

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY****Partition Violence: A Cause of Psychological Trauma in Nahal's *Azadi***

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English

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**Letter of Approval**

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## Abstract

This thesis entitled “Partition Violence: A Psychological Cause of Trauma in Nahal’s *Azadi*” has been written on the novel *Azadi*, written by an Indian writer Chaman Nahal. In the novel, the core intention of the writer is to portray the heart rending violent scenery of partition violence of India in 1947, and spread the message that violence benefits no one. Further more, he wills to say how the violence breaks all the limitations of social and moral laws. Violence brings severe catastrophes for the civilians and can be one of the root causes of trauma, especially psychological trauma. This thesis seeks to examine the narrativization of trauma in *Azadi*. However, at the same time the writer fails to maintain the fair judgment regarding the causes behind the eruption of such heart rending partition violence. *Azadi* projects Muslims as responsible for the eruption of the partition violence in 1947. Chaman Nahal does so out of the cultural chauvinism on their part to build up the image of their communities as civilized entities as opposed to the other communities. This cultural prejudice mars the authenticity of the traumatic experience depicted in the novel.

The description of the violence in Pakistani side by the main character Lala Kanshi Ram is a subjective one. It is increased so much that it boils the blood and raises hair of any Hindu. *Azadi* is an unauthentic presentation that the rendition of violence is influenced by his inclination of Indian nationalism. He vainly attempts to create a show-up of the objectivity and authenticity in the narrativization of the trauma of the Muslim by presenting Lala Kanshi Ram. He says that what ever happened to them in Pakistan is happening to the Muslims in India. He does not narrate what exactly he observes. This refers two things. The first is Hindus or Sikhs were not less violent than Muslims. And second, Nahal escapes details of trauma undergone by the Muslim refugees in India.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

### Chaman Nahal and *Azadi*

*Azadi*, the Sahitya Akademi winning book in 1977 employs an entirely different style and has won the appreciation of many literary figures. Mulk Raj Anand has praised the novel saying, “One of the rare tragic narratives in Indian fiction, intensely felt, poignant and symptomatic of the author’s having drunk from the sources of love” (qtd. in Nahal, Front Cover Page). Similarly, Christopher Ricks has praised the novel *Azadi*, “Chaman Nahal’s moving, dignified, and honorably enthralling novel” (qtd. in Nahal, Back Cover Page).

Chaman Nahal, an Indian writer lived in Pakistan though he was born in 1927 in Sialkot, India. He had received his Master’s Degree in English from the University of Nottingham in 1948. Similarly, in 1961 he did Ph.D. in English. He has taught at various universities in India. The novelist was also a professor at several universities in the U.S.A., Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, Canada and North Korea. He has written many novels like; *My True Faces*, *Azadi*, *Into Another Dawn*, *The English Queens*, *Sunrise in Fiji*, *The Crown and the Loincloth*, *The Triumph of the Tricolour*, etc. Chaman Nahal’s distinction lies in writing about India without any touch of exoticism. He is not only famous for his novels but also for his short stories.

*Azadi* was published in 1975 in which Chaman Nahal has tried to resemble the three different time segments and their consequences, namely the Lull, the Storm and the Aftermath. Before 1947 war, both Hindus and Muslims live together. They worship their God in their own way only inside the home. But in the society they live like they are own brothers. There is a great co-operation and co-ordination between them. But after the violation, a communal limitation, boarder is created between them. The situation is very panicky and dreadful after the violation. When India is divided into India and Pakistan, Indians become refugees in their own place and in the same way, Pakistanis become refugees in India.

However, the partition brings innocent and poor civilians to great catastrophe. After the violence, communal venom and contempt grow. Chaman Nahal sets his novel in the partition period. He chooses to narrate his experiences of partition from the vantage point of Lala Kanshi Ram, a Hindu man. The novel *Azadi* employs the theme of the partition violence 1947. The people who are projected as characters are from all parties involved in the partition violence, basically Hindu, Sikh and Muslim. But the thesis focuses only on the traumatic experiences of Hindu and Sikh through the memory and consciousness of its major character Lala Kanshi Ram. Lala Kanshi Ram, a grain merchant in Sialkoat, is a humble person. He is an example of self dignity, virtue and humanity. Kanshi Ram has a Muslim Chaudheri Barkat Ali as a close friend. His son Arun has a Muslim classmate Munir as his best friend in the college. Arun, moreover, has fallen in love with Nur, a Muslim girl.

There is utter harmony among Muslim and Hindu and Sikh in pre-partition Punjab. They worship their gods in their own ways but only inside the home. They are never divided even though they follow different religions. Similarly, they share many things “they speak a common tongue, wear identical clothes, in an identical manner. If they worship different gods, it is only in their homes. This refers to the communal harmony prevalent in pre-partition India. They were not Muslim or Hindus, they were Punjabi” (Nahal 54). The communal bond however, begins to deteriorate as the time for Indian independence draws closer and as talk grows more explicit regarding a possible India-Pakistan partition and disintegrates completely after the announcement of partition.

