



**Short Review Paper**

# **An approach to Souvenir Realities of Partition by Chaman Nahal's Azadi**

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## **Abstract**

*My review on the novel Azadi, just to highlight the mixed realities that had been witnessed of the best and worst time, faced by the people of Sialkot. Chaman Nahal has come close to answering the question of the slaughter of the innocent people in the compelling novel 'Azadi'. Chaman Nahal explained in detail about different characters with their love, relation, bonding as well as suffering, looting, killing, fear, and trauma. Partition of India in 1947 was a historical event not only in Indian history but in the world's history. The origin of giant disaster was communal fire provoked after the declaration of partition. British have applied the policy of divide and rule to separate Hindu and Muslim. They left India but after dividing it into two sovereign countries India and Pakistan. Which resulted in the vast devastation of many lives in communal fire. Partition had become the process of dividing people according to their religions Hindus for India and Muslims for Pakistan. Population had migrated to their declared nation but leaving all their property and household behind. They had to begin with ruined social, political and economic background without any experienced government. About millions of people had to flee from their homeland, thousands of people had died in communal war, left were in trauma because their family members were brutally killed in the riots. No one could expect mercy in the communal war, because Hindu and Muslim have been become a swear enemy to each other.*

**Keywords:** Partition, Communal fire, Hindu, Muslim, History.

## **Introduction**

Chaman Nahal, an Indian writer of unusual ability and outstanding novelists of the 1970's. He has born in Sialkot (now in Pakistan) in 1927, educated at the Delhi and Nottingham University<sup>1</sup>. He became Professor of English at Delhi University in 1980. He has received the "Federation of Indian Publishers award" in 1977, "Federation of Indian Publishers award" in 1979, the "Sahitya Akademi Award" in 1997. Azadi is a sensational novel on the theme of partition, published in 1975. It is a novel which secured a real historical and horrible event of the partition of India into India and Pakistan. Azadi is a modern classic novel which expresses an understanding scenario of the havoc that had been faced by the population of Sialkot at the personal and social levels. Chaman Nahal had written this novel with an involvement and practically on the theme of partition. Novel is consisted of different characters from the seven families who were living in a village Sialkot, just like a one family. These characters reflected different behaviors according to the change of circumstances. The British Viceroy in English speech on the radio announced India's independence and her partition<sup>1</sup>. After the declaration of independence and partition, love affection, feelings and sacrifice have been become the words of tale. In a rapid form good relations had been divided according to the religions. All the happenings of the village and expressions of the writer are divided into three important parts "Lull", "Storm", "Aftermath".

## **British technique and the partition of India**

Very skillfully and continually British ruled India nearly for 350 years. They have followed the divide and rule policy to weaken the national movement. They have also followed the same policy at the time of census. They divided people according to their religions and also alienated them from each other<sup>1</sup>. British rule in India had been turned into violent revolts and brutal violence. By the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century nationalistic movements had started<sup>2</sup>. The new British policies of education, transportation and communication have come in existence. The British have weakened the command over India during the Second World War. They have been become socially and economically weak and supposed to go back home. Finally they have prepared to transfer the power in June 1947. Indian National Congress has been understand that now the British had to quit India and they have called Britain to Quit India and in 1943, the Muslim League approved a declaration for the British to Divide and Quit<sup>2</sup>. Jinaah was the most responsible person for the creation of Pakistan and for Pakistan he was known as the father of nation. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was opposite to the congress, he advised the Muslims to maintain the distance from the Hindus. For the formation of separate Muslim homeland, the three parties- the British, the Congress, and the Muslim were responsible<sup>2</sup>. British were fearful from the former rulers of the subcontinent, who have ruled under the Mughal Empire for over three hundred years. British helped the Muslims to establish the

M.A.O. College at Aligarh and also supported to All India Muslim Conference. After the revolt of 1857, the British located all the responsibilities on the Muslims. The British have supported to the Muslims but Muslims have refused to learn English. They were not ready to associate with the British<sup>3</sup>. The Muslims learned from their social reformer that the cooperation and education with the British was indispensable for their survival in the society. Therefore it has been observed by the study of the novel Azadi that the British have followed systematic and urbane lifestyle but in British India they have adopted the policy of divide and rule between Hindus and Muslims<sup>3</sup>. British left India but with the division of the country into India and Pakistan. Hindu-Muslim tension was there from the time of British rule but after the declaration of partition it was evolved into the antagonism. Government and Hindu-Muslim leaders were failed to reconcile religious differences which resulted in Hindu-Muslim competition and then conflicts<sup>3</sup>. When the religious differences heightened and aggression grew, Muslims proposed a separate province for their equal rights in united India. In the starting Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not asked for the separate Muslim state from India, instead, a better position for Muslims in India. Central leaders Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Jawaharlal Nehru never agreed for the partition instead they both supported to the unity and equality of India.

### **Sialkot before the partition of India**

Sialkot village was a peaceful place of seven families where Hindu Muslim and Sikh have lived in unity. Some examples of small quarrel could be heard but there were no any big disputes have been noticed. Instead the friendship of Lala Kanshi Ram and Chaudhary Barkat Ali was a land mark in the village Sialkot. They both were influenced by Gandhi's speech and his theory of non-violence. Their children Arun and Nural-Nissar had loved to each other. They wanted to get married. Arun was ready to change his religion for his beloved but Nur's brother Munir suggested Arun to maintain Hindu Muslim concord. Small village was happy with big commitments of friendship and romance. Villagers were free and happy to live accordingly. Sialkot was a calmative and peaceful place, only loud sound of enthusiasm and pleasure that have been celebrated in the village. Village was completed with daily routine of men's work, women's household work, their gossip, and children's school and their plays. On one evening an important announcement had to take place on the radio<sup>2</sup>. Only Bibi Amarvati had radio in the whole village therefore members of seven families were assembled at Bibi Amarvati's house to listen the special speech by the British Viceroy Mountbatten.

