But there is no death, only defeat. Daily, hourly, perpetual, defeat.

This epilogue hints of the war that will took place in upcoming chapters it metaphorically hints towards the futility of existence that Maharaja Kumar felt and his relationship with the princess. Nagarkar has also included letters from Kaushalya, Leelawati, Mangal. Through this novel Nagarkar has destroyed the myth of Meerabai and
that her husband was a cruel, ruthless fellow. Instead Nagarkar has portrayed him in such 
a way that he creates an impression of helpless common man rather than a prince. He 
craves for his wife’s love but his wife is unfailingly in love with Krishna. Nagarkar with 
his subtle style recreates Mewar of sixteenth century and that Meerabai, often named as 
“green eyed” or “little saint” in the novel. she has an emotional and loving husband. 
Maharaja Kumar has a monologue while getting marry; “He would stand by her, put his 
arms around her and protect her. They would make life of their own.” (Cuckold 44)

Maharaja Kumar wanted to remain committed to his wife but irony of the 
situation is that his wife is committed to someone else. Poisoned by Kaushalya when “ 
little saint” was miserably ill, Maharaja Kumar nurses her unlike the king. Forgetting his 
traditional role of a male and that to a ruler one, he serves his wife.

Thus, Nagarkar has deconstructed and reconstructed whole myth of Meerabai and 
Maharaja Kumar with his narrative style. he has successfully recreated whole historical 
chronicles.

7. Stream of Consciousness Technique

Stream of consciousness is highly adapted by post-independence Indian English 
Novelist as a device to reveal character’s conflicts, thoughts, feelings and action. It is 
different from interior monologue, as it reveals the thought process that is preconscious 
and inward. Stream-of-consciousness does not include any kind of unity or cohesion. As 
William James remarks:

The stream of our thought is like a river. On the whole easy simple 
flowing predominates….but at intervals and an obstruction, a set-
back, a log-jam occurs, stops the current, creates an eddy, and 
make things move the other way. (James, 233)

Stream-of-Consciousness is often used with free indirect speech that is a style of 
third person narration. The term was initially used by James Joyce in The Principles of 
Psychology (1980) and later writers like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and William 
Faulkner made use of it in their renounced literary work.
Sunetra Gupta has made use of Stream-of-Consciousness to give insight to the character of Moni. Her conflicts and traumas are thoroughly justified with this technique. Throughout the novel Moni’s conscience is swinging from past to present and along with this she muses over her predicament on marrying an English man. Like a stream, her thought process passes from one object to another, from one person to another: At one occasion in the novel she muses over her plight:

For a moment she is frozen with fear, it dawns upon her that her plan is terribly fragile, her own indecision is not her only enemy, that she may indeed still be here on Monday evening, suitcases packed in the closets upstairs, she may be here, wretched in the failure of her plan, she is on the shores of a deep misery, a long-lasting despair, if her plan fails, she will be left to drown, the dull slow destruction of her consciousness will continue, they will remain suspended in the stale winds of their unresolved conflicts…(MR, 51)

Above thoughts reflect Moni’s dilemma while deciding to leave Anthony. She is scared as her plan to leave secretly is not sound and if she will fail to go away from Anthony, it will add to her grief. Shashi Tharoor has commented about style of Sunetra Gupta in The Washington Post. He writes; “At twenty-seven, Sunetra Gupta won raves for this first novel and was heralded as the “true heir to Virginia Woolf” (MR, Backpage)

Gupta is often been compared with Virginia Woolf for her experimental use of stream-of-consciousness technique. Through this technique, Sunetra, penetrates deep into psyche of her character. Moni’s emotional state is very well reflected through such description. After leaving England and Anthony, she wonders:

Unshackled misery, cold metal upon her tongue, why has she left him? He who held her young limbs with sleep-soaked fingers, many year ago, the morning after their wedding, he who had buried his smoldering eyes within the pale sleepless depths of her skin and told her he would never know such happiness, it should have been enough to shift the last embers of such passion between her numb fingers, and wait to die at his side, to be buried deep in a
foreign soil by his grave, so that dust of their bones might mingle and fertilize the same bed of grass, instead her ashes would scatter upon the field waters of the holy river…(MR, 177)

Sunetra has wonderfully observed and described human psychology and dilemma. At one point Moni regrets leaving her husband and imagines a life of a compromise with his infidelity. But conscious self within her matrimonial life does not allow her to compromise. Sunetra has successfully touched upon various issues of a diasporic women’s identity with the technique of stream of consciousness.

8. Flashback Technique

“Flashbacks are interruption that writers do to insert past events in order to provide background or context to the current events of a narrative. By using flashbacks, writers allow their readers to gain insight into the past of a character’s motivation and provide a background to a current conflict. Dream sequences and memories are methods used to present flashbacks”

(www.litrary devices.net/flashback/5/8/2014/6.40AM) Technique of flash back helps the author to describe his character with insight. Constant movement between past and present gives two fold narration of the character.

R.K Narayan has subtly made use of flashback technique in his famous novel The Guide M.K Naik rightly remarks:

Of all Narayan’s novels, The Guide teats us into thought to an extent no other novel of his does. Narayan’s fictional technique is also at its subtlest in The Guide. The narrative alternates between the past and the present, ‘swinging backward and forward’ as Rosie does when she dances, thus emphasizing how Raju’s present is inexorably rooted in his past. The blend of the omniscient and the autobiographical method of narration endows the story with a double perspective. The novel, which opens with Raju in the ruined to village temple about to be reverentially accepted as a

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sadhu, ends in the same locality with his enforced death, thus giving the tale a perfectly rounded, circular structure. (Naik, 167)

Through the technique of flashback, Narayan juxtaposes Raju’s past and present. It also arouses curiosity of the readers and adds the element of suspense. When novel begins, Raju is introduced as a saint and people around him are having a great faith in him. And at page no-09 of the novel, story moves into past from present; “My troubles would not have started but for Rosie. Why did she call herself Rosie? She did not come from a foreign land…..” (G.09)

Again in the same chapter the narration returns to the present. From the past of narrating her mother a story of Devaka, Raju is described with Velan:

Raju set on the step and watched the river dazzling in the morning sun. Raju had many problems of his own to think. (G, 21)

Description of novel again moves into flash back when Raju narrates his real story and reveals his identity. This narration runs through chapters seven to eleven. Raju starts narrating his story at night and it comes to an end in the morning: “Raju’s narration concluded with the crowing of the cock”. (G, 232) From here onwards the story has been described by Narayan himself. Thus, Narayan has made use of flashback technique cleverly to introduce characters of the novel, layer by layer, through events and their response to it, avoiding verbal and superficial description. Flashback technique in the novel keeps hold and one always remains curious to know what will happen next! The Guide occupies an important position in the history of Indian English Novels as when either writer was adjusting themselves with foreign language to express Indian social milieu, Narayan brilliantly utilized the modern technique of novel writing.

Sunetra Gupta has used technique of flash back in her novel Memories of Rain. Sunetra has narrated the story through the memories of the protagonist. Conscience of Moni, Constantly keeps moving forward and backward, form past to present and vice versa.

The novel begins with present that is Moni, feeding pigeons, on Oxford Street at London. And immediately her memories reaches back to Calcutta in the year of 1978 when she first time saw Anthony. Moni recalls the day when she met Anthony for the first time and thus her psychological journey to the past begins. Sunetra has used little
objects and events that drags Moni back to the past. Thus selected authors have experimented with narration. Such experiments highlight the depth and subtlety of socio-cultural issues.
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