

**POLITICS IN THE NOVELS OF  
CHAMAN NAHAL**

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Supervisor  
Dr. NIRMALA PANT  
Professor  
Department of English  
SSJ Campus, Almora

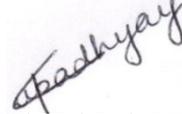
Research Scholar:  
CHANDRAKALA UPADHYAY

Faculty of Arts  
Kumaun University, Nainital  
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the Ph.D. thesis entitled **POLITICS IN THE NOVELS OF CHAMAN NAHAL** being submitted by me embodies my original work and to the best of my knowledge, it has not been submitted in part or full, to any other university/Institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, It contains no material, in full or in parts previously published or written by any other person, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text. All the sources used in the thesis, have been duly cited and acknowledged by me. If I am found guilty of plagiarism, the responsibility of the same shall be solely mine.

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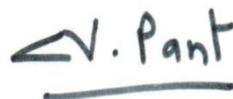
CHANDRAKALA UPADHYAY  
Ph.D. Scholar

Date: 6-05-2017

Place: Almora

## **CERTIFICATE**

Certified that Ms.Chandrakala Upadhyay has worked under my supervision for her Ph.D thesis entitled “POLITICS IN THE NOVELS OF CHAMAN NAHAL”. Her research work is original and she has completed it within stipulated time. She has fulfilled the requirement of attendance as per University rules.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N. Pant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Date: 6-5-2017

**(Dr. Nirmala Pant)**

Place: **Almora**

**Supervisor**

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## PREFACE

Chaman Nahal is a renowned novelist, essayist, story writer, and a versatile genius of post-modern Indian English Literature. His novels are primarily concerned with political, social and mythical issues as well as Indian culture. His novels are about politics and the freedom struggle. He has also presented the conflicts and violence between communities across India during the time of partition and that of its aftermath. He has portrayed Gandhi and his life lively. He is a highly appreciated story writer. His portrayal of the traumas of partition won him the Sahitya Academy Award in 1977.

The present research work is divided into five chapters including the “Introduction” and “Conclusion.” Chapter one, presents a note on the author’s life and his literary career along with the literature review. It also illustrates the writer’s style, narration and other qualities which immortalize him in the galaxy of literature.

The second chapter, ‘Treatment of Politics in Indian English Fiction’, provides an overview of those Indian English Fiction Writers, who have political elements in their novels. This chapter deals with the different political colours on Indians and their consequences. Khushwant singh’s *Train To Pakistan* deals with partition, Bhabani Bhattacharya’s *Shadow from Ladakh* shows the impact of the China war of 1965, Arun Joshi’s *The City and The River* and Nayantara Sagal’s *Rich Like Us*, reflects Emergency.

The third chapter ‘Freedom Struggle’ as the title suggests, deals with the freedom struggle; here I have discussed the freedom movement from 1919 upto independence. Nahal’s *The Gandhi Quartet* in its four volumes picturise the whole scenario of our memorable freedom movement. These novels analyse how Nahal presents political elements in a fictional way. The political elements dealt here are Non-Cooperation Movement, Satya and Ahimsa, the Salt March and the Quit India Movement.

The fourth chapter, ‘Partition’ deals with Nahal’s most famous novel ‘*Azadi*’ in which the autobiographical element is obvious. Through this novel he has tried to say that not everyone gets pleasure from freedom. The dark and hidden sides of freedom have been presented here. The plight of the Hindus and the Sikhs refugees from Pakistan is the basic theme of the novel.

The sixth and the last chapter, “Conclusion” is a brief summary of the preceding chapters which has been analysed from various perspectives in the light of the present research work. It compromises on the findings of the thesis and focuses on the contribution of the research work to the existing knowledge.

It is customary as well as obligatory to express my gratitude towards all those who extended their help and inspired and encouraged me in the process of achieving the timely completion of this thesis. I most humbly express my sincere and profound sense of gratitude to my esteemed guide and my Guru Dr. Nirmala Pant for her moral support and encouragement. Her careful and constant guidance sustained my spirit and inspired

me at every stage of my research study. I am overwhelmed with a deep sense of gratitude to my respectful and eminent teachers Dr. S.A.Hamid, Prof. Arvind Adhikari, Prof. V.R. Pandeya, and Dr.Megha Bharti Dept. of English, SSJ Campus Almora, for having enabled me to carry out this research work under their valuable guidance.

I owe a great deal to my parents and family for whom no words of gratitude are enough as they have constantly goaded me, blessed me and prayed for the completion of my research work. I am extremely grateful to my uncle Mr. P.C.Upadhyay, brother Deepak and my friend Dharendra who always encouraged me with their congenial co-operation. I am also grateful to my principal Mr.H.S.Banai and all the other staff members of G.I.C.Naugaon, Reethagarh for their constant encouragement and valuable support.

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to my dear friends Pragya Verma and Vinod Mehta. It is with their constant encouragement and meticulous supervision that I have been able to accomplish this fruitful task. I record my sincere gratitude to the Library Staff of SSJ Campus Almora, for their kind cooperation and to my respected colleagues for their valuable suggestions and encouragement. I extend my gratitude to my parents, family members, friends and all those who were instrumental in shaping me to bringing out this thesis.

I also thank each and every one who has helped me directly or indirectly in my research work. Last but not the least;

I thank the Almighty for bestowing me with His blessings to enable me complete this work in time.

CHANDRAKALA UPADHYAY

## ABBREVIATIONS

*CL* - *The Crown and The Loincloth*

*SL* - *The Salt of Life*

*TT* - *The Triumph of the Tricolour*

*RLU* - *Rich Like Us*

*SFL* - *Shadows From Ladakh*

*CR* - *The City and The River*

# **CHAPTER 1**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Writing is a popular and powerful medium of expression. Indian English Fiction is started as a small plant but attained great recognition and branched off into many directions. It is not difficult to trace its slow but steady progress from the initial stage to the realistic one. It has touched every aspect period from the ancient to the modern, and level from the village to the international level. It is due to the spark of Indian English Literature that we have achieved two Nobel Prizes in the field of Literature.

Literature is a lake which reflects the changing society. It presents opinions of a society. It is affected by the social, political and cultural panorama and affects them as well. Literature is directly connected with the human heart, mind and soul. The writer is bound to present his contemporary time and society in his works. Lucian Goldman in his article *the sociology of literature: status and problems of method* writes: “at any given moment social and historical reality always presents itself as an extremely complex mixture not of structures but of process of structuration and destruction....1” (511) A writer can't neglect the actualities around him; mostly his characters are taken from contemporary society and culture.

Joan Rockwell on giving the importance of fiction writes,

...fiction is not only a representation of social reality, but also a necessary functional part of social control, and also paradoxically an important element of social change. It plays a large part in the socialisation of infants, in the expression of

official norms such as law and religion, in the conduct of politics, and in general gives symbols and modes of life to the population, particularly in those less easily defined but basic areas such as norms, values, and personal and inter-personal behavior. The implications of this are that fiction can give us two types of information about society: first, in a descriptive way, facts about the state of technology, laws, customs, social structure and institutions. Next, is more subtle and easily obtained information about values and attitudes. (web)

India is the largest democratic country of the world. It is the land of various geographical landforms, more than twenty official languages, and twenty-two thousand dialects and over a billion individuals of every caste and religion. Here people live in a comfortable and secure zone and celebrate Diwali and Eid with the same love and happiness. We not only follow the ideals of non-violence of Gandhi but also respect the sacrifices of great revolutionaries like Bhagat singh. Since long our country has been the centre of knowledge, religion, wisdom, culture and tradition. Unity in diversity can be easily seen here.

It is the land of Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and Jainism where greatest universities of Nalanda and Takshshila have been the centres of knowledge here. India is full of indigenous art, music, literature and craft. Every village and city has its own magnanimous history. The glorious temples, the great mosques and the peaceful monks all spread the message of love. Different kinds of music, dances, languages, dresses and cuisinas make our country unique and incredible. In spite of so many

differences we still live like a family. The people of different religion and caste live with the feeling of brotherhood.

This incredible unity of India has attracted everyone. Many invaders attacked and ruled over India. The Aryans, the Alexander, the Arabians, the Muslim Emperors and other West Asian ruled in India for centuries. Finally the Europeans came here for trade and commerce and ruled over India for almost two hundred years. The reign of the English has been both, a boon and a curse. Indian English literature is the gift of the Britishers to India. Prof. M.K. Naik in his book *Dimensions of Indian English Literature* wrote: "...One of the most notable gifts of English education to India is prose fiction for though India was probably a fountain head of story-telling; the novel as we know today was an importation from the West." (99)

The introduction of English education in India was started by Macaulay's Minute of 1835 and gradually it attracted the whole world. H.W. William in his book *Indo-Anglian Literature-1800-1970: A Survey* wrote: "The history of Indo-Anglian literature is broadly speaking a development from poetry to prose and from romantic idealization to various kinds of realism and symbolism." (3)

Indian English Fiction is impressive and has attracted the attention of the world. In Indian English Literature the themes and subject matter are purely Indian. Some Indian writers have also attained international fame in the literary field. They have won international awards like the Nobel Award and the Booker Award etc.

Though Indian writers are greatly influenced by the language of the west but their contents like the religious conflicts, the socio political differences, the different cultures and the status of women are purely Indian. Praising the Indian English Literature K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar writes: “What makes Indo-Anglian literature an Indian literature and not just a ramshackle outhouse of English literature is the quality of its ‘Indianness’ in the choice of its subjects, in the texture of thought, and play of sentiment, in the organization of material and in the creative use of language.”(web)

The literature of a country cannot survive without its culture, tradition, values and others. The Indianness is the foundation of our Literature. The Indianess mentioned by Srinivasa meant the themes and the picture of Indian culture and tradition and the pros and cons of Indian society presented by the novelists in their novels. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s novel *RamMohan’s Wife* (1864) is the first novel of Indo Anglian Literature written which describes the patriotic feelings in Bengal and exposes the hypocrisies of contemporary society. Whenever anyone talks about Indian English literature we must mentioned the trio: Raja Rao, R.K.Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand. They provided the foundation to Indian English fiction with their unique approach individually.

Gradually the Indian English Fiction acquired a significant position in the literary world and our Indian writers acclaimed a huge success. Anand’s *Untouchable* and *Coolie*, Narayan’s *Swami and Friends* and *The Bachelor of Arts* and Raja Rao’s

*Kanthapura* symbolize the beginning of Indian English Fiction. Anand has highlighted the culture; art and has created literature out of his own environment. His characters symbolize contemporary people who had been deprived of their rights by the oppressors. While Anand concentrates on contemporary Indian reality, Narayan has highlighted Indian customs and traditions and his characters are rooted in that very tradition. Raja Rao, the youngest of them dives deep into Indian metaphysics and gets at the roots of Indian tradition. He tells his stories by referring to the great epics like *the Ramayan* and *the Mahabharata* and explores the spiritual quest. His important novels include *Kanthapura* (1938), *The Serpent and the Rope* (1962), *Cat and Shakespeare* (1965) and *The Chessmaster and His Moves* (1988).

Anand was a famous humanitarian and most of his characters belong to the lower middle or oppressed class of society while on the other hand Narayan is known as for his social realism. The psychology of his characters resembles the common man's psychology that we see in our day to day life, his characters are like next door people. The last of the Trio was Raja Rao who dealt with metaphysics, and his characters are very complicated and revolve around metaphysical theories.

After 1950, Indian novelists shifted their attention from the social to the individual world. They started to explore the individual's quest for the true meaning of life and the truth of existence in all different complex forms along with their problems in his works. Indian English Novel has gone through a

lot of changes from its initial days to the contemporary period. There are two types of writers who have contributed to the Indian English Fiction; one, who focused on the social issues of the country like poverty, class discrimination, social dogmas, complicated religious rituals and traditions which always attracted the west, and the other group of writers who include the diasporas, global Indians, and these Indians who are Indian by birth but they lived abroad, and watch Indian realities objectively.

Gandhi and his philosophy prevailed in the Indo-Anglian literature during the nineteen twenties and thirties. He was the undisputable leader in the social and political scenario of India and his teachings influenced every Indian. From 1918-1922 Indian English Novel, is socially, culturally and politically, influenced by Gandhi and his consciousness. His efforts, teachings, ideology of *ahimsa* and *satyagrah*, continuous protest against the Rowalt Act, the massacre in Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, the Khilafat Movement, the boycott of the Simon Commission, and of foreign goods and clothes, the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Salt Satyagrah, the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Quit India Movement, Partition of the country, find special place in the novels of that time.

Many novels revolve around Gandhi and his principles. The socio-political movement that had caught the imagination of the entire nation also inspired Indian novelists and they realized that the novel too had a vital role to play in it. The Indian novelists of 1920s in English as well as in other languages

started focusing on contemporary issues. Gandhi appeared as a character in Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* (1935), *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942) K.A. Abbas's *Inqilab* (1955), R.K. Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955) and Nagarajan's *Chronicles of Kedaram* (1961).

Raja Rao had not presented Gandhi as a character in his novel *Kanthapura*. He rather presented a vivid and faithful account of his impact on rural India. Devesh Basu an idealized character of Bhabani Bhattacharya's novel *So Many Hungers* is also influenced by Gandhi. In *Inqilab*, K.A. Abbas presented Gandhi as a votary of Hindu-Muslim unity with his faith in the ideals of non-violence. Anwar, the protagonist is influenced by Gandhi and decides to meet him in spite of his father's hatred of the Hindus. In R.K. Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma*, Gandhi lives with untouchables, preaches non-violence, stays with sufferers and motivates people to take part in freedom struggle.

After the trio other novelists of the fifties and sixties like Manohar Malgonkar, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Khushwant Singh, Anita Desai, Arun Joshi, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Markandaya, R.P. Jhabvala entertained the people with their different contemporary themes as east-west counter, partition, communalism, themes of exploitation on different grounds, emergency, industrialization, materialism and others. Satish Kumar in his book *A Survey of Indian English Novel* writes:

The novelist minutely analyses the significant and far-reaching changes in individual passing through period of overall transition. His observant and penetrating eye is a reflection to the

evolution of new values and new morality. The creative artist alone is interested in these basic changes.(53)

The Indian English novel has undergone many changes that highlight every particle of the rich Indian customs and traditions. The novel presents the different faces of Indian culture from the pre-independence to the modern era in the 21st Century in a rational and entertaining way and directly or indirectly throws light on the transition. A growing combination of social, cultural, traditional and political transformation of opinions and ideas necessary is to bring about a healthy, peaceful and correct environment for the development of new generations.

The novelists have painted the history, the socio political, the economical and the cultural consciousness, in the colonial, the post colonial and the contemporary period. Certain national incidents have occupied a central theme in some novels and in the others these are either used partly or play a role in the background. It is the quality of the novelists that they have beautifully mixed reality with their fictional universe.

K. Venkata Reddy on focusing the socio political evils writes in his book *The Indian Novel with a Social Purpose*:

Parallel to this struggle for political freedom was a social struggle-a fight against superstition, casteism, poverty, illiteracy and many other social evils that were eating into the vitals of Indians society. The socio-political movement that had caught the imagination of the entire nation also inspired the Indian novelists in English who rightly realized that novel too had a vital role to play in it. (1-2)

Without being biased many writers have penned such changes and if it is somehow their responsibility to present their contemporary period in their writings as a heritage for their successors. P.P.Mehta and P.N. Bhatt, both having same opinion wrote in the book *Theory of Literature.*, “A work of art changes in course of time. Its structure is dynamic. This process has never been interrupted and the task of the historian is to describe this process.” (170) when we talk about such writer the name of Chaman Nahal comes to our mind who has beautifully presented the entire scenario of our freedom struggle. He is undoubtedly a very bright star of Indian English Fiction, who has spread his light in the literary universe through various memorable works. His writings cover a vast expanse of diverse issues such as national identity, religion, gender, ethnicity, language and history.

Chaman Nahal was born in Sialkot, Pakistan in 1927 in United India. He grew up in an Indian environment and culture. He took his M.A. degree from the University of Delhi and Ph.D. degree from the University of Nottingham (British Council Scholar) in 1961. Nahal worked in different universities as a Reader in English in the Rajasthan University, Jaipur, Professor of English in the University of Delhi, visiting Fulbright fellow in the Princeton University, New Jersey, and visiting lecturer at several universities in the U.S.A, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, Canada and North Korea from time to time.

He had contributed collective short stories in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* since 1957 and his writing was

because of intensive native touch praised by many Indian and British critics. In 1981 these stories were published in book form under the title *The Weird Dance and Other Stories*. Mulk Raj Anand, a great novelist praised him for his splendid collection.

Nahal is a reputed author of twenty two books that includes novels, short stories and an autobiography. His creative works include, *The Weird Dance and other stories*, *Tons in the Statesman* (1977) *The Light on the Lake* (1984), *The Take Over* (1985). His contribution to the realm of fiction is, *My True Faces* (1973), *Into Another Dawn* (1977), *The English Queens* (1979), *Sunrise in Fiji* (1988), *Azadi* (1975), *The Crown and The Loincloth* (1981) *The Salt of Life* (1990), *The Triumph of Tricolour* (1993), *The Gandhi Quartet* (1993) etc. Nahal wrote three children's novels, *Akela and the Blue Monster* (2007), *Akela and the Asian Tsunami* (2009) and *Akela and the UFOs* (2009). There are several academic awards and prizes to his credit. These include Sahitya Academy Award, 1977, Federation of Indian Publisher Award 1977, 1979.

Chaman Nahal's fictional work reflects the socio-economic problems and traditional-modern differences of the contemporary Indian society. In an interview he accepted that:

I have dealt with the theme of how to live personally in a society that is so inhibited because it discourages individual living. One is constantly being asked to sacrifice one's pleasure for the sake of the society, for the sake of the clan, for the sake of the family. (Thirveni B. & Prasad, V.V.N.Rajendra. *In the Beginning is the End In the End is the Beginning Chaman Nahal's My True Faces*. Pune Research 1)

Nahal has almost touched all the fields of life. In his novels we could find the glimpses of mythology, personal dilemmas and emotions. The canvas of his themes is too wide from personal to social, emotional to political, and regional to international.

He has written about the innocent and simple world of children also presented the complex and horrible circumstances of the freedom struggle and partition. Nahal gives a realistic account of both the political and the social India. His dedication towards his work can be easily understood through his writings. *The Gandhi Quartet* is the best example of his vast knowledge of his country and its history where he vividly describes the heart-touching period of the freedom movement. It is the story of Gandhi and Nahal has painted his character very beautifully. Nahal explores Gandhi's personal and socio-political life in his works. Ambuj Sharma in his book *Gandhian Strain in the Indian English Novel*, expresses his opinion as follows:

*The Gandhi Quartet* is a realistic, plausible, picturesque, rational, touching and frank picturization of Gandhiji's life and covers a period of about thirty three years- from his voyage from south Africa to the end of his life. Nahal has skillfully and meticulously interwoven all the significant episodes of Gandhiji's life with the main story of all the four novels of *The Quartet* making it a marvelous piece of fictional world. *The Quartet* presents a vivid, credible and enthralling picture of the father of the nation and his key and pivotal role in the freedom struggle.(203)

His first novel *My True Faces* was published in 1973 and it shows the various pulls that appear in the life of an individual

and which affect the masses also. The novel reveals his knowledge about Indian myths. The book is influenced by the one of the chapters of the holy book of Hindus, '*BhagawadGita.*' The main protagonist, Kamal, was a university teacher and who grew up in a traditional and custom ridden Hindu middle class family where he was attached to his grand-mother who used to tell him many mythological stories. The next main character is his wife Malti who has a western attitude. Kamal and Malti are present two different outlooks of the two diverse poles of the universe. The orthodox Kamal and the modern Malti ultimately get separated from each other. When Malti left home with their child then Kamal hunts for them. His hunting is symbolic of happiness of his life and this has made him think about the real happiness and real meaning of life.

Through the character of Kamal the novelist tries to express that one must have true faith in God and himself. Religion in India affects the love and man-woman relationships. Indians accept religion without analysing its pros and cons. The society, the corrupt politicians get profit from it. Nahal has used irony in his earlier novels but in this novel Kamal's blind faith in his religion destroyed his happy family life.

The great source of Nahal's portrayal of his characters and themes is his Gandhian vision and philosophy. Like Gandhi his own thoughts were influenced by the *Bhagvadgita* and the great Indian epics the *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharata*. He has trust in the innate power of the Almighty, the purity of spirit and accepts

life as a total unit with all its pleasures and pains but he does not follow the religion blindly. The readers make a picture of the novelist in their minds who sometimes resembles the characters of his works.

His next novel *Into Another Dawn* was published in 1977. Though written after his most famous novel *Azadi*, it deals with the theme of east-west differences and universal love. Chaman Nahal says about this novel, “It is an attempt at bringing together two different cultures....It attempts to tell how in spite of cultural and religious differences, a ground for affirmation can be forged, within which human bonds are very vital”. (web)

Ravi, the protagonist is a poor unmarried Indian student who runs a shop in Rishikesh. One day Steve Coney, an American Professor of History at Columbia University, and his wife, Liz Coney advised him to take admission in a college of U.S.A. for a Master’s programme in Business Management. It was like a new dawn in the suffocated world of Ravi. As Usha Rani in her book *The Novels of Chaman Nahal: A Study* observes, ‘From the darkness of Hardwar he moves to the bright day of America. His aimless and drifting life acquires a sense of direction. What takes him to that country is not the pursuit of higher studies as much as the urge for freedom from an inhibiting, constricting and hostile environment. (Usha Rani 142)

Ravi got married with Irene, an American woman in U. S. A. Ravi and Irene are not from the same social backgrounds as Malti and Kamal in Nahal’s earlier novel *My True Faces* but they love each other dearly. When Ravi contracted from by cancer then all the worldly pleasures failed to give him happiness

and he always found himself hanging between the two different cultures and traditions. He never got satisfaction in U.S.A. Finally when a black doctor made him realize that life is too short to live fully and one should live the present moment at one's life only. Realizing this fact he left the west and moved to Haridwar, his holy birth place to die. The first phase of happiness rather worldly happiness dawned upon Ravi when he got rid from the clutches of his old traditional family life, but spiritual happiness dawned upon him when he faced his certain death due to blood cancer.

This novel presents Nahal's love towards Indian culture and tradition. He presents the value of self satisfaction which we can't buy with money. O. P. Mathur in his book *Indian English Novelists* remarks, "...it is a powerful statement of the theme of the meeting of the East and the West at the level of human emotions". (92)

Nahal's next novel *The English Queens* was published in 1979. It is a pure satire on those Indians who feel ashamed of their culture, customs, tradition and language. Through this novel Nahal has made a satire on Indians for their lack of knowledge of the English language. It is a satirical story of six women 'crowned' as the Queens, though in the real sense the women are neither queens nor English.

The story of the novel revolves around six queens. The first queen Miss Sumitra Pandey, was a spinster and snob, who pronounced Lawrence as Laurence, Shelley as sell-eh, and Shakespeare as six pair. The second queen Renuka Chopra is the

wife of Brigadier Bhupesh Chopra, and belongs to the army circle. She is famous for her showy manners and strident English. The third queen Caroline Oaks is an Anglo-Indian. She is proud of her English ancestry. The fourth queen is Barbara Smiles, an English waitress who comes to India along with her Indian husband and her Anglo-Indian son.

Shrimati Hemakant Mathur, wife of a retired judge was the fifth queen. She is also an honorary director of a woman's organization. Sardarni Satwant Kaur, the sixth queen is most fashionable, brassy and exorbitant. She was famous for suffixing 'ji' to any word or sentence like yes 'ji', no 'ji' 'I am ok ji' etc.

As the title suggests, 'it is a very funny but hard-hitting satire against the elitism of the English-speaking groups in India, such as the officers of the defense forces, the nouveau riche, the highly placed civil servants, or the Indians having foreign wives. Nahal unfolds a fantastic plot hatched by Lord Mountbatten, the last British Viceroy of India, to ensure India's subjugation to Britain. On the eve of handing over political power to Indian, he prepares a charter for the "safe transfer of linguistic power" by which he gives the English language to India. To "preserve, propagate and spread" English in India he appoints six women in New Delhi to "The Order of the Queens." Rekha, the daughter of one of these queens, horrifies them by wishing to marry a young man from a slum. The young man wears Indian clothes and is an expert in Indian classical music.

The novel takes a fantastic turn when the bridegroom reveals himself as an avatar of Vishnu, who has come to destroy

the pernicious second-hand English Culture. He flies back to heaven with the charter, but it drops out of his hand accidentally, so he comes back to continue its destructive work; perhaps even God could not help India in rectifying the mistake. “Nahal is not against the English language as such; his satire is against the kind of Indian who thinks that it is shameful to know anything about his own culture.” (web)

Nahal had an optimistic perspective towards life which he has presented through all of his novels. In the book *Interview with Chaman Nahal, Commonwealth Novel in English* B.S.Goyal Nahal expressed:

I believe in an affirmation of life in spite of all its odd and setbacks. Life is a series of crisis until one emerges powerful and resplendent. I don't have commitment with a slant, I am only committed to the affirmation of life. Life consists in taking on the challenges and in the refusal to be beaten down. (42)

Nahal through his novels depicted the changes occurring in society and human life. These changes from socialism to individualism, from spiritualism to materialism, from the tradition to the modern and from the east to the west reveal a various reflections in developing the Indian society.

History changes with the passage of time, it has been noticed that in spite of availing materialistic comforts and reputation people are continuously losing their inner satisfaction and self-control. All of Nahal's novels end with a positive note, because he believed that life is full of troubles, pains and

pleasures but is still a worth living. His philosophy of life is that suffering, pain and death are only the beginning of a new life which is full of hopes and new directions. In his vision of life, he appears much influenced by the approach of Bhabani Bhattacharya.

Nahal's next novel *Sunrise in Fiji* published in 1988 is much like his earlier novel *Into Another Dawn*. Nahal in an interview explained the theme of this novel and said, "The theme of individual pride, individual integrity, individual loneliness and individual sorrow."<sup>19</sup> (B.S. Goyal: *Culture and Commitment: Aspects of Indian Literature in English* 68) In this novel Hariwansh, the protagonist is an Indian architect who comes from a small town, Sonipat, now in Haryana. He is successful and wealthy and completely involves in the sophisticate modern world. He is rationalistic, secular, and a very practical person who isn't influence by the metaphysics and religious rituals of Hinduism. Though well settled and reputed businessman is but emotionally alone and feels mentally tired. He plans to visit Fiji in search of true happiness and to introspect himself. The journey is planned in such way that he can find the true meaning of life.

The novel comprises of eleven chapters, and also has an epigraph, a poem by Anita Nahal, the youngest daughter of Chaman Nahal which concludes the entire content of the novel. In it the people try to find the truth about life and to lead life as true humans. They perceive that one truly makes efforts to know the true meaning of life; one can definitely find a positive way that leads to fulfillment. The novel describes Harivansh's life as

a journey from death to life. An individual is always affected by the social, political and cultural scenario of his times and Nahal too has beautifully explored the circumstances of his own time in his novels. As Stephen Spender in his famous book *World Within World* expressed that: "...the writer who refuses to recognize the political nature of the age must to some extent be refusing to deal with an experience in which he himself is involved."(215)

Nahal has acclaimed an international reputation for his book *The Gandhi Quartet*, a collection of four books. In each book Gandhi is an omnipresent character, Nahal has presented Gandhi beautifully along with his personality, his opinions and his beliefs. Nahal in his real life was much influenced by Gandhi. Like Gaandhi, he also believed in non-violence, God and the Hindu philosophy.

According to the sequence of historical incidents, the book *Azadi* should have been the last book of *The Gandhi Quartet* but Nahal wrote *Azadi* first and then the remaining three books. All four books of the quartet deal with the theme of Indian freedom movement and its results. Nahal had himself witnessed the freedom struggle at the time of partition when he was 19 years old, and it might be a one of the reason behind the success of this novel.

*The Gandhi Quartet* covers Indian history from 1915 to 1947: *The Crown and the Loincloth* (1981) covers the period of 1915-1922, and deals with the historical incidents of Gandhi's arrival from South-Africa to India and the heart touching Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in Punjab. The second book is *The*

*Salt of Life* (1990), as its title indicates; it revolves around the Salt Satyagraha. Gandhi's Non-Cooperation movement and other revolutionary activities are the main attraction of the novel. *The Triumph of the Tricolour* (1993) covers the period of 1942 when the quest for liberty was at its peak and the Quit India Movement had started. The last book *Azadi* (1975) is considered the finest of Nahal's novels and it highlights the last phase of India's freedom struggle and the holocaust of Partition.

In the three novels of the Gandhian epic- *The Crown and the Loincloth*, *The Salt of Life*, and *The Triumph of the Tricolour*, two plots go in parallel, first that of the conflict between British colonialism and Indian nationalism and the second the different modes of the freedom struggle; the non-violent methods of Gandhi and his followers and the violent methods of the revolutionaries on the other.

All the dramatis personae and the real historical figures have been beautifully portrayed by Nahal. The fusion of real history with the virtual fiction is fantastic and his narrative style is effective and quite impressive; his methods of story narration and merging of historical incidents has made his novels interesting. He had presented the story in a lively and natural way and this reflects his mastery over technique, subject matter and narration. All of his characters seem live and known.

In the book, *The Gandhi Quartet* Nahal has reflected his personal observation of life and made an interesting use of historical facts of the freedom movement. It becomes the duty of a novelist writing on historical themes, to explain and represent

the historical facts to suit his objectives and creativity. He should make an effort to explain history from a different point of view, with a different perspective to entertain the readers.

*The Gandhi Quartet* is an imaginative reconstruction of the Indian freedom struggle, spanning a period of almost thirty five years, beginning with Gandhi's non-co-operation movement of 1920 till the holocaust of partition. As a writer who focused on political and social themes he has presented new image of women who is free from the clutches of patriarchal society. In the form of Kusum, Rehana, Shyama, Charulata and Abha we meet new kind of women who can fight for their rights and live their life freely. It is a new dawn for the dark chasm of a custom ridden male dominated society.