### **Critics' Views on *Azadi***

Since the publication of the novel, it has been criticized and eulogized by many critics. Bhagat Goyal in his book *Nahal's Azadi: A Review* (1984) puts his view in the following words, “Nahal is able to retain an Aesthetic objectivity which enables him to view disastrous

human drama performed after the partition of India" (127). Similarly, critic G. Neal Arther in his article "Collective Trauma Apologies, and The Politics of Memory" (2004) presents his views as follows, "The perpetrator of the trauma imposed up on the ethnic racial and religious minorities would prefer to forget about the past and pretend that atrocities didn't occur . In the same line, Nahal's *Azadi* also commits the similar sin because it elides the atrocities imposed upon Muslim minorities in India" (465). Shubha Tiwari has commented the novel in his book review "Azadi-Some Bitter Realities of Past," "Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* is a simple and candid novel about the realities of India's independence and her partition. The novel strips off the layers of romance, valor and chivalry and lays bare certain historical realities which demand attention". In the same way, Radhika Purohit, a feminist, has also expressed her view on the novel *Azadi* in her article "An Androcentric and Gynocentric Perspective of Women as Victims in Partition Fiction: A Comparative Study":

*Azadi* is a deeply touching saga of the partition of the sub-continent and accompanying disaster .The novel is realistic in its chronicling the details and in depicting a picture of human cruelty and perversity. It also has a remarkable penetration and convincingness in its well-executed and gripping narrative clear cut and readily identifiable characters and a kind of grisly, macabre atmosphere that has its own sharp appeal. (442)

According to Chaman Nahal, the creation of Pakistan solves no problem. There are Hindus everywhere in Pakistan and so are Muslims in India. The sixty five years of post British rule has proved that partition can not and has not solved communal problems. Innocent lives are unnecessarily victimized and sacrificed. Young girls and boys like Nur, Madhu, Arun, and Chandani are killed or separated from each other for no reason at all. Partition is not a historical necessity. Vividly painting all the realities, Chaman Nahal poignantly touches the subject of women victims. Women are the worst victims. They are the



hardest hit. The description of Sunanda, her grandeur, her untouched sophistication and then the description of the way in which she is dragged and ill treated by Capt. Rahmat-Ullan Khan is heart rending.

Hindus are traumatized by the Muslim in the 1947 violation. The truth about the traumatic experiences of traumatized people is not often fully explored nor that is represented without any manipulation or distortion. Since trauma surfaces in the period of latency or belatedness of the event, when the traumatic event occurs the victim may not be fully aware of it. The effects of trauma, however, are apparent later when similar situation or the event triggers the memory of the victim. Due to many reasons even the victim himself may not (can not) present his experience in its stark reality. Because of the tenet of memory, the traumatic experiences are either overplayed or downplayed by either adding or subtracting certain experiences. In addition to this, when such experiences are transformed into narratives, they are not objectively presented. It happens usually because of the network of the cultural politics in which the author or the narrator is a member. Besides, it happens due to discrimination which is pre-occupied in the mind of the person who records and presents the traumatic experiences of the victimized people. The major factor behind the politics of inclusion or exclusion and over playing or downplaying certain traumatic experiences of the partition victims is the nationalistic prejudice and communal discrimination. Such predisposition is explicit in Indian novelist Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*. The narrativization of *Azadi* seeks to project the Muslim as responsible for the eruption of the partition violence of 1947. This chapter highlights the adverse impacts of traumatic memory caused by partition violence through the textual analysis of *Azadi*.

The disintegration of human relationship starts with the announcement of the partition of India in two independent countries. Gradually, the fire of communal tension grows into inferno. Sialkot, where Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus minority had been living since decades go

inside the Pakistani territory. As Pakistan comes into being terrifying scenes of looting, humiliating, murders, rape and atrocities of other kinds mounted up. In this situation, Muslims insist taking a procession through the Mohalla where only Hindus and Sikhs live. India being a free from the colonial rule of British and emergence of new country Pakistan throws the religious minorities like Lala Kanshi Ram into the inferno of communal hatred. Amidst this, Lala Kanshi Ram finds nothing but leaving his dearly loved place and property to seek shelter in free India as difficult existence. As stated earlier, Sialkot falls in the territory of Pakistan, freedom turns Hindu and Sikh minority there as an occasion of crisis and catastrophe. Having persuaded that there is no way except migrating to mother India, Lala Kanshi Ram and other Hindu and Sikh neighbors move to a refugee camp at the end of Sialkot. The partition brings not only split of India into two countries but it also separates many families, relations and drives innocent civilians like Lala Kanshi Ram to unknown place away from their own home.

Uprooted from the original homeland Kanshi Ram loses home, business and other possession along with their attachment with the land. Neither Kanshi Ram is a leader nor the lala of his business. Now he is in a canvas in the refugee camp. It is intolerable to Lala Kanshi Ram to accept himself as a refugee in his own home land. Soon the refugees are to taken to India. The news of abduction of Hindu girls by Muslim, their rape, slaughter and violence has covered the air in the camp. Meanwhile, Kanshi Ram receives a sad news that his only daughter and son-in-law are killed in a train while coming from Wzirpur to Sialkot. It leaves him entirely broken and his wife Prabha Rani goes to comma. She is traumatized in such a degree that she does not cry but, “It look(s) as though blood [is] drained out of her face; she look(s) mummified. There was no movement in her lips. She doesn’t even flicker her eyelids. After a few moments she closed the eyelids and kept them closed. And then she opened them and they stayed open” (169). She becomes completely numbed because of

trauma. The aura of destruction and tragedy has become common phenomena. Like Kanshi and his family, there is not a single family left in the camp without any suffering and loss of one kind or the other. Mourning, cries, pang of suffering and destruction surround everyone in the camp if not later on their way to the boarder.

The more severe tribulations begin later in their expedition and that reach to an epic scale. Lala Kanshi Ram provides leadership and guidance to the refugees of his unit while refugees are being escorted by the Indian army. The exodus begins. The immediate goal of this expedition is the small town of Dera Baba Nanak, nearest safety that lies forty-seven miles away from Sialkot. This town falls inside Indian Territory and from there refugees will go to Amritsar by train. This forty-seven miles long distance is to be covered on foot by the refugees because Pakistan has not arranged refugee train to Dera Baba Nanak from Sialkot. Indian troops under the commandship of Major Jung Bahadur are acute and careful to escort refugees safely to the boarder. As per the plan convoy of refugees have to cover a distance of six miles a day.

