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Socio-Psychological Issues in the Chaman Nahal's Selected Novels

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Abstract---If Literature is the treatment of experience through the medium of words, the quality of the literature depends on the kind of experience handled. The works of great literary men stem from high consciousness. No literary work can achieve its true aim of expanding the consciousness and increasing the awareness, if the author does not rise to the spirit and carry the creative power to kindle fire in others. Chaman Nahal, the most renowned post – Indian Historical novelist, sharpens the sensibilities of the readers by forecasting the spirit of the times.

Keywords---community, factors, Gandhian ideology, gender issue, religion, repercussions trauma.

Introduction

Chaman Nahal the Indian Historical novelist depicted the freedom struggle, intense mental agony of youngsters, sociopolitical discontent, religious thought and Gandhian principles of non- violence. As an Indian English novelist he has credited for his denied justifiable attention. The dynamics of political revolution captivated many a sensitive mind. This is rightly observed by Ramamurthi in *Essays in Criticism on Indian Literature in English*, “ Political urgency, reformistic motivation, journalistic impulse and creative imagination seem to have criss-crossed in the speeches and writings of the leaders... Which carry with them an unmistakable literary quality” (52). Many powerful writers stirred the heart of the people to realize India's plight and their own individual destinies. One such dynamic writer who captures the past to change the present is Chaman Nahal, the most prominent historical fiction writers of India. The political bondage of the nation in the past and the economic deficiency of the people in the present are

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aspects of reality. Nahal has chronical Indian history in the most desirable form by adorning reality with fiction as Shyamala Narayan distinguishes his artistry in her article, "Chaman (Lal) Nahal Biography", "Chaman Nahal's distinction lies in writing about India without any touch of exoticism" (N.pag.). Nahal believes that there are greater concerns which beckon to the human consciousness.

Chaman Nahal reckons that the most essential evolution in human society is the evolution of consciousness and without such awareness, discord and conflict will condemn the society to individual and collective degradation. To shape a new future, it is necessary to find the moral foundation and the new social vision. Through his remarkable literary skill no less than the vigour of his thoughts, Nahal taps the consciousness within, which stems from deep concern. The thematic concerns of Nahal enlighten the minds of his readers.

The Review of Literature

Chaman Nahal is one among the Indian writers in English who has been denied justifiable attention. With an exception to *Azadi*, his other works remain insufficiently analysed. Nahal's short stories and his critical works suffer the same indifference while his latest contribution to juvenile literature, the *Akela* trilogy has indeed won considerable acknowledgement. As a novelist, Nahal has invited attention to critical works in the form of reviews, thematic analyses, interviews and articles in journals.

The novels of Chaman Nahal provide interesting reading and the critical works indeed enrich the understanding of his themes and style. Nahal's autobiography, *Silent Life: Memoirs of a Writer and Other Free Encyclopedias: Chaman (Lal) Nahal Biography* provide details of his biography presented in this research. Subba Rayudu's extensive analysis of his Gandhian novels, Gandhian ideology and the Indian Novel: Chaman Nahal's *The Gandhi Quartet* along with a host of articles on his other novels have motivated and contributed to the in-depth study of his themes and patterns.

The spectrum of consciousness for celebration of life in Nahal's novels has not been specifically dealt with. Critics have indulged in analyzing themes of affirmation, the Indian sensibility, the use of history, and the Gandhian aspect. Nahal's novels provide ample scope for a clinical study of various types of Consciousness in men at different premises. The characters awaken to particular Consciousness and display remarkable commitment to life and its worth.

The dimensions of consciousness

The paper discusses the compulsion of artists and philosophers to represent contemporary problems and their essential role in moulding a better society. The growth of the historical novel has been traced and Nahal's unique place in the order is highlighted. Biographical details are drawn from his autobiography, *Silent Life* along with other sources to provide an insight into his artistic acumen. Instances that have inspired Nahal to present life-like situations are identified from his own testimonial statements.

The study establishes the hypothesis that the various experiences of the characters unfold the dimensions of consciousness pointing to the new directions of recreating life, affirming its meaning. The study seeks to look afresh at the problems and see how they can be created anew in the light of the experiences of his characters. It examines Chaman Nahal's attempt at awakening consciousness of the readers to the social problems and to scrutinize his view of life at the individual, national and the cosmopolitan levels, not excluding his moral, social, philosophical and psychological delineations in another plane. Towards this purpose, eight novels have been taken for study: *Sunrise in Fiji*, *Into Another Dawn*, *The English Queens* and *My True Faces* and the four novels included in *The Gandhi Quartet*-*The Crown and the Loincloth*, *The Salt of Life*, *The Triumph of the Tricolour* and *Azadi*.