*The Crown and the Loincloth*, as the title suggests is a powerful novel of Nahal in which the British Empire is symbolized by the 'crown' while the 'loincloth' represents the Indians and their new leader Gandhi. In the novel Nahal has presented the three faces of contemporary India, Thakur Shanti Nath follows the crown, the old British system, Sunil, the protagonist and ideal Gandhian followed the rules and methods of Gandhi and Rakesh, a colleague of Sunil followed the revolutionaries and their violent methods to make free the country from the clutches of Britishers. The indulgence of fictitious characters with the historical figures in the freedom struggle is beautifully expressed by the writer.

Nahal writes about the life style of the joint family of Thakur Shanti Nath who lived happily in a huge haveli in a small

town Ajitha in Punjab. Thakur is a landlord and through his character Nahal has highlighted the grandeur of the landlords of that time. All the family members were living a luxurious life in the small town but the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre changed their life and Sunil, the son of Thakur Shanti Nath along with his wife Kusum joined Gandhi and left his family and job for the sake of the nation. Shyama, Shanti Nath's daughter eloped and got married Rakesh.

Gandhi started the non-cooperation movement in response to the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, inspired and encouraged by Gandhi Sunil started a khadi bhandar and a few of his Muslim neighbors helped him in running the shop and spreading the message of Gandhi to avoid using foreign clothes and use khadi. In May the congress headquarter sent Sunil to Simla hills to settle a dispute among the labourers and the timber merchants. Nahal has presented the pathetic condition of the untouchables- the sweepers, the barbers, the cobblers and the washer men who were called low-castes and were treated so badly. Here the writer has commented on the social evil untouchability. The low caste people live separately, cook separately, have separate wells and they can't touch the people of other castes. Sunil made many efforts to uplift their social status.

Sunil returned to Ajitha with his wife Kusum and Muzzaffar moved to Bareilly to receive Rehana, who was being released from prison. When she was released all the four members visit Naintal where unfortunately Rehana died in a landslide. Sunil lost his love Rehana and his wife Kusum also

left him. After returning to Ajitha he met Kenneth Ashby who invited him to a meeting where the Prince of Vales was to come. The revolutionaries made an attacked the Prince at the fair and Sunil sacrificed his life to save Prince of Vales. Kusum left her home with her four year old son Vikram to Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram. The novel ends with Gandhi's imprisonment for six years.

His second novel *The Salt of Life* opens at the point where his first novel *The Crown and the Loincloth* ends; Gandhi was released after four years of imprisonment on medical grounds. Gandhi didn't take part in any political activity directly for the next two years until the completion of his imprisonment. The title of the novel reveals the significance of the salt agitation. When Gandhi came to know the British monopoly on salt, he decided to break the salt law. On 12 March 1930 Gandhi started his march with seventy eight members of his ashram. He traversed three hundred eighty five kilometers to reach Dandi in Arab ocean. People from all over the country encouraged Gandhi in this salt agitation and joined him. Many people who didn't join Gandhi broke the salt rule in their repective areas. Nahal has highlighted the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Churchil's decision to punish the freedom fighters and the death of Lala Lajpat Rai due to lathi blows.

Kusum in this novel is presented as an image of a modern and independent woman as Shakti or as Bharatmata. She is married to Raja Vishal Chand, a king of a small town Lambini. Here we meet the third generation of Thakur Shanti Nath's

family, Vikram, who was in his teens living with Gandhi in his ashram. Nahal has beautifully mixed the historical and fictitious characters. Even he got the idea of including the Salt March when Kusum was seen teaching her students the importance of salt in daily life of common people.

Gandhi's decision of discontinuing the Civil-Disobedience Movement, the round table conferences, the hanging of freedom fighters and great revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh, Charulata, Sukhdev and Rajguru and the Gandhi Irwin Pact were the main historical incidents which Nahal has narrated in this novel. Destiny played its role and Kusum again turned to the ashram as Raja Vishal Chand died. Nahal added few more historical and fictitious characters here. Nahal in this novel has described many social evils as he had done in his earlier novel like untouchability, ignorance, consumption of liquor, crime of sati practice and ignorance.

The third novel in the 'Quartet', *The Triumph of the Tricolour* was published in 1993. This novel played the role of a bridge between *The Salt of Life and Azadi*. As a part of the 'Quartet' the writer continued his fictional characters from *The Salt of Life* to *The Triumph of the Tricolour* and unlike the first two novels the revolutionary activities in freedom struggle also played a vital role in this novel. Kusum has played an important role in all the first three novels. *The Triumph of the Tricolour* raises serious doubts about the triumph of Indian freedom and Independence.

His third book *The Triumph of the Tricolour* opens with the speech of Gandhi when the congress passed the Quit India Movement in August 1942. Gandhi said: Nahal in his book *The Triumph of the Tricolour* writes: “A nation of four hundred million people was still slave nation, which couldn’t raise its head in its own right. It had no national flag which couldn’t flutter alongside the flag of other nations....” (13) The story of Kusum’s family moved ahead with the story of freedom struggle.

The Congress wanted that the Britishers to leave India as soon as possible, so all the Congress leaders participated in the special session in Bombay and passed the resolution. The novel has focused on the events starting from the Quit-India Movement to the Cabinet Mission’s visit to India to sort out the issue of freedom, Cripps’s Mission and Burma War. The novel weaved the plot for Nahal’s next great novel *Azadi*.

Most of the fictional characters in this novel were influenced by Subhash Chandra Bose instead of Gandhi and his principles of non violence, though at last they ultimately accepted the Gandhian principles. Kusum’s two sons Vikram and Amit follows the two different paths, Vikram as the product of Gandhi ashram follow the Gandhian methods, while his step brother Amit goes against the philosophy of Gandhi and follows the path of revolutionaries. Even Kusum, the true follower of Gandhi helped the revolutionary parties. For the first time in the freedom struggle the revolutionaries and the Gandhian’s work together.

Gandhi to one of the revolutionaries said: “you know I have come to the conclusion that in the present circumstances, you are free to interpret non-violence the way you want It.” (TT 27) The leadership of the freedom struggle was in young hands. Workers and employers of different companies and offices boycott their work and protest openly. Vikram and Darbara Singh, a revolutionary got some POWs (Prisoners of War) released near Jammu and Kashmir and Subhas Chandra Bose formed the Indian National Army (INA) with the POWs and join hands with the Japanese to drive the English away from India. After the resolution, Indian sailors on the ship Lonavala in the Arabian Sea started a Navy Mutiny. The white officers insulted Indian ladies and Gyan, the grandson of Thakur Shanti Nath felt angry and didn't listen to the commander and killed many white officers. It was an open revolt against the white officers.

Kenneth Ashby has narrated the pathetic condition of the soldiers of INA. They were badly killed and were suppressed just like that of the mutiny of 1857. Gandhi was impressed by the revolutionaries and their valour and hailed Bhagat Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose as the great son of India. He also met Mohammad Ali Jinnah to convince him to drop the idea of Pakistan but the meeting failed and finally with the suggestion of C. Rajgopalchari, Gandhi agreed to consider the idea of Pakistan. The Labour Government headed by Atlee decided to grant freedom to India. So they sent a three men delegation to India to decide on conducting elections in India to form an interim government under the British national flag. Politicians now

started to spread corruption and eligible candidates were skipped from contesting the elections. Finally the Congress won the elections and Jawaharlal Nehru formed an interim government on 3rd September 1946. Gandhi still attempted to avoid the Partition and the spreading of communal violence but it in vain.

In the end of the novel Nahal has presented the immense communal frenzies and the crucial situation in which the country was divided into two parts. Nahal started his most famous novel entitled, *Azadi*, which is an Urdu word meaning freedom. It is Nahal's best novel and it won him Sahitya Academy and The Federation of Indian Publishers Award. It begins with the announcement of the Partition and this is where Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges (1962)* ends. India got freedom in 1947 the Muslim dominated northern state became Pakistan which the Hindu predominated part became India.

The attainment of Indian freedom was followed by the tragic drama of partition. The Indian unity, brotherhood and political ideology, through which India achieved freedom, failed and the new chapter of Indian politics started from the very time of partition. The holocaust of partition left an imprint which is impossible to erase from the minds of the few writers who themselves were of victims of the holocaust and butchery.

Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges (1964)* and *Distant Drum (1960)*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan (1956)*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines (1988)*, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy Man (1991)*, Balchandra Rajan's *The Dark Dancer, (1959)*, Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken*

*Column*(1961), and Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*(1975) are directly penned on the theme of partition while some other novelists used it as a background.

Nahal's *Azadi* has been translated into many regional and international languages. It has been translated into Urdu, Hindi, Tamil, Punjabi, Kashmiri, Malyalam, Hungarian and Russian. Nahal had presented the scene of partition realistically. It was what he had himself experienced while running away from his birth place Sialkot to Punjab during the period of partition, when he was young. The traumatic experiences which he had undergone, the holocaust which he had seen helped him in framing the scene of partition in *Azadi*.

Nahal's *Azadi* deals with the dawn of freedom, the tragedy of partition and its aftermath. The novel comprises of three parts- The Lull, the Storm and the Aftermath -that represent correspondingly the beginning, the middle and the end of the great event. It not only reflects the massacre and atrocities of Partition, but also highlights the reasons that caused the tragedy. Khushwant Singh in his *Train to Pakistan* narrates the circumstances of Indians during partition in India while Chaman Nahal has presented the scene during partition in Pakistan, in his novel *Azadi*. "...of all the attempts made so far, Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* is the most ambitious one." *Azadi (A Review)* *Indian Literature* 114)

The novel is set in Sialkot a Muslim dominated city in West Punjab (now in Pakistan) and spans a period of about eight months from June 3, 1947 to the death of Gandhi on 30<sup>th</sup>

January, 1948. The story of the novel opens on June 3, 1947 with an announcement of the Viceroy Lord Mountbatten, declaring the division of the country into two parts—India and Pakistan. Lala Kanshi Ram, a wholesale grain merchant was happily living in Sialkot with his family. Barkat Ali, a bosom friend of Lalaji and Nur, his daughter loves Arun, Lalaji's son. Before partition all the people lived happily; 'they spoke a common tongue, wore identical clothes, and responded to the weather, to the heat and first rains, in an identical manner.' (*Azadi* 47)

This announcement had changed the complete scenario. The innocent still couldn't believe the announcement. They neither believed on the consolation of Nehru nor the fast of Gandhi. The Muslims started to celebrate it by firing huge crackers, and taking out different kinds of processions in the streets. The Muslims in the procession shouted 'Pakistan Zindabaad' so loudly that it frightened the Hindus. The police and army failed to secure the Hindus and when the situation became worse the Hindus were compelled to leave their families, homes, business etc. to settle in refugee camps.

Murders, rapes, looting, killing, putting houses on fire became the daily routine. When Lalaji was staying in a refugee camp he heard the news of his daughter Madhu's and her husband's murder. A very heart touching scene of the hatred between the two communities has been presented by Nahal, when Abdul Ghani, on the death of Madhu had told Arun, 'who told you your sister was killed, my boy? But don't worry. I put her and her husband into the fire with my own hands, and

they're now on their way to dozakh, to hell'...he made no effort to disguise his venom'. (Azadi 155)

The convoy faced a lot of suffering; the poison of communal frenzy crashed the lives of many people. The rape of Sunanda, the murder of Suraj Prakash, the circumstances which provoked Niranjana Singh to commit suicide, and the most horrible one of these is the taking out procession of naked Hindu and Sikh women brought out tears in the eyes of readers. In the end Lala Kanshi Ram reached Delhi where he could get a roof over his head.

It is Nahal's quality that all of his novels end with a positive note and this quality attracts his readers most.

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**CHAPTER-2**

**TREATMENT OF  
POLITICS IN THE  
INDIAN ENGLISH  
FICTION**

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### **TREATMENT OF POLITICS IN THE INDIAN ENGLISH FICTION**

India is the land of Krishna, the lord of love; the land of Gandhi, the epitome of non-violence; the land of Shivaji, the embodiment of valor. India is known as the Vishwa Guru in the world. We had great universities like the Takshila and the Nalanda in the days gone by. Scholars from all over the world came here to take education. Our country was known as a golden bird, so many invaders attacked it for different reasons like Mohammad Gajnawi attacked for looting the gold temples while Mohammad Gauri and many Islamic emperors for spreading Islam in it, but the advent of the Europeans was a death trap to the great heritage which was preserved and secured by the Indian for several generations. We had the oldest civilizations like the Indus valley civilization. We possess the richest fields for agriculture. Our country is the most suitable for trade and commerce because our country surrounded by water bodies from three sides which provide the cheapest and the simplest waterways for trade.

The British, the French, the Portuguese arrived in India for commercial purposes. The British became a colonial power in India in the 1700s when Jahangir, the Mughal emperor gave permission to the English East India Company to establish its factories in India but after the Battle of Plassey (1757) their political supremacy was established in India. They took nearly over one hundred years to build their strong empire in India and

had established their influence by the early 1800s. The Indian life style, the Indian society and the Indian culture were deeply influenced by their practical wisdom and enlightened attitude. The traditional and Superstitious attitudes, the evils of society like the Sati system, the Zamindari system and the dowry system were banished the attitudes of the Indians entirely changed. The Indians adopted the good qualities of the westerners and helped them in their business. Though the Britishers started English education in India for administrative purpose, but many Indian scholars were benefitted by it.the Indians slowly they understood the main purpose behind the English education system of the British Empire and spread awareness in the society many ways.

The British rule that existed in India till 1947 had both blessings and curses. The Britishers used many foul methods to get hold of the assets of India. They concentrated only the departments of finance and neglected the departments of public works. It was the British who not only broke up the Indian economic system but also created lots of false differences in the society. They truly followed the principle of ‘divide and rule’; they created diversity in the united India. They killed lots of innocent Indians; they ravaged Indian culture, Indian brotherhood and Indian heritage. Besides the lots of curses of British rule a few blessings of it also as they were instrumental in the construction of infrastructure, introduced the postal system and the railways and made their language popular in India.

This chapter presents the political history of the Indian writing in English. However before focusing the political

writings, I would like to present a glimpse of the political life of that period. A feeling of great hatred arose against the British rule in the heart of Indians during the middle of nineteenth century when they realized the insensitiveness of Britishers. The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 is a glaring example of it when a sepoy Mangal Pandey refused to use the greased cartridges. He invoked his other comrades to take arms against the British in order to preserve their religion. This mutiny was followed by a social and cultural awakening in India. The formation of INA by Bose, the movements started by Gandhi, the patriotism of the comrades like Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad and the powerful slogans like *Quit India*, *Do or Die*, *Now or Never* and *Dilli Chalo* shook the foundation of the British rule in India.

Like other literary fiction, Indian English fiction is also the result of national agitation and upturn, which revealed itself in socio political life of the nation. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was not far from the truth when he emphasized that Indian literature is one, though written in many languages.

The Indian novelists, who have presented political subjects in their novels in one way or other include K.S. Venkatramani '*Kandan the Patriot*', A.S.P. Ayyar '*Baladitya*', and '*Three Men of Destiny*', Bhabani Bhattacharya '*So Many Hungers*', '*Shadow From Ladakh*', Kamala Markandaya '*Nectar in a Sieve*' and many others. They were followed by G.V. Desani '*All About H. Hatterr*' Manohar Malgonkar, '*A Bend in The Ganges*', '*Distant Drums*' and '*Combat of Shadows*' *Sunlight on a Broken Column* by Attia Hosain, Khushwant Singh's *Midnight's Children* by

Salman Rushdie, *A Fine Family* by Gurucharan Das, *The Great Indian Novel* by Shashi Tharoor '*A Train To Pakistan*' and Chaman Nahal's '*The Gandhi Quartet*'. These novelists have beautifully presented the Indian political and social panorama in their own ways and have described historical scenes very vividly in their Indian fictional scenario.

There appeared a new kind of Indian English fiction which treats the political events and the fictional world and its characters to give expression to their sensitiveness to history. All four novels, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Arun Joshi's '*City in the River*', Nayantara Sahgal's '*Rich Like Us*', Bhabani Bhattacharya's '*Shadows From Ladakh*' selected for this chapter come under the category of political fiction. The scope of the political novel in Indian writing in English is very wide and large because it covers all the political issues and social problems in the history of Indian Society.

Khushwant Singh was one of the most significant contemporary Indian English novelists. He was born on 2nd February 1915 at Hadali in West Punjab, now in Pakistan and had his education in the Government College, Lahore, King's College London and the Inner Temple, London. After completing his education he practiced law at the Lahore High Court for several years and later joined the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in 1947.

The riots that took place in Lahore during the middle of 1947 forced him to leave Pakistan forever. He and his whole family finally left Pakistan on 12th August 1947, Delhi by road.

He had to leave behind everything, including his newly-acquired bungalow, where he stayed as a guest during one of his visits to Lahore. He had his own experiences of the partition and its venomous impact. After his arrival in India he published *Train to Pakistan* in 1956. The Indian Government sent him on diplomatic postings to Canada and London and later to Paris with the UNESCO. He was a Member of Parliament from 1980 to 1986. Among other honours, he was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1974 by the President of India but he returned it in 1984 in protest against the Union Government's siege of the Golden Temple, Amritsar. The Indian Government awarded later him the Padma Vibhushan in the year 2007. He passed away at the age of ninety nine in 2014.

He began his career as a well known Journalist with the All India Radio in 1951. He has been the founder-editor of Yojana, and editor of The Illustrated Weekly of India, The National Herald and The Hindustan Times.

Today, we remember him, as India's best-known columnist and journalist. He had also a highly successful career as a writer. He penned many significant novels as *Train to Pakistan* (winner of the Grove Press Awards for the best work of fiction in 1945), *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale*, *Delhi* and *The Company of Women*. He also translated a number of works from Punjabi, Urdu and Hindi, and wrote several non-fiction books on nature, current affairs, etc.

Khushwant Singh became a writer unintentionally though. He had no such choice. It was the sorrowful pain of the turbulent

days of partition which inspired him to write about it. His attitude towards life and its situations underwent a drastic change and his trust in the nobility of mankind was fully broken. He said:

The beliefs that I had cherished all my life were shattered. I had believed in innate goodness of the common man. But the division of India had been accomplished by the most savage massacres known in the history of the country... I had believed that we Indians were peace loving and non-violent; that we were more concerned with matters of the spirit, while the rest of the world was involved in the pursuit of material things. After the experience of autumn of 1947, I could no longer subscribe to these views. I became an angry middle-aged man, who wanted to shout his disenchantment with the world ... I decided to try my hand at writing. (C.L. Khatri. "Trauma of Partition....*Khushwant Singh: The Man and the Writer* 12-13)

Khushwant Singh's second novel *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* (1959) also has a historical platform. The background of the novel is set in Amritsar and the period it covers is from almost April 1942 to April 1943 when the Indians called upon the Britishers to quit India. It was about five years before the country attained freedom. The startling success of the Japanese in South-East Asia in the early forties has shaken the foundation of British Government and they had started facing the imminent collapse of the Indian Empire. The beautiful story of the novel revolves around Sardar Buta Singh, Sher Singh and other characters who are fully influenced by the different national movements of India.

Khushwant Singh's third novel 'Delhi' appeared in 1990 and became famous as a great piece of history-fiction. It was the best seller for several months. The novel is a large book, having twenty-one chapters in all, which contain nine chapters are on historical facts, in which seven are monologues. There are ten long plots in this great novel. It is the story of Bhagmati, a eunuch who represents the city Delhi and can be seen as a metaphor for Delhi and history simultaneously. Basically it is a collection of ten tales which starts from 1265 A.D. and come down to 1985 A.D. covering all the major incidents that gave Delhi its present shape. It celebrates the past of Delhi, the city with a long and eventful history.

His latest novel 'The Company of Women' (1999) is centered on the individual's search for the truth of existence within a society and is rather different from his other novels.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* is the first novel in English about the partition of the country by an Indian writer. Since then many novelists have penned down political themes especially on partition. This novel by Khushwant Singh was published in 1956 and happens to be one of the finest realistic novels of the Post world war II of Indian English fiction which conveys the historic and political incidents that occurred during the partition of India. It won the Grove Press Award the very same year. John Adkins has commented on the importance of the novel and has written:

'Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* deserves a high position in Indo-Anglian literature. ...The author's objectivity in the treatment of theme and

event, his skill and insight in the delineation of character, and his vision of humanity—the power and glory, the weakness and the defeat—all align him with the finest novelists in the English Language'.<sup>2</sup> (The Journal of Indian Writing in English: *History as Art Form: Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan* 11)

*Train to Pakistan* was originally entitled *Mano Majra* which a small village, on the bank of the Sutlej close to the Indo-Pakistan border and serves as the plot for the novel. There were about seventy families consisting of Sikhs, Muslims and one single Hindu family there. For centuries it had been the abode for the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs and they had lived there together in peace with a feeling of brotherhood. These people entirely lacked political consciousness and many of them even didn't know that the English had left India. They also knew nothing about the brutality of partition of India into Pakistan and Hindustan.

The subinspector reports to Hukum Chand the situation of the village and says:

I am sure no one in Mano Majra even knows that the British have left and the country is divided into Pakistan and Hindustan. Some of them know about Gandhi but I doubt if anyone has ever heard of Jinna. (TP 24)

The harmonious atmosphere suddenly converted into communal frenzy in this united village. The residents of Mano Majra were so innocent that they did not even know that the British had left India and the Indian sub-continent was divided into two nations.

The writer has beautifully explored the plot of *Mano Majra*:

Mano Majra is a tiny place. It has only three brick buildings, one of which is the home of the money lender Lala Ram Lal. The three brick buildings enclose a triangular common with a large peepul tree in the middle. The rest of the village is a cluster of flat-roofed mud huts and low walled courtyards, with front on narrow lanes that radiate from the centre. Soon the lanes dwindled into footpaths and get lost in the surrounding fields. At the western end of the village is a pond ringed round by keekar trees. There are only about seventy families in Mano Majra, and Lala Ram Lal's is the only Hindu family. The others are Sikhs or Muslims about equal in numbers.... But there is one object that all Mano Majrans –even Lala Ram Lal –venerate. This is a three-foot slab of sandstone that stands up right under a keekar tree besides the pond. It is the local diety, the deo to which all the villagers- Hindu, Sikh, Muslims or Pseudo-Christian repair secretly whenever they are in need of blessing.’(TTP 2)

The novel has four sections – the first is *Dacoity*, the second is *Kalyug*, the third is *Mano Majra* and the fourth is *Karma*. The incidents of the novel started from one night in August 1947 and after that night there were killing, rapes and evils dominated the scene. During this time, the people of Mano Majra pass from the state of brotherhood and calmness to that of bloodshed and rampage. Harish Raizada in his article “*Train to Pakistan: A Study in Crisis of Values*” quotes what Khushwant Singh said in one of his interviews:

The beliefs that I had cherished all my life were shattered. I had believed in the innate goodness of the common man. But the division of India had been accompanied by the most savage

massacres known in the history of the country.... I had believed that we Indians were peace-loving and non-violent, that we were more concerned with matters of the spirit, while the rest of the world was involved in the pursuit of material things. After the experience of the autumn of 1947, I could no longer subscribe to these views.'<sup>3</sup> (*Train to Pakistan: A Study in Crisis of Values.*" *Commonwealth Fiction* 162)

The people of Mano Majra had heard of the communal violence that has taken place in the other parts of the district, but the village had not experienced any partition violence before the killing of Lala Ram Lal. After the arrested of Iqbal and Juggut Singh Mano Majra also started to experience the pain of partition. There was a railway station at Mano Majra which was like a backbone for the village and some trains run through this station. One among them was the train that ran between Lahore and Delhi. The sound of the train was like a rhythmic tune for the villagers but the music of their life was changed one day when early in September, a train reached Mano Majra from Pakistan carrying the corpses of men, women and children.

The writer has used the trains and the river Sutlej as the symbols of horror and carriers of human corpses as these had become agents and messengers of death. Throughout the novel we found, events related to abductions, rapes, communal violence, mass burials and trains filled with human corpses. The train which worked as a clock for the people of Mano Majra had now started to represent a black and horrible time while one of the biggest river of Punjab, the Sutlej, which irrigates the fields

was now flooded with blood and corpses of human beings and cattles.

Before the communal violence and religious disputes the atmosphere of Mano Majra was very peaceful and harmonious. Imam Baksh, the mullah of the village addressed Meet Singh, a Sikh priest as brother and Meet Singh addressed him as uncle. The love story of Jugga set the examples of communal harmony. In the first part of the novel 'Dacoity' we witness the circumstances before partition and the changes that occurred after it. The protagonist Juggat Singh 'Jugga' was a simple person of Mano Majra, who trusted on the justice of God, but he was officially declared a man of bad character, "his name was entered in register number ten and he was officially declared a man of bad character."(TTP 64)

Jugga loves Nooran, the daughter of Imam Baksh, a weaver who was equally respected by the Hindus as well as the Muslims. This shows that interreligious relationships were acceptable in this village. The people of the village lived peacefully before the murder of Ram Lal and the dacoity. Juggat Singh and Iqbal were arrested for this case and sent to jail by the sub inspector with the orders of the district magistrate, Hukum Chand, the Indian representative of bureaucracy in the British-governed India.

Iqbal was a social worker explained the aim of his arrival to this village, to Meet Singh priest of the Gurudwara as:

I am a social worker, Bhaiji. There is much to be done in our village. Now with this partition there is so much bloodshed

going on, someone must do something to stop it. My party has sent me here, since this place is a vital point for refugee movements. Trouble here would be disastrous.(TTP 38)

Iqbal raised his voice against the arrest and he tried to prove his identity but the police refused to accept it and completely changed his identity. They police even made a fake warrant in front him. He told the police that he was a Sikh but the sub inspector instead of trusting him, changed his name from Iqbal Singh to Mohammed Iqbal, 'Fill in the warrant of arrest correctly. Name: Mohammed Iqbal, son of Mohammed something or other, or just father unknown. Caste: Mussulman. Occupation: Muslim League worker.'(TTP 69)

The writer has beautifully expressed the class differences present in India because Iqbal and Jugga were treated in a different ways in the same jail. A table, chair, cot, a few magazines of Hindi, English and Urdu had been provided to Iqbal and his food was also served in brass plates while for Jugga no furniture was provided. He had to sleep on the hard cement floor and eat his chapattis out of his hand. The writer has expressed Marxist influence through the character of Iqbal and his thoughts on the class difference are;

in a country which had accepted caste distinctions for many centuries, inequality had become an inborn mental concept. If caste was abolished by legislation, it came up in other forms of class distinction.(TTP 75)

The writer made a comment on the society when he said that people wanted fair and virgin girls for their sons and instead of mutual understanding and education the astronomical harmony

and horoscopes were the parameters of happiness of married life. The people of Mano Majra are very simple and innocent. They did not expect much from freedom. Lambradara accept that:

Freedom must be a good thing. But what will we get out of it? Educated people like you, Babu Sahib, will get the jobs the English had. Will we get more lands or more buffaloes? (TTP 51)

The second part of the novel is named ‘Kalyug’ or the Dark Age. According to the Hindu Mythology, Kalyug comes at the end of the cycle of the yugas when the old order ends and is replaced by a new order. This very thing happened in Mano Majra when the ghost train arrived at the station. The train time table was changed and the arrivals of the trains became less regular. The peaceful village was now full of Sikh soldiers. The train was carrying bodies of thousands of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan for the common funeral at Mano Majra. The people of the village were ordered to bring out the wood and kerosene from their homes for the cremation. There was a deathly silence in the village on the day: “A soft breeze began to blow towards the village. It brought the smell of burning kerosene, then of wood. And then- a faint acrid smell of searing flesh.”(TTP 88)

Hukum chand, badly horrified recalled the scene of the train;

there were women and children huddled a corner, their eyes dilated with horror, their mouths still open as if their shrieks has just then become voiceless. Some of them did not have a scratch on their bodies. There were bodies crammed against the far end wall of the compartment, looking in terror at the empty windows through which must have come shots, spears and spikes. There

were lavatories, jammed with corpses of young men who had muscled their way to comparative safety. And all the nauseating smell of putrefying flesh, faces and urine' (TTP 90)

The mass cremation had changed the music and rhythm of the life of the village, Monsoon was about to start in Punjab by August end. The commencement of the rainy season rain worried to Hukum Chand when he thought about the big heap of the ashes and bones of the mass cremation and when the inspector informed him that more than fifteen hundred bodies had been cremated. In a very philosophical way he exclaimed:

Fifteen hundred innocent people! What else is a Kalyug? There is darkness over the land. This is only one spot on the frontier. I suppose similar things are happening at other places. And now I believe our people are doing the same. What about the Muslims in these villages?(TTP 102)

The third part 'Mano Majra' opens when another ghost train arrives from Pakistan,

...the train had brought a full load of corpses, a heavy brooding silence descended on the village. People barricaded their doors and many stayed up all night talking in whispers. Everyone felt his neighbour's hand against him, and thought of finding friends and allies.(TTP 124)

The head constable released Malli and his gang, the real culprit of the dacoity and the murderers of Ram Lal and divided the village into two groups-the Sikhs and the Muslims and indirectly supported the culprits in their cruel act.

The young boys convinced the Sikh community that all the Muslims were responsible for the killings of their brothers and families. They related the history and said that the Muslims

deserved punishment for their atrocities on their Gurus. The last Guru had warned the Sikhs to never believe on Muslims because they killed their own father for power and suddenly every Sikh became a stranger for their Muslim neighbours. The Muslims also started to fear the Sikhs with their long hair, beards and kripans Sikhs.