Every migrant in the convoy is scared before the exodus begins. Reports of the attacks on the refugees, abduction of the refugee women, their mass rape, molestation, brutality and atrocities of violence perpetrated on the other convoys similar to them have traumatized all the members. Paul L.Love in his article “The Narrative of Partition: With special attention to Chaman Nahal’s *Azadi*” says, “At the outset of their expedition they are plagued with sufferings and hardship. The pilgrims are increasingly shocked and traumatized by the reports of other such convoys being attacked by the Muslims on their way to the boarder” (49). Lala Kanshi Ram is seen encouraging and inspiring in his fellow members but deep down he is moving with shattered psyche as the death of his daughter has made a deep wound in his mind. Besides, the report about many starvation deaths and atrocities committed on Sikhs has deeply traumatized Lala Kanshi Ram and other refugees. “In each village they passed, they

found the remains of parties that have been attacked and butchered the dismembered human limbs and the skeleton” (283). They are scared of being attacked at any time on their way to the boarder.

On their way to Indian boarder of Dera Baba Nanak, the first attack falls on the convoy. Lala Kanshi Ram is shaken by noise of “machine gun firing and men of Indian army shouting: stop where you are. Sit down. Sit down on the road. Don’t panic!” (Nahal, 284). This attack leaves refugees with fear and tension. They start shivering and murmuring full of fear. The convoy gets ambushed and parts of unit two and three are affected. A large number of marauding mobs in horse back systematically kills and loots people in convoy. “The Muslim mob disappeared on horses, carrying away a number of young refugee girls with them and raising a storm of dust in the air” (285). Lala Kanshi Ram consoles himself though he is shivering because tragic as the attack is, it has hit only a small segment of the convoy.

The convoy is again a target of severe attack. The convoy receives second attack at Narowal, a town mainly populated by Muslim Zamindar. Muslims atrocities up on Hindus and Sikhs reach to apex as a number of Hindu-Sikh women abducted are paraded naked. These women are abducted first, and then raped publicly by a large mass of Muslims. Other abducted women are raped first and their breasts are chopped and many of the pregnant women’s wombs are torn open. The women brought to the parade are described as follows:

They all stark naked. Their heads were completely shaven: so were their armpits and so were their pubic regions. The women walked awkwardly, looking only at the ground. They were all crying, though their eyes shed no tears. Their faces were formed into grimace and they were sobbing. Their arms were free, but so badly had been used, so wholly their spirit crushed, their morale shattered. The bruises on their bodies showed they had been beaten and manhandled. (296)

Lala Kanshi Ram is completely broken down by this scene. As the parade takes place in the afternoon, refugees receive systematic attack at around eight in the evening. In this raid, Kanshi Ram's close companions are lost. Arun, who earlier had agonized bitterly in leaving behind Muslim friend and beloved, undergoes even greater loss in the disappearance of new love - Chandani. Sunanda, daughter-in-law of Lala Kanshi Ram's landlady in Sialkot, is abducted. Arun finds his college friend now Pakistani army officer Rahamat-Ullah Khan raping Sunanda. He automatically and almost routinely kills the man with a single blow. The raid comes in the wave for several hours where refugees scatter with panic. This time also a marauding mob of attacker abducts many other refugee women and many other get butchered when a crowd of Muslim "brandishing guns, sticks, and knives surge into the [refugee] camp" (304). Only after such horrors and suffering on an epic scale refugees reach their first goal Dera Baba Nanak, a place inside Indian territory.

Lala Kanshi Ram is left dispirited totally and defeated now in Indian Territory. Now he is no longer leader. Even when the refugees reach India their troubles are not over. In India, more tribulations await them. Boarding into refugee train Lala Kanshi Ram reaches Amritsar. There, to his dismay, he discovers his relatives' unwelcoming attitude. He still does not want to lose his dignity. So, he sets out for Delhi the capital city of India. The refugee train crawls so slow that it takes two days to cover the distance that is normally covered in four hours. Within India there are more atrocities, this time it is Hindus-Sikhs who have attacked Muslims. In Delhi, Kanshi Ram discovers an ultimate disillusion awaiting them. All housing promised to refugees has already been allotted. Jobs are the rarest things to find. Nevertheless, after a big struggle he manages to settle his family again in the refugee camp. This time, they are allotted rooms in tin-roofed refugees barrack. There Lala Kanshi Ram sets up a small shop and sells groceries in an attempt to earn a meager minimum livelihood for himself and his family. Now he learns his dream is shattered when he discovers Indian

bureaucracy is corrupted as instead of expressing sympathy to the refugees for what has befallen on them, the official ill-treated and humiliated them. Moreover, the independence has not given freedom and a new sense of dignity. Rather the suffering and horror, the loss of home, of loved ones and friends and incurable wound in mind and pains in body. This is how the main character of the novel and his surroundings are traumatized physically and mentally.

In fact, the writers like Khuswant Singh and Bhisham Sahni are more inclined towards the themes related to politics, communalism or religion. But, Chaman Nahal has chosen to deal with 'exile' as a consequence of partition. Unasked for exile, the suffering and loneliness that such forced exile imposes on the persons involved, is an experience by itself. *Azadi* is full of graphic description of human indignity and brutality, mass murders and mass rapes, large scale abductions and parades of nude women. One of the most powerfully touching scenes in the novel is the parade of the naked Hindu and Sikh women in Silkot. The novel is an example of how religion could generate in man the most destructive and inhuman frenzy. The description of the parading of the naked Hindu women by Muslims at Narowal is an example of it. But, at the same time, the point to be noted is that it was not only Hindu women who are ill-treated; their counterparts in India are no less insulted.