Individual seeking meaning in life

It explores Nahal's treatment of the individual and his conflicts with the family, society and the nation. Chaman Nahal devoted considerable space to family as an institution. *The Gandhi Quartet*, supplies ample scope for analyzing the responsibilities of an individual, *Into Another Dawn* analyzes the highly sensitive individuals seeking meaning in life. *Sunrise in Fiji* focuses on the spiritual famine concealed by materialistic splendour. The individual in relation to family, the civic sense aroused during the freedom struggle, personal discipline as advocated by Gandhi, the East West encounter in respect to individuality are the other concerns of the chapter.

The sensitive issue of partition

Issue of partition delineates the whole saga of struggle for Independence based on Satyagraha pointing toward awakening of the collective consciousness. As families, as communities, and as a nation, the background provides immense opportunity for the novelist to bring about a spectrum of awakening at various levels, The other prospective fields of communalism, the presence of extremists and moderates among the freedom fighters, and the sensitive issue of Partition are analysed. The chapter assesses how the dawn of freedom becomes a nightmarish "false dawn of freedom and "a wiped-out dream", with the horrendous experience of the holocaust of communal violence, besides emphasizing the need for religious harmony. The chapter analyzes *The Gandhian Quartet*, which is rich in the colonizer and the colonized attitudes for the collective sensibilities. Nahal's skill at dealing with the diasporic sensibilities in novels like *Sunrise in Fiji* and *Into Another Dawn* and the comical treatment of the imitative English consciousness in *The English Queens* are also examined. The chapter highlights that Nahal's concerns stem from a code of stable ethical and cultural values.

Reflecting Gandhian thoughts

It concerns itself with Nahal's portrayal of Gandhi and his role in awakening the national as well as moral consciousness. Nahal's *The Gandhi Quartet* is an exclusive presentation of the mechanics of Gandhian methods and how people responded to them. Gandhi's firm belief in non-violence, his frustration over the

division of people on basis of religion and creed are elaborately analysed. An array of novels portraying Gandhi as a character and the relevance of Gandhian ideologies are discussed. Nahal's difficult and challenging task of portraying Gandhi both as an individual and as a symbol has been explored. Gandhi saga sets the pace and the deeper meaning to his novels. The chapter focuses on the relevance of Gandhi and the need to interpret Gandhian values in response to the new life demands.

Analyze the spectrum of women character

Analyze studies the feminist consciousness as perpetuated by Chaman Nahal in his novels. Nahal has the flair for portraying strong women. The role of women in the freedom struggle has been glorified by Nahal. His women are smart and are often the anchors of the storyline. The chapter analyzes the spectrum of women characters- the instrumental woman of a family, the convicted women in the freedom struggle, the British and the American women living in India, and the emancipated yet cultured woman typical of the Indian tradition.

Renewing the spirit

The main threads running through all the chapters, illuminating the relevance of his observations on the exultation of life at all circumstances. The various techniques employed by Nahal are examined to assess and establish Chaman Nahal's position among the major writers of Indian English novels. Nahal's creative writing is an embodiment of a positive attitude to life, its acceptance in its totality, the celebration of its joys and resignation to its sufferings, leading to relentless exploration of values that make life meaningful. He succeeds in awakening the dormant spirit of men pointing out, that though confined within the frame of society or history, the essential pursuit should be to search and celebrate the meaning of life.

Research Suggestions

The study aims to analyse and establish the hypothesis that the various experiences of the characters of Nahal unfold the dimensions of consciousness pointing to the new direction of recreating life, affirming its meaning.

- A more evocative and analytic method, more supple and more harmonising becomes essential for an exploration of these dimensions of consciousness in the works of Chaman Nahal.
- The study shall unfold Chaman Nahal's attempt at awakening consciousness and scrutinize his view about individual and communal responsibilities, Gandhian ideology and gender issues, not excluding his moral, social, philosophical and psychological delineation.

Conclusion

The study evaluates Nahal's skill at dealing with the diasporic sensibilities in novels like *Sunrise in Fiji* and *Into Another Dawn*. The fourth chapter deals with Gandhi's role as a beacon light in India's freedom struggle, his life of discipline

and the Gandhian morality, his ideologies and his misgivings too. An attempt has been made to highlight the relevance of Gandhi to modern times. The fifth chapter studies the feminist consciousness, as perpetuated by Chaman Nahal in his novels, which is different from the stale cry for independence from male domination. Nahal's remarkable portrayal of empowered women is brought to light, highlighting that their self-sufficiency renders them freedom and modesty together.

The approach is thematic, dealing with the individual, Social and moral concerns, and the methodology chosen is analytical. The purpose is to evaluate Nahal as a novelist with the lauded purpose of awakening consciousness toward celebration of life. The forthcoming chapter traces Nahal's focus on the individual consciousness, the discovery of the meaning of individual life by restoring personal discipline and values. His individuals experience fulfillment as well as failure in the struggle they encounter and emerge from these vicissitudes of life adding greater meaning to it.

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