Chaman Nahal has presented the situation of Sikhs in his novel *Azadi* when the Sikhs were in Pakistan before partition, just in the same way as Khushwant Singh presented the fear of Muslims in this section here:

Muslims sat and moped in their houses....they had heard of gentlewomen having their veils taken off, being stripped and marched down crowded streets to be raped in the marketplaces....mosques being desecrated by the slaughter of pigs on the premises, and of copies of the holy Quran being torn up by infidels.(TTP 128)

When it was decided that the Muslims would have to leave Mano Majra the people started saying goodbye to each other in a hurry, Malli's gang looted the bullocks, the carts and drove away their cattle.

The last section of the novel is named Karma which gives the novel a metaphysical note. Here the writer suggests that in an atmosphere of brutality and killings human actions become meaningless. When the Sikh families were crying and feeling sad for their Muslim neighbours, Malli and the refugees ransacked the properties and cattle of the Muslims. The writer has used the Sutlej River as a symbol of death and horror because it had yielded hundreds of floating corpses of the tortured and

mutilated people. With the floating corpses of men, women and children, the swelling Sutlej presented another terrible scene. The writer has presented the pathetic sight as follows:

There were also men and women with their clothes clinging to their bodies; little children sleeping on their bellies with their arms clutching the water and their satiny buttocks dipping in and out. The sky was soon full of kites and vultures. They flew down and landed on the floating carcasses. They pecked till the corpses themselves rolled over and shooed them off with hands. (TTP 150)

Meet Singh, Iqbal and Imam Baksh represent the goodness who believe according to which the people should in humanity and the optimistic part of religion, but this humanity and faith in goodness is regarded as a sign of cowardice by the few young Sikh refugees who came to the gurdwara at night to stimulate the fire of retaliation. They said:

Do you know how many trainloads of dead Sikhs and Hindus have come over? Do you know of the massacres in Rawalpindi and Multan, Gujranwala and Sheikhpura? What are you doing about it? You just eat and sleep and call yourselves Sikhs ---the brave Sikhs! The martial class! (TTP 156)

The train is carrying Muslim refugees going to Pakistan next day was to be attacked and they needed volunteers for that cruel act. They planned to stretch a rope across the first span of the bridge. Meet Singh is worried about the Muslims of Mano Majra on the train. The volunteers plan to send a train full of Muslim corpses but Meet Singh is still concerned for them and Hukum Chand is also worried for the refugees because he has promised to the prostitute Haseena, whom he loves that he will

save her life. The sub-inspector informed him that the fanatic and blood thirsty Hindus or Sikhs will kill the Muslims, either the train go or not so he made a plan to release the two prisoners Jugga and Iqbal because Nooran, Jugga's love is also in the same refugee train and Jugga will definitely save the life of Nooran.

Iqbal returned to the Gurudwara and met a number of refugees. He tried to gathered information from Meet Singh about the situation in the village. Meet Singh made a comment on the events of the days;

What has been happening? Ask me what has not been happening. Trainloads of dead people came to Mano Majra. We burned one lot and buried another. The river was flooded with corpses. Muslims were evacuated and in their place, refugees have come from Pakistan. What more do you want to know?(TTP 175)

Iqbal thought a lot about the system of India. Through the character of Iqbal the writer has criticized the Indian system, its customs, philosophy, art and culture, and religion. When he writes: "India is constipated with lot of humbug. Take religion. For Hindus, it means little beside caste and cow protection. For Muslims circumcision and kosher meat....."(TTP 180)

Jugga was not worried for the refugees but he only wanted to save his beloved so he climbed on the steel span to started to cut the rope and give a safe departure to the train:

He pulled himself up, caught the rope under his left armpit, and again started hacking it with his right hand. The rope had been cut in shreds. Only a thin tough strand remained. He went at it with him. There was a volley of shots. The man shivered and collapsed. The rope

snapped in the centre as he fell. The train went over him, and went on to Pakistan. (TTP 207)

Jugga was just a puppet in the hands Hukum Chandd because he knew very well that Jugga would definitely go to protect his beloved and so he used his feelings to stop the cruel act planed by the few Sikhs.

In this way many great leaders and politicians exploited the life of ignorant and innocent people in the name of religion but in spite of religious and political instigations the inborn goodness and kindness of a few people remained intact and Jugga presented the example. C.L.Khatri made a comment on his bravery when he writes: “The ultimate optimism of the novelist is shown in the end that shows the victory of virtue and love over vice and hatred even in this utter chaos.” (*Trauma of Partition in Train to Pakistan*”. *Khushwant Singh : the Man and the writer 100*)

The novel ends with an optimistic note that even in the darkest world of hatred and revenge, the pious love for someone can blossom and find its place. The plan to sabotage the train is known to everybody but only Jugga rises to the occasion. Jugga’s sacrifice is not only the victory of good over evil but sets the example of kindness and spiritual love also. Jugga illustrates that no religion is greater than humanity. Harish Raizada observes,

The heroic spirit of man is revealed in the novel not by men who are considered religious and respectable in the public and supposed to have innate goodness but by a man like Jugga who is

treated as a confirmed ruffian”. (*Train to Pakistan: A study in Crisis of Values* 20)

The second novel which I have selected for this chapter is *Rich Like Us* by Nayantara Sahgal, the daughter of Vijayalakshmi Pandit and the niece of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru & Ranjit Sitaram Pandit, well-known freedom fighters of the Independence Movement. She was born on May 10, 1927 in Allahabad. She lived in Dehradun for decades. She was married twice, first to Gautam Sahgal and then to E.N. Mangat Rai. The collection of letters of the correspondence between Rai and Nayantara was later published in book form under the title *‘Relationships’* (1994) which received huge appreciation in spite of being shocking because these letters represent the endeavors of a woman to remain true to herself and her ideals.

Her childhood was spent in Anand Bhawan at Allahabad with her parents, her maternal uncle, Jawaharlal Nehru and her cousin, Indira Gandhi. From her early age she has seen India's political reverberations, the struggle for independence and the influence of Gandhian ideas of freedom & non-violence. Her personal and literary career was always influenced by politics. She is a prolific writer and to her credit goes nine novels, two biographies, two political commentaries and a large number of articles, and literary contributions to various famous newspapers and prestigious magazines.

The political consciousness is real and inseparable from hers and her literary creation. Being born in a famous family of

freedom fighters, and politicians' politics is mixed in her blood and is reflected in her famous writings.

For her analysis, she chooses the sample from those sections of society with which she has the closest associations- the world of politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen and the diplomatic maneuvers. By fictionalizing their lives, Sahgal shows vividly, what goes on in the corridors of power in the drawing rooms of politically important people, and in the lobbies of the parliament. (R.K.Dhawan:*Indian Women Novelists 21-22*)

She has been active in the world of literature both as a creative writer and a political columnist. She has the honour of being the first Indian woman novelist who was writing in English and dealing with political subjects in such a broad way. All her novels reflect the contemporary Indian social and political background, expose the power hungry politicians, the cultural changes occurring in India, the ardent freedom fighters and their sacrifice for the country. Lakshmi Sinha focusing on the theme of her novels writes: "Sahgal's literary world,...in a broad sense can be termed 'personalized fiction'. History, politics, autobiography and personalities intermingle in the novels of Sahgal". (*Nayantara's Sextet. From A time to be Happy to Rich Like Us. 42*)

Her first prose work *Prison and Chocolate Cake* written in 1952-53 recollects the memories of the 1940s. The book is an excellent exercise in understanding that the great leaders of India had their personal lives too. One can easily find the fisted woman of the hard emergency being equated to an emotional girl. Sahgal described three year old little boy Rajiv who would also go on to be come the PM of India. Here we see Gandhi as a family

member and Nehru as a father. The autobiography ends on the tragic note of Gandhi's assassination and the reaction of the public.

Her second book *From Fear Set Free* is a sequel to the first part of her life *Prison and Chocolate Cake* and was published exactly ten years after at 1962. She has dedicated to this book her first husband Gautam Sahgal. In this part of her life she had returned from America to the new independent India and she had adopted the new changed face of the country. Both the books express the circumstances and temper of her time. Her characters, language and culture truly reflect the times exactly before and after independence.

*A Time to be Happy* published in 1963 is her novel basically refers to the activities and actions of the congress in 1942. It is the story of a young, educated and energetic man Sanand against the backdrops of India's struggle for independence. The background is set in Saharanpur but moved through the cities of Lucknow, Delhi and Calcutta. It covers a period from 1932-1948. The life of the protagonist revolves around the Gandhian ideology and its influence upon him. Her Idea of the the soul, freedom of thought and expression were all gained under the influence of Gandhi. Thus we can see that this work of sahgal is also somehow also influenced by her own life.

*This time of morning* was published in 1965 and is set in the early post independence years mostly and has dealt with partition and its aftermath. The book offers a view of the early stages of corruption when industrialists meet the politicians and a

new generation of politicians who have hardly played any role in the freedom struggle springs up and suddenly get the power. Sumer Singh, Kalyan Sinha, Hari Mohan and Somanth are hungry for politics and power. Sumer Singh used politics and his political position to fulfill his personal ambition. Rakesh is the main character here and we visualize a new India through his eyes. He finds himself caught up in the struggle for power. The conflicts revolves around two men Kailas Vrind, who still believes in the humanistic philosophies of Gandhi and Kalyan Sinha, the dominant and interesting character who rose from poverty to become the head of the delegation to the U.N. and prime minister's most vocal representative through his cunning means of corruption. these, the means however become the main reasons of his political downfall. "Power, in this modern political world, instead of being a means to end has become an end in itself." (R.K.Dhawan: *Indian Women Novelists 17*)

Her next and the most famous novel is *Storm in Chandigarh* published in 1969. The book highlights the pros and cons of a newly planned and built city, Chandigarh and the violence of the sixties in a dramatic way. It focuses on the corruption of the individual self by virtuous disintegration. The birth of the city is a result of the partition of Punjab into two states. The theme of the novel revolves around three couples- Inder and Saroj, Jita and Mira and Vishal and Leela.

Her next novel *The Day in Shadow* published in 1971 is a brilliant novel about divorce and its influences n society. It is the story of Smiriti who was trying to cope up with her brutal

divorce and seeking for a new life with Raj. In this novel we meet a new genre of politicians who were very far from the Gandhian ideologies, business barons, journalists and free thinkers. The novel explores politics, religion, eastern and western ideology, free speech and changing emotions of man-woman relationship in an admirable way. The main characters of the novel- Som, Raj, Smiriti, Sumer Singh, Brij and Ram Kishan- represent the modern fashion but at the same time don't want to give up their traditions and values. To conclude, in the words of A.V.Krishna Rao, the novel is an

imaginative rendering not only of the pulls and pressures of public life but also of the agony and ecstasy of the private lives of men and women of consequence in contemporary India.(R.K.Dhawan: *Indian Women Novelists 19*)

*A Situation in New Delhi* originally published in 1977 revolves around three characters: Devi, her son Rishad and Michael Calvert. Shivraj, Devi's brother somehow resembles Nehru, is the main protagonist who dies at the beginning of the novel. This novel also focuses on the Naxalite movement, the unrest created by the students and the aftermath of Nehru's death. It is an implicit attack on the new type of politicians who represent how freedom is in jeopardy in independent India. In this novel Sahgal had beautifully recreate the atmosphere amongst the upper class political families of the 1970s.

Her next novel *Plans for Departure* was originally published in 1985 and won the Eurasian regional award in the Commonwealth Fiction Prize. It registers a valuable stage in her

growth as a novelist. It is set in the hill station of Himapur in India, on the eve of World War I in 1914. Miss Anna Hansen is the chief protagonist and it is both a love story as well as a mystery.

The novelist most of the time connects journalism with fiction and beginning from *A Time To Be Happy* in 1958 to her new novel *Mistaken Identity* in 1988 she has used the political streak. Bhushan Singh, son of Raja of Vijaygarh is the narrator of the novel. It highlights the socio-political events in India during the British Regime in the year 1929. The narrator comes home after a long sojourn abroad and is arrested by the police in a case of mistaken identity. The story is knitted in the prison where the narrator lived with many political prisoners who had different political ideologies.

All the novels of Nayantara Sahgal show the trace of the nation's journey from slavery through independence to Emergency, from Mahatama Gandhi to Indira Gandhi and represents a variety of clashes faced by individuals in a restless society. "Freedom for Sahgal is not mere political freedom or economic independence. In her own words, "freedom means creativity, adventure, experimentations and even risk."(R.K.Dhawan: *Indian Women Novelists*, 22). Through her characters she has beautifully defined freedom and its true meaning and her characters have actively participated in this march of progress.

The year 1973 is a remarkable year in the history of India because it set the platform for the upcoming emergency in 1975.

The year witnessed the oil shock when world prices of crude oil increased four-fold, leading to heavy increase in the prices of petroleum products and fertilizers which influenced both the poor as well as the middle class families of India. Economic recession, unemployment, corruptions, black-marketing, price rise and scarcity of goods led to massive unrest and there was a wave of strikes in many parts of the country during 1972 and 1973. An all India railway strike started all over India in May 1974, and lasted for twenty two days. The law and order situation were badly affected in 1974-75. The popularity of Indira Gandhi, the prime minister of India had witnessed a down fall because people's expectations remained them unfulfilled.

Indira Gandhi proclaimed a State of Emergency on the morning of 26<sup>th</sup>, June 1975 when she was found guilty of the charges of campaign malpractice by the Allahabad's High Court. The Politicians and newspapers demanded her resignation from the post of Prime Minister and for this they organized a huge demonstration on 25<sup>th</sup> June. Many people were arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and were released after a few days or months. Among those arrested included the suspension of basic civil rights and tight censorship over press. Thousands of students, journalists, lawyers and activists were also arrested along with a large number of anti-social elements such as smugglers, hoarders and black marketers. Through many amendants of constitution she succeeded in liberating herself from approaching legal charges. This autocratic behavior revealed her dictatorship. Corruption and favoritism,

replaced the general democratic system. For those who had dreamt of equality in society, Emergency meant a bitter discriminated reality and a sense of hopelessness.

Clamping of Emergency is not an overnight dream but “it is the culmination of an erosion of moral values that set in among the politicians, Civil Servants and people at large after Independence.”<sup>11</sup>(R.K.Dhawan:*Indian Women Novelists 17*) During the period of the Emergency, the power of the party rested in the hands of the Prime Minister only. Emergency and its effects became the main subject of the political novelists in the literary world. Many novelists highlighted the evils and the suppressed volcano of pain and anger of the people during period of Emergency in their novels. Some people welcomed the traumatic period while others resented it.

Nayantara Sahgal's *Rich Like Us* is considered as one of the most prestigious and complex novels about this theme. It was awarded two prestigious awards, the Sinclair Prize for fiction in 1985 and the Indian Sahitya Akademi Award in the year 1986. During the Emergency the novelist resigned from the Akedemi's Advisory Board in dissent because she suggested that the Board must pass a proposal to criticize the censorship of press and imprisonment of the people and journalists without trial. O.P. Mathur writes that “*Rich Like Us* is perhaps the only novel which subsumes the horrors of the Emergency in the consciousness of human beings affected by them”.(*Indira Gandhi and the Emergency as viewed in the Indian Novel 38*) Sahgal criticized the Prime Minister when she declared that Emergency was

basically for helping the poor and needy people. Sahgal remarks that it was not for helping the poor but for glorify the stature of her son. The action of the novel revolves around many victims of emergency who somehow personally or professionally were hurt by it.

The novel opens in Dev's house, where he and his wife are talking to their foreign professional guest, Newman, a collaborator in the proposed fizzy company named Happyola factory. Dev is a symbol of evil in the novel that represents cunningness, greed, selfishness, cruelty and is an epitome of Indian politics. Both Dev and Newman come together in the Happyola factory which brings money for them. Newman wants a market for his business while Dev get a chance to make money. Dev while talking with to his foreign delegate Newman praise the Emergency as it was beneficial for their business

This Emergency is just what we needed. The trouble makers are in jail. An opposition is something we never needed. The way the country's being run now, with one person giving orders, and no one being allowed to make a fuss about it in the cabinet or in parliament, means things can go full steam ahead without delays and weighing pros and cons forever. Strikes are banned. It is going to be very good for business. (RLU 2).

The theme of the novel is weaved around the multi coloured characters like Sonali, an I.C.S. officer who the chief but most miserable character in the novel and who suffers a lot in the wake of Emergency. Rose, the foreign wife of a businessman who while making a passage to India, met her death, Kishori Lal an associate of RSS, Ravi Kachru, the batch mate ICS officer of

Sonali, Dev, a businessman who later become a cabinet minister in Indira Gandhi's Government and many others who were eventually the sufferers of the unwanted Emergency.

Sonali has grown up in a universe of idealism. Till the end of her career she had tried her best to turn her eyes away from the difficult faces of life in Emergency but this did not last long. She always performed her duties and responsibilities with humanity and righteousness. She is an intellectual, humane, wise and an idealistic woman who is ready to sacrifice everything for the communal good but the Emergency destroyed her career as the civil servants had to follow the politicians during that period.

The distinction between the politics and the service had become so badly blurred over the last few years it had all but disappeared. The two sides were hopelessly mixed, with politicians meddling in administration.(RLU 23)

She described the status of bureaucrats that, "here, there and everywhere the right hand and left leg of the prime minister and her household." (RLU 23). Bureaucracy was totally webbed by politics and politicians, and each and every decision of the bureaucrats were directly influenced by prime minister and her people.

Sonali's recalls that before emergency the job of civil services have no direct connection with politics because bureaucrats have their own power and rights; 'once upon a time we had thought of the civil service as 'we' and politicians as 'they', two different sides of the coin.( RLU 22)

The novelist has beautifully portrayed the different kinds of cruelty, injustice and harassment caused to people during the

period of emergency. The common folk had to deal with many kinds of problems, “The emergency had given all kinds of new twists and turns to policy and the world’s largest democracy was looking like nothing.”(RLU 26)

Sonali is the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Industry. Unaware of the secret meeting between the minister and a foreign businessman with his Indian collaborator about the setting up for a fizzy drink factory she refused to grant permission for the opening of the new Happyola soft drink company. She said;

Policy did not allow foreign collaboration in industry except under a complicated set of regulations, although essential items the economy needed that we couldn’t produce for ourselves were exempted from the list.(RLU 24)

Sonali did not have any information about the real business behind the fizzy factory actually it was really a cover up for the import and storage of car parts need for the manufacture of an ‘indigenous’ car by the prime minister’s younger son. Rose informed Sonali about the truth of the company, she said;

Happyola, a child of the emergency, with a blanket import licence that would store underground hidden wares for the car manufacture, while machines produced a fizzy brown drink( RLU 50)

Dev was very sure about the success of his hidden business because all the members of the opposition party were in jail Madam could therefore easily amend the constitution according to her will. Dev said:

once it was amended Madam's son could be brought up to front rank leadership and the car he's trying to make could finally hit the road...once a few models are ready madam should nationalize the project. Then the public sector will be responsible for it (RLU 264)

Sonali got a shock because in response to her refusal to permit setting up of the Happyola Factory she got her transfer order.

Ten minutes later a phone call informed me I was to go back to a posting in my State where I already knew, there was no vacancy at my level. I hadn't merely been transferred without warning, I had been demoted, punished, and humiliated and I had no inkling why. ( RLU 27)

It is only Sonali who understands her father's commitment for freedom. She values individual freedom above everything else. "The Emergency had finished my career, but suddenly I didn't want a career in the crumbling unprofessionalism that bowed and scraped to a bogus emergency."(RLU 32) She never blamed her fate for anything, her rebellious nature made her to put questions and rationally find out the answers.

Instead of accepting her transfer order she took a decision to resign from her job because she never wanted to make any compromise with her ideals and her father's teachings. She says: "when the constitutions become null and void by the acts of a dictator, and the armour of a modern state confronts you, Satyagrah is the only way to keep your self-respect." (RLU 198) The largest democracy of the world was totally jeopardized through many kinds of twists and turns in politics by Emergency. The country was under the dictatorship of the prime minister. All

the rules and regulations had been changed for the benefit of a single person and there was no one to raise s against it because media was toyally under her control and all the rebellious people put into jail.

Those people or officers who praised emergency got promotions just like Ravi Kachru, who was a batch mate of Sonali and was of the same age group. Ravi replaced Sonali and it was like a harassment for her,

He was to replace me immediately as Joint Secretary in the ministry of Industry. He waited for me to say something, and when I didn't utter a word, he spread his hands in an apologetic gesture, turned round and walked out. If he had sneaked in and shot me I could not a have been more dazed. Yet I remember thinking with a shaft of painful clarity what kind of automatons we of the civil service have become, and are not expected to reply. They are expected to obey.( RLU 27).

The factory was quickly established and the minister earned a lot of Indian and foreign currency through his daughter in law.

The story of Rose proceeds simultaneously with that of Sonali because personal relationships also got affected by the Emergency in India. Rose, a beautiful girl, was living a happy life with her husband upto the period of emergency, in the same house with Ram's first wife Mona. Rose is like the mouthpiece of the novelist and she is presented as a Sita figure through her character. Rose's life has changed drastically changed after getting married with Ram. Though she had suffered a lot, but she never made any regret about her decision. She has highlighted social injustice. She learns to live in humiliation and neglect.

There is always a cold war like situations between Mona, Ram's first wife and Rose and when Mona attempted to commit suicide, it was Rose who saved her life and after that they lived like sisters.

Kishori Lal, Nishi's father was also punished without having had committed any crime except perhaps not accepting the emergency. When he was imprisoned he said; "Madam using her Para-military organizations so freely on peaceful demonstrations, seemed headed for authoritarian rule." (RLU 235). Dev' Kishori Lal' son in law did not make any effort to release him from the jail as K.L. did not support Madam. This shows how emergency had ruined the feelings of love, care and sense of belongingness in the personal life of the people.

Rose believes in the ideal of love and she remains kind hearted and retains practical and having working class values till the end of her life. Though there is difference of age between Sonali and Rose they still share their problems and feelings with each other and trust each other. When Rose came to know the truth about the factory she expressed her fear in front of Sonali and said that she was worried about her future as her husband had not made any will. Being a part of a joint family Dev, his step son was misusing her husband's money by forging signatures. When Rose voiced her suspicions and anxieties she met an accidental death, though it was officially dismissed as suicide by drowning in a well which was difficult for her to approach. "Rose had become a legend and not because English wives were rare."(RLU 45)

Chapter eleven is the longest in the novel where the novelist throws light on some most important historical events like civil disobedience, Satyagrah, Quit India movement, the regulations abolishing Sati, Calcutta Gazette and other small but valuable reformations.

The third novel which I have selected for this chapter is *Shadows from Laddakh* by Bhabani Bhattacharya. He was a writer of Bengali origin writer who mainly focused on social realist fiction and endeavoured to a novelist with a social purpose; he has presented the social, political and economic changes in India as the background of his novels. His themes basically revolve around poverty, hunger, discrimination, freedom, traditionalism, and industrialization. He has thrown light on all the parts of India, rural as well as urban and the prime motive of his fictional works is to reveal a lot of drawbacks and social problems, existing in the society.

He was born on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1906 at Bhagalapur and belonged to an affluent and educated family. He had his schooling at Puri and joined the Patna University for his studies. After his Bachelor's degree with Honours in English Literature in 1927, he went to England to study at the University of London and returned to India in December, 1934 with his Ph.D. degree in History. He worked for several years as press attaché to the Indian Embassy in Washington before starting his career as a freelance writer. He had travelled widely and was associated with a research, centre, at the University of Hawaii.

His writings exhibit the influence of Gandhi and Tagore in the Indian perspective while in western one he influenced by Shakespeare and Steinbeck. The adage that behind the success of everyman there is a woman came true in his case also because his wife Salila Mukherji served as an inspiration for him in his literary career. He was appointed a Visiting Professor in 1971 in the University of Hawaii where he wrote his last novel, *A Dream in Hawaii*.

In the field of literature he was greatly inspired by many Indian and Western writers like William Shakespeare, Edward Fitzgerald, Henrik Ibsen, and Bernard Shaw but the great poet Rabindranath Tagore was his ideal in the Indian perspective. He, at first, got a chance to meet him in Shantiniketan. Bhabani had no limits of joy when he received a letter of appreciation from Tagore commenting on his series of articles in Bengali. He was confused about his future as he had wished to become a scientist like Jagdish Chandra Basu but when he started writing Tagore encouraged him by telling that his future as a writer would be more fruitful. Tagore's applause left a deep impression on Bhattacharya. He accepted Tagore's inspiration in his life. Besides Tagore he was also influenced by Gandhi with whom he had met for the first time in London where Gandhi had gone to attend the Round Table Conference in 1931. The writer was attracted by the Gandhian principles of non-violence, truth, ahimsa and others.

His works include Tagore's translations entitled *The Golden Boat*, *Indian Cavalcade*, and a collection of historical

sketches. *Towards Universal Man* a commemoration volume published on the eve of the birth centenary of Tagore. *Steel-Hawk* is a collection of fifteen short stories but he is mainly renowned for his six great novels *So Many Hungers ! (1947)*, *Music for Mohini(1952)*, *He Who Rides a Tiger (1954)*, *A Goddess Named Gold (1960)* *Shadow from Ladakh (1966)* and *A Dream in Hawaii (1978)*. All his novels have a social note and present the true face of contemporary India, its shortcomings and diversities which are part of Indian society. He won the coveted Sahitya Academy Award in 1967 for his novel *Shadow from Ladakh*, Including fourteen European languages, his books have been translated into twenty six languages. The fact that eighty thousand copies of the German translation of *A Goddess Name A Gold* were sold in Europe proves his huge popularity. In spite of this universal fame he is not much discussed among the Indian scholars.

His first novel *So Many Hungers (1947)* was published two months after India gained freedom. This novel deals with the theme of hunger. The title of the novel speaks of the different kinds of hunger. *B. Syamala Rao* in *Bhabani Bhattacharya* says,

The title of the novel, *So many Hungers!* is amply justified.

There are indeed many hungers. - hunger for food, hunger for affection, hunger for love, hunger for lust, hunger for money, hunger for sacrifice and hunger for the general welfare of all. (*Bhabani Bhattacharya.46*)

The central theme of the novel revolves round the historical events like the Bengal famine of 1943, the Quit India Movement of 1942 and Satyagraha. The year 1943 was a

horrible period for the country because about one million people were killed by the famine in Bengal and many others had died due to other diseases and malnutrition. There are two plots in the novel, first deals with the rich family of Samarendra Basu's which consists of his wife, two sons Rahoul and Kunal, Rahoul's wife Manju and her father and the poor family of the young girl as the protagonist and her parents, her husband and two sons.

The stories of these two families move parallel till the end. Samarendra Basu, a lawyer is hungry for money. He feels the war to be an opportunity to make money so he opens a company named 'Cheap Rice, Limited'. His younger son Kunal, joins the British Army for thrill while the elder son Rahoul follows his grandfather, whom the villagers of Baruni call 'Devata'. He looks the war as the a danger for democracy and motivates the villagers to take part in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Devata is a great follower of Gandhi and represents his principles. He leaves his family and starts to live with the peasants. When Devesh's and Kajoli's fathers were arrested the villagers set the post office on fire and the government imposed a group fin on them as a penalty. The villagers used rice to pay the fine but when the lack of food became intolerable the villagers started to eat fish crabs and green figs. utimately began sending their daughter to the city to brothel agents, to quench their hunger.

Kajoli's family moved to Calcutta where she was raped by a soldier and a betel leaf selling woman suggested an easy way to earn money. She accepted her suggestion as she wanted to save

her family from hunger but on the way she came to know that Basu was on a hunger strike in a jail so she decided to earn money in an honest way and she started working a job in a newspaper agency. Samarendralost his both sons and realized that his hunger for money and fame had killed his family. Thus at the end we find that hunger is the central theme because every character is hungry for something or the other in life.

His second novel *Music for Mohini* published in 1952 is different from his other novels. It deals with the clash between modernity and orthodoxy. It is the story of a girl named Mohini, the heroine of the novel, who is a well educated girl representing modernity. She is opposed to her mother-in-law and her orthodox philosophies. JayDev, her husband, wants his wife to teach the poor villagers of Behula. He is a social reformer and fights against social evils such as superstition, child marriage and caste system and follows the principles of Gandhi. From the very first day of his married life, he wishes his wife to be like a great philosopher and thinker like Gargi or Maitry. Mohini however is not satisfied with her husband as she wants physical indulgence but she cannot provide her much sensual pleasure because of his idealistic attitude. JayDev thinks that the new generation should take the responsibility of serving the country. The novel beautifully presents the struggle between the modern thoughts of having a modern thinking girl and her ritualistic and husband.

His third novel *He Who Rides A Tiger* was published in 1954. The title of the novel is taken from the saying "He who rides the tiger cannot dismount". It has the same ground as that

of *So Many Hungers*. The freedom struggle and the Bengal famine are the two major themes dealt with in it but the treatment of the themes and the conclusion are different. It is also a social novel wherein the theme is also the caste difference in the Indian society. Kalo the protagonist is a dark skinned self competent, ambitious and hardworking blacksmith of Barna town. He has a daughter named Chandralekha. When the Bengal famine struck, the tillers of the land were reduced to starvation. Kalo with weavers and other tradesman moved to Calcutta leaving his daughter behind with an old lady.

On the way he steals some bananas and is arrested and jailed for three months. In the jail he met a political prisoner Bikash Mukherjee. After being released from the jail he starts removing corpses of destitute but later turns into a pimp for a brothel. One night when he hears the cries of his own daughter, he leaves this work and resolves to take revenge from the corrupt society. He creates a temple and places an image of lord Shiva under a banyan tree and metamorphosizes into a Manglik Adhikari, the prosperous priest of the temple. The rich merchants, stock brokers and even the magistrate come to the temple and respect the priest but when Kalo see her daughter's sad face and realizes that his daughter is only physically present with him but is far away from him mentally and spiritually, he starts feeling very uneasy on the back of the tiger.