This thesis will be written applying the Trauma Theory basically establishing relation with the psychological aspect. Besides, the thesis also discusses on how the normal characters are politicalized and victimized in the novel *Azadi*, by Chaman Nahal in relation to how the traumatic event caused by partition violence disrupts attachment between self and others by challenging fundamental assumptions about moral laws and social relationship. Here, we address only psychological trauma, not physical injury, although physical injury leads to emotional or psychological trauma responses. Trauma involves an event (or repetitive events) and a reaction or response that includes an overwhelming experience of helplessness or powerlessness. This thesis examines the narrativization of psychological trauma in *Azadi*.

Besides, how the violence can be one of the major causes of psychological trauma will also be explored here establishing the relation between the trauma theory and the situations given in the novel. Furthermore, the thesis also discusses the cultural chauvinism that Nahal has shown in the novel to build up the image of their communities as advanced being as oppose to the other communities.

## Chapter II: Religious Prejudice in *Azadi*

### Trauma Theory and its Type

Trauma is an emotional wound or shock that creates substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a person often leading to neurosis. Trauma is an experience that is emotionally painful, distressful or shocking, which often results mental and physical effects at the end. Similarly, it creates substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a person often leading to neurosis.

There are two types of trauma — physical and mental. Physical trauma includes the body's response to serious injury and threat. Mental trauma includes frightening thoughts and painful feelings. They are the mind's response to serious injury. Mental trauma can produce strong feelings. It can also produce extreme behavior; such as intense fear or helplessness, withdrawal or detachment, lack of concentration, irritability, sleep disturbance, aggression, hyper vigilance (intensely watching for more distressing events), or flashbacks (sense that event is reoccurring).

A response could be fear. It could be fear that a loved one will be hurt or killed. It is believed that more direct exposures to traumatic events causes greater harm. For instance, in a school shooting, an injured student will probably be more severely affected emotionally than a student who was in another part of the building. However, second-hand exposure to violence can also be traumatic. This includes witnessing violence such as seeing or hearing about death and destruction after a building is bombed or a plane crashes.

Three main categories of traumatic events can lead to a different trauma response and respond to a different form of treatment: recent acute traumatic events (e.g., car crash, violent assault, etc.), past single traumatic events (e.g., rape, death of spouse, accident) and events



that last a period of time (e.g., a natural disaster or outbreak of political violence or war), long-term chronic abuse (e.g., ongoing childhood sexual or other abuse, including neglect; growing up in violent environment). Experiencing traumatic events can lead to a person developing simple or complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Recent acute traumatic events or past single traumatic events are most likely to lead to simple PTSD. Long-term chronic abuse including sexual abuse can lead to complex PTSD. Complex PTSD is more difficult to treat and can involve more complex, psychosocial factors that affect a person's ability to form healthy, trusting relationship.

This thesis discusses how the partition violence can be one of the root causes of psychological trauma, and what sorts of impacts it brings in the human life. In a very plain and simple sense trauma is a wound or bodily injury in general. This refers to the physical trauma, and contradicts a morbid nervous condition. Trauma is a severe emotional shock and pain caused by an extremely upsetting experience. Freud and Joseph Brewer in an essay *In Traumatic Neurosis* included in their book *Studies on Hysteria* suggest “the psychical trauma is something that enters the psyche that is so unprecedented or overwhelming that it can not be processed or assimilated by usual mental process. Therefore, it falls out of our conscious memory, yet is still present in the mind like an intruder or a ghost” (38). In the same essay they argue that physical symptoms are enigmatic signposts pointing to traumatic memories hidden away in the psyche. So the term ‘trauma’ cannot be analogous word for another word ‘disaster’. More specifically trauma refers to any wound that is independent of physical injury. In another term trauma is wound or shock or anxiety in the psyche of victim that he/she inhabit in him/her even long after the catastrophic events or accidents.

Caruth Cathy in the book *Trauma: Exploration in Memory* says, “Trauma is an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events, in which response to the event occurs, in the often delayed and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and

other intrusive phenomena” (11). Her point is that we can not experience traumatic event at the moment of its occurrence, it is fully apparent only in connection with another place and in another time. While coming all the way meaning or referring physical shock to the psychical wound the phenomena of trauma covers psychic life to public history. There is very contemporary attempt on trauma studies that reflects the sense that violence is coming nearer, like a storm - a storm that may have already moved into the core of our being. Besides, trauma has emerged as the site of amalgamation of various issues - as it is regarded a multidisciplinary discourse.

Judith Lewis Herman in his book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence* has quoted:

Psychological trauma is an affection of the powerless. At the moment of trauma, the victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming force. When the force is that of other human beings, we speak of atrocities. Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning. In 1980, when post-traumatic stress disorder was first included in the diagnostic manual, the American psychiatric Association described traumatic events as, “Out side the range of usual human experience.” (33)

About trauma, Caruth Cathy in his book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* has said, “Trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: It is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available” (4). Similarly, in the words of Thom Spiers in his book *Trauma: A Practitioner’s Guide To Counseling*, “Traumatic reactions are essentially psycho-physiological, that is, they affect both the psycho and the body” (4).

Finally, theory of trauma has affected a range of discipline and cultural expressions as well as other various issues. Besides, trauma theory dismantles the traditional historiography and demands a new sphere and language in order to recapture and reinterpret what is othered and silenced by the history or myth. Though theory of trauma is associated with psychological issues it converses with other theories and discourses. This conversion makes trauma not only multidisciplinary discourse but also a truly postmodern theory.