### **Sialkot after partition of India**

Migration had been started in Sialkot. People were moving to refugee camp willingly, unwillingly, forcefully or fearfully. Peaceful place had become a house of uproar and riot. Without any reason or hostility anyone was killing to anybody. Many

innocent lives had sacrificed into the communal riot<sup>4</sup>. In that way women were the most horrible victims of the partition events. After struggling for three decades, India and Pakistan got freedom in August 1947. In which way Indian approved freedom was vindictive<sup>4</sup>. People had to move after leaving their property, pride and an age. They have been lost their beliefs in the government as well as in the communal relations<sup>5</sup>. Coexisted communities attacked each other horribly under the sectarian violence<sup>5</sup>. The violence was intense and cruel, there were massacre, arson, carnage, abduction, sexual brutality and forcefully religious conversion. Thousands have been killed in arson, carnage, and massacre. Thousands of women have been abducted, kidnapped, raped and disfigured. People have denounced on their own land. Lala Kanshi Ram was deeply influenced by the British Empire and autocratic lifestyle<sup>6</sup>. He always attended all the parades and other activities organized by the British. He believed that the British had the power and technique to control the communal riots but very soon he was dumbstricken that the British were not able to control the riots. He was disappointed to British inability but still loyal to them. So that he was not agreed to leave Sialkot, now as a part of Pakistan. People of Sialkot were moving to refugee camps, carrying luggage in hands and children on their shoulders and were crying hysterically. No Hindu was safe in Sialkot now instead they were feeling cheated and defeated on their own land. Muslims have kidnapped the Hindu women for their extra uses; they also forcefully have converted to Islam. Abducted Hindu women had to walk in the naked procession passed by the main market<sup>1</sup>. Everyone wanted to see the procession, public had thrown many odd article upon the naked women. Pregnant women have been rapped and torn their bump, survivors have repeated rapes till they were alive<sup>1</sup>. They were totally ruined in horror of abduction, kidnapping and rapped therefore in fear committed to suicide, left have been mentally sick or behaving hysterically. In that way women were the most horrible victims of the partition events<sup>6</sup>.

### **Greatest migration in the world history**

After the declaration of partition a supreme migration took place in the world's history. Exodus of masses was a process to migrate population safely to their nation but the sectarian thinking had been turned into the communal riots<sup>6</sup>. Millions of refugees have migrated from the both sides. At the time of migration government actively arranged aircrafts facility for the old aged and the sick refugees. From the sea route isolated refugees have been sent to their nation. Most of the refugees have been migrated by the train, anyone wanted to climb the train first, those climbed up were relaxed, some of set on the top, left were stuck on the cuff links. Those who could not moved by any transportation they have joined the foot convoy. Because they wanted to leave Sialkot to the safe place as soon as possible. Lala Kanshi Ram was not ready to leave Sialkot. He was in trauma that I have spent my all life here and how could I become a refugee here?<sup>1</sup> But Chaudhary Barkat Ali convinced him to move to refugee camp. He moved but with the hope that

when the riots would be settle down he would be come back to Sialkot. In refugee camp he had informed about the slaughter of his daughter Madhu and her husband Rajeev. From here Lala Kanshi Ram distracted to the Sialkot and prepared to leave the place and joined the foot convoy. The convoy could be attacked any time so, Indian government had sent troops to protect Hindu refugees. In this troop some captains and gurkhas and soldiers were there to protect the convoy. In the troop soldiers from Hindu Muslim and Sikh majority was there. They said to the refugees that “don’t have fear we would take all of you safe to your country” and shouted “Vande Matram”<sup>1</sup>. Refugees had faced the attacks by the rioters during the march and some places no anti Hindu slogans have been listened instead some Muslim villagers have brought water for them, some have waved their hands and some said Khuda Hafis, some were just stood and stared. This was the most pathetic part of the novel which made sentimental to the victims as well as the readers. During the migration people have not taken bath from many days, limited food have been provided, they have to carry their own luggage. Only pregnant women, old aged and sick refugees have given vehicle facility. This migration was a play for the children; they were roaming from here to there. Finally convoy reached to Delhi after reaching on their own land all shouted “Hindustan Zindabad”, “Hindustan Zindabad”.

## Conclusion

It has been observed that the event of partition has proved as a disaster of ill luck in the world history. Freedom of India from the British rule followed by the declaration of the partition of India into two separate states India and Pakistan. An event that have snatched pride and dignity, grace and glory of the people of India whether they were Hindu or Musalman. Independence and partition resulted into the murder, loot, rape, dishonor, abduction, carnage and massacre etc. The novel professed the labels of friendship, romance, gallantry, cruelty, honesty and sacrifice that are worth attention. The English granted freedom

to India when they had no other option besides it. It was sufficient to smash the faith of people in them and in government system. It is also observed that partition of India had been done according to the religious line even than Hindus were in Pakistan and Muslims were in Hindustan. Partition was not a right decision to solve the communal problem therefore many innocent people have without cause offended. different characters like Lala Kanshi Ram, Chaudhary Barkat Ali, Arun, Nur, Munir, Madhu and her husband Rajeev, Chandini and many others have sacrificed their love or lives for no reasons. Chaman Nahal very successfully created an atmosphere of those tumultuous days of partition.

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