The disguise of a Brahmin begins to irritate him so he finally gives up the mask of Brahmin. Lekha's decision to marry Motichand who already has three wives is her individual

freedom. While Kalo's act of disclosing the truth is his personal freedom. The novel gets success in hitting back at the rich and high caste Hindus.

His fourth novel is *A Goddess Named Gold* (1960 which) deals with man's lust for gold, power and possession. It is a satire on those who live by the lure of the gold. The novelist exposes people's belief in superstitions and miracles. Meera is the protagonist of the novel who belongs to a peasant family and is symbol of sacrifice while the Seth is the villain and the symbol of all around exploitation. Meera's grandfather is a symbol of Gandhian philosophy. When the Seth creates an artificial scarcity of clothes in the village Sonmati his wife and other five women peasants demand the shopkeeper to sell the sarees at a low rate but the shopkeeper refuses to do so but when his wife and other women starts removing their clothes in front of his shop he surrenders.

He decides to bring in a film show but women are not allowed to watch it. Meera's grandfather then played a trick. He tied an amulet to Meera's arm and declared to the villagers that if a person with the amulet performs an act of kindness, all copper on his or her body will turn into gold. The Seth offers Meera fifty percent partnership in the amulet business and sponsors her to perform various acts of kindness. But the magic does not work. Meera feels sorry for her failure but she comes to know the truth about the trick to teach a lesson to the greedy Seth.

Freedom is an important recurrent idea in his fiction. He survived in a period which witnessed the freedom struggle so he

examined various kinds of freedoms like political, social and economic freedoms. He through his novels praised India and its different traditions and customs. In his novel, while applauding Indian culture, he wrote:

India watched the rebirth of a nation. India was all warmth for china's new way of life even though it was not her way. India believed in many paths leading to one goal- human happiness. Those many paths had to coexist. Universal brotherhood was the ultimate value. So India stood for enlightened neutralism. That was Nehru's gift to his people; in its long range meaning it was a gift for many peoples.'(SFL77)

His next and latest masterpiece *Shadow from Ladakh (1966)* is about the unfortunate political event of China's shameless invasion on India in 1962. India had to protect her hard won freedom by hook or by crook. When the Chinese troops began to march on Indian Territory, every Indian was in a state of shock and bewilderment. Jawahar Lal Nehru had known for years what had been happening in Aksai-Chin but he was sure that every matter would be settled through friendly negotiations. Unfortunately a month long friendly negotiations gave no fruitful result.

Aksai-Chin road connects their province of Sinkiang with Tibet and it cut off twelve thousand square miles of Indian Territory. Nehru pointed out this mistake of encroachment to Peking and told the Chinese,

This area is uninhabited, mountainous territory of an altitude varying from fourteen thousand to twenty thousand feet above sea level, with the peaks going up much higher. Because of this, and because we did not expect any kind of aggression across

our frontiers, we did not think it necessary to establish check posts right on the international boundary.(SFL 169-170)

As the Chinese wanted this place for to use it to connect Sinkiang and Tibet they claimed it as the right to take the place “even if it meant the expropriation of thousands of square miles of Indian land.”(SFL 170). The importance of Ladakh and the motive of the war of 1962 is beautifully described by the writer in these words:

This area is the only traffic artery linking Sinkiang and western Tibet, because to its north-east lies the great Gobi Desert through which direct traffic with Tibet is almost impossible. This Aksai- Chin area is easily passable and, therefore, forms the only route linking Sinkiang and western Tibet. To the west, between this region and Ladakh, is the towering Karakoram range, which is extremely difficult to pass through.(SFL 170)

India believed on China and one of the poet of India wrote ‘Hindi-Chini bhai bhai’. But China was shaken by the growth of India so it stabbed India on its back and besides other activities Ladakh also became one of the points of the war. The communist Mao, who appreciated Gandhi and his principles suddenly started following the footsteps of his imperialist forefathers. The Indians frightened by the menace of China started to think ways to resolve the problems. Either they thought that they should follow the Gandhian principles of truth and non violence or develop their modern and scientific technology. The story moves around the two different attitudes.

On one side there is large scale industrialization and modernism while on the other side there is the ancient India and

its decentralized small scale industries. The two poles of the novel are the two persons Satyajit and Bhaskar Roy. Satyajit, the creature of Tagore's Shantiniketan follows the principles of Gandhi and Tagore and dwells in Gandhigram which is also called a sevagram and Bhaskar Roy, the young American trained chief-engineer, dwells in steeltown and presents the modern and westernised ways of life. Since these two persons have different outlooks towards life so it creates a huge conflict between them.

The novel opens with the five day session of the Peace Congress in Moscow organised to establish world peace. Suruchi, wife of Satyajit participated in this Congress and while returning to India she watched Ladakh- the bone of contention between India and China, though no foreign delegate talked about Ladakh in the Peace Congress "All through five day session of the Peace Congress, Ladakh was a forbidden word." (SFL 3). Through the character of Mrs Tung Pao the novelist has highlighted the thoughts of China when she said; "peace everlasting peace can not be won without war. War is the only way to world peace. war to end all wars." (SFL 4).

The woman also commented on the economical Development of India when she argued,

her country has sold its newly won freedom to the imperialist powers and become their helpless stooge. Her people are beggars who live on the scraps of alms thrown as aid. (SFL 4).

The cave temples of Buddha were made by the Indian missionaries in the deserts of Siankyung and the Chinese pupils

Hsuen-Tsang and I-tsing had studied from the Nalanda university. This had set the examples of unity between the two biggest countries of Asia. Here the novelist has presented Nehruian philosophy and Gandhian ideals of non violence.

India is a country of villages and Gandhigram is like all the other villages of the country. Satyajit has made it an ideal and economically self sufficient place where people work in a small area with small needs. While Steeltown, Ilohapur, the neighboring city, represents the modern and industrialization. Thus these two places are different not only in a geographical way but in their ideology also.

The novelist has mentioned the geographical location of Ladakh and enlightens us about the five principles laid down in the memorable conference of the Asian Countries at Bandung, Indonesia. Satyajit believes on the principle of mutual respect territorial integrity and nonaggression under all circumstances because he believes that China will also follow these principles and respect the borders.

The Chinese aggression of 1962 changed many things for India; it raised suddenly the need for more weapons, money, food and other things. Bhashkar Roy, the chief engineer of the Steel town knew that greater production of steel was the only solution to defend the democracy of India. So he plans to expand his project Gandhigram also but Satyajit felt insecure about it so he argued with Bhashkar Roy. He narrates the power of steel and said;

steel means economic progress. Machine tools, tractors, big industrial plants, locomotives. Steel to fight poverty and hunger. But steel has gained a second meaning. It stands for our country's freedom. That is an inescapable fact, not to be changed by wishful thinking. Development plus defense-a compulsion for our current history.(SFL 27).

He attacks on the old methods and the weapons of war and says; "our troops must have modern arms. Much of the equipment they now have is old, obsolete. And steel is the core of all armament."(SFL 27)

Bhaskar's assaults in Gandhigram are only ideological not economical. He thinks that the attitude and ideals of Gandhigram are only identical and not practical. As he had spent his life in the modern civilization of America so he believes that the people of the village will certainly enjoy the modern and technological ways of new and modern life. Gandhigram and Steeltown are both are working for the economical growth but their ways are different. While talking to Sumita, he narrates "Machines can produce in a minute the sum total of whatever you make with your hands in a year."(SFL 29)

Suruchi after returning from the world peace congress shares her experience with the villagers and expressed that the motives of China were different what they spoke;

Must we see an evil motive? The Himalayan border is well demarcated. Local Chinese guards have acted wrongly on their own initiative. What both the side need is a cool dialogue to settle this petty dispute.(SFL 52)

The audience then heard the news that the Chinese armed forces in the region of Kongka Pass, Ladakh had started a war on the Indian patrol team of twenty men. Nine guards were killed and the others were taken prisoners. Each passing day Indians were getting a shocking news that the Chinese had brought tanks and machine guns near the borders.

The writer also has focused on the situation of Tibet, located within the highest peaks of the Himalayas.

Tibet, a buffer state between China and India, became a Chinese possession, the question of borders arose between the two countries over a stretch of two thousand miles. (SFL 78)

Its custom, tradition, language and culture are totally different from other countries of Asia. From India they got Buddhism and alphabets. The people of Tibet are spiritually rich and one out of every ten men or women is a monk or nun. China attacked Tibet many times and tried to capture it so Dalai Lama, the spiritual guru declared independence in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. He also appealed the United Nations for the security of his country. India also requested for the sovereignty of Tibet and its pious culture.

The novel also presents some glimpses of China and its history. Satyajit reads the works of Mao-Tse-Tung, who wrote: 'the whole world can be remodeled only with the gun. War can be abolished only through war. To get rid of the gun, we must grasp it in our hands' (SFL 78) In response of the war Satyajit plans to take a peace march *Shanti Sena* to Ladakh which reminds us Gandhi's struggle in South-Africa. Satyajit read the poem *The Mask of Anarchy* by Shelley and recalls Gandhi's lines; 'Nonviolence, the quiet

courage- "If blood be shed, let it be our blood"-had brought the world's greatest empire to its end."(SFL 175)

Satyajit's aim behind the peace march is to inculcate the feeling of love and brotherhood and to touch the nobility of the Chinese people. He, therefore, goes to Delhi to get the approval of the government to carry out his plan of a peace march of five persons to Ladakh. At Delhi station his old friend, Bireswar, the Member of Parliament, met him and take him to his home where he narrated the situation of new China, "I saw the new China. All land redistributed. Fast- paced industrialization, with massive Soviet help. The people's eyes turned toward new horizons."(SFL 191) Bires proved Satyajit that his idea was not fit in the present circumstances.

As Satyajit is a blind follower of Gandhi so he makes a call to the nation to make his peace march successful. Unfortunately nobody responded regarding to his appeal and the mission failed. Meanwhile government his approved the expansion of steeltown in Gandhingar and he dropped the ideas of peace march and moved to Gandhinagar to save it. Bhaskar wants to destroy Gandhigram not only technically but also its traditional and conservative ways of life.

Ultimately neither Gandhigram nor Steeltown are shattered. They mutually compromised nstead. Sumita creates a link between her conservative father, Satyajit and modern husband, Bhasakr Roy. G.P. Sharma rightly describes this synthesis, "A happy combination of Gandhi, Nehru and Tagore together".<sup>14</sup> (*Nationalism in Indo-Anglian Fiction 268*)

The last novel discussed is *City in the River* by Arun Joshi. He was born on 1939. He took his engineering his degree from the University of Kansas and a degree of Industrial Management from M.I.T., Cambridge, Massachusetts. His education proved him to be his brilliant academics, for a short period he worked at a mental hospital in the United States in 1957 and in 1962, he returned to India and joined DCM in a managerial capacity, on the recruitment and training side. He has also served as an executive Director of the Shri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources. He was not a student of literature but from the beginning of his life he had a keen interest in literature and influenced by many Indian or western writers especially of the French writers such as Camus, Sarter, Kierkegaard, Kafka, Beckett and others. He is a novelist of great talent and as a novelist of rare sensitivity. Through his novels he reveals his psychological insight. His writing has been praised all over the world.

He has produced very compelling works in fiction. Joshi wrote five novels but his unexpected death in 1993 brought a huge loss in the literary world. Three of his novels *The Foreigner* (1968), *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* (1971), and *The Apprentice* (1974) were published before 1980. He got the Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel *The Last Labyrinth* (1981) and his last novel *The City and the River* was published in 1990.

With the publication of his first novel, *The Foreigner*, which appeared in 1968 Joshi shined in the galaxy of Indian

literature. Praising the novel and its psychological aspect Meenakshi Mukherjee said: “The Foreigner is the first Indo - Anglian novel to deal with a genuine human predicament without compromise and without cliches, since Anita Desai’s *Voices in the City*.”(Quest:*Detachment 103*)’

The novel is about human relation and its various aspects. Sindi Oberoi, a rootless person is the protagonist and the story revolves around his feelings of alienation and loneliness. He spent his youth in America and comes back in Delhi where he met a humble officer but he felt detached no matter where he goes be it his birth place Kenya or England or America where he got education or his working place India. He is an introvert person and spiritual exile and find his soul alone in the darkness. He thought that attachment caused pain. Sindi’ detachment does not meant to escape from work instead it means getting more involvement, sacrifice and Devotion to his work. He decides to carry the sinking business of his officer Mr. Khemka and at the end gets success because he forgets his self interest for the benefit of the workers of the factory.

This novel throws light on some thought provoking issues like detachment, frustration, quest for life, identity crisis and self- realization. Joshi used a poetic language full of similes, metaphors and oxymoron to present the variations of the mood and intensity of emotions and feelings of his characters. An example can be seen when Sindi said: “feels like a river that hopes to leave its dead wood behind taking an unexpected plunge over a steep precipice”(The Foreigner 176)

*The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* is his second novel which was published in 1971 and. It is different from *The Foreigner* in that the protagonist himself is the narrator while in this novel the story is narrated by Billy's friend Romesh Sahai (Romi) an officer of the ISA cadre posted as the collector of Jhansi. It is in a biographical form. The novel is divided into two parts, the first one named 'The Civilized World' and the second one 'The Primitive World' respectively. The novel has biographical note through which Romi, the narrator tells the story of Billy. Billy Bimal Biswas, the only son of a Supreme Court judge was sent to America to study engineering but quit his studies in favour of Anthropology. He was strange from his very childhood and he instead of liking the modern civilization praised the tribal civilization.

He feels that civilization is not the upgradation it society its but degradation. He says,

I sometimes wonder whether civilization is anything more than the making and spending money. What else does the civilized man do? And if there are those who are not busy earning and spending - the so called thinkers and philosophers and men like that - they are merely hired to find solution, throw light, as they say, on complications caused by this making and spending of money'. (*The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* 69)

He married with Meena but indulged with his friend Rima. He move the Central India and lived there as a semi-naked—tribal. He was seeking the meaning of life above and beyond that entire civilized world. Bilasia, Billy finds the right woman who can enliven his soul. Billy feels the meaning of life in the

primitive. The novel presents the difference between the civilized and the tribal life, and the modern and primitive age.

His third novel *The Apprentice* published in 1974. About this novel Thakur Guru Prasad remarks, “the narrator in this novel is an insistent confessionalist, confession is a factor in his redemption.” (*The Novels of Arun Joshi :The Lost Lonely Questers of Arun Joshi’s Fiction 100*)’

It is the story of the social disease and pain of Ratan Rathor. He is an educated and cultured person who wanders in search of a livelihood. He narrates. “I had become at the age of twenty-one hypocrites and a liar, in short a sham... from morning till night I told more lies than truths. I had become a master faker.”(*The Apprentice 128*)

He lost his personality and became pensive about the corruption in the world. He confesses in front of his listeners;

So you see my friend, here I am, a man without honour, a man without shame, perhaps a man of our times... How do I know life has purpose? Actually I do not, And, quite honestly mine is not the mind that can grasp such questions. But let me tell you something that a colleague of mine used to say. Life is a zero, he would say, and he would add, you can take nothing away from a zero.... I have begun to see a flaw in the argument. You see, you can make it negative, Life might be a zero, for all I know, but it seems to me that it need not be negative. And it becomes negative when you take of it your sense of shame, your honour.(*The Apprentice 204-205*)

The next novel *The Last Labyrinth* follows the tradition of first person singular. The hero, Som Bhaskar, relates the incidents of his life in flashback. Like Joshi’s other heroes he

also belongs to an upper class family. He is wealthy young industrialist, who gets his education from the best universities of the world. He also is searching the true meaning of life so he flies from one pleasure to another but instead of getting pleasure and a sense of fulfillment; he contracts a terrible sense of loneliness. His grandfather is a carefree man but his father is a scientist and wants to know the cause and effect of relationship. He follows the footsteps of his father and grandfather but he is more influenced by his religious mother.

A close study of his character reveals that he feels insecure and restless, and never runs for commercial comforts. On one side he inherits the drinking habit and the sensual attitude from his grandfather but on the other he is affected by his mother's religious nature. In between two emotional universes he becomes a labyrinth. He confesses:

if only one knew- what one wanted. Or, may be, to know was what I wanted. To know just that. No more. No less. This, then, was a labyrinth too, this going forward and backward and sideways of the mind. (Shankar Kumar: *The novels of Arun Joshi: a critical evaluation* 29)

The novel which I have selected is *The City and The River*. It was published in 1990 and is his fifth and last novel. His other four novels are related with the quest of life but this one is different from others. It is the mixture of prophecy, politics and fantasy. It is a critical commentary on the times; it contains sounds of the Indian emergency in India in 1970s but before focusing on the theme I would like describe the cause and effect of that period. The freedom struggle, the sacrifices of the

countrymen and was ultimately independence are discussed in the other chapters of the thesis. There was only one occasion after independence when protests evoked in the whole of India- the internal emergency declared by Indira Gandhi on 25 June 1975 which was lifted by her on 21 March 1977.

The incident attracted the attention of so many literary gems and they penned about it either directly or indirectly. Nayantara Sahgal, Salman Rushdie, Shashi Tharoor, Rohinton Mistry, O.V.Vijayan, Raj Gil, Ranjit Lal and others are some of them. The novel starts with a Prologue and ends with an epilogue. There are nine chapters narrating the reign of the grandmaster. The grandmaster's ambition to become a king, boatmen's rebel, the declaration of an Era of ultimate Greatness, the destruction of the city and the restoration of the city are the main features of the novel.

The novel moves parallel between the Emergency period of 1974-75 in India and the story of the Grand Master. The acquisition of unlimited powers, presence of a coterie of self-seeking sycophants, destroying huts for widening of the streets in the name of the beautification of the city of Delhi, the twenty-point programme, projection of the son as the heir, illogical family planning, loss of individual freedom, press censorship, arbitrary arrests etc. are some of issues connected with Emergency are presented through myths and fables in the novel.

The novel is written in a mythical framework because myths are the storehouse of great universal truths. There are various

themes in this novel and O.P. Mathur while commenting on the themes writes:

the theme of the novel is multilateral, spanning its political, sociological and mythical dimensions in a world which transcends its contemporaneity and contains characters who are archetypes rather than recognizable human beings with individual characteristics.' (O.P.Mathur: *The Contemporary and the cosmic in Arun Joshi's The City And The River, : New Perspectives In Indian Literature In English, Essays in Honour of M.K. Naik,150*)

The prologue of the novel introduces a master and pupils who are living somewhere near the Himalayas. The teacher is well-built, grey haired and bearded person is, the Great Yogeshwara, and the disciple is the Nameless - One. The guru narrates the past of the city and reasons behind its destruction and wants to prepare his student to enter a new world after the destruction of the old city. The city is governed by a single man, the Grand Master and its councilors include the Minister of Trade, the Education Advisor, the Master of Rallies, the Astrologer and the Commissioner of police. It is similar to the Emergency of India during which the elected legislature had become passive and dead and the Prime Minister was guided by a small coterie of sycophants. On the other hand the city is surrounded by the river which symbolizes the endless flow of life.

The aristocratic grandmaster and his family inhabit on the highest hill whereas the ministers occupy the other hills according to their position. Administrators, intellectuals and the middle class people live in the brick colonies. The real sons of

the river, the poor boatmen living in mud-houses lie scattered by the river on the outskirts of the city. It symbolizes the social differences during the emergency period of India, where the migrated and poor people lives in the outskirts of Delhi.

The Grand Master has a dream that he becomes the king of the city but surrounded by boatmen ready to attack him. His eyes fixed upon becoming the king of the city and all his deeds are directed toward the achievement of his aim. So he declares an “Era of Ultimate Greatness” (CR 23) and its “the Triple way or way of the Three Beatitudes” (CR 17) these rules represent the laws of Emergency where the Prime Minister declared the Twenty –Point Programme

The Grand Master started to bring the people to his side so he suppresses the rebellion of the boatmen. The Astrologer tries to convince the boatmen to accept the Grand Master as the angel sent by the gods themselves to serve the boatmen but they assert their allegiance only to the river, because, “They consider themselves to be the children of the river, and to the river, and river alone do they hold allegiance”.(CR 14)

The population of boatmen is increasing sharply so the grandmaster enforces family planning and passes a regulation that there must be one child to a mother and two to a home. It is the copy of the family planning act enforced by Indira Gandhi during Emergency. Siddhartha Sharma while comparing the rules between the Grand Master and Prime Minister of India writes;

Tyranny and repression, hypocrisy and deceit, selfishness and corruption, violence and destruction are rampant in the “City” of the Grand Master. The events portrayed are reminiscent of the emergency in India, as the aftermath in both the case proved ruinous to the rulers. (*The City and the River. A parable of the Times 82*)

The boatmen headed by the woman headman rebel against the rules of ‘the Triple Way’ or ‘the Way of the Three Beautitudes’ ( CR 19) which are supposed to improve the welfare of the state and Grand Master’s law of family planning. The head boatman warns the Astrologer and says:

You think that an ant is born on this earth without God’s will? If it is His will that there should be only one child to a mother then surely it shall come to pass. There is no need for the Grand Master or you to pass a law... You said that the wealth of the city belongs to the people...let the city’s wealth be put to use for the benefit of all. (CR 20)

The torture of the Grand Master can easily be seen when in the name of beautification he snatches the houses and living places of the boatmen and orders his councilors to straighten the road for a nice view. This incident also reminds us of the order of the Prime Minister during the Emergency when the poor and needy people were thrown from the outskirts of Delhi in the name of beautification of Delhi.

The Grand Master does not only want to upgrade his status but also wishes that his son ascends the throne after him. He seeks to ensure that he is succeeded by his descendent. Rallies Minister has to organize such rallies for him and for his son as well to give an impression to the masses that he too has endeared

himself for the masses. The Rallies Master tells the journalist: “And now, journalist, I must gather rallies not only for the Grand Master but his son as well. The city must now face its final humiliation and I must be an instrument to it”. (CR 76) Press and Media are called the third pillars of the constitution but during Emergency Prime Minister restricted the freedom of press and no independent newspaper was allowed to maintain itself.

Through an incident Joshi narrates the scene when the Professor is informed:

There are two newspapers in the city. One of them is owned by a trust of which the Astrologer is the head, and the other is owned by a girl. The girl is five years old and cannot manage a newspaper. It is managed for her by the Master of Rallies. (CR 88)

The entire broadcasting and media were under the control of Grand Master and in such situation people can only know what grandmaster and his councilors wanted to inform. The Astrologer in order to justify the role and importance of the rule of the aristocratic family argues that:

The sacred and mysterious has shown us the light and we have unanimously concluded that the Grand Master must immediately request his son to help him maintain the *Dharma Rajya* that he has established. We know what we are asking. We know we are asking for great sacrifice. No sacrifice is greater than the sacrifice from a family that has for a hundred years sacrificed its men, its women, its children, its wealth, its very all for the sake of this city. They have suffered endless privation just so that this city might prosper. Such is the family that we are asking this sacrifice of and we have no doubt that the Grand Master will listen to our pleadings. This city needs his son and he must give him to us. (CR 101)

The family resembles the Nehru family and its sacrifices. Commenting of the scene Shankar Kumar writes, “It is perhaps an ironical reference to the slogan during the Emergency— “Indira is India”( *The Novels of Arun Joshi: A Critical Study* 145)

The commissioner prepares a fake report which proves that the headman and Bhoma, the disciple of the professor were conspirators but the Professor knows that all reports of the Headman’s conspiracy are fake so decides to tell the truth to the people by starting a free lottery stall but failed to attract gathering. Finally Bhoma’s student narrates a fable of the king and tries to shows the truth behind the conspiracy. The headman sent to the Gold Mines where she had to face lots of tortures but still she rejected the rules of the grand master and said to the Astrologer: ‘I spit on you and I spit on the Grand Master’. (CR 164) The hunger of power makes the Grand Master so cruel that those who oppose him are put into the Gold Mines and are subjugated to personal afflictions. There is also an ironical satire because gold mines that once were are now prisons, dungeons of infinite black and dark nights.

Though the Professor was not a boatman yet he takes the responsibility to the uplifting of the boatmen. The little star, Bhoma’s student and the headman support him in this task. He tries to console them by narrating the story of the naked king and said, “This evil cannot last. There must be a new beginning – There will be no Grand Masters. There will be a new world; a new race of men will be born. I shall watch from wherever I am”. (CR 167) but unfortunately the professor died in peace and

to pick up the boatmen up and transport them in the dingy. To the suffocating gold mines became the daily routine of the police. In the jail the boatmen feel that they have become “orphans in an evil world”. (CR 144)

Bhoma was lucky that he escaped from the clutches of the police but he finds that the meaning of his life is not in escape but in action, So he become a man of action. He started a campaign for the release of the Headman and others. The strike was moving peacefully before the unwanted support of the “shock brigade” of the Education Advisor but then the movement becomes violent.

The boatmen watched in amazement as, with breathtaking swiftness, the shock brigades converted their strike into a general uprising. Within hours the uprising spread from the great river to the pyramids. Shops, schools, buses, telephone exchanges and railway stations were systematically burnt.(CR 182)

Meanwhile the goldmines are broken and all the innocent people set free but the next night almost two hundred sleeping boatmen are brutally murdered and thrown into the river which leads an open war between the boatmen and the Grand Master’s Military forces. The police and the army which is expected to secure and protect the citizens from internal revolt and external war are misused by the Grand Master because he used these to keep himself in power and to frighten the poor boatmen.

The headman is blinded in the Gold Mines, Grand Father, Bhumi Putra and Dharma lived in the Rose Garden were killed and all the satellites were under controlled so that the news couldn’t spread. It represents the control over censorship by the

Prime Minister. An unequal war started between the boatmen and the army. The boatmen, Bhumiputra and all his supporters were mutilated. While all this is going on, the Grand Master at night organized a secret meeting and declared himself a King and appointed the Minister for Trade as the new Grand Master of the city.

The Hermit of the Mountain performs a *yajna* for the peace of the departed souls and collects the boatmen on the bank of the river. He recites some mantras to purify the sins done by the Astrologer on the inaugural day of the New Era. After the continuous downpour of seven days and seven nights the river consumes the whole city barring one child so that he might tell the truth in future. The Great Yogeshwara explains,

On the ruins of that city, as always happens, a new city has risen. It is ruled by another Great Master, which, of course, need not always happen. In the new city is another Professor, another Bhumiputra, another tribe of boatmen. There is another's Council and another set of Councillers. The men have other names but the forces they embody remain unchanged. And into all this where you go you will perhaps, be known as another Hermit of the Mountain. And it is possible you will have a disciple whose name will be Little Start.(CR 262)

We can conclude the novel in the words of Tapan Kumar:

Indeed, as a re-affirmation of Indian and as an experiment of the parable as a fictional mode to convoy mythic truths and political, *The City and The River* is a remarkable *tour de force* in contemporary Indian English fiction'.(Arun Joshi's *Novels: A Critical Study* 120)

The novel investigates the failure of the government to gain their goals. In case there is autocratic political party, there are common people also who fight for their freedom, democracy and fundamental rights. According to Brahmma Dutt Sharma,

....Arun Joshi presents the malpractices in which people wielding political power indulge and the ways in which people respond to them. Taxonomically speaking, the malpractices presented here are of two kinds: the malpractices resorted to in order to gain and retain power and the malpractices resorted to in order to eliminate dissent. The response of the victims range from total surrender to uncompromising resistance. (*The Novels of Arun Joshi: The City and the River as a Political Novel* 241)

Thus we can conclude that our freedom movement is not only a political struggle but a sentimental experience for all the countrymen even it is also the most renowned and discussed topic among novelists. The novel in one way or other way presents the national trauma. Some of them have even presented a comprehensive and realistic account of all the important phases of freedom movement.

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**CHAPTER-3**

**FREEDOM**

**STRUGGLE**

## CHAPTER-3

### FREEDOM STRUGGLE

After more than two centuries of British rule, India won independence on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947. The Indian freedom struggle for freedom was not only based on *satyagraha* (the principles of truth), and *ahimsa* (non-violence) but also involved great masscare and bloodshed. Every Indian sacrificed something for it. Men and women, young and old, soldier and writer, Rightists and leftists, revolutionaries and oppressed castes, Hindus and Muslims, reformers, conservatives, moderates and rebels, the leaders of freedom fighters were drawn from every region and walk of life. Dadabhai Naoroji, Lokmanya Tilak, Acharya Narendra Dev, Sarojini Naidu, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Jayaprakash Narayan, Subhash Chandra Bose, Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Kasturba Gandhi, and other patriots embodied selfless patriotism.

Up to 1930's there was no Indian novelist who could claim sustained and considerable achievement in fiction originally written in English. Then came a sudden flowering, and it is significant that it came in 1930s, a period during which the glory that was Gandhi's, attained perhaps its brightest splendor. The Indian freedom struggle was more than a generation old, yet with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, it was so thoroughly democratized that freedom consciousness percolated for the first time to the very grassroots of Indian society and revitalized it. It is possible to see a connection between this development and the rise of the Indian

novel in English; of all literary forms it is most vitally concerned with social conditions and values'1( IJELLH: The Impact of partition on Indian writing in English.... 375)

Politics and social issues have played an integral part in the development of Indian English Fiction. The political movement, the freedom struggle and the role of the leaders in the freedom struggle always inspired the writers in English to explore it in their novels. Many writers turned away their plots from the romantic phase to contemporary issues. Through their novels they highlighted the political and social problems of Indian society. Bipin Chandra in his book *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*, writes:

The Indian national movement is perhaps one of the best examples of the creation of an extremely wide movement with a common aim in which diverse political and ideological currents could exist and work and simultaneously continue to contend for overall ideological political hegemony over it. While intense debate on all basic Issues was allowed, the diversity and tension did not weaken the cohesion and striking power of the movement; on the contrary, this diversity and atmosphere of freedom and debate became a major source of its strength.(5)

Novel is the best medium to present the panorama of changing society and living relationships. It was the impact of the freedom struggle and other national movements that Indian English fiction has suddenly changed from old dogmas to contemporary issues. Freedom struggle provided many important themes to the novelists like East-West encounter, partition, communal differences, class discrimination, exploitation and

oppression of economically weak people. The Indian English Fiction witnessed the British rule, the effect of western on Indian Socio- Political culture. K.Venkatta Reddy rightly says:

Parallel to this struggle for political freedom was a social struggle a fight against superstition, casteism, poverty, illiteracy and many other social evils that were eating into the vitals of Indian society. The socio political movement that had caught the imagination of the entire nation also inspired the Indian novelists in English who rightly realized that novel too had a vital role to play in it. (web)

The Post-Independent novelists, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K.Narayan, Khushwant Singh, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar, Kamala Markandeya, Arun Joshi, Attia Hossain, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal, Bharti Mukherjee, Nargis Dalal, Salman Rushdie and others deal with the themes of cross-culture differences, communal riots, loss of moral values and faith, the growth of Indian sensibility and identity crisis.