### **Historical Background of Trauma Theory**

Trauma, from a Greek word meaning ‘wound’, now summons up internal and emotional injury more immediately than it does a laceration or broken bone. The topic of trauma was raised to the centre of twentieth century European thought by the work of Sigmund Freud. Matthew Sharpe in his book *Trauma, History, Philosophy* has said, “Trauma is central to Freud’s work at both its beginning and its end. Trauma appears as a pivotal concern in his 1890s case studies on hysteria. It returns, at the basis of the later metapsychology, in Freud’s works written after the First World War” (1). Similarly, on the same page he further says, “A sense of trauma, unsurprisingly, pervades much of twentieth century European thought, especially that written in the century’s middle decades” (1).

The study of psychological trauma has a curious history- one of episodic amnesia. Periods of active investigation have alternated with periods of oblivion. Repeatedly in the past century, similar lines of inquiry have been taken up and abruptly abandoned, only to be rediscovered much later. Classic documents of fifty or one hundred years ago often read like contemporary works. Though the field has in fact an abundant and rich tradition, it has been periodically forgotten and must be periodically reclaimed. This intermittent amnesia is not the result of the ordinary changes in fashion that affect any intellectual pursuit. The study of psychological trauma does not languish for lack of interest. Rather, the subject provokes such

intense controversy that it periodically becomes anathema. Judith Lewis Herman in his book *Trauma and recovery: The Aftermath of Violence* has quoted:

The study of psychological trauma has repeatedly led into realm of the unthinkable and foundered on fundamental questions of belief. To study psychological trauma is to come face to face both with human vulnerability in the natural world and with the capacity for evil in human nature. To study psychological trauma means bearing witness to horrible events. (7)

To hold traumatic reality in consciousness requires a social context that affirms and protects the victim and that joins victim and witness in a common alliance. For the individual victim, this social context is created by relationships with friends, lovers, and family. For the larger society, the social context is created by the political movements that give voice to the disempowered. So, Herman says, “The systematic study of psychological trauma therefore depends on the support of a political movement. Indeed, whether such study can be pursued or discussed in public is itself a political question” (9).

Three times over the past century, a particular form of psychological trauma has surfaced into public consciousness. Each time, the investigation of that trauma has flourished in affiliation with a political movement. The first to emerge was hysteria, the archetypal psychological disorder of women. Its study grew out of the republican, anticlerical political movement of the late nineteenth century in France. The second was shell shock or combat neurosis. Its study began in England and the United States after the First World War and reached a peak after the Vietnam War. Its political context was the collapse of a cult of war and the growth of an antiwar movement. The last and the most recent trauma to come into public awareness is sexual and domestic violence. Its political context is the feminist movement in Western Europe and North America. Our (the general) contemporary understanding of psychological trauma is built upon a synthesis of these three separate lines

of investigation. Only after 1980, when the efforts of combat veterans had legitimated the concept of post traumatic stress disorder, did it become clear that the psychological syndrome seen in the survivors of rape, domestic battery, and incest war essentially the same was the syndrome seen in survivors of war.

Investigating the history of trauma, Robert Scaer in his book *The Trauma Spectrum: Hidden Wounds and Human Resiliency* has said, “The most important research into the field of trauma was produced after the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps as a result of the terrible ambiguity and societal distress produced by the Vietnam War, which may have rattled our cultural cage enough to force the current keen awareness of the consequences of trauma.” (1)

Hence, trauma is an outcome of any undesired incidence that directly affects the mental aspect of the victims. It can even lead the victim to some sorts of hysteria. Presently, the theory of trauma is largely being beneficial in the field of treatment, especially to heal the psychological hindrances of the victims.

### **Reflection of Religious Prejudice in *Azadi***

Prejudice can be termed as the disease that deteriorates the bond and relation between or among the people. Amongst the various factors that lead to prejudice, religion is one. If we analyze the novel *Azadi* written by Chaman Nahal in depth, the religious prejudice can be found in the core. Moreover, the major influencing factor behind the traumatization of the central character Lala Kanshi Ram along with other victimized characters in the novel is religious prejudice. Since the dwelling place of Hindus and Sikhs, Silkot, falls under the territory of Pakistan, the mental and psychological torture over them is mercilessly carried out by the Muslim community. And that is entirely derived by prejudice, moreover religious prejudice that the Muslims have for the other religious communities. The barbaric and inhuman behavior shown by the Muslim over other communities, basically Hindus and Sikhs is

directly guided by the hatred that emerged due to the being followers of different religions. Otherwise, there are not any other convincing reasons given in the novel for the eruption of such heart rending violence.

In the novel *Azadi*, Chaman Nahal has presented Lala Kanshi Ram as a main character as Nahal's narrator. He is the main character with whom most of the stories surround around. Here, he is presented with Hindu religion and culture. Nationally he is an Indian at the beginning of the novel but later on he becomes Pakistani with the partition violence of 1947. He becomes refugee in his own home-country India, after the partition. Other characters are Prabha Rani (wife of Lala Kanshi Ram), Madhu Bala (their daughter), Arun (their son), Bibi Amar Vati (a landlady of Sialkot), Gangu Mull (her husband), Suraj Prakash (their son), Sunanda Bala (Suraj Prakash's wife), Sardar Jodha Singh (a dry-fruit merchant of Sialkot and another tenant of Bibi Amar Vati), Sardar Teja Singh (his son), Isher Kaur (Teja Singh's daughter), Niranjana Singh (Isher Kaur's husband), Padmini (a charwoman, also a tenant of Bibi Amar Vati), Chandani (her daughter), Chaudhri Barkat Ali (a sports-goods dealer of Sialkot, and a bosom friend of Lala Kanshi Ram), Begam Barkat Ali (his wife), Munir Ahmad (their son), Nurul-Nisar (their daughter) and other characters have been presented as different religious parties having distinct cultures.

