CONCLUSION
CHAPTER-V
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India won her freedom from British rule due to the combined efforts of patriots of all persuasions. These included the armed revolutionaries, moderate and radical leaders as well as those who led mass movements. India was a vast prison house and people went to prison willingly. In pre-independence India, prison played a significant role in shaping the personalities of political leaders involved in the fight against British colonial rule. Going to prison was a matter of honour then—a sacrifice in the service of the nation. For the sake of the nation they were ready to sacrifice everything. Some of them were arrested without reasons. Several of them were deported in order to curb the militant activities of others.

Most people think of prison as an environment designed to stifle creativity, but some of society’s most important literary and political works have come from behind bars. The isolation allows inmates ample time to reflect, and putting their ideas on paper is a powerful tool of outreach and expression—both hard to come by in prison.

Chaman Lal in his The Vanishing Empire, shares his feelings thus:

“His Majesty’s guest” in Indian prisons’ camp-jails and detention camps. The writer, who was one of those guest not once but four times, could compile large volume on the treatment of Indian political prisoners, most of whom are treated worse than murderers and dacoits, but space limits him to just a few verdicts on prison life in India, concluding with his own experience, as the “Happiest Jail Bird”

During the struggle for independence, most of our national leaders went through repeated periods of incarceration. Prison became a part of our
saga of struggle for national independence. Prison, though an isolated place secluded from the normal public life, inspired great people when they were behind the bars to give vent to their flow of thoughts in an enforced tranquility has thus enormously urged them to record their experiences in that tranquility provided for them much against their will every literature is a product of its age and it thus necessarily breathes the spirit of its age. Indian literature is not an exception to it.

Prison was also a place of instruction, conducive to self-purification and moral regeneration. Nehru described the hardships of jail life as “mostly imaginary” and encouraged Indians to think of prison as “a holy and happy place”, a “palace”, and even a “paradise” Citing Bunyan and Tilak as examples, he presented prison as a place where “conscientious men” had “achieved great things”.

Prison narratives were written to inspire as well as inform. Prison elicited many life histories that would not otherwise have been written. It could provide the time as well as the incentive for autobiographical writing, though it should be noted that conditions in jail were not always so conductive for middle-class prisoners, some of whom (like M.N.Roy) were deliberately denied ink, pen and paper as well as access to books and newspapers. For others, it was only following their release that writing became emotionally as well as physically possible. After a long and gruelling period of confinement, writing about jail experiences might be a kind of necessary self-purging answering a therapeutic need to “imprison” the ordeal of incarceration on paper and so to come to terms with the humiliation and suffering involved.²
The English education gave scope to free thinking, and the educated mass had a vision. Most of them lawyers, had their education in England. They wanted to liberate India from the clutches of the Britishers. Chaman Lal, in his The Vanishing Empire observes as under:

There is a strong desire on the part of the educated Indians to govern their own country. Education makes rebels against invaders and conquerors. Young Indians know the long and glorious struggle of the English people against absolute monarchy; they also know the story of Washington and the American Revolution.¹³

Rare persons can produce great works in the prison cells, because those works are the result of great concentration and peace of mind. The best of such individuals is reflected in their writings, but not always. Sometimes the solitary cell can be nerve-racking and devastating. It all depends upon the person and attitude of the political authorities and their intentions. Many noble-hearted souls have perished in such inhuman, dangerous prisons, unknown to the world and unwept.

India has very rich experience of prison literature. Suppressed creative talent of these prison writers both as individual writers and as social icons have revealed the best in the prison writings.

The purpose of the present research study aims at throwing light on this neglected areas of socio-political perspectives in prison writings.

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Though the inmates of the British jail have scribbled their feelings in their leisure hours, they provide us the picture of the age in making, the turmoil, and the social, political and social upheavals of those days.

Gandhiji used to call prison a mandir (temple). To him it was a temple of liberty, spiritual as well as political. Indians whose life was caught between the socio-political subjugation by the British gave impetus to this kind of writing. Prison writing almost became an essential component of great leaders and great souls of India.

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It is hurting to note that the role of Indians in India astonished that It was all an Indian affair: the satyagrahis were Indian, the firing and lathi charging policemen were Indian, the men employed for torture work were Indian, and policemen punished in retaliation were Indian.