Satish Kumar impressed by the contribution of the Post-Independent era writers, wrote:

The novelist minutely analyses the significant and far reaching changes in individual passing through period of overall transition. His observant and penetrating eye watches the evolution of new values and new morality.....the creative artist alone is interested in these basic changes in the individuality of man and the evolution of new values and new morality is integral to the theme, action and characterization. All the novelists.....have sincerely and realistically recorded the revolutionary changes in human outlook and thus they have envisioned a new social order.

(IJELLH Social and Historical influences...*A Survey of Indian English Novel 249*)

The story of nation building is connected with the story of nation destroying and this happened due to the power transfer. India has a great history that inspires the historians and the writers. Bipin Chandra, in his book, *India after Independence* writes:

The freedom struggle was perhaps the greatest mass movement in world history. After 1919, it was built around the basic notion that the people had to and could play an active role in politics and in their own liberation, and it succeeded in politicizing, and drawing into political action a large part of the Indian people. Gandhi, the leader who moved and mobilized millions into politics, all his life propagated the view that the people and not leaders created a mass movement, whether for the overthrow of the colonial regime or for social transformation. He added, though, that the success or failure of a movement depended a great deal on the quality of its leadership. Satyagraha, as a form of struggle, was based on the active participation of the people and on the sympathy and support of the non-participating. (23)

There is one character, Mahatma Gandhi, who can't be neglected and he has been explored by every writer who wrote on the of freedom struggle. The writers have described Mahatma Gandhi's passive resistance movement against the British and the cruel activity of them to destroy the Indians. Rowelt Act, the drastic massacre in Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, the boycott of Simon Commission, the boycott of foreign goods, the Non-Cooperation Movement, the abolish of

Untouchability, the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, the famous Dandi March, the Quit India Movement of 1942 and many other revolutionary activities during the pre-independence period have been presented by the writers in their novels.

The major novels which have picturised the influence of Gandhi and also the freedom struggle are- R.K.Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatama*, Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges*, Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers*, Ahmad Abbas's *Inquilab*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Chaman Nahal's very famous novel *The Gandhi Quartet*.

In this present chapter I have endeavored to present the freedom struggle beautifully described by Chaman Nahal in his *Gandhi Quartet*. The idea of writing a quartet is a herculean task for a writer but Chaman Nahal did this in a very smooth manner. As the name implies, it consists of four books which focus on the historical movements. *Azadi* is the fourth one in *The Gandhi Quartet* series but Nahal wrote it first and the remaining three volumes thereafter.

Nahal's *The Gandhi Quartet* is much like Paul Scott's, *The Raj Quartet*, a four -volume novel sequence about the concluding years of the British Raj in India. The series was written during the period 1965–75. *The Gandhi Quartet* was written remarkably because Chaman Nahal had lived in that rambunctious time. *The Gandhi Quartet* is based on some of the most important historical events of the freedom struggle of India. Nahal has weaved a story which runs with the historical events; the

fictional characters are beautifully mixed with the real historical characters. The virtual world has been portrayed as a real one. The background of the novel is closely related to the historical perspective.

In *The Gandhi Quartet*, the fictional characters present the role of freedom fighters with their names changed. The characters were influenced either directly or indirectly by the real freedom fighters. As the title indicates Gandhi predominates in his every novel. He is omnipresent in all the four volumes. He was the ultimate hero of the Gandhi Saga but Nahal has also given much importance to the other revolutionaries. All the four volumes of *The Gandhi Quartet* revolves around Gandhi, the freedom struggle, the political and economical differences, the social evils and Gandhian movements to improve the society.

Nahal, while writing *The Gandhi Quartet*, might have been influenced by Sir Walter Scott. Sir Walter Scott has also picturised historical incidents and historical personalities in a magnificent way in English Literature. The sacrifices of the freedom fighters, the valor of the revolutionaries, the influence of Gandhi, his love towards his country and the magnificent freedom struggle inspired Nahal for writing such a splendid piece of literature. Nahal while giving an interview accepts that the real heroes of freedom struggle had influenced him to write novels.

Surprisingly, I found other Non-Gandhian movements which contributed to the overall freedom movement, like the violent revolutionaries. Gandhi talked about non-violence. Ras Bihari, Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose were people who

believed the British could be driven out through organized physical force. I'm fascinated by that too. (commonwealth novel in English :'Interview with Chaman Nahal.' 42)

In *The Gandhi Quartet* Nahal has presented joint family of Thakur Shanti Nath, with many of his family members. As time elapsed the Indian family system was also influenced by the western culture and the joint family got divide into nuclear families. Before independence joint families were very common in villages. From one book to other in the quartet the family of Thakur Shani Nath has also shifted from one generation to the other and in this way we encounter three generations of his family. The members of the family of all the three generations appear influenced by Gandhi and the other revolutionaries.

The fictional characters have played important lively roles in the different movements of the freedom struggle. Nahal's knowledge of Indian History can be easily traced through the volumes of *The Gandhi Quartet*. The Satyagrah Movement, the Civil-Disobedience Movement, the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Dandi March and the Quit India Movement presented by him realistically including historical details. In the Gandhi Quartet we see the whole journey of freedom struggle being performed and in the last volume *Azadi*, we witness the culmination of the journey, though the aim which the journey was started is not fulfilled in the way the people had expected to be. People longed for an independent united India where the people of all communities could live in harmony and brotherhood but the situations, had changed the outcome of the freedom struggle.

The holocaust of partition and the assassination of the national hero i.e. Mahatma Gandhi have been presented in the last volume of *The Gandhi Quartet*. P. Usha Rani in her book *The Novels of Chaman Nahal: A Study* writes:

‘Nahal has created a poignant human drama with a sure instinct for dynamic character and intense action. The Gandhi Quartet is a remarkable fictional venture in the history of Indo-Anglian novel in which author has admirably succeeded in effecting clear-cut linkage between the historical personage and fictional characters.’ (125)

In *The Gandhi Quartet* Nahal had not presented Gandhi as a superhero but as a victim of the British rule, in spite of the fact that he had many positive qualities and immense courage. This was why the people of India were enchanted by his policies of truth and non-violence. Chaman Nahal throughout the four volumes of the Gandhi Saga has depicted the live picture of Gandhi by providing the precise and minute details of his splendid personality. Many of the fictional characters in *The Gandhi Quartet* are directly influenced by Gandhi viz. unil, Rehana, Kusum and Vikram.

*The Gandhi Quartet* comprises of four novels—*The Crown and the Loincloth*, *The Salt of Life*, *The Triumph of the Tricolour* and *Azadi*. The first novel *The Crown and the Loincloth* describes the first phase of the freedom struggle of India, the Non Co-operation Movement during 1920-1922. It describes the conflicts between the British and the Indians and the conflicts between the moderates and the extremists simultaneously. As the title represents, the powerful British Empire is symbolized by the, “crown” and “loincloth” symbolizes the new leader of freedom

struggle. Ambuj Sharma in his book *Gandhian Strain in the Indian English Novel* wrote: “The ‘loin’ in the loincloth emerges as a towering figure against the atrocious attitude of the British crown towards the Indian masses.” (129)

Like other volumes of *The Gandhi Quartet*, *The crown and the Loincloth* also consists of three parts-‘Love’, ‘Perspective’ and ‘Affirmation.’ The two hundred years of British rule had created a huge difference between the aristocratic families and the exploited poor families, the highly literate and the village illiterate, the zamindars as also the farmers and community differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. Nahal has presented all these differences as also the exploitation by the British in India, in the novel. “Large-scale growth of industries in cities was discouraged by the British and they kept the Indians essentially an agrarian nation.”(CL 47)

The major historical events as the return of Gandhi from South-Africa, the Rowlett Act, the Non Co-operation, the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre and the spinning wheel movement are presented as the background in the novel. Nahal has presented the historical incidents chronologically. To make his book interesting Nahal collaborate historical incidents with fictional events beautifully.

The story of the freedom struggle in the novel starts from Thakur Shanti Nath’s joint family which includes his wife, his four sons and their wives, his three daughters and his grandchildren in Ajitha, an imaginary place in Amritsar. “Ajitha

was symbolic of the strategy through which the British ruled India-or at least in Punjab.” (CL 46)

Not only the British but the rich Indians like money lender also exploit the simple folk of the village. Ajitha was like any other village of India where people spent their lives in the village only and earn money by agriculture. In Ajitha the money lenders with the support of British badly exploited the poor peasants.

The British wanted to have a stable rural base, loyal to the throne, and only agriculturists with vast holding could serve that end.....small holdings quickly disappeared and passed into the hands of the trading classes or moneylenders. The British turned a blind eye when moneylenders charged exorbitant rates of interest, forged documents, and eventually swallowed up the land of their clients. (CL 46).

The poor Indians were not only the slaves of the English but also of the rich Indians. Gandhi had noticed the social differences in every phase and encouraged his followers and other countrymen to stand against it. Even Gandhi has launched many programmes to abolish the social discrimination. It was one of his influences that the fictional characters also discussed the problems of the social and the economical exploitation and stood against it.

O.P. Mathur in his book *The Novels of Chaman Nahal-A Penultimate view, Studies in Contemporary Indian Fiction in English*, has described the influence of Gandhi on the fictional characters:

.....clearly in this novel Nahal has taken upon; himself a difficult and challenging task to portray Gandhi both as an

individual and as a symbol to follow the lives and fortunes of a large number of fictional characters and to project the whole as a metaphor of the multi-farious strands of those tumultuous years of struggle generated by the opposing forces of the foreign government (the crown) and the popular uprising symbolized by Gandhi (the loincloth). (330)

The first historical incident mentioned by the writer is the Rowlett Act incident. Sunil, the protagonist is explains to his beautiful and educated wife Kusum the upcoming hartal to be conducted by Gandhi in Amritsar against this new law passed by the British Government. If the law was passed police would arrest anyone without any warrant. This law said, ‘no lawyer, no appeal, no plea’

Against the new law passed by the government, the Rowlett Bills. Under these laws they can arrest us at will, without a warrant, and try us in courts without a jury. Gandhiji had given out a call that sixth April be observed as a hartal by the entire nation. I didn't mention to you, since I didn't think it would be any different from the run of hartals we have seen so often earlier. (CL 55)

It is the custom in the joint families that all members have to follow the rules made by the head of the family. Sunil wanted to join the hartal but Thakur Shanti Nath didn't want him to do so. There two special qualities of the hartal; first it was conducted by the national hero, Mahatma Gandhi and second people of every community with unbiased intentions participated in this hartal and it attracted each and every person of every religion and caste. The hartal symbolizes that the Hindus as well as the Muslims sacrificed their lives for the independence of the country.

Because it was not a hartal, it was an act of atonement. Gandhiji wanted the people not only to observe a hartal but also to fast for twenty-four hours to protest against such inhuman and brutal laws. And they observed mass fasts, they bathed in the Golden Temple the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs, they broke their bread together, drank water out of the same container and embraced each other in streets. And the police felt powerless. The sahibs and officers on horse-back couldn't look at the crowd straight, so humiliated were they at this display of unity.(CL 56)

It was the unity of the Indians which shook the foundation of the British Empire in India but unfortunately with passage of time this unity was badly shattered by the Britishers through their 'Divide and Rule' policy. Sunil, participated in the strike against Rowlatt Bills in spite of his father and family not agreeing to it. The fictional characters have their own ideals in this novel like Sunil represents Gandhi and Gandhian principles; Thakur Shanti Nath is in favour of British Raj and Rakesh, the school friend of Sunil at high school, praises the extremists and their revolutionary activities.

Nahal, in this novel have given equal importance to both the streams of the freedom struggle i.e. the moderates who followed Gandhi and his path of non-violence and the extremists who followed the revolutionary and the path of violence. Though their paths were different but their destination was same i.e. Azadi. Rakesh in a conversation with Sunil said,

...the British could be driven out of India only by force. He said Gandhi was a fool who was not taking the people forward but backwards. What would going to jail achieve-or fasting? ...They must have read about Lenin. If not, they should. We too had

leaders like him. Like Lala Hardyal. Or Ras Bihari Bose. Or Jathedar Kishan Singh. We should follow them instead. (CL 63)

Rakesh thinks men as well as women should participate violently in the unequal war with the British. He wanted a brave better half for himself and in his wife he expects; “A rebel, walking shoulder to shoulder with me with a gun in hand.” (CL 206) The anguish, the hatred against the British Empire and the landlord system can easily be traced in the heart of youngsters. It is the quality of the writer that he has painted the pain and anger of the youngsters so beautifully in his novel. Our history has witnessed the sacrifices of youngsters who were hanged for their country.

Rakesh narrates the Black Hole incident of Calcutta to Celia Ashby, an American woman and says that every jail of India is a Black hole in itself and the British system is a system of exploitation where the series starts from the king and ends with the village patwari. Through the character of Rakesh Nahal presents the revolutionary group of India which wants to get rid of the British and their exploitation system.

Rakesh knew that the Indian possessed a lot of power but they hadn't yet realized it.

Burke! He had called the Indians a bunch of grasshoppers making all that noise under a tree. They had to show the British they were *not* a bunch of grasshoppers; they were men, with vitality and vigour, and with a sense of determination. Did the British yield their hold on America willingly? No. The poor Americans petitioned and petitioned. And the British only laughed

at them. And then a handful of them rose and wrested the power from their hands. That's what the Indians must do, too. (CL 67)

On the importance of both groups Radha K. opines that,

In *The Crown and the Loincloth*, the novelist succeeds in weaving the story of Gandhi and that of Sunil and his family, giving equal importance to both. They merge quite naturally, without being yoked together by violence. (web)

With the support of the other revolutionaries Rakesh organized a group named, "Himmat" an Urdu word which means Valour or courage. Rakesh was the head of the group. It represents the small regional groups who had contributed a lot the Indian freedom struggle. In support of such small courageous groups R.C.Majumdar in his book *Struggle for Freedom* wrote:

It is hard to distinguish the terrorists from the nationalists. The essential and fundamental ideas were the same in the two cases but while the nationalist relied mainly on passive resistance or other forms of self-assertion on an organized basis, the extreme let school had no faith in these methods and activities and regarded armed resistance as the only feasible way of destroying British Power. (69)

While Rakesh was actively running his organization 'Himmat,' Sunil was under the influence of *Hind Swraj*, a famous book of Gandhi and he fully applied the instructions of the book in his life. The two characters symbolize the two different modes of the freedom struggle i.e. the moderates and the extremists. "Organized violence and organized non-violence were both forms of strength, were both feats of endurance and

courage. Only organized non-violence was a greater force, a great power, said Gandhi.”(CL 67)

We meet General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer in this novel that was responsible for the heartbreaking Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. Dyer was born in India and had been living here from forty five years. Dyer conducted this huge massacre because of his suspicion that the huge mass present there had assembled to plan a revolution against the British. Kenneth Ashby, the Assistant Commissioner of Amritsar had even informed him about the intentions of the huge mass.

They have just finished celebrating Hindu festival of Ram Navami when hordes of them are here from the country to bathe in the Golden Temple. There is a cattle fair on in the city. And today also happens to be Baisakhi, the Indian New Year Day.( CL 76, 77)

But Dyer did not listen to him and planned for lots of killing. While describing the historical incident Bipin Chandra, a great historian writes *India after Independence*;

On 13<sup>th</sup> April, Baisakhi day, a large crowd of people, many of whom were visitors from neighboring villages who had come to the town to attend the Baisakhi celebrations, collected in the Jallianwala Bagh to attend a public meeting. General Dyer incensed that his orders were disobeyed, so he ordered his troops to fire upon the unarmed crowd. The shooting continued for ten minutes. General Dyer had not thought it necessary to issue any warning to the people nor was he deterred by the fact that the ground was totally hemmed in from all sides by high walls which left little chance for escape. The government estimates was 379 dead, other estimates were considerably higher’12(’188-189)

The effect of Jallianwala Bagh had been picturised beautifully by the novelist

Last night, the household of Thakur Shanti Nath in Ajitha was reeked by three termors. They heard that more than five hundred Indians had been shot dead in Jallianwala Bagh at pointblank range by a British general and his troops that evening.(CL 105)

On the same night Shyama eloped with Rakesh when sunil was lying unconscious in his home because police had beaten him brutally. His mouth was bleeding and lots of bruises were visible on his body. The situation became worse in Punjab after the huge massacre. Dyer had crossed limits when he had made the pujabies crawl on their bellies.

The government had imposed martial law in the Punjab immediately after the Jallianwala Bagh firing and, though public meetings were banned, vernacular newspapers closed down and the leaders gagged down or put in jail,.....Mass arrests, mass torture, mass abuse.....He ordered the electricity supply to the city cut. He had ordered the water supply cut. He confined people to their homes and forbade them to go out, even to bury their dead. (CL 120, 121.)

People hoped that Dyer would be punished for this inhumane crime but on the contrary he got lots of praise in the British Parliament.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of June the martial law had been withdrawn from Punjab. r Gandhi visited Amritsar twice in October where he intended starting a movement against the British for their inhuman deeds naming it the: Non Co-Operation Movement. “Non-cooperation. No more loyalty to this

government, no more allegiance.”(CL 141) The incident of Jallianwala Bagh had made Sunil strong and he left his job and home too. He took an oath to become an active life member of the Non-Cooperation Movement. He after getting the advice from Gandhi opened a khadi bhandar in Ajitha and started supplying the homespun cotton material, Khadi material which according to Gandhi, would provide economic strength to the Indian people as Gandhi was always against foreign clothes. Describing the importance of khadi Maganlal in a conference said:

He was at pains to stress the value of the spinning programme. Even if the Congress launched no political campaigns, or if its political campaign were defeated, the khadi bhandars would go on, the spinning would go on. There could be no political freedom without economic freedom and the key to the salvation of the teeming millions lay in spinning.(CL 164)

Finally in 1920 Gandhi presented his programme of non-cooperation movement before the Congress,

...in the year 1920 Gandhi did present his programme to the Congress and became its undisputed leader.....The revolutionary nature of Gandhi’s ideas frightened many of the seasoned leaders like Lala Rajpat Rai, C.R.Das and Mohammad Ali Jinnah (who was then a member of the Congress), but Gandhi remained firm and carried the vote.(CL 153, 154)

Sunil was the first volunteer who supported Gandhi in the Non-Cooperation movement and Rehana, Sunil’s neighbor and Muzzafar’s wife helped him at every stage. She was arrested by the police in Bareilly. This incident set an example of the role of women in the Indian freedom struggle.

Sunil as a true disciple of Gandhi tried to eradicate untouchability, while living in Shimla, he hired a cook from lower caste and then organized a dinner for all ranked personalities and after dinner he disclosed the truth about the cook belonging to a low caste. Nahal has also presented the fragrance of communal difference in this novel through the conversation of Muzaffer and Sunil

1921 was a memorable year in Indian History because the visit of the Prince of Wales to India was scheduled that year; “the Prince of Wales was coming to India on a state visit and now was the time to show the mighty Crown the strength that lay in a flimsy loincloth.”(CL 179) People had started to show their disloyalty. This represented the intensity of their struggle for independence. The freedom fighters involved themselves in burning the foreign clothes. Sunil and Muzaffer were arrested for boycotting foreign goods in Hall Bazar and it was the growing influence of the Non Cooperation Movement that many people had joined it,

In 1921, a large number of people joined the movement, a good many of them waved the black flags at the Prince of Wales, thousands of them suffered the lathi blows unflinchingly, hundreds picketed the textiles mills, many still picketed the liquor stores, numerous blocked the police vans and the police horses, and so forth.(CL 13)

Nahal has beautifully presented the scene of the Indians burning the holi of foreign clothes. Celia Ashby, aunt of Kenneth Ashby, noticed the crowd in the Hall Bazar;

The crowd was new to this type of protest; they stood somewhat sheepishly, each man hidden behind the one ahead of him. Yet there was that huge pile of shirts, suits and saris in the middle of the bazaar.....it was like a collage, that bundle with trouser legs, jacket sleeves, shirt sleeves, ends of neckties, end of shoes and shoelace, frilled and lacy bits of slips and bras, and stockings, both men's and women's sticking out from every opening in the bundle. As they threw the bundle on the fire, the crowd with one breath shouted: 'Bharat Mata ki jai.' Soon the extremities of the collage were burning. It was like a crown burning, thought Celia Ashby diabolically. (CL 188)

When the protest against the British Crown was at its peak the seeds of communal difference had been sown in the Congress. Nahal has explained the differences through the communication between Sunil and Muzzaffar. Muzzaffar said that Congress was a Hindu Organization and said a lot of bitter things about it;

you have to admit that if a man like Mohammad Ali Jinnah leaves the congress, there must be doubts in the minds of many Muslims.....Gandhi as his prayers meetings devotes three-fourth of his time to Hindu mythology and thought. And mark you; this is a highly insidious method Hinduism has to first engulfing and then wiping out a sect opposed to it. The Hindus have practiced it for centuries. This is how they would wipe out Islam, given the chance. The formula is simple. Follow some of the rituals of the opposing sect and make them follow most of yours.....Look at Buddhism. There are not a hundred thousand practicing Buddhists today in the land that gave birth to Buddha. I think it is the same game that the Congress is playing. It's only biding time to inflict Hinduism on Islam.(CL 270, 271)

It was in an open protest against the Prince of Vales that various violent activities began to occur in the different parts of the country. Twenty two policemen were killed by the revolutionaries at Chauri-Chora in U.P. They have burnt the police-station. A khadi bhandar at Rohru in Shimla was burnt by the police and by being disappointed due the violent activities of the extremists Gandhi suddenly called off this successful non-cooperation movement. Great national leaders like Moti Lal Nehru and his son Jawahar Lal Nehru and the common people of the country criticized Gandhi for suddenly calling off the movement.

It was a bitter personal defeat for Gandhi. No organization could have been more hostile to its leader as that AICC. Though eventually Gandhi won, throughout the delegates hurled abuse at him. Why should he have taken a national decision single-handed? Why did he not consult the AICC before suspending the movement? Who was the real master in a national organization: the individual or the elected representatives? The grievances against him were far too numerous. The delegates from Bengal and Maharashtra openly opposed Gandhi at the session.(CL 405)

Finally the Prince of Vales arrived in Bombay on a four months tour on 17<sup>th</sup> of November 1921 and this journey was organized by the British to impress the people of the subjugated Indians, but the revolutionaries planned to attack the Prince and kill him. Many Indian revolutionaries started to coming to India from different countries on reading an advertisement in a newspaper under the wanted column

WANTED

Heroes to organize revolt

Remuneration: Death

Reward: Martyrdom

Pension: Freedom

Place of work: Hindustan. (CL 393)

Being attracted by the advertisement many Indians began to come to India. A revolutionary Darbara Singh arrived in India On a ship Kamagata Maru. The police fired on that ship when it docked at Budge Budge harbour, in the Hooghly River.

Many revolutionaries were killed, arrested and deported from India in this historical incident. When the Prince of Wales reached Punjab, Rakesh with the help of other revolutionaries attacked him but unfortunately Sunil was killed in this attack while trying to save the life of the Prince. He became a national hero because he sacrificed everything; his family, his love Rehana and at last his life too in the freedom struggle. After the death of the hero of the novel his wife Kusum left Ajitha and moved to Sabarmati Ashram with her son Vikram where on 18<sup>th</sup> of March 1922 Gandhi, on the charges of sedition, was sentenced to six years of imprisonment.

K. Venkatesh Reddy on the success of the novel writes:

Nahal achieves a remarkable success in recreating a momentous period of Indian History with a meticulous attention to detail and truly human understanding of people and situations. It acquires an epic sweep of events that shaped them. The great variety of character and action, the deft mingling of the historical and the fictional, the powerful play of the tragic and farcical, and the moving multiplicity of sense and incident, all combine in making *The Crown and The Loincloth* a forceful recollection of the first of the three phases of the age of Gandhi. (web)

Nahal's second novel *The Salt of Life* starts from the point where the first volume of The Gandhi Quartet *The Crown and The Loincloth* culminates when Gandhi was released from the prison by the government on health grounds in January 1924 though he has been imprisonment for six years till March 1928. As in the first volume Gandhi is the central figure in this volume too.

Nahal has beautifully elaborated the picture of Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chanra Bose, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and other historical characters and Vikram the son of Sunil, the hero of *The Crown and The Loincloth* is the main protagonist and like his father he also follows Gandhi and his principles. Like all the volumes of the Gandhi Quartet, this volume is also divided into three parts-Whispers, Temper and Choices.

The Salt-Satyagrah, Dandi March and other freedom movements are discussed here and the taste of communalism becomes bitter with the passage of time. Kusum reflects the image of a woman 'Shakti' or 'Bharatmata'. The novel starts with a few negative points in the historical as well as the fictional panorama. Gandhi's got arrest in 1922, the beginning of the Second World War began, and the failure of Round Table Conferences in 1930, the execution of the very young Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries, the underground revolutionary activities of INA which met a fatal end and the constant obstinacy of Muslims for Pakistan play a vital role in this novel.

After Sunil's death Kusum, his wife along with her son Vikram, Thakur Shanti Nath's family follows the path of Gandhi

and leave Ajitha. Shyama, the daughter of Thakur Shanti Nath married Rakesh's friend Zahir and embraced Islam. Zahir was a member of the revolutionary group 'Himmat' but after escaping from Andaman prison he quit the group but achieved new voluntary revolutionaries joined 'Himmat'.

The revolutionaries sacrificed their lives happily for the sake of freedom. Bipin Chandra describes one of the violent scenes in his book *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* and writes,

Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt were asked to throw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly on 8 April 1929 against the passage of the Public Safety Bill and the Trade Disputes Bill which would reduce the civil liberties of citizens in general and workers in particular. The aim was not to kill, for the bombs were relatively harmless, but, as the leaflet they threw into the Assembly hail proclaimed, 'to make the deaf hear.' The objective was to get arrested and to use the trial court as a forum for propaganda so that people would become familiar with their movement and ideology. (239-240).

Being non-violent Gandhi condemned the violent revolutionary activity. "No one was hurt but the gesture accomplished its task: it made even Gandhi sit back and search for his conscience." SL 58 and when people asked him about the incident, he said: "...they started out with violence. Brave though they are, I cannot approve of their acts." (SL 22). The character of Gandhi has been portrayed in a very complicated manner by the writer;

the British officials felt so much dismay, so much frustration, so much confusion, as while dealing with Gandhi.

Whose side was he on, with his own people or with the rulers? He made it seem he was on both ....And the British not only feared Gandhi, they somewhat despised him, too. Why couldn't he act like a man, state his claims, and stick to them? (SL 20)

Gandhi while talking to Kusum explained the result of his freedom movement:

What had the British done during the ten years in spite of all the noise? Sent out a mission now and then, which repeated the old clichés in the report it submitted? What had the Simon Commission done for India, which was here for two years ago...Jawahar was hit with the lathi blows in the demonstration against this commission. Pandit Pant had been hit with lathis. Lala Lajpat Rai had been hit with with lathis and had later died because of the blows.'...and what of the common people...They had been trampled upon in the most brutal manner, their bodies mutilated, their spirits crushed yet again. (SL 44)

Gandhi has always condemned the violent activities of the young revolutionaries. The death of Lala ji influenced the revolutionaries and the writer has beautifully presented this historical incident and its effect. While reading the novel a reader feels patriotism in his heart. Bipin Chandra in his book *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* mentions the death of Lala Lajpat Rai in this way:

The death of this great Punjabi leader, popularly known as Sher-e-Punjab, was seen by the romantic youthful leadership of the HSRA as a direct challenge. And so, on 17 December 1928, Bhagat Singh, Azad and Rajguru assassinated, at Lahore, Saunders, a police official involved in the lathi charge of Lala Lajpat Rai. In a poster, put up by the HSRA after the assassination, the assassination was justified as follows: 'the murder of a leader

respected by millions of people at the unworthy hands of an ordinary police official . . . was an insult to the nation. It was the bounden duty of young men of India to efface it. . . We regret to have had to kill a person but he was part and parcel of that inhuman and unjust order which has to be destroyed.(SL 239)

Thus the Simon Commission failed in India and Sir John Simon himself was aware of his failure. After negotiations with the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald gave the idea of round table conference to be held in London. In the round table conference, leaders of different political parties and the prince participated and tried to solve the problems of Indians.