The people who are projected as characters are from all religion involved in the partition violence, basically Hindu, Sikh and Muslim. When narrative unfolds, we find Hindu, Sikh or Muslim living together in harmony and friendly terms since decades in the Punjab, a city of Sialkot. But the narrative focuses only on the experiences of Hindu and Sikh through the memory and consciousness of its major character Lala Kanshi Ram. Lala Kanshi Ram, a grain merchant in Sialkot, is a humble person. He is an example of self dignity, virtue and humanity. Kanshi Ram has a Muslim Chaudhary Barkat Ali as a close friend. His son Arun has a Muslim classmate Munir as his best friend in the college. Arun, moreover, has

fallen in love with Nur, a Muslim girl. There is utter harmony among Muslim, Hindu and Sikh in pre-partition Punjab. They worship their Gods in their own ways but only inside home. They are never divided even though they follow different religions. Similarly, they shared many things “they spoke a common tongue, wore identical clothes. If they worshiped different Gods, it was only in their homes. They were not Muslims or Hindus, they were Punjabi” (Nahal 54). This refers to the communal harmony prevalent in pre-partition India. The communal bond, however, begins to deteriorate as the time for Indian independence draws closer and as talk grows more explicit regarding a possible India-Pakistan partition and disintegrates completely after the announcement of partition. In pre-partitioned India, all the religious communities observe mutual trust and harmony but:

Those days had passed away and Abdul Ghani (a Muslim) was no longer friendly with Hindu businessmen of the bazaar. Yet (Hindu and Sikhs) neighbors treated him an equal. But the Muslim League had slowly made him aware of the threat in a free Hindu India. It was not a question of his personal views; the League or Jinnah Sahib new better. They said, view your Hindu neighbors with suspicion, and he did that. They said there should be Pakistan and he shouted for Pakistan. (Nahal 56)

Gradually, the fire of communal tension grows into inferno. Sialkot where Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus minority have been living since decades goes into the Pakistani territory. As Pakistan comes into being, terrifying scenes of looting, burning, humiliating, murders, rape and atrocities of other kinds mount up. In this situation, Muslims insist taking a procession through the Mohalla where only Hindus and Sikhs live. Here, it is vivid that their intention is to show the Muslim supremacy over the Hindus and Sikhs dwellers. India being free from the colonial rule of British and emergence of new country Pakistan throws the religious minorities like Lala Kanshi Ram into the inferno of communal hatred. Amidst these,

Lala Kanshi Ram finds nothing but leaving his dearly loved place and property to seek shelter in free India which presented him rather bleak prospects of difficult existence. Having persuaded that there is no way except migrating to mother India, Lala Kanshi Ram and other Hindu and Sikh neighbors move to a refugee camp at the end of Sialkot. The partition brings not only split of India into two countries but it also separates many families, relations and drives innocent civilians like Lala Kanshi Ram to unknown place away from their own home, for they belong to different religions i.e. Hindu and Sikh.

Being banished from the original inhabitant Kanshi Ram and his lot lose home, business and other possession along with their attachment with the land. Now, he is neither a businessman known as Lala nor a renowned local leader of his people. He is just confined in a canvas in the refugee camp. It is entirely out of tolerance to Lala Kashi Ram to identify himself as an anonymous figure in his own home land. Soon the refugees are to be taken to India. The news of abduction of Hindu girls by Muslim, their rape, slaughter and violence has covered the air in the camp. Meanwhile Kanshi Ram receives a sad news that his only daughter and son-in-law are killed in a train while coming from Wzirpur to Sialkot. It leaves him entirely broken and his wife Prabha Rani goes to comma. She is traumatized in such a degree that she does not cry but, “It look(s) as though blood [is] drained out of her face; she look(s) mummified. There was no movement in her lips. She didn’t even flicker her eyelids. After a few moments she closed the eyelids and kept them closed. And then she opened them and they stayed open” (169). She becomes completely numbed because of trauma. The aura of destruction and tragedy has become common phenomena. The heart rending catastrophes that hit the Hindus and Sikhs are largely an out come of religious prejudice.

This is non-other than the wild activity done by being influenced from religious prejudice that the characters like Kanshi Ram and his family together with others under goes the immense level of mental and physical torture. There is not a single family left in the camp



without any suffering and loss of one kind or the other. Mourning, cries, pang of suffering and destruction surrounds everyone in the camp if not later on their way to the boarder.

The more server tribulations begin later in their expedition and that reach to an epic scale. Lala Kanshi Ram provides leadership and guidance to the refugees of his unit while refugees are being escorted by the Indian army. The exodus begins. The immediate goal of this expedition is the small town of Dera Baba Nanak, nearest safety that lies forty seven miles away from Sialkot. This town falls inside Indian Territory and from there refugees will go to Amritsar on train. This forty seven miles long distance is to be covered on foot by the refugees because Pakistan has not arranged refugee train to Dera Baba Nanak from Sialkot. Indian troops under the commandership of Major Jung Bahadur are acute and careful to escort refugees safely to the border. As per the plan, the convoy of refugees has to cover a distance of six miles a day.

Every migrant in the convoy is scared before the exodus begins. Reports of the attacks on the refugees, abduction of the refugee women, their mass rape, molestation, brutality and atrocities of violence perpetrated on the other convoys in which similar to them have traumatized all the members. At the outset of their expedition they are plagued with suffering and hardship. The pilgrims are increasingly shocked and [traumatized] by the reports of outer such convoys being attacked by the Muslims on their way to the boarder. Lala Kanshi Ram is seen filling courage and inspiring in his fellow members but deep down he is moving with shattered psyche as the death of his daughter and her husband has made a deep wound in his mind. Besides, the report about many starvation deaths and atrocities committed on Sikhs has deeply traumatized Lala Kanshi Ram and other refugees. Similarly, “the remains of parties that have been attacked and butchered, In many cases, the dismembered human limbs and the skeleton were still lying there, and the stench was intolerable . These horrible scenery torn

them with sorrow” (283). They are scared of being attacked at any time on their way to the boarder.