Entire India was a prison, there was no difference between each village was a cellular jail and each family was a cell.
The entire atmosphere, entire country was in no better condition than jail. There was mutual suspicion as all are criminals. Indians are criminals in the Britisher’s eyes. Those who fought for freedom were in prison, India was a biggest jail.

Uncongenial atmosphere, which had pushed them behind the bars was positively encashed by these writers, as they had lot of leisure time and also pleasure in giving vent to their thoughts and feelings during their incarceration.

Being subjects they were treated as an objects. Indian subjects were placed in an object place there was exploitation to the maximum level.

There was suffocation loss of freedom. Human rights were denied and Indians are not treated as human beings. They were treated as the slaves. They were subjects in the British government. Subaltern subject of the lowest category. The treatment given to subaltern was that of a lowest rank soldier. He had no freedom of any kind, no freedom of speech, freedom of movement, even no right to live. He was deprived of all the privileges and robbed of human dignity. Indians were fear stricken. Nehru puts the situation thus: the dominant impulse in India under British rule was that of fear-pervasive, oppressing, strangling fear: fear of the army, the police, the widespread secret service; fear of the official class; fear of the laws meant to suppress and of prison; fear of the land lord’s agent,fear of the money lender; fear of unemployment and starvation

Famine, Epidemics, natural calamity, Word War-I and II, Slavery, poverty and oppressive rule did not suppress their zeal to produce literature of world class even from the cells of the prison. Their care and concern for the nation and the pains they have taken to liberate the country from the shackles of the colonial rule and later on from the clutches of dictatorship in
Emergency are noteworthy. For them India’s freedom became the mission and focus of life, and they went about their work not only with untiring zeal and courage, but also with wisdom and a true spirit of service. They provided shining examples of puissant thought and vigorous action, of nobility and generosity. They were messengers of peace who were somehow destined to live a life of turbulence and constant battle. They were visionaries who were given the privilege of translating their visions into actuality. To study their lives and their work is to experience an unfailing inspiration and instructive illumination.

Barring few though the colonial prison administration was worst nobody complains about the food and infrastructure oddities. In which they lived. Some times when agitation, disturbances, tensions, they have given scope for both negative and positive developmental changes.

Prison was also a place of instruction, conducive to self purification and moral thus prison has played pivotal in shaping the personalities of the political leaders. Prison narratives were written to inspire as well as to inform.

*The very birth of prison writings, which is considered to be a neglected genre has in turn given scope for great moment of awakening for the prison writers*

The story of freedom struggle thus has resulted in as a story of great awakening of unyielding courage and undismayed creative urge.

Writing from the prison is also a kind showing ones resistance, firm will, courage to survive in against the situation in which one is caught in.

Prison’s relevance – message for a posterity it becomes an authentic document of nations’ historical, political socio cultural fabric and thereby if
remains a guiding force and becomes a unique milestones achievement of our writers and leaders.

It definitely speaks of nations socio-political and cultural anatomy and severs as an important literary document of and if finds its place at the world literary scenario.

Few moments of awakening courage not in the calm waves of water but in the turbulent of water which creates ripples for new things to emerge. The positionality of prison writing essentially breathes this kind of disturbed air which is the out came of turbulent situation of freedom struggle in the Indian context, which is essentially a rare experience on par with African Countries and others.

The river of life is never still, it flows on, and sometimes, as now, it rushes pitilessly, with a demon energy, ignoring our petty selves, and tossing us about like straws on its turbulent waters, pushing on and on no one knows whether to a precipice which will shatter it into a thousand bits, or to the vast and inscrutable, stately and calm, ever changing and yet changeless sea.

Of all the prison writers people like Gandhi, Nehru, Rajaji Tilak, Advani are considered as charismatic celebrity prison writers.

Prison writing has emerged either knowingly or unknowingly, later forms the rich creative corpus, in the Indian English Literature.

The present study acts as an humble academic endeavour to throw light upon the neglected genre, i.e. prison writings. It also paves way for the further research to be pursued from different perception and angles. It also opens up new vistas of understanding not only in one language but even from regional languages and if must further try to explore the minor writers, their writings themes trends and movements.
REFERENCES

1. Chaman Lal, *The Vanishing Empire*, p. 186
3. Chaman Lal, *The Vanishing Empire*, p. 6