Here in India, Gandhi was ready for his second mass movement, Salt Satyagrah. Gandhi announced “I’ll be walking to the seashore and I won’t return to Sabramati until India’s freedom is won,” (SL 47). But Kusum refused to follow him in this Salt March. Bipin Chandra put light on the importance of Salt Satyagrah explaining the power of civil disobedience, in his *India’s Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*, he said:

Supposing ten persons from each of the 700,000 villages in India come forward to manufacture salt and to disobey the Salt Act, what do you think this Government can do? Even the worst autocrat you can imagine would not dare to blow regiments of peaceful civil resisters out of a cannon’s mouth. If only you will be stir yourselves just a little, I assure you we should be able to tire this Government out in a very short time. (263)

The historical Dandi March started on 12<sup>th</sup> march 1930 when Gandhi with his seventy eight followers, including a boy of thirteen set out from his pious ashram in Sabarmati. They walked 240 miles to Dandi, the sea coast of the Arabian Sea. The

thirteen year boy was no one but Vikram, Kusum's son who left his mother when she got married with Raja Vishal Chand. Even Gandhi had not given permission to her for remarriage. Gandhi started this Satyagrah to break the salt law imposed by the English, "set out to register his protest against such a law, which crushed even the poorest of the poor in the country," (SL 176). On the way Gandhi said to Vikram that if he dies his ashes should be thrown into the holy river Ganges or in the Indian fields. It presents the simplicity of Gandhi and his devotion and love towards his country.

Finally Gandhi on 6<sup>th</sup> April reached Dandi; "after marching 240 miles from Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad on fifth April. He took twenty three days to do so, covering ten miles a day on an average" (SL 261) and broke the salt law.

When he reached Dandi, merely picked up a lump of natural salt from beach and thus violated the law by possessing contraband salt. At his signal, 700,000 villages in India came forward to do the same in any of the forms prescribed by Gandhi. (SL 261)

The Britishers didn't arrest him because they knew the power of the single man. The result of the movement of 1930 was more compact and powerful than that of 1921,

75,000 people met on the sands of Sabarmati river to pledge allegiance to Gandhi; 15,000 men raided the police armouries at Chittagong and carried away all the arms; 10,000 people surrounded the police headquarters in Peshwar, when their leader Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was arrested; 80,000 join his party, the Red Shirts, a branch of All India Congress; 65,000 textile workers down tools in Bombay; 30,000 railway workers in

Mymensingh walk out of their sheds;100,000 clothe merchants observed a six day hartal in poona and keep their shutters down; 500 men in Sholapur took charge of the municipality and ran the town for one week; 20,000 Muslims in the Punjab found a new party, the Ahrar Party and hoist the Congress flag at their meeting in Lahore; 25,000 dock hands in Madras refuse to unload the cargo from British ships.(SL 260, 261)

The writer was so impressed by the movement that he named his book after it. Just as salt makes our food tasty, this incident also changed the mood of the countrymen because the salt law was broken in almost each and every part of the country. The British were shaken by noticing the unity of Indians and the power of a frail man. Bipin Chandra in his History book *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* had mentioned that;

On 6 July, Gandhi Day was declared by the Congress Working Committee to protest against large scale arrests, and about 50,000 people took part in the *hartal* that day with workers from forty-nine factories downing their tools.'(208)

On 4<sup>th</sup> may 1930, Gandhi was arrested by the police in Dandi and imprisoned in the Yervada prison in Poona. Vikram too was hit and hospitalized in Bombay. Kusum and Angela Davis, wife of Kenneth Ashby booked a first class coupe in Frontier Mail as Kusum wanted to visit the hospital where Vikram was admitted but unfortunately their seats were taken by two white persons Percy Wand and his sister Jennifer Wand and they refused to leave the seats for Kusum. It could be said that it was the influence of Gandhi that Kusum fought for her right and won when finally she got her seat, "it was yet another act of Satyagarh" (SL 275).

Nahal has beautifully captured the scene in this novel and presented Kusum as a symbol of power.

Kusum possibly lead this impetuous, vibrant mob, in the unbiased expression of power, of energy which she had just gotten hold of, which she was sure Gandhi would approve of too, the woman as shakti, as an intense vital flame of molten lava, demanding her rights. (SL 277)

After the boycott of Simon Commission, first Round Table Conference was held in a Fiasco in London in December 1930 and it was an unsuccessful conference because no settlement on India could be done without the presence of effective leaders of the Congress and Gandhi. The government released Gandhi from the prison in January 1931 so that the Round Rable Ronference could be successfully conducted. In this series during of March 1931 a pact was signed in Delhi between Gandhi on behalf of the Congress and Lord Irwin on behalf of the government and is known as Delhi-Pact or Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

Bipin Chandra in his book, *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* explaining the terms and conditions of the pact wrote;

The terms of the agreement included the immediate release of all political prisoners not convicted for violence, the remission of all fines not yet collected, the return of confiscated lands not yet sold to third parties, and lenient treatment for those government employees who had resigned. The Government also conceded the right to make salt for consumption to villages along the coast, as also the right to peaceful and non-aggressive picketing. (273)

The government as was its nature betrayed Indians and hanged four revolutionaries.

And on twenty-third March, in spite of all Gandhi's repeated appeals for clemency to the viceroy, the government hanged Bhagat Singh and Charulata in the Lahore jail; two of their associates, Rajguru and Sukhdev, were hanged with them. (SL 337)

The news of their hanging spread like a wild fire in the country and people sympathised for the young revolutionaries because these were not mere revolutionaries but the heart throb of the Indians also. The beauty of the words used by the writer make his reader's eyes wet. It is his narration skill that makes the scene so life like and live. Bipin Chandra in his book *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* expressed his last message,

In his last message of 3 March 1931, he declared that the struggle in India would continue so long as 'a handful of exploiters go on exploiting the labour of common people for their own ends. It matters little whether these exploiters are purely British capitalism, or British and Indians in alliance, or even purely Indians. (247)

Gandhi said that it was the insult of the whole nation including him. But lots of people criticized him and greeted him with black flags when he was going to Karachi to endorse the pact and to attend the annual session of the Congress, people said that he should not sign the pact. Before sailing for London to participate in the second Round Table Conference in 1931 Gandhi visited Simla to meet the new Viceroy, Lord Willington. The Congress President Jawahar Lal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan followed him, but this meeting also failed because Willington doubtfully questioned the unity in

Congress and the government again used the weapon of ‘divide and rule’ by launching an award, ‘Communal Award.’ Many historians also criticized this incident in their books.

Bipin Chandra, in his book *India’s Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* wrote:

The British policy of ‘Divide and Rule’ found another expression in the announcement of the Communal Award in August 1932. The Award allotted to each minority a number of seats in the legislatures to be elected on the basis of a separate electorate that is Muslims would be elected only by Muslims and Sikhs only by Sikhs, and so on. Muslims, Sikhs and Christians had already been treated as minorities. The Award declared the Depressed Classes (Scheduled Castes of today) also to be a minority community entitled to separate electorate and thus separated them from the rest of the Hindus. (283)

The meeting baffled the other leaders and Gandhi because he understood the intentions of the British and explains it to his fellow members in an angry tone that the British wanted to divide the country by institutionalizing religion. They would cut the country first into Hindus and Muslims and then into small pieces based on caste, the shiyas, the sunnies, etc.

In the series of conferences the third and final Round Table Conference was held in 1932 but also failed because the Congress leaders boycotted the conference. Here Gandhi was facing failures in his political life and Kusum in her personal life because she has become a widow once again and had joined the ashram again.

Nahal in the last part, 'Choices' of this novel portrays the emergence of Subhash Chandra Bose and narrates his role in the great freedom movement. Bose left the Congress in 1939 and formed his own party, 'Forward Bloc' "...Forward Bloc-to march forward, to achieve forward rapidly. Though the two had never met, it was this speed, this pace of the freedom struggle that Bhagat Singh had died for." (SL 379) and the wave of freedom struggle reached every village. Congress was operating in almost all of the villages, the national flag was being waved (Congress Tricolour) in every village and everybody sang no other song but Vande- Matarm. It shows the every village was now standing against the British Imperialism.

The freedom struggle was at its peak and people had now started openly protesting in the streets. On twenty second of June, 1941-

.....crowds had already come out on the streets in many towns in protest. There had been heavy firing on them in Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. In Delhi the crowd had stoned Linlithgo's car. In Bombay five hundred thousand people had gathered at Chowpatty, defying the ban on public meetings. In Madras as many people had gathered at Maria Beach. In Calcutta the crowd in retaliation had set the Howrah Bridge on fire. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, had suffered a broken wrist, while resisting a police baton attack on him near Allahabad. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was with Azad, had suffered a lathi blow on his shoulder. The youth camp on Vikram in Nagpur was raided and participants forcibly dispersed; Vikram was arrested and sent to jail. (SL 546)

The fire of communalism which had started in the thirties was now spreading very fast and was effecting appealed lots of minority people,

And in the annual conference of the Muslim League in Lahore in 1940, the League openly came out with this as its political aim: a free India, yes but a free Hindu India as one unit, and a free Muslim are as the other unit....By 1940, the Muslims even added a name for their separate state; they wanted it to be called Pakistan, the land of pure, of the believers. This choice of the Muslim masses was personified by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a Bombay based Muslim Lawyer. (SL 376, 377)

When all the Round Table Conferences failed the British Government presented the act of 1935,

It offered popular governments at the provincial level but on the basis of separate franchise but accepted office and formed governments in many of the provinces under the new Act. This was nominal power though- all major portfolios still saying with the governors and their advisors. (SL 377)

In the last part of the novel the writer has introduced the Second World-War which he has elaborated in his next novel, *The Triumph and the Tricolour*. Tricolour is our national flag and Nahal has presented the history of the Tricolour in the first volume of *The Gandhi Quartet* that;

The Congress had for the past some months adopted a national flag. It was Gandhi's brainwave, though the idea was suggested to him by a Punjabi-by Lala Hansraj of Jullundur. Gandhi wanted all the sets of the country to be represented in the flag, which was impossible- considering the number of minorities. Eventually, after many experiments, the Tricolour emerged. The flag had three colours, in the form of three brad horizontal strips.

The saffron band represented the Hindus, the green one the Muslims, and the white took care of the other ethnic groups. In the middle of the white band, there was a spinning wheel, representing the poor masses. And Gandhi declared to the nation here is your flag, you live and die for it. CL 23)

Every country has a flag which represents the whole country and its tradition and culture. A flag is not only a piece of cloth but it is such a thing which creates patriotism in human heart and in this volume Nahal has beautifully presented our national flag, its history and its importance. Nehru unfurled the national flag for the first time in the annual session of Congress in December 1929 and delivered a message to the people of India- “Remember once again, now that this flag is unfurled, it must not be lowered as long as a single Indian man, woman and child lives in India.” (TT 24) The flag had been announced but some Muslims raised their voices against the sequence of colour bands because they thought that saffron dominated the green and therefore the green band should be on the top.

Like other volumes it also consists of three parts: Defiance, Constraints and Release. This novel deals with the last phase of freedom struggle. All four volumes of *The Gandhi Quartet* are linked together. In this novel Nahal has beautifully presented the last ultimatum given by the Indians to the British to quit India immediately. The influence of Second World War, The arrival of Cripps Mission, the Cabinet Plan, Quit India Resolution, Burma War, Bengal Famine, and Formation of Interim Government are the principal historical events mentioned in the novel.

The connection of historical characters and fictional characters is beautifully weaved by the writer and the accuracy of historical incidents is magnificent. The story of freedom struggle and the story of Thakur Shanti Nath move simultaneously. The novel started with the speech of Gandhi when he was delivering his opinion about Quit India Resolution passed in August 1942 and watering the seeds of freedom in Indian's heart. *Bharat Choro*, Quit India Movement is also called August Revolution because it started in the month of August. The year 1942 was remarkable in Indian History because: "for the first time, the Congress deleted all words of supplications from its resolution." (TT 13)

Gandhi was so dissatisfied and in pain that in one of his speech he said,

A nation of four hundred million people was still a slave nation, which couldn't raise its head in its own right. It had no national flag which could flutter alongside the flags of other nations; it had no national anthem which could be sung alongside the flags of other nations. (TT 13)

The influence of Second World War had been described by the writer beautifully Japan had invaded Calcutta and could invade other parts of the country. Though Japan is our neighboring country and it could never invade India but the presence of British provoke them to do so. After the failure of the Cripps Mission in 1942 all the leaders of Congress realized that Britain would not make any particular and honourable constitution for India nor they would leave it. Even Gandhi realized that any more silence could be dangerous for the future

of India, so Gandhi said: “The British must leave, retire, exit, go, vanish, disappear, pass out, and pass away.”(TT 14) The person known for truth and non-violence, Gandhi understood that Indian had given many opportunities to the British government for settlement. The attitude of Gandhi shows the aggression, hatred, anguish and rebel of every Indian.

The non-cooperation movement of 1921 and civil-disobedience movement had been suspended by the Indians because they had trusted on the promises and commissions made by British but it was all in vain as India was still a slave nation. The Congress started their last movement, Quit India Movement in 1942. Gandhi in his speech on the day when the Quit India Movement bill passed said;

How long could India keep on waiting? How long could it beg? There was no question of giving the British another chance at readjustment. The Congress was no longer asking for readjustment; it was asking for a total withdrawal.(TT 15)

All the countrymen knew that it was the policy of divide and rule that created an insecurity among Muslims and they wanted an Islamic nation for themselves but Gandhi always focused on the unity of the two major communities of India;

And what other homeland these Muslims could have, but India? A majority of them were of the Indian stock; they had emotional and sentimental ties with India which couldn't be snapped. If Pakistan was being claimed by the Muslims for an Islamic presence in India, that presence was already there. Could a decent Hindu disown his debt to Islam...And that pulse nowhere demanded separation of brother from brother, of community from community, it demanded unity. (TT 15)

The writer had presented a scene when the members of the revolutionary group, 'Himmat' met Gandhi. The freedom fighters that were captured in Cellular Jail in Andaman and a lot of other such freedom fighters scattered all over the India, negotiated with the Congress leaders to accept them and their revolutionary methods in the fight against the British. Their means of fighting might be different from the Congress but ultimately their goal was the same i.e. Azadi, freedom. Darbara Singh, a revolutionary on behalf of revolutionaries said to Gandhi: "We are at a moment of war with the British.....and in a war we fight to win-whatever the methods."(TT 23)

The revolutionaries expressed their thoughts about the equality of violence and non-violence. If Gandhi thought that Christ and Budha were great because they fought with the power of non-violence then there were other leaders who had powerfully fought and won and we can't forget their sacrifices. He said:

....at this juncture in our freedom movement, hold the great Shivaji in any lesser esteem merely because he fought violently? Would you hold Rana Pratap in any lesser esteem? Or Rani of Jhansi? No, Mahatma ji, if you are honest with yourself, you will have to honour and applaud both the groups.(TT 23)

At this point, the freedom struggle took a sudden twist and Gandhi, a priest of non-violence looked indifferent towards the methods of struggle. Gandhi gave a powerful mantra to the Indians, i.e. 'Do or Die.' Bipin Chandra in his book *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* expressed;

Here is a *mantra*, a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantra* is. "Do or Die" We shall either free India or die in the attempt: we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery.(464)

The influence of Quit India Movement could be easily understood. Nahal writes:

the forces that the Quit India resolution had unleashed could now only go forward; could only demand, only insist on, engagement. Gandhi had eventually succeeded in this. He didn't want the people to sit around; he wanted them to act. And they were vying with each other to be in the vanguard of that action. While she could rationalize about his earlier movements, this one was utterly beyond her comprehension. The response it had sparked off in the whole country, even he perhaps....the iron might never be as hot again and they had to strike at the anvil now. What did 'Do or Die' the call Gandhi had given otherwise mean? (TT 188)

He neither fully rejected the violence nor fully sanctioned it when he said to the revolutionaries, "You know, I have come to the conclusion that in the present circumstances, you are free to interpret non-violence the way you want it."(TT 27) and praise Darbara Singh by saying,

My Sikh friends here might have been driven into the freedom struggle from as pure a non violent motive as I. And yet what if in the process they might have been unable to retain the non-violent stance? So long as you don't start out with violence, so long as you start out with non-violence, you are free to interpret the way you want it. (TT 29)

Civil- disobedience movement was more powerful than the non-cooperation movement but Quit-India movement was more powerful than both of them because the British government was really frightened by this last mass movement. One reason behind its huge success was that at this time, Violence and Non-violence were united to fight for the ultimate aim. All the newspapers also highlighted the news,

All the local papers had brought out special editions, with 'Quit' figuring prominently on the front page. 'The Congress wants the British to quit now,' shouted newsboys as they raced along on their cycles. Now. Abhi. Fauran. (TT 25)

In this novel we meet the third generation of Thakur Shanti Nath who were also sacrificing their lives for the freedom of their motherland. Naval, the grandson of the Thkur joined, 'Himmat' and Gyan, his second grandson who had initially joined the navy gave up his job and rebelled against the government and Vikram was living with Gandhi from his very childhood. Not only the boys but Abha, had his granddaughter too helped the revolutionaries to achieve their aim. The freedom movement was in young hands at the time of Quit India movement. There were lots of families who are sacrificing their lives for the freedom of the country from their different generations.

Nahal expressed the combination of two pillars:

for the first time in the freedom struggle the leadership truly passed on to the younger people; the older ones lay languishing in jails. And for the first time in the freedom struggle, the violent and the non-violent revolutionaries truly worked

together in terms, in tandem Gandhi himself having expressed doubts about the limits of non-violence.....the mode of action emerging in the post 1942 India was different from anything that had ever been done in the country before. The younger leaders no longer believed in just filling the jails, or in just perpetuating violence. (TT 51, 52)

Without crossing the limits of violence the young leaders were beautifully taking the freedom struggle ahead. Many people boycotted their work. The young people joined hands with the leaders and made the police helpless as their policy of movement had become really complicated and made confused and baffled the police;

what could the police do if all the sweepers in a town struck work and dumped the dirt in the local kutcheri- as they did in Allahabad in October 1942? What could the police do if all the workers in the factory down tools- as they did in the loco workshop in Ajmer on hearing the Gandhi's fast in February 1943? What could the police do if all the students of a university refused to take their exams-as they did in Lahore in April 1943? (TT 52)

The incidents taking place frequently in a series and the motive behind it was just to engage the government. The master mind behind the strategy according to many historians was a Bihari Leader, Jayaprakash Narayan and a few others. Nahal narrated an incident of the mutiny of Lonavla where ten people died and in response to this incident many workers all over the country resigned from their jobs,

the ratings in the Castle Barracks( which housed sailors awaiting appointments to othet ships), in the Central

Communication Office (which handled all signal traffic for the navy), the Colaba Receiving Station (a wireless centre), the Mahul Wireless Station (which had the powerful transmitters), the Sewri Naval Hospital (with 300 beds and 200 staffs), all struck work partially or wholly, for the succeeding week. And incidents of sympathetic protest occurred in over sixty naval ships-sixty!- when ports and shore establishments in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Karachi, Vizagapatam, Mandapam, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Jamnagar, Cochin, New Delhi, Aden and Bahrin, all joined hands with the Lonavla dead. (TT 52, 53)

While Gandhi and other leaders were busy in the Quit India Movement, Subhas Chandra Bose was preparing his army INA. The first phase of INA was formed in September 1942, by an Indian officer in the British Indian Army, Mohan Singh and the second phase was prepared by Subhash Chandra Bose himself in 1943. The Indian Prisoners Of War (POWs) were handed over to the Indian officers by the Japanese. Special trains were bringing them Darabar and Joseph Daniel with the help of Vikram planned to hijack the trains at Sialkot and prepare those POWs for INA.

In 1943 the famine of Bengal and the careless attitude of government put ghee in the fire of freedom struggle;

A famished Bengal in the government's opinion, would be like a minefield in the way of the Japanese; they would find no subsistence here and their line would be snapped. In a way, therefore, the government encouraged the famine. TT 117)

When the people were suffering from the pain of famine and epidemics the government was busy in collecting funds for war but the people refused to donate anything. Nahal has presented the scene of Delhi where the Muslims has refused to contribute towards the war collection because,

Hundreds of Muslims had died because of cholera and famine. The government had no right to ask for any donations toward the war fund from the Muslims. They should quit the Muslim mohallas, they should quit Delhi, and they should quit India. They protest against the collection team in a high manner; ‘The Muslims inside were offering a qurbani- a sacrifice, a self mortification. Against a corrupt and indifferent regime, which had allowed epidemics and famines to spread? And every Muslims in the bazaar was in a hurry lest he be left behind before the arrests were called off. By the afternoon, two hundred men had been arrested. People were still lined up at the nukkarhs. (TT 155)

Gandhi was released from jail on 6<sup>th</sup> May 1944 while all the other leaders were kept in jail as Gandhi had suffered the immense loss of his wife Kasturba in 1943. On the role of Kasturba, P.Usha Rani in her book *The novels of Chaman Nahal: A Study* expresses:

Looking at Kasturba’s role in The Gandhi Quartet retrospectively from The Crown onwards, it is clearly borne out that unalloyed love and respect for Gandhi, deep concern for his health and happiness are combined with courage to speak out her mind when necessary and caution him whenever he goes to excess in self denial. She resents his chalking out her life for her, and

reluctantly accepts many of his vows, including celibacy. She does not hesitate to express her exasperation at Gandhi's vows...(382)

During Gandhi's absence from the active political scene the revolutionaries performed many violent activities. Kusum was living in Banras, a holy city of India, after Raja Vishal Chand's death and helping INA indirectly when one battalion of INA accompanies the Japanese army to the Indo-Burma front and for the Imphal Campaign. Kenneth Ashby visited to Kusum and informed her as the situation of the INA in the Imphal Campaign. The INA men had been completely demoralized because they were facing a discriminatory attitude and had to even do menial work with the Japanese units. Kenneth said, "These revolutionaries don't have a chance. Things are pretty bad for them in the east; they are already beaten there." (TT188) but Kusum was not ready to accept the truth and when he enquired about her indulgence in revolutionary activities she indirectly refused and said,

....they all have my blessings. I'm sorry Vikram was arrested in Delhi; I would have liked him to go as well. I would have liked Amit to go but he's too young. But those, who go, they have my sympathy, and love, and respect. (TT 188)

Kenneth Ashby sensed the warm effective air of the Quit India movement but he tried to convince Kusum that the fate of revolutionaries in the east was not bright. He opened his briefcase and showed some images of the men of INA;

Some wore makeshift uniforms, some were in mufti, others in dhotis. But there they lay, their faces and their bodies riddled with bullets, their mouths open, and their clothes in disarray. They were all in a heap, piled up in a bit, or fallen in a line. They lay next to telegraph polls or walls or village wells. Many were no older than children. Each had a gun in his hand, or the gun lay next to him. Kusum could see that many of the persons in uniform were actually women wearing blouses and trousers. Kusum fished out the photo of an old Sikh who lay slumped against a tree trunk. His teeth were protruding out and his white beard was smeared with blood. A machine gun lay in his lap, across his legs. (TT 195,196)

This heart melting scene of INA makes us recall the Sepoy Movement of 1857. The sacrifices of the freedom fighters are immortal in Indian History. Gandhi might have realized the importance of their sacrifice so even after having witnessed the great violence he had praised the revolutionaries and suspended his movement as he had done earlier. Nahal writes,

May be violence had occurred, may be many underground workers didn't even belong to Congress, but today, in 1944 Gandhi couldn't condemn one of them, not one. Today, in 1944, he was willing to hail Bhagat Singh, as a son of India. Today, in 1944, he was willing to hail Subhash Bose-with whom he had such basic differences-as a great son of India. ( TT 203)

Gradually the fragrance of freedom could be smelled by the Indians and they were now expecting that they would be able to breathe in an independent country very soon but they were unaware of the nightmares of partition because they trusted that their leaders would definitely solve the problem however

unfortunately the sores of communal frenzy were very deep. The talks between the main leader of Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi failed.

Then one of Gandhi's colleagues C.Rajgopalchari suggested to Gandhi that the idea of Pakistan could be at least examined by the congress but the Two-Nation Theory was unexpected for Gandhi and he said,

And if there were two, there were ten nations in it, there were twenty. A community, a kaum, owing allegiance to whatever faith, whatever creed, whatever myths, whatever legends, whatever sacred books, whatever taboos, whatever religion, whatever political system, whatever dress, whatever food, whatever language, did not constitute a nation (TT 209)

Gandhi was focusing on the might of unity and he presented a lot of examples when both the communities had worked together and lived together like a single family while he defined a nation,

A nation meant being born together. That's it; it meant a group of people who were born together, who lived together, who grew up together, who died together. ....the Hindus and the Muslims of this subcontinent were born together here, on this soil, this earth, virtually on the same bed, in the same cradle. Yet now they were talking of a separate zone for the Muslims. Did the great Lodis ask for a separate zone for the Muslims? Did the great Moguls? When Shivaji became an emperor, did that Marata stalwart ask for a separate zone for Hindus in his kingdom? Did the plumed Rnjit Singh ask for as separate zone for the Sikhs in the Punjab? (TT 210)

Finally in March 1946 the newly formed Attlee cabinet of the Labour Government sent another committee comprising of three Britishers. They were Pethic- Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A V Alexander. Gandhi openly boycotted their arrival while being baffled by it. He said to the workers that just like their predecessors, the members of committee would also enjoy here and make a report of five hundred pages but fail to solve the problem of the Indian. The members of the cabinet mission visited the whole country and then presented the proposals publicly. The main recommendations were that “elections were to be held in each province to Legislative Assemblies.”<sup>433</sup> both the Congress and the Muslim League participated in the elections to form an Interim Government.

It was declared by the government that the election would determine the future of the sub continent whether it would be united nation or it would be split into two. The result of the elections is presented by Bipin Chandra in his book, *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947* –

The Congress won over 90 percent of the general seats (including twenty-three of the thirty-six labour seats) in the provincial elections while the Muslim League made a similar sweep in the Muslim constituencies.<sup>(480)</sup>

It was clear that the British would leave the country within a few months and wanted to leave as soon as possible as they knew they would not be secure once the Indians got freedom. They perhaps sensed the upcoming communal frenzy and

holocaust of partition. Gandhi was still trying to unite the two communities he started a padyatra, from village to village and Nehru followed him to many places and consoled the people that very soon a new government would be formed and it would protect them but he knew that it was just a wild goose chase to console them.

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# CHAPTER- 4

## PARTITION

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### PARTITION

“Partitioning two lives is difficult enough. Partitioning millions is madness.” (Chaturvedi, Dr. Roopesh, *The Partition of Indian Sub- continent* 39)

Literature has an undisputable significance in human life because it focuses on every matter and remains as a heritage for future generation can pass to its succeeding generation. It presents the social, political, communal, historical and cultural temperament of the society and people.

Many writers have presented their experiences of the Indian freedom movement in the form of novels, biographies, short stories etc. The pain, anguish, bloodshed, separation-all of those has been recorded by many literary legends and personalities. They have tried to expose the nature of selfish political leaders and their parties behind partition. Some writers suffered directly due to partition. Many of their novels are based on the insane butcheries committed in the name of caste, community and religion during or after partition. Partition was the darkest event in Indian History; it had shattered the happiness of Indians. Unity, brotherhood, and love for each other are the weapons which help India achieve its freedom and swept out the powerful reign of the British. Before partition our country was famous for its unity in diversity the Hindus, Muslims, Jains, and

Sikhs, lived here without any communal bias whatsoever but Partition left a permanent wound on the soul of the nation.

The freedom struggle had united the major communities of India but its ultimate result Partition shattered its broke the unity. There was a social and emotional integrity among the countrymen earlier but the partition of united India into two separate nations, India and Pakistan, created great hatred and bloodshed. Freedom did not come to India the way Gandhi and other great leaders had expected. Though the Congress tried to avoid partition it became inevitable due to the huge Hindu-Muslim massacre.

K.R.S.Iynger has rightly expressed,

The 'leaders' had sowed the wind of communal suspicion and partition was the result, like a whirlwind, the mad act of partition was uprooting masses of humanity, mangling them and throwing them across the border heap after heap. (*Cyber Literature: M. A. Jinnah and Partition 103*)

We can point out some prestigious novels based on the theme of partition like "*The Heart Divided*" by Mumtaz Navaz, "*Ice Candy Man*" by Bapsi Sidva, "*Clear light of Day*" by Anita Desai, "*Shadows of Time*" by Nigarmasroor, "*Train to Pakistan*" by Khuswant Singh, "*A Bend in the Ganges*" by Manohar Malgonkar, "*Azadi*" by Chaman Nahal and others.

The creation of the new nation called 'Pakistan', the sudden freedom, the transfer of power to the Indians and finally the painful partition of the peaceful land of Buddha and Mahatma

took place on the year 1947. Instead of rejoicing Independence, people were gripped with fear and terror. They had lost all their human values like love, sympathy, friendship etc. They had become aliens in their own home and country.

Communal riots and terror had reached the climax. People who were peacefully dwelling on borders began to leave their houses, lands, properties and relatives to save their lives, friends became foes over night, their love and sense of belongingness converted into hatred; killing, raping, looting and burning became the order of the day and mass migration like that of the Israelites in the old Testament take place. Radcliffe got the task of fixing the boundaries for the two separate nations India and Pakistan. He had to make a boundary that would divide a sub continent of more than 35 million people, who, despite religious varieties shared a common culture, language and history.

One of the most tragic problems of partition was to transfer the population.

The forty five mile of roadside from Lahore from to Amritsar along which so many passed became a long open grave yard....And every yard of the way.....there was a body. Some butchered some dead of Cholera. The vultures had become so bloated by their feasts they could no longer fly and the wild dogs so demanding in their taste they ate only the liver of the corpses littering the road.'(Chaturvedi, Dr. Roopesh.*The Partition of Indian Sub- continent* 39)

The emerging national political consciousness of Indians has been faithfully captured in the political fiction of Indian

Writers. When the nation was on the doorstep of new dawn, it also faced unparalleled demolition, blood-shed and agony. Famous partition writers Khuswant Singh and Chaman Nahal have successfully portrayed this irksome phase of our national history in their novels.

Like other writers of partition novels, Nahal was also unbiased while writing the novel *Azadi*, he never supported particular community. Lakhmir Singh in his article, '*Chaman Nahal: Azadi*' Wrote.