In the book, *Azadi*, Chaman Nahal has reflected the narrow and wild thought of the people showing how the blind and so-called faith and devotion towards religion breaks down all the limitations of humanity and human bond. The ultimate level of religious prejudice is also seen in the novel. Muslims atrocities up on Hindus and Sikhs reach to the apex as a number of Hindu- Sikhs women abducted are paraded naked. These women are abducted first, and then raped publicly by a large mass of Muslims. Other abducted women are raped first and their breast are chopped and many of the pregnant women’s wombs are torn open. The women brought to the parade are inhumanly treated by Muslims. There is no hair in their any part of body. They are compelled to walk around the market area in their birth suit. Though the victims beg to show some kindness, their appeal goes in vain. It is not only the young women but also the old ladies, aged sixty, are imposed to participate in the parade. Furthermore, while walking along with the street, the bystander Muslims abuse and insult them using cheap words and showing their private area.

There can be nothing more barbaric, wilder and more inhuman than this. Lala Kanshi Ram shudders by this scene. As the parade takes place in the afternoon, the refugees receive systematic attack at around eight in the evening. In this raid, Kanshi Ram’s closest companions are lost. Arun, who also has been agonized bitterly in leaving behind Muslim friend and beloved, undergoes even greater loss in the disappearance of new love - Chandani. Sunanda, daughter in-law of Lala Kanshi Ram’s landlady in Sialkot, is abducted. Arun finds his college friend now Pakistani army officer Rahamat-Ullah Khan raping Sunanda. The raid from Muslim comes in the wave for several hours. Refugees scatter with panic. This time also a marauding mob of attacker abducts many other refugees women and many other get butchered when a crowd of Muslim “brandishing guns, sticks, and knives surge into the

[refugee] camp” (304). Only after such horrors and suffering on an epic scale refugees reach their first goal Dera Baba Nanak.

So far as the theory of trauma is concerned, it is the mental or physical wound caused by unexpected happening. If we penetrate into the reasons why the characters in the novel *Azadi* are traumatized, the religious prejudice appears to be the first. The first character to be traumatized is Prabha Rani. When she knows the news that Madhu, her only daughter, is killed by Muslims while coming from Wazirpur to Sialkot she does not shed tears. She simply says to Arun “now you have no sister left” and reacts very strangely as if nothing has happened to Madhu” (169). Instead of sorrow she just displays anger. But later, Prabha Rani is so much shocked. She does not show any movement. Neither she speaks nor she cries nor interacts with her husband and son. She seems mummified by the shock of her daughter’s death. She is broken deep down. The family of Kanshi Ram is able to survive all the attacks and reach Delhi. There also Prabha Rani, for days after the news of Madhu’s death, refuses to speak with any one. It is so because she is still shocked and “feels as same snare as does Kanshi Ram, her husband. She [has] lost the ease and become confined to her own single self and she has been detached from all the bonds she used to have with her husband” (369). She has lost vigor of life along with the ability to communicate with other because of trauma caused by religious prejudice resulting with the loss of her daughter.

Similarly, the characters like Nirajan Singh are compelled to sacrifice own self, for they belong to the different religion but not Muslim. In the refuse camp, the Sikhs are instructed to cut their hair. In such critical situation Nirajan Singh chooses self-sacrifice to cutting his hair. The consequence related to Nirajan Singh is guided by nothing but religious prejudice. Even after setting fire on self he shouts in agony but distinctly and clearly, “I belong to Waheguru, Waheguru is great” (262). The incidents as such vividly resemble the strongly rooted religious prejudice in *Azadi*.

## Chapter III: Partition Violence: A Cause of Psychological

### Trauma in Nahal's *Azadi*

#### Partition Violence in 1947

Violence can also be termed as a conflict that takes place between or among people, communities, and nations owing to various reasons. Basically, violence is an outcome of dissatisfaction in religion, opportunity, right, property, and so on. The outcome of violence is always heart rending that lasts with the lives of people.

The different critics have presented their opinions on partition violence of Hindustan. Analyzing the partition violence of India, Gyanendra Pandey in his article "In Defense of the Fragment: Writing About Hindu-Muslim riots in *India Today*" says:

The history of violence has been treated in the historiography of modern India as *aberration* and as *absence*: aberration in the sense that violence is seen as something removed from the general run of Indian history: a distorted form, an exceptional moment, the "real" history of India at all.' Violence also appears as an absence-and here the point applies more emphatically to a field wider than Indian history because historical discourse has been able to capture and re-present the moment of violence only with great difficulty. (27)

Portraying the evil consequence of the partition violence of 1947, Gyanendra Pandey in his book *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* has said, "Several hundred thousand people were estimated to have been killed: unaccountable numbers raped and transformed into official 'refugees' as a result of what have been called the partition riots" (2). He further says, "After partition, individuals, families and communities in the subcontinent remade themselves in radically altered setting. They had to struggle to overcome new fears, to gradually rebuild faith and trust and hope and to conceive

new historians” (16). In the same way, Jill Didur in his book *Unsettling Partition: Literature, Gender, Memory* has quoted:

The partition of India in 1947 marked the birth of two nations-states and the end of British colonialism in South Asia. The move towards ‘two nations solution’ was accompanied by an unprecedented mass migration (over 12 million people) to and from areas that would become India and Pakistan. The migration included abduction and sexual assault of over 75,000 women. (164)