The novel in fact gives a picture of these riots in their totality, without presenting a Hindu or Muslims points of view. Nahal blames both the communities for losing their sense of balance and sainty.”(234)

The partition of the sub continent was the avenue of separating the two communities. Through political History many writers presented the causes behind the partition of India which includes the growing tension between both of the important parties i.e. the Congress and the Muslim League, the clash between Nehru and Jinnah, helplessness of Gandhi and insecurity felt by minor communities.

The Political leaders in the lust for power took the least care of loss and profit, friendship and enmity, grief and happiness of the sufferers of partition; they only focused on the geographical and the political boundaries, assets and other visible things. The bitter truth is that India achieved its freedom at the cost of huge human loss and pain. The partition was like

the betrayal of the common folk by the cruel, corrupt and inefficient government, politicians, officials and bureaucrats. When India gained its freedom from the British clutches in August 1947, it was divided into the Muslim dominated northern state of Pakistan and the Hindu predominated southern part the Republic of India. The Britishers who had come to India only for trade became its rulers. Though there were both blessings and curses of British rule, the intention of the Britishers was only to use the Indian assets but their methods were foul.

The Britishers neglected the Indian village administration which integrated agriculture and the manufacturing industry. British monarchism will be remembered as a dark period in Indian history because it ruined the society that was dwelling in peace with love. The Britishers have used the policy of 'divide and rule' for every aspect of human life. This policy sowed the seeds of enmity between the two major Indian communities i.e. Hindu and Muslims. Bill Davidson, a British sergeant who was against British rule had made the following comment on their rule in India in Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*, "Local cultures had been destroyed everywhere. More so in India which had such a long History and Tradition." (*Azadi* 98)

Gradually, the young as well as the old generations realized and understood the real intentions of the Britishers behind each and every of their policy, and then little and great mutinies sprang against them and finally they realized that they would not be able to rule in India any more. The Lahore session of the

Muslim league was held in March 1940 under the president ship of Md. Ali Jinnah. The cabinet mission had mentioned the probability of the formation of Pakistan. The Communal riots started in North India from August 1946. The Muslims had made a volunteer organization known as Muslim National Guard and simultaneously to secure their religion and society the Hindu had created their own organization call the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sanghthan, RSS. In such crucial circumstances it was impossible for Britishers to continue to rule in India.

The Britishers have decided to transfer their powers into the hands of the Indian leaders in June 1948. In one of his letters to Ernest Bevin, in January 2, 1947, Attlee Clement confessed:

We have always governed India through the Indians. Without the tens of thousands of lesser functionaries we could not carry on. In a typical district of one or two million population it is quite common for there to be only one or two white officials....with the knowledge that the termination of British rule in India is not far off, how can you expect them not to look to the future? It would be quite impossible ....For a few hundred British to govern against the active opposition of the whole of the politically minded of the population. (web)

On June 3, 1947 Mountbatten announced that the date of transfer of power would be shifted from June 1947 to August 15, 1947. Attlee Government on eighteenth July passed a bill where he declared that two independent dominions shall be set up respectively known as India and Pakistan on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947.

Chaman Nahal commenced his, Sahitya Academy and the Federation of Indian Publishers Award winning novel '*Azadi*' begin from the exact date of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1947 and deals with the anguish of partition on three main communities the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. It presents the huge massacre and the vast incursion of refugees spreading from the period of the announcement to its 'aftermath' and finally concluded with the murder of Mahatma Gandhi on January 30, 1948. D.R. Sharma in his work '*The Novels on the Indian partition*' wrote: "*Azadi*, the mouthpiece of Chaman Nahal....Presents a brilliant close up of the profile of communal violence in Punjab." (15)

The Novel presents the traumatic experiences of the partition of the united India. The beauty of the novel lies in the balanced and unprejudiced picture of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh love and hatred, their emotional, social, cultural and political relationships. Paravati Rao's opinion regarding this is:

What makes *Azadi* memorable is the faithful, realistic and sincere documentation of the situation in the Punjab during the time of partition. Among the numerous partition novels in Indian English literature *Azadi* with all its structural and other flaws, is easily one of the most outstanding." (*IJELLH: The Impact of Partition on....384*)

Nahal got inspiration to write this Novel from his personal experience because he belonged to Sialkot at the time of partition.

In his autobiographical novel *Azadi* Nahal has remarked, '....A hymn to one's land of birth, rather than a realistic novel of the Partition.' (*IJELLH: Tyranny of Partition...174....*). He has portrayed the realistic picture of the partition by giving details of the political background and the effects of the partition on both the countries. While delineating the partition, he raised the cause, the process of the partition and the butchery of the political leaders with its effect on the people. Partition has changed the political ideology of both of the nations.

*Azadi* differs from most of the other partition novels in respect of canvas and unity of time, place and action. It has gathered unity of time and place. Its actions revolve around Sialkot and cover a period from 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1947 to 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 1948. Before partition every countryman either Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or of any other community desperately waiting for the day when he can breathe quietly in the air of freedom because each and every Indian had paid something or the other to achieve India's freedom but the ambition of a few leaders, the ignorance of the common people, lack of communication, insecurity of minor communities in Hindu dominated country and most important of all the policies of the British had changed the real meaning of freedom.

When congress passed the Quit India resolution in 1942, Gandhi focusing on the unity of Indians, expressed:

The Hindus and Muslims would eventually come to a settlement between themselves. They had lived together in unity

when the British were not here; they would do the same again. And what other homeland these Muslims could have could claim but India? A majority of the Indian shock; they had emotional and sentimental ties with India which couldn't be snapped. If Pakistan was being claimed by the Muslims for an Islamic presence in India, that presence was already there. Could a decent Hindu disown his debt to Islam; Indian culture, such as it was today, was shaped by the Hindus and the Muslims both. No one in recent History had traveled so extensively in India that he could claim to know the very pulse anywhere which demanded separation of brother from brother, of community from community, it demanded unity. (*The Triumph of the Tricolour 15*)

Gandhi had always tried his best to unite the different communities, to diminish the hatred between them and whenever he got a chance to speak at the meeting of Congress or other nation movements he focused on unity and brotherhood. He loved Nehru as well as Jinnah. When he started a national strike against the Rowlett Act, he tried his best to show the positive activities of the Muslim emperors before the arrival of the English:

Many of the Muslims were even talking of emigrating from India and settling in Arabia or some other Muslim country. A Hindu may perhaps be happy to get rid of the Muslims. But he would be a stupid Hindu, an ignorant Hindu. For what would India be without Muslims! Talk not to me of the atrocities they committed upon the Hindus and the Sikhs. Given the chance, the Hindu would have committed as many atrocities upon them. Talk to me instead of the beauty they have brought to India, talk to me of their architecture, of the roads they laid, of the inns they built, of

the wells they dug, of the gardens the planted. And talk to me of the amalgamation of cultures which the best of the Muslim kings aimed at- in their own lives and in the life of the community.....Go and listen to a Muslim musician, if you doubt me. In all probability, he will be singing of the love of Radha and Krishna. (*The Crown and The Loincloth 140-141*)

Neither the speeches and fasts of Gandhi nor the melodious music could control the fire ignited by the English and others. Ultimately each and every effort of Gandhi to unite the two communities failed. *Azadi* presents a graphic picture of the partition experienced by the north Indians in 1947. Bhagwat Goyal says: "It deals with the political, social, economic, religious, psychological and cultural implications of 'Azadi' which India achieved in 1947." (Nahal's *Azadi : A Review* 124)

Apart from the Indian English partition novels, there are many Indian regional novels on the same theme. Hyder's *Aag Ka Darya* (River of the Fire), Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar* (The Skeleton), Bhishma Sahani's *Tamas* (The Dark) and a lot of other short stories deal with the same theme.

Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961), the first novel written by a Muslim writer, is a heart touching novel on the theme of partition where she has presented the unexplained anguish of women during partition. It deals with the struggle of India for freedom and the ironic reward of this struggle.

It represents the hideous deeds of the communal riots and shows that the fight of the Indians against the English had

converted into a fight amongst themselves. It presents for the first time the Muslim point of view towards partition. The novel portrays a feeling of regret and grief because the original instinct for the partition came from the Muslims. Attia Hossain shows that the British had a great role in dividing India but they were not the only ones responsible for partition. The Indian freedom movement puzzled and misled when religion entered politics. The scenario grew crucial the vibrant dispute increased day by day. Jealous, disdain and the desire to demolish the other community became dominant. Manju Kapoor's debut and Commonwealth writer's Prize for Eurasian region winning novel, *Difficult Daughters* (1998) also in the series of partition novels, but instead of communal violence it focuses on the effects of the disturbance during the partition.

Khuswant Singh's most famous novel, *Train to Pakistan* originally entitled a *Mano Majra* is the first novel in English by an Indian writer about partition and has four sections- First is *Dacoity*, Second is *Kalyug*, Third is *Mano Majra* and last one is *Karma*. *Mano Majra* is a village where Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs live as brothers before partition but after partition it became the centre of communal hatred and violence. The novel presents the picture of terrible deeds committed on the border areas during the devastating days of the partition. It starts with the holocaust in the east and then provides the detailed scenario the madness of communal violence at the Indo-Pakistan Border in the North. The train loaded with corpses, their cremation and burial at the bank of river of Sutlej presents a horrible sight. The

people of peaceful Mano Majra then begin to believe on the theory of 'tit for tat' and the human killings and butchery started on both the sides of the borders.

Partition no doubt was a pointed decision but not an event in isolation for – it had repercussions on the lives of people as it resulted in geographical, economic and most important of all, emotional and psychological dislocation. (Singh, Veena: How difficult are...171).

Partition was the result of the communal suspicions sown by ambitious leaders who have the lust for power in their hearts. Dr. S. Chelliah, in his article writes:

In the nine months between August 1946 and the spring of the following year, between fourteen and sixteen million Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were forced to leave their homes and flee to safety from blood crazed mobs. In that same period over 6,00,000 of them were killed. But no, not just killed. If they were children, they were picked up by their feet and their heads smashed against the walls. If they were female children, they were rapped and then their breasts were chopped off. And if they were pregnant, they were disemboweled. (IJIRAH: Social and Moral 14)

It is not only the Indian writers who write partition novels. There are a few prominent writers from Pakistan also who wrote on the same theme. Mohumad Sipra's *Pawn to king Three* (1985) was the first partition novel by a Pakistani writer; it portrays the picture of a boy called Adan who lost his parents in the holocaust of partition massacres in Amritsar. The next novel is by a Parsi wirtter, who stands unbiased in her interpretation of the bloodshed of partition named Bapsi Sidhwa. She Wrote, *Ice*

*Candy Man* on the same theme and beautifully picturised the horrors she experienced at that cruel time. This novel was filmed by Deepa Mehta with the title *Earth*.

The other famous writer of Pakistan who wrote one of the best short stories about partition was Sadat Hassan Manto, who was compelled to migrate from Bombay to Lahore but unfortunately he died at the very young age of 43 of the despair of partition and his sensation *Dawn: 50 sketches and stories of partition* has a unique and important place in Pakistani literature.

A good number of literary works were written on the theme of partition but the present chapter deals only with the novel *Azadi* by Chaman Nahal. The novel begins with the announcement of partition by Mountbatten on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1947. This is the point at which Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* (1962) ends. It seems that when Malgonkar left his novel, Nahal started to write. Ramamurthy has presented his opinion about Nahal's *Azadi* in his work *Azadi- point of view as Technique*'

.....are not only the socio-economic and humanistic implications of the tragic exodus of suffering millions from the lands of their birth but also the deep psyche disturbances and emotional transformation brought about by that traumatic experience in the inner lives of individual men and women. (131)

The Novel *Azadi* is divided in three parts-Lull, Storm and Aftermath. Nahal uses the word *Azadi* as the title in a satiric way because it means freedom but no character of the novel felt like

celebrating because it brought neither joy nor the sense of freedom but lots of killing, raping and looting instead.

Lala Kanshi Ram, the leading character in the novel becomes a mouthpiece of the victims who are deeply broken by the political events. He was a well established grain merchant in a Muslim Majority city, Sialkot. He was leading a happy life with his illiterate but a great life-long soul-mate, Prabha Rani, whom he tries to educate, his son Arun and a married daughter Madhubala. All the Hindus and Muslims live happily in Sialkot before the declaration of partition. There are almost four or five Sikh families who live as tenants of Bibi Amarvati. Lala Kanshi Ram has no interest in Politics but is deeply affected by Arya Samaj and Mahatma Gandhi. He knows Hindi, Sanskrit and Punjabi but always comfortable with Urdu. While he had a disdainful attitude towards the British people and their government he admires their discipline and working attitude.

What mattered to Lala Kanshi Ram was the precision of the British Raj, which was seen in as small as act as the killing of a stray dog. No wonder they ruled the world over, no wonder, he said to himself. There indeed was no Raj like the Angrez Raj. (*AZADI 27*).

As millions of common people he also fears the division of the nation and his faith in Gandhi's oath looks shaken. He says to his wife- “

I am worried about the announcement the viceroy might make.”

‘... And you know these English; they would rather divide than leave behind a united India.’

‘Everything will be ruined if Pakistan is created.’ (*AZADI* 34-35)

Lala was very frightened when he realized the hurry of the English to leave India and was confused by their plan to hand over power to any constituted authority.

But why were they in a hurry to leave? And why this reference to freedom in the plural? Didn't that mean they were thinking of Pakistan? And the congress leaders what trust could you put in them? Didn't Gandhi ji and Raja ji themselves as much as offer Pakistan to Jinnah in 1944? (*AZADI* 35)

Jinnah was the leader of Muslim League and first appeared in Nahal's novel, *The Salt of Life* and his role in partition is totally dependent on his relationship with the leaders of the Congress.

It was Jinnah who requested the British to provide the Muslims a separate Muslim country if they wanted to restore peace and happiness to the republic of India. Jinnah's demand for Pakistan was presented by Nahal through the character of Muzaffer Ahmed in his novel, *The Salt of Life*. When he said to Sunil, the great follower of Gandhi

The two-year Congress rule in many of the provinces, from 1937-1939, had convinced the Muslims of the totalitarian intent of the Hindus. The Congress rituals were all essentially Hindu rituals and the Muslim consciousness had been asphyxiated in the provinces ruled by the Congress. The act of 1935 was a blessing in disguise for the Muslims. It had shown them how the Congress would operate in a free India. Hence the Muslim League's demand

for Pakistan- a separate sovereign state for the Muslims. At Lahore in 1940, and now in Madras, the League had passed clear resolutions to this effect, and under the able leadership of Qaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah they would Insha-Allah see the Muslims of India got justice at the hands of British. He had been sent by the Quad-e-Azam personally to seek their collaboration. The Congress and the League should together work towards freedom. But towards the evolution of Hindustan and the evolution of Pakistan. (*The Salt of Life 488*)

Lala's terror represented that he put the blame for the partition mainly on Jinnah, Nehru, Baldev Singh, Rajaji and Kripalani, it was Gandhi and Raja ji who were responsible for bringing Jinnah into limelight.

Until then Jinnah had talked of Pakistan but he did not quite know what he meant by it. Gandhi by going to him not only gave Pakistan a name; he gave Jinnah a name too. Who took Jinnah seriously before September 1944? (*Azadi 35*)

On 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1947 when Mountbatten declared the possible date of India's independence as 15<sup>th</sup> August he suggested the leaders of both political parties tackle the problem before independence. Gandhi neither supported the plan of partition nor opposed it openly. The announcement on Radio was remarkable for every citizen because everyone was desperately waiting for it; "The speech was in English.....Arun had understood it all only too well, and in a shaken voice he said "Partition!" (*Azadi 54*)

The viceroy said that nineteen hundred and forty seven two independent countries shall be put in India, known as India and Pakistan. This announcement filled the life of many people with darkness. The Viceroy's speech was followed by that of Nehru "acting as a Prime Minister of the interim government since 1946, and his voice had boomed on the air many times in the last nine months. Yet never before had he sounded so tired." (*Azadi* 55) Nehru had failed to win the trust and sympathy of the people. When the radio was switched off people of the room commented,

...have partition if there is no other way, have it that way – we're willing to make sacrifices.....Had he gone mad? Didn't he know his people? Didn't he know the Muslims? And why the partition in the first place? What of your promises to us... (*Azadi* 56).

It seems that many Hindus who wished that they would be able to live in Pakistan were either innocent or ignored. Lala still hoped that they could live in Sialkot as earlier, but then gradually he witnessed the real picture of partition. The creation of Pakistan save a lot of happiness to the Muslims and suddenly the nice atmosphere of Sialkot was converted into that of hatred and bloodshed.

Muslims started celebrating their victory of getting Pakistan by cracking huge fire crackers and by staging processions. They started to show open hatred because Sialkot was a Muslim major city and Hindus felt insecure. Nahal has described a scene of a procession and presented the terror of Muslims in the Hindu Mohalla.

The procession came down Trunk Bazaar, and stopped outside the eastern entrance to the street. It was a wild sight. The mob was in a transport which exceeded pain or hysteria. As far as you could see, the Bazaar was a sea of heads. They were split into many small groups, and before each group here were two or three drummers.....many of them were dancing the Bhangra, the Punjab dance of victory... And together they shouted," Pakistan Zindabad long live Pakistan. (*Azadi* 61,62).

Due to the terror of the procession all the tenants of Bibi Amarvati was gathered on the roof top and denied to open the gate. When the Deputy Commissioner arrived, he handled the situation and expressed the thoughts about partition:

How do you cut a country in two, where at every level the communities were so deeply mixed? There was a Muslim in every corner of India where there was a Hindu..... Pakistan wouldn't solve the problem of a minority; it was going to create new minorities- Minorities which would be hounded out with a vengeance. (*Azadi* 72)

The Muslims freely looted and killed the minority Hindus and Sikhs. The minority people had to flee from their place to save their lives. Partition affects psychologically and emotionally as it had affected the pious love relationship of Hindu Arun and Muslim Nur the daughter of Lala Kanshi Ram's best friend Chaudhari Barkat Ali.

Their classmates had long known of their romance but after the announcement of Pakistan they had become suspects. He was now a 'Hindu' by carrying on with a 'Muslim' girl. And the

Muslim boys in the college stood watching them menacingly.  
(*Azadi* 76)

Mohan Jha in his book *Chaman Nahal's Azadi; a search for identity* observes

.... In the flush of his youthful romance Arun could have elected to go in for Nur in preference to his parents but the communal holocaust suddenly makes 'a man' of him and he chooses to share the joys and sorrows of life with his parents.(40)

The gift of freedom to Arun, a school boy was to get separation from his first love Nur and lost his childhood and school friends, for Lala Kanshi Ram to left his whole life's outcome i.e. his land, house, shop, friends, reputations. While Muslims celebrated their victory of becoming a new country for them in the map of world, the Hindu and Sikhs felt like aliens in their own native place Sialkot and thought of saving himself against the impending attacks of the furious and militant Muslim mob.

....The cry of the new state, the name of Pakistan shouted repeatedly before him as insult, had split Arun Asunder. He knows the conspiracy of politicians behind the whole move. Jinnah and Liaquat Ali khan were coming into are estate; as was Nehru. Why else would they rush into Azadi at this pace- An Azadi which would ruin the land and destroy its unity? For the creation of Pakistan solved nothing. One would have to go around with tweezers through all the villages to separate the Muslims from the Hindus. Arun knew this, the game of which he and Nur and million

like them were only victims. But politicians gave ideas legs, even though they were the wrong kind of ideas. (*Azadi* 81)

After the announcement of partition, killing the Hindus and the Sikhs everyday had become the routine for Muslims. These people were trapped in their houses and it had become a herculean task for them to even earn their bread because their close Muslim friends had abruptly turned into enemies.

.....There were four or five cases of stabbing each day, and at least four or five fires. It was a mass killing or organized killing –not yet” (*Azadi* 105). The scene of Sialkot looked terrible, every night became more horrible for minors; “the fires were started in the night, and the four fire engines the city had were kept rushing from one fire to the next. More than murders it was fires that were frightening and demoralizing.....a red glow of death, which slowly spread out and became more menacing when the smoke came up. (*Azadi* 106)

The hatred between Hindus and Muslims during partition can be easily understood by the conversation between Abdul Ghani, a shopkeeper in Sialkot and Lala Kanshi Ram when he force Lala to give up Sialkot;

Why do you want me to leave?’ said Lala Kanshi Ram. ‘We have been good friends-for years we have been such good friends’

I want you to leave because you’re a Hindu, and you don’t believe in Allah.’ (*Azadi* 112)

Gradually the life of the Hindus and the Sikhs become miserable in Sialkot, friends became foes, people lost their means of survive, it was hard to keep body and soul together,

then people started to take shelter in ‘refugee camps’ set up by the government. Lala ji had never expected such a day, but when the Muslims looted his shop then he realized that Muslims will never accept them in Sialkot. Despite their concern and attachment they were forced to migrate. All the Hindus and Sikhs were compelled under the horrible circumstances to give up their houses. Lala ji was not ready to leave his place but by persuasion of Arun and Barkat Ali, he started to move to Refugee camp. Barkat Ali Khan was Lala’s bosom friend. Both of them respected non-violence and Gandhi, wore homespun khadi and cotton shirts. Barkat Ali informed to Lala Kanshi Ram:

...either the Congress Muslims were a fraud to begin with, or they have changed sides. I’m afraid there is no organized body of Muslims denouncing what is happening in the city.....But it is of no avail; the poison had stepped in. added to the fact that every day hundreds of refugees from India continue to arrive with tales of terror and disgust. Whatever is happening here in Sialkot, things very much like that are happening on the other side too-let’s not make no mistake about it. It is not the collapse of Congress Muslims in Pakistan; apparently it is the collapse of Congress Hindu in India also. When refugees with stories of personal misfortunes land here, the politicians use them to their advantages to fan up further hatred. (*Azadi* 117,118).

Finally Lala left Sialkot and entered in the refugee camp where he faced the real communal violence. Partition is a bitter catastrophe for Lala ji and he accepts the necessity of migration

when his old and faithful friend, his practical son forced him to do so.

The government had made arrangements to transport minor Hindus in India and minor Muslim in their new country Pakistan. Either they were airlifted or were shifted by trains and foot convoys but after 15<sup>th</sup> August the new governments did not care about their basic needs and security. All the refugees had to survive on only the dry ration supplied by the government. The shortest way from Sialkot to India was through Jammu & Kashmir but from the first day to till today it is the bone of contention between the two countries and at the time of partition this route was closed for civilians and the refugees had to come from Sialkot to Dera Baba Nanak, by a foot convoy.

After entering the refugee camp the first shocking news Lala Kanshi Ram got was that his loving daughter Madhu and son in law Rajiv were killed in a train massacre. It was unbelievable for Lala and Prabha Rani to believe the unexpected and premature death of his daughter and son in law. To confirm the news he sent his son, Arun and Suraj Prakash, the son of Bibi Amarvati to the station where Arun came to know that Abdul Ghani, his neighbor with whom Arun used to spend his time in Sialkot and who was like a caring uncle for him, had killed Madhu and her husband.

so there was utter harmony among them, and the fact that Ghani was a Muslim and Lala Kanshi Ram a high caste Hindu

snever entered their heads. They spoke a common tongue, wore identical clothes....(*Azadi* 46, 47)

Abdul Ghani after partition had then become an enemy of Lala Kanshi and when Arun came to the railway station with Barkat Ali, Abdul Ghani said,

‘I’ m one of the khaksar volunteers, sir, helping to keep our city clean by cremating the kafir dead.’ And cynically, showing his teeth which lit up easily in the light of fire he said to Arun; ‘who told you your sister was killed, my boy? But don’t worry. I put her and her husband into the fire with my own hands, and they are now on their way to Dozakh, to hell where I hope they rot for every!’ He made no effort to disguise his venom. (*Azadi* 155)

As there is autobiographical touch in this novel Nahal narrates his pain of losing his real sister Kartar Devi during partition, through the character of Madhu.

During the communal riots in the wake of partition, his sister Kartar Devi consider staying in wazirabad is not safe and along with her husband tried to reach us in Sialkot but the train in which they were travelling was stopped along the way by a hostile mob and they were both cruelly murdered, as were hundreds of other on the train. (*Azadi* 14)

Violence spread on both sides of the country, as depicted in Khushwant Singh’s novel *Train to Pakistan*- a group of youngsters attack the Muslims and takes away their belongings and property, lootes their business and burns their houses in the same way, the Muslims burnt and looted the Hindus and Sikhs in Sialkot. This fact was justified by Chaudhari Barkat Ali when he

informed the Lala that the situations were similiar in both countries.

Lala who was so extrovert and social before partition had now totally changed. He had no become a pure introvert, and analyzed the situation of the refugee camp as follows:

What the leaders of India offering the people of the Punjab was an enormous bluff, he felt. They had neither the power nor the intention of maintaining the minorities in their homes; they had not the power of saving their lives. They should have devised means of mass migration to begin with, before rushing to partition. Now they should at least keep their mouths shut and not misled the poor, credulous people. Jinnah and Nehru were villains enough. ...Kripalani was the worst offender. More than the others, it was he who so loud about the minorities staying where they were. (*Azadi* 177, 178)

It shows the pathetic condition of the minorities on both the sides of the border. There were millions like Lala Kanshi Ram who suffered the pain of separation without having committed any mistake. It was the common masses who faced the horrors of partition; “The two new governments were parties to fratricidal war, and how could unarmed men and women withstand organized slaughters?”(*Azadi* 178).

Nahal had projected the scene of Boundary Commission beautifully. Sir Cyril Redcliffe, the British Commissioner had given the charge to divide the country geographically in two parts within five weeks. On 17<sup>th</sup> of August the Boundary Commission’s award was announced.

After the Boundary Commission's award was announced on the seventeenth of August, everyone knew where he stood-on a part of Pakistan or in India. Violence in the Punjab reached an unprecedented pitch after the announcement of the award. Both sides felt they have been shabbily treated. The Sikhs were angry to lose fertile lands in Montgomery area; much to their surprise, the boundary line, but for a small sector along the river Ravi was drawn along the Sutlej River. The Muslims were aggrieved over the award of the sections of Gurdaspur district to India, which gave India a contagious border with Kashmir state. (*Azadi* 180)

When the Hindus and the Sikhs were staying in refugee camps Arun underwent a psychological trauma after meeting one of his old classmates Rahmat Ullah Khan who had become an army officer. Being an old friend Arun had positive thoughts about him and Rahmat also treated Arun nicely, but partition had injected its venom in their friendship too. One day when he asked Arun to bring Sunanda, a beautiful Hindu married lady, to his bed, Arun could make out the reason of his nice behavior. After facing a lot of misfortunes and tragedies the refugees leave for the next destination, Dera Baba Nanak, the border town on the Indian side nearly about forty seven miles from Sialkot. The foot convoy had to face a heaps of problems everyday.

In each village they passed, they found the remains of parties that had been attacked and butchered. In many cases, the dismembered human limbs and skeletons were still lying there and the stench was intolerable. And they saw only bearded Muslim faces in these villages. The Hindu population had been completely driven out or completely exterminated. Hindu and Shikh places on worship had obviously been defiled, because outside of them there

were obscene words written in Urdu. When at a few of the places, the Indian officers enquired if there were Hindu families there, the bearded Muslims smiled insolently and said: 'look for yourself.(*Azadi* 238)

While the convoy was staying at Narowal, the biggest misfortune-befell them. A huge Muslim group attacked on the camp. The terrified refugees scattered and hid themselves under trees or in the open fields. Nahal has presented the massacre of the garden, where the refugees had hid themselves, very lively.

in the gardens, which ran over a mile by the side of the road, dead bodies were lying allover; there were bodies on the road as well.....most of the dead fully dressed. Only a few women lay with their breasts exposed, with a dead chila next to the breast. Most of the children lay with their faces downward. The men lay on their backs or on their sides, their mouths open. (*Azadi* 241).

Lala while moving forward came to know that Dr. Chander Bhan, who had brought the news of Madhu's death was him also killed by the Muslims and his wife and two daughters were captured by them.

Partition had created a huge wall between the psyche of the Hindus and the Muslims. It was hard for the Hindus and the Sikhs to survive in the camp with their religions so they had to perform many rituals against their religion. Niranjjan Singh, husband of pregnant Isher Kaur committed suicide but didn't cut his long hair even when he knew that his wife needed him most in such a crucial situation:

‘Think of me,’ said Isher Kaur

‘You know what our dharma says:

Lose your nhead, if need be

Don’t lose your Sikh faith!’ (*Azadi 207*)

When Bibi Amar Vati told her husband, Gangu Mull to join them in the foot convoy he refused but as he couldn’t live with his Hindu religion so he readily accepted Islam and even changed his name from Gangu Mull to Ghulam Muhammad to continue living in Pakistan. As the convoy moved forward, situations became the most crucial.

Partition had destroyed the feelings of the people. They had lost respect and humanity and behaved like animals. They had no fear of God in their hearts. The communal differences, bloodshed and hatred were at its peak. Both the countries were committing crime in the name of religion. The blind killings, lootings, rapings had converted the boundries in red due to bloodshed. The seeds of hatred were sown so deep that we feel the effect of it even today.

Though everyone had suffered due to partition but women suffered the most because they underwent the worst abuse and maltreatment. At the time of partition they were treated worse than animals, they were kidnapped, raped and forcefully converted to other religion and were finally sold in the markets for prostitution.

A number of abducted Hindu and Sikh women were in their custody. Many of the kidnapped women disappeared into private homes. A lone Muslim dragged a woman away and kept her for his own exclusive use or he took her with the consent of other Muslims converted her to Islam, and got married to her. The rest were subjected to mass rape at times in public places and in the presence of large gatherings. The rape was followed by other atrocities, chopping off the breasts and even death. Many of the pregnant women had their wombs torn open. The survivors were retained for repeated rapes and humiliations, until they were parceled out to decrepit wrecks- the aged, the leftovers who couldn't find a wife, or those Muslims who wanted an additional wife. In the mean time all over again. (*Azadi* 246, 247)

At Narowal a heart breaking news reached Suraj Prakash and Arun that a women's naked parade was organized by Muslims in the market. All the women in this procession were Hindus and Sikhs who were kidnapped by the Muslims. The procession expressed the height of hatred, communal prejudices, moral debasement and cruelty of Muslims towards the Hindus and the Sikhs. Nahal has picturized the pathetic act in a realistic way: Gundur in his work, '*Partition and Indian English Fiction*' Quotes,

The victims of the partition were neither Muslims nor Hindu nor Sikhs but women of all these communities. Women were put to death, nakedly paraded in public, raped, abducted and forced to prostitution. (192)

The administration knew about such parades but it did not interfere in such events. The news of the parade had shaken the

refugees. When we read the novel we feel the unsaid painful story of women, because Nahal had so beautifully described the torn spirit of the women of the procession.

They were all stark naked. Their heads were completely shaven; so were their armpits... The women walked awkwardly, looking only at the ground. They were all crying, through their eyes shed no tears. Their faces were formed into grimaces and they were sobbing. Their faces were free, but so badly had they been used, so wholly their spirits crushed, their morale shattered none of them make any attempt to cover themselves with their hands'.(Azadi 249)

K.K.Sharma and B.K.Joshi in his book *The Epic and Psychological Delineation* commented on Nahal's realistic picture of the horrible scenes of unbelievable communal violence, "Azadi portrays vividly the horrors of the partition, the colossal violence that still haunts the Indian psyche." (89)The narration, the words used by the writer to present the condition of the women make the reader cry, it is his narrative skills that have made his scenes realistic and picturesque.

The procession moved through the bazaar and along with the procession moved a river of obscenities- foul abuses, crude personal gestures, spurts of sputum, odd articles like small coins, faded flowers, cigarette butts and bidis that were thrown at the women. As soon as the women came near, that section of crowd become hysterical. 'Rape them, Put it inside of them' 'the filthy Hindu bitches' 'The Kafir women.' Some said worse things. Then came the shower of spittle. Almost everyone spat and hundreds of tongues were pushed forward inside

of their teeth and hundreds of lips twisted into ugly openings and hundreds of uplifted faces canon-like fired the saliva. (*Azadi* 250)

Religion is like a tree, having branches like peace, brotherhood, respect, humanity, sense of belongingness love and non-violence but partition had converted these branches into hatred, jealousy and insecurity instead of brotherhood. People are now stood with guns, swords and knives to cut the throat of the people of other religious groups. S.Bhagwat in his article *Nahal's Azadi; A Review* commented,

Religion which is supported to be an embodiment of human and spiritual values, became an instrument of hatred, rapiousness, evil, exploitation, sadism, torture, murder, rape and wholesale destruction. (*124*)

Arun was a school going boy but partition had snatched his childhood. It was seen that at his small age he had started behaving like an adult. Partition had snatched his emotional support and badly torn his heart. First he lost his childhood love, Nur, daughter of Barkat Ali, and then his sister who were also like a friend to him. Finally they reached Narowal, where two tragic incidents occured. Arun killed Rahmat Ullah Khan, for he had raped Sunanda and he also lost Chandni, his love. Suraj Prakash, Sunanda's husband was stabbed to death.

Suraj Prakash's body was found later in the day. He was stabbed through the abdomen; his face was also mutilated- both his eyes were taken out. More than two thousand bodies were discovered that day, so savage had been the vengeance, every single body had been badly mutilated.' (*Azadi* 266)

From Narowal the convoy moved to Dera Baba Nanak and after crossing the Ravi River and entered in the Indian Territory. Finally they had reached Amritsar, in India their motherland and felt secured. Lala shouted in a satisfactory and loud voice, 'Vandemataram'. Prabha Rani and many others picked up the soil and rubbed it on their foreheads. Many others bathed in the Ravi River to purify themselves.

Finally when they reached Amritsar, every one visited their relatives who offered tea and food but none offered them shelter. No Hindu or Sikh in India was ready to accept their relatives. The refugees felt like aliens in India too. They only got smiling faces and words for their welcome. They said that they were happy for having safely arrived in India. Even the government did not provide them the necessary facilities for survival;

If they had imagined their troubles would be over the moment they reached Indian Territory, they were disillusioned. Not only were the arrangements to house and feed the refugees inadequate, their very presence was resented by the local people. Their number had exceeded all the expectations and the food was running short.'(*Azadi* 274)

The condition of Amritsar was just like any city of Pakistan

The city looked as if it had been bombed from the air. Not a building in Hall Bazaar, the main through fare of the city, stood intact; they were in total ruin. The roofs were gone the window framdes burned out, they walls collapsed. And this continued block after block, and bazaar after bazaar, charred and blacked walls, and

heaps of rubbish of what must have been impressive, many storeyed buildings. These were the houses of the Muslims, who had now been driven out. (*Azadi* 274)

The scene of Amritsar railway station has been presented in a very rustic way by the writer in his novel. Lala Kanshi Ram was waiting on the railway station. He heard the passer by saying: "They are taking out a procession of Muslim women through the bazaar" was the saucy reply. He spoke as if this was the routine here; he showed neither surprise, nor curiosity." (*Azadi* 274) Looting, killing and destroying the property were common in both the nations during partition. As the Muslims were ruining the Hindus and the Sikhs in Pakistan similiarly the Hindus and the Shikhs were devastating the properties and lives of the Muslims in India.

The situations were pathetic in both the countries, even the scenes of cities; villages and railway stations were similiar in both India and Pakistan.

It was a train carrying Muslim refugees to Pakistan; it had been stopped at the signals outside of Amritsar, when the Muslims were massacred..... The platform was recently washed but patches of blood were on its floor everywhere. Indian soldiers stood guard with machine guns, but they were only a façade- like their counterparts in Pakistan. They had failed to protect the Muslims. (*Azadi* 275)

Lala ji told his wife that he couldn't hate Muslims anymore even when he knew that he can't get his daughter back.

“What I mean is, whatever the Muslims did to us in Pakistan, we’re doing it to them here!”( *Azadi* 284)

In explaining the incidents of trains, Khuswant Singh in his famous novel “*Train to Pakistan*” wrote that Sikhs attacked and killed the Muslim refugee passengers train and sent it across the border with the thousands of corpses and wrote ‘Gift to Pakistan’ on the engine of the train. Indians received a similar gift from Pakistan too. When Lala Kanshi Ram and others reached Delhi in the hope that they might get proper facilities and means of survival there, they felt very disappointed. “He saw unfriendly faces on the platform. It was difficult for him to find a porter to carry his luggage. The porters knew these refugees did not have much money on them.”(*Azadi* 285)

In Delhi Lalaji tried very hard to get an apartment and a shop for survival. He said to the officer,

Sir, I’ll be ruined if you don’t come to my rescue. I only want a small flat and a small little shop to be allotted to me.... From those Muslims left behind. Refugee property... there were three hundred thousand Muslims in Delhi and most of them had gone. We too have left property back in Pakistan. (*Azadi* 287).

There were many refugees who didn’t get any shelter in India too and the government and those powerful leaders could never understand their pain. After a lot of negotiations, by facing a lot of humiliation and disgrace Lala Kanshi Ram was a successful in a brick hutment in the Kingsway camp on Alipur road. It was no less than a heaven for his family. “After about

four months of irregular living under canvas, they found this a luxury.”( *Azadi* 297).

Gradually situations started settling down in Delhi. Like other refugees Lala also had lots of wounds of partition in his heart and they all expected that the first Prime Minister of India, Jawahar Lal Nehru would definitely sort out their problems, so they visited his residence;

There was a huge crowd outside Nehru’s residence. The police would allow no one in. he waited for hours. Many in the crowd were shouting slogans. It was no organized demonstration; each man stood only for himself. it was easy for the police to resist such a crowd and they did not open the gate. Later it transpired Nehru was out of Delhi that day.....They ‘re liars, said Lala Kanshi Ram to himself, for he saw cars going in and out of the gate constantly. A shining limousine would draw up the gate was swung open....( *Azadi* 290).

Through this statement Nahal wants to reveal his hatred towards the leaders who committed such a hideous crime of dividing the country. The last part of the novel is *Aftermath*, which deals with the assassination of the historical hero of *The Gandhi Quartet*, Mahatma Gandhi.

They were playing devotional songs over the All India Radio. A news bulletin came on and it confirmed what the man had told him. It said that Gandhi ji that evening had died at the hands of an assassin. He was walking to the prayer meeting from his room in Birla House; when a man approached him and fired three shots. Gandhiji’s last words were ‘Hey Rama’ before he fell. The assassin, the announcement said, was a Hindu to remove any misgivings, it was repeated the assassin was not a member of a minority community. ( *Azadi* 303, 304)

People had hatred and anger in their minds for him; it is justified by the conversation between Bibi Amar Vati and Prabha Rani: “Have you heard? Gandhiji has been shot dead.’.....’it is good he is. He ruined us,’ said Bibi Amar Vati.” (*Azadi* 303)

Even Lala Kanshi Ram who respected and thought Gandhito be his ideal, when he heard this news didn’t react very much “....paid no serious attention to it, though a part of his mind said, wake up, these are good words. Gandhiji was dead-fully dead, completely dead. He found anything after that irrelevant and insignificant.”(*Azadi* 304) It was the impact of partition that people forgot their goodness; they were now filled with venom for the political leaders. The whole family however paid respect towards the Father of the Nation by not eating their food and by mourning over his death.

The adages ‘Change is the law of nature’ and ‘Time heals the scars’, came true for Lala Kanshi Ram and the other refugees. Though they could never forget the pain which they had felt, they slowly tried to adjust and make themselves busy in their new lives in Delhi. Basavaraj Naikar says,

All of them suffer from a sort of existential loneliness....  
Displacement, loss of land, home, roots, friends and relatives, death of his daughter and so on have awakened in him(Lala) the deep seated Hindu philosophical feeling Vairagya or detachment...  
Kanshi Ram experiences the essential spiritual loneliness of man.  
(*The Trauma of Partition* 59)

After the process of partition and resettlement of the refugees a survey was made to check as to how much property was left by the Hindus and the Sikhs in every part of the new nation, Pakistan and it was entitled 'After Partition' by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. The statistics revealed that:

.....The amount of loss incurred by the refugees as a result of migration from Western Pakistan to India, that in Delhi alone up to July 22, 1948, over 94,364 claims were registered with the Registrar of claims. The registered value of 66,583 claims from out of these, so far consolidated comes to Rs. 806 crores.”<sup>21</sup> The refugees have not only faced the material loss but psychological and emotional loss also. Rama Jha in his review said, “Lala Kanshi Ram whose experiences symbolize the soreness and sufferings of the millions affected by the partition. (*Azadi* 22)

Lala Kanshi Ram realized that only compassion, communal harmony and sympathy might provide him peace at heart. O.P.Mathur has rightly observed Lala's conditions and said that

....takes a stance which clearly demonstrates his freedom from commitment to anything except love compassion, tolerance and forgiveness, in a word, 'freedom of spirit and mind' which alone makes political differences of religion peel off and reveal the essential humanity of man and idiocy of the evil that seeks to raise artificial walls of hatred between one human being and another” (*academic research journals: political turbulence* 126)

Though the whole novel has presented the holocaust of partition but Chaman Nahal has summed up his novel with a ray

of positive hope when the hero, Lala Kanshi Ram adjusted himself in the new city Delhi and Arun resumed his college. Asha Kaushik in her book *Politics, Aesthetics and culture: A study of Indo Anglican Political Novel*. remarks that

....although beginning on a note of ambivalence and uncertainties of national integrity in the face of religious fanaticism, moral degradation and political fragmentation, *Azadi* closes with the affirmation that a nation... our lives even annihilating tragedies. 24

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# **CHAPTER- 5**

# **CONCLUSION**

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The detailed study of the prestigious Novels; *City in The River* by Arun Joshi, *Rich Like Us* by Nayantara Sahgal, *Shadows From Laddakh* by Bhabani Bhattacharya, *Train to Pakistan* by Khushwant Singh and *The Gandhi Quartet* by Chaman Nahal provide us with ample knowledge about Indian Politics, the freedom struggle and its aftermath. The study in the five preceding chapters reveals some first-hand painful experiences of the writers' lives. The themes dealt by all the writers might be the same somewhere but their versions are so unique and different those represent the genius of the novelists selected for the study. Through their different perspectives and experiences they penned the pain and anguish of a common Indian.

The main concern of these novelists is social, political, cultural and economical. Bhabani Bhattacharya has focused on social evils like poverty and untouchability. Nayantara Sahgal and Arun Joshi have highlighted exploitation by the capitalists of the common men and the Emergency, State War while Khushwant Singh and Chaman Nahal focused on the catastrophe of Hindu-Muslim discord and the tragedy of partition, the cultural confusion consequent in the east-west and the political and economic problems that independent India faced.

The theme, characterization, plot, dialogue, language and background comprehensively concentrate on the politics, freedom struggle and its consequences. These novels represent

the journey designed to oust the British from Indian Territory and narrate the heroic deeds done by our martyrs. All the novelists sum up their fiction with an optimistic note that communal harmony, cultural heritage, peace and brotherhood are very significant in India and this kind of communal harmony will create a new era of love and prosperity in India. They believe that we must not forget the sacrifices of our soldiers and leaders and by the recreation of their fictional characters; they have immortalized these great people. No country can grow and progress until and unless it has sound communal harmony and brotherhood among its countrymen, irrespective of their caste, creed and colour.

Chaman Nahal had to flee from his birthplace in the early youth because of partition. The traumatic experiences of partition contributed a lot to his literary career because he was greatly influenced by it. He has synthesized that very sensibility in his novels which he either witnessed or felt during the horrible years of his life. Nahal is also a great literary critic and in one of his interviews he has mentioned that in the growth of his literary career he was highly indebted to the great literary gems D.H. Lawrence and Earnest Hemingway.

From Lawrence he learnt the delineation of man – woman relationship in all their difficulties while from Hemingway he learnt how to make his characters survive under huge strain and struggle without ever giving up. The freedom of our country and the birth of a new country named Pakistan brought joy and celebration on one hand; but tears and tragedy on the other hand.

The basic component of partition was the geographical distribution of land between India and Pakistan. The Bengal province was divided into East and west Bengal and later became the country Bangladesh. In the north region East Punjab has remained a part of India while west Punjab was annexed to Pakistan. All the princely states after partition were either annexed with India or Pakistan. Though it was just a geographical distribution but it created a huge wall of bitterness among the hearts of the Hindus and the Muslims.

Nahal in his literary world might have been influenced by a lot of people but the one person who happens to be omnipresent for him always is Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi and his idealistic principles surpass all other influences. From the very beginning of his personal and literary life Nahal was fascinated by Gandhi's humanism and way of life. It was Gandhi and his ideology that inspired Nahal to fictionalize and immortalize him and his heroic struggle for freedom in *The Gandhi Quartet*.

Nahal has fictionalized Indian history in his books. Though Gandhi has played the lead role in his books but he has not failed to maintain the contribution of other Indian revolutionaries. Ras Bihari Bose, Bhagat Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose have also played a great role in his novels. The sacrifices of these young revolutionaries touch the heart of the readers. He has proved through his novels that when violence and non-violence had both aimed at realizing a noble purpose the victory was definite. And this very trust becomes the message ultimately each of his novels.

The politics and the freedom struggle and especially the partition influenced and encouraged many literary gems across the country. Many authors intertwined these historical events with imagination in order to expose the horrors of partition, Emergency and India- China war graphically. Right from the time of partition upto now the politicians and the common people of both the nations treat each other as their rivals. The evergreen, wounded and painful souls of the victims of partition are captured in many forms like paintings, stories, movies, songs and novels by artists, musicians and authors. Partition – a division based on religion has created too many disputes and troubles among the Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. The communal riots and massacres of the partition days are often repeated in these countries.

There are many incidents in history which reflect the rivalry like the issue of Kashmir, the first Indo-Pakistan war in 1947, the second Indo-Pakistan war in 1965, the third Indo-Pakistan war in 1971, the formation of new country called Bangladesh, the Kargil war in 1999, Godhra and Babri Masjid issues and many others. Both of the countries are facing, the LOC terrorism, continuous bomb blasting and attacks, riots between Hindu and Muslims within the country which are the examples that prove the wounds of pain and anger of partition to be still green in the hearts of people. The ambition of a few leaders changed the entire outlook of the country. We still can not forget its bitterness and it is a hurdle in the growth and development of the country.

Both novels Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* deal with the same theme i.e. partition. It seems as if Nahal's *Azadi* is the answer of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*. It is a heart-touching and realistic picturization of the trauma of partition. These authors were the real victims of partition holocaust. Both Kushwant Singh and Chaman Nahal were born and educated in Pakistan. Due to the partition of the Indian sub-continent, they along with their families had to migrate to India in 1947. The cause behind the success of the novels is that these two authors had witnessed and felt the horrors themselves.

*Train to Pakistan* received much appreciation because it was the first novel written on such a theme. It is set in a unique village Mano Majra, where Mslims and Sikhs had dwelled for centuries with lots of love and brotherhood. The title used by Khushwant Singh is very apt as it reveals many told and untold events. It is the life line for the villagers; the life of Mano Majra is connected with the train. It is the symbol of terror and love also as on the one hand it carries the dead bodies of Sikhs and Hindus from Pakistan and on the other hand Jugga sacrifices his life for saving hundreds of Muslims as his love, Nooran , is also travelling in this train. In the preface to *Train to Pakistan*, Singh writes:

The only conclusion that we can draw from the experience of the partition in 1947 is that such things must never happen again. And the only way to prevent their recurrence is to promote closer integration of people of different races, religions and castes living in the subcontinent.'<sup>1</sup>(TTP xv).

The writer has beautifully merged different kinds of characters related to various creed and communities, ordinary and political workers and officials and culprits. Even the protagonist is a blend of the hero and villain. Prafulla C. Kar in his article “*Khushwant Singh: Train to Pakistan* remarks,

Some novelists, who actually suffered due to partition, have used the incident as aesthetic compensation for their loss; those who did not suffer have used the occasion as a watershed in history to suggest that fiction can re-live the event which history tends to distort. (*Khushwant Singh: Train to Pakistan 90*)

We find that both of the novels run on the same theme but with a variety of characters. Singh took up the Indian Territory while Nahal touched the Pakistani Borders. The characters either Hindus or Muslims felt the same pain and bore the same terror. Both the writers have condemned the riots and the holocaust of partition. Lalaji, a Hindu in Pakistan of *Azadi* and Noor, a Muslim in India of *Train to Pakistan* have paid a lot for belonging to minor communities.

Nahal here is seen as an angry young man who tries to present his feelings of torment through his novel. The novel is set in Sialkot and covers the eight horrible months from June 3, 1947, the announcement date of partition to January 30, 1948 the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. He uses the title *Azadi* in an ironic way because his characters did not celebrate it but rather mourned it. Nahal’s dialogue narration quality is superb. A few incidents of the novel can never be forgotten by any reader like the death of Madhu, the suicide of Niranjana Singh, abduction and rape of Sunanda and the naked parade of Narowal. Like Lala Ji,

Nahal himself follows the Gandhian principles so he also mentions a few harmonious relationships irrespective of communal differences like the love between Arun and Nur, the friendship between Lala Kanshi Ram and Chaudhri Barkat Ali.

Nahal's novels have captivating attraction. His characters, dialogues, expression and images are realistic and significant. His narratives and description is picturesque and loving. He feels the sentiments of his characters and expresses it beautifully. The writer has successfully presented the psychological effects of the trauma, Lala ji and the other characters like Barkat Ali Khan, Davidson, Arun, and Nur exemplify the status of common people at the time of partition. *Azadi* excels all other novels. As a victim of partition the writer has beautifully wrapped his sentiments.

The experience of partition through women's eyes, the innocent love stories of Nooran and Jugga in *Train to Pakistan*, Arun and Nur as well as Arun and Chandni in *Azadi* could be a heart touching subject for future research. Women's writing and their perspective regarding partition can be another theme for future research. The role of politicians and their dictatorship can another topic be analyzed by future research scholars.

Though partition had divided the Hindus and the Muslims into two nations but the Muslims lie scattered in India even today. All the writers in their novels emphasize the maintenance of communal harmony. They advocate that some humanistic values must be maintained in every condition. The leaders advocating partition were highly ambitious for name and fame and partition was the result of their ambitions. Even after 1947

incidents like imposition of Emergency by Indira Gandhi in 1975 created a kind of slavery within the country.

Nayantara Sahgal in *Rich Like Us* deals with the theme of Emergency. She being brought up in a political family understands the pros and cons of Emergency. She has taken this event Emergency as the plot of her novel. Sonali, joint secretary in the Ministry of Industry, is the main protagonist of the novel. The largest democracy appeared more like a dictatorship because Emergency had given all kinds of twists and turns to politics.

Emergency and its effects have been presented in many versions. The official version of Emergency is the one in which the idealistic Sonali was replaced by Ravi, a puppet in the hands of politicians; the personal version of Emergency is where Dev forges his father's signature and kills his step mother Rose for his personal benefits and the business version of Emergency is where Newmen got profit by collaborating his secret business with Devikins. O.P. Mathur in his book *Indira Gandhi and the Emergency* made a comment on the novel and writes: "*Rich Like Us* is perhaps the only novel which subsumes the horrors of the Emergency in the consciousness of human beings affected by them". (38)

Like Nayantara Sahgal Arun Joshi, Shashi Throor, Salman Rushdie, Raj Gil, Rohinton Mistry, Manohar Malgonkar also penned on Emergency. Arun Joshi's *The City and The River* is one of the noticeable works where he describes Emergency in a mythical way. Grand master denotes the prime minister and all the rules and regulations mentioned and created by him directly

satirize the rules made during the Emergency. His ‘ways of three Beautitudes’ are similar to the Twenty-Point Programme of Emergency. The grandmaster had members of council who are nominated by the king himself for his personal benefits, as the legislative had become ineffective during the Emergency.

The grandmaster controlled the satellite, the astrologer, the rallies master; the military and the rallies master are fully under his control. He is the dictator who not only wishes to be a king but wants to promote his son also. Joshi has attacked on every part of the Emergency; be it the impractical family planning, or the harassment of common people in the name of the beautification of the city.

On the side there are rebellious boatmen, the owner of the river refuse to take the oath of alienation and stick to their traditions and customs. Just Sonali sacrificed her job in *Rich Like Us*, the head boatmen, professor and Bhoma also sacrificed their lives but never gave up their values. O.P. Mathur connects this suppression with other historical incidents in his book *Indira Gandhi and the Emergency* and writes:

These acts of suppression and torture including the blinding of the Headman remind us not only of the Emergency but also of incidents like Jallianwalla Bagh, the French Revolution and the communist rule in the erstwhile Soviet Union and in China.(90)

Besides Emergency our country has bravely faced wars also be it the India-Pakistan war or the India-China war. These wars also find a great place in Indian English fiction and in this series Bhabani Bhattacharya’s *Shadow From Ladakh* is an important document. Bhattacharya’s themes basically deal with

social dogmas, freedom and hunger. Gandhi died in 1948 but many Indians still believe in his principles and ideals. The story of the novel focuses on traditional vs. modern values. It stresses the need for the synthesis of various visions for the growth of the country. We have to synthesise the modern weapons and technology denoted by Steeltown with the traditional small industries of Gandhigram.

Scholar Satyajit is the epitome of Gandhi and his principles while Bhaskar, the American trained chief engineer advocates the modern outlook and symbolizes Nehru. The modern thoughts shake the pillars of traditional Gandhigram so Satyajit has adopted the Gandhian way of fast unto death however their different attitudes gradually synthesized and ultimately the wall of differences falls down as Bhaskar got married Sumita, the daughter of Satyajit.

Ladakh is a much discussed topic among the characters. Even the novel starts with the Peace Congress organized for World Peace. It has focused on China's history and the role of Mao-Tse-Tung has also been described. India has not only to secure its hard earned political freedom at any cost but also to preserve the sovereignty of Tibet. The Indian leaders know the truth of Aksai-Chin border but they try to solve it with their old weapons of non-violence and negotiation.

Satyajit and Bhaskar are both fighting for a same goal i.e. to safeguard the Indian Territory but Bhaskar thinks that he can do this only by producing more steel for weapons while Satyajit, following the Gandhian way thinks of conducting a peace march

in Ladakh to generate the feelings of love and brotherhood in the hearts of Chinese people.

The characterization of Bhattacharya is beautiful and the title is also very apt and suggestive because both the main characters are the shadows of two great leaders and their thinking. Ladakh too creates a shadow in the personal life of the fictional characters. The synthesis between the incidents and characters is also appreciable. There are two different persons representing two different attitudes of life but Sumita connects them and paves the gap of their differences. Thus the character Sumita is the symbol of positive hope that will connect the two persons and their attitudes regarding the India-China War of Ladakh. Bhattacharya's approach to life is optimistic and his characters are very simple and successfully portrayed.

*The Gandhi Quartet* covers the whole history of our freedom struggle; it's like a fictional journey from Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in 1919 to Gandhi's death in 1948. The first book of *The Gandhi Quartet* (1981), deals with the story of Gandhi's life in South Africa and his experiments with truth and non-violence. The fictional characters and the historical personages go simultaneously. Sunil, the son of Thakur Shanti Nath and his wife Kusum are the followers of Gandhi and the main characters of the volume and like many Indian they also give up the pleasures of their life for the freedom of their motherland.

The novel covers the period from 1915-1922. In the title the term crown denotes the British Empire while the Loincloth symbolizes Gandhi and the national movement. The Non-

Cooperation Movement, the burning of foreign goods and clothes, the popularity of homespun khadi and the journey of the Prince of Wales are the main events discussed in this volume. Nahal has beautifully mingled the fictional characters in these historical events as Sunil sacrificed his life to save the life of the prince. Gandhi is an omnipresent figure in all of his books.

As a sequel to *The Crown and the Loincloth*, the second volume *The Salt of Life* was published in 1990. The story begins where *The Crown and the Loincloth* ends. In historical perspective it covers the period between 1922 to 1939 i.e. when Gandhi was arrested and the beginning of Second World War. This volume also covers some historical incidents like the Salt Satyagrah, the Dandi March, the Civil-Disobedience Movement, the hanging of Bhagat Singh, the formation of Muslim League, the failures of the Round Table conferences in 1930, the formation of Forward Block Party by Bose and the conception of Pakistan by Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Here Sunil was replaced by Vikram, his son and Kusum, his widow. Kusum got married with Vishal Chand but unfortunately he also died. In this part through the character of Kusum the writer has highlighted the role of women in the Indian independence struggle. In Kusum we find the glimpses of Kasturba, Gandhi's wife who had sacrificed her life and dreams for Gandhi and his idealistic principles.

In the next volume *The Triumph of The Tri-Colour*, the story moves with the third generation of Thakur Shanti Nath. It is the continuation of *The Salt of Life*; here in the historical panorama

the incidents started from 1939 and continued upto 1947. Gandhi's Quit India Movement of 1942, Cripps Mission, Cabinet Plan, formation of Interim Government, Burma War, formation of INA by Bose with POWs released by Japanese are the chief historical events dealt with in his novels. When Cripps Mission failed in solving the situation Gandhi gave the slogan 'do or die.' In this novel Nahal highlighted not only Gandhi but focused on the revolutionaries also. The circumstances of the revolutionaries and the brutal killing have been depicted very lively.

Nahal's characterization is also historical and the large scale characters of Gandhi, Nehru, Bose and Jinnah are the requirement of the story. It is the narrative skill of Nahal that the reader feels as if watching a live film instead of reading a novel. The plot, the correlation of fiction with history, the suppression of Indians and the butchery of the British has been presented beautifully. The character and activities of General Dyer make the readers furious; the helpful nature of Kenneth Ashby also touches the reader.

The hanging of innocent youth, the patriotic feelings of the revolutionaries and the role of women is also appreciable. There is ample scope to research in his novels on the topics Gandhian perspective and the comparative study of fictional and historical personages. The autobiographical element in his novels can also be a great topic to research his works.

I find out that though Nahal made Politics and the Freedom Struggle his themes for most of his novels. He has also dealt with a lot of historical facts and incidents but when we read

his novels we certainly don't feel like merely reading a history book. It is his imagination and creativity that makes his literature a perfect combination of history and fiction. The dialogue delivery as well as the action of time and place shows the genius of the novelist. Like music and painting novels also generate feelings of patriotism in readers. We should be grateful to Chaman Nahal for recreating our freedom struggle through his books. We can learn from our history how we can maintain communal harmony, secularism and respect for our motherland and martyrs.

In my present work I have basically touched the political part but when I read his works I came across his vast knowledge of Indian epics. His child psychology and his mythical excellence can be traced by his short story collections. Through the detailed study of all of his works one cannot categorise him because he touched the political, the social and the traditional parts of India. He appears to have assimilated the qualities of many writers. As in *The English Queens* and the story collection *Akela* we find the humourous touch of R.K.Narayan's works while in *My True Faces* he presents the qualities of Arun Joshi's existentialism. When we read *Azadi* we feel the presence of Khushwant Singh and his novel *Train To Pakistan*. In the same way he reflects the qualities of Manohar Malgonkar also. His mighty pen with his narrating skills sometimes makes us cry and sometimes creates humourous for us.

To sum up I find out that Nahal is a true disciple of Gandhi and follows his principles; though in personal life he paid a lot

for *Azadi* but still loves his country. Through his works he gives a message of positive attitude, communal harmony and brotherhood. His immense knowledge of history and respect for the freedom struggle inspires the readers to respect their country and its freedom. He is one of the torchbearers of the Indian English fiction. Our literary world is highly grateful to him for his beautiful works.

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