On the same page, to portray the barbaric and inhuman scene of the partition violence, quoting the lines from a letter written by a non-commissioned officer in the erstwhile Punjab regiment of the British Indian Army two weeks after the official partition of India, Jill Didur writes, “Whosoever from the Hindu and Sikh came in front of us, were killed. Not only that, we got them to come out of their houses and ruthlessly killed them and disgraced their womenfolk. Many women agreed to come with us and wished us to take them, but we were out of revenge” (164). Ashis Nandy, in his book *The Intimate Enemy* recalls:

In 1947, India walked towards a new journey of freedom; the journey towards nationhood and statehood that art and media valorized as an event as process towards modernity and progress. But another part of the journey that simultaneously began in 1947 is never topped by Indians and Pakistanis. The journey laid to emergence of Hindustan and Pakistan that “frames the significant aspects of the political cultures and international relations” is not seriously admitted by any Indian. (309)

Why is such biasedness? The answer of this question is obvious that this journey began with a massive riot, mass murder, abduction, rape and mass rape of female, mutilation and bloodbath. In the same book, Ashis Nandy has said, “The ultimate symbol of the journey was the mass exodus of the minorities which uprooted people from their habitats they had

known for centuries” (310). Unfortunately, Indian official history covers this dark part of face of the partition behind the rhetoric of independence and civilization. According to Gynendra Pandey “it was only the bloodshed of partition that ordinary people saw the shape of independence” (qtd. in Nandy 307).

Ashis Nandy, says that history lies not only by misrepresenting reality but also by exiling emotions and making the false myth of an event. Memories and myth that enshrine them stand witness by refusing to discard human subjectivity. Myths never identify peoples’ history because they are not:

Peoples’ history or alternative history; their job is to resist history and resist the objectification of suffering and suffers in the name of objectivity. Thus the memories of partition often have a little to do with the known reality or scale of riot. Many [people] are traumatized not by the direct experience of violence but by the loss of their ancestral home and the culture and identity in a new setting. Often they cannot articulate this fear, for the culture they are afraid of losing is the one they shared their neighbors. That culture included not only the shared past, landscape and the language but also places of the worship and the concepts of the divine. Their anguish may seem misappropriate to their loss [but] the loss of their culture is itself a matter of a serious concern. (316)

Treating the partition history merely as history of communalism, historians tend to exclude issues associated to reality and fact about struggle and violence, sacrifice and loss, the extensive forging of new identities and localities or the rise among uprooted and embittered people of new resolution and new ambitions.

The above discussion illuminates the fact that representation of partition violence in general and the representation of gendered violence in particular always remain effaced in the

history text books, art, media and other sources. During the bloody partition of India in 1947 thousands of women were abducted, raped and compelled to accept forcible marriage.

This thesis tries to show why histories as well as literature remain unable to represent the traumas of partition violence 1947. The above discussion shows the inefficiency, insufficiency and unreliability of the dominant historiographies of partition violence 1947, for they not only silence the voice and experience of subalterns, women and children but also try to justify atrocities of the violence by overplaying the rhetoric of freedom and nationality.

Paola Becchetta in her review essay “Representing Partition Violence: Voices of Women/ Children/ Dalits” signals that:

Dominant historiographies of partition have functioned together somewhat like a chronotope in their ability to contain elements (dates, the deed of ‘great men’) while effacing others (subaltern subjectivities, emotion, the body lived experience). This exclusion paradoxically has operated simultaneously with the public revelation of ‘fact’ detailing some of the human and specifically gendered aspects of partition. (569)

This spotlights the reality about the nature of the official statistics. The official statistics fail to tell the fact that twelve million people were uprooted from their ancestral habitat that they knew for hundreds of years, thousands of people were killed, countless people were dismembered and maimed and about seventy thousand women were abducted and raped on both sides of the boarder. According to Bacchetta this silenced fact is revealed in the works of feminist scholars Ritu Menon, Kamala Basin and Urbasi Butalia. Besides, their works gave a turning point to shift the old paradigm set by the traditional historiography to the experience of marginalized groups-female, children and Dalits.

One of the views expressed by Gynendra Pandey in his book *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* related to partition violence is noteworthy to mention here, “Recognition of the severity, the broken edges, and the uncertain boundaries of partition allows us a standpoint that was perhaps unavailable to an earlier generation of writers of nationalist Indian history. How much violence and intolerance has it taken to produce the ‘successful’ nation states of the twentieth century? How many partitions did it take to make the Partition of 1947? (19)

Finally, analyzing the partition violence of India in 1947, the conclusion can be drawn that violence brings nothing but the severe catastrophes for the civilians whether they involve in the violence visibly or not. Furthermore, the violence creates or makes the new room for another new violence. It flourishes hatred, intolerance and conflict amongst people, community or nations.

### **Representation of Partition Violence in *Azadi***

*Azadi* was published in 1975 in which Chaman Nahal has tried to resemble the three different time segments and their consequences, namely the Lull, the Storm and the Aftermath. Before 1947 war, both Hindus and Muslims live together. They worship their God in their own way only inside the home. But in the society they live like they are own brothers. There is a great co-operation and co-ordination between them.

The novel *Azadi* employs the theme of the partition violence 1947. The people who are projected as characters are from all parties involved in the partition violence basically Hindu, Sikh and Muslim. But the thesis focuses only on the traumatic experiences of Hindu and Sikh through the memory and consciousness of its major character Lala Kanshi Ram. Lala Kanshi Ram, a grain merchant in Sialkoat, is a humble person. He is an example of self dignity, virtue and humanity. Kanshi Ram has a Muslim Chaudheri Barkat Ali as a close friend. His



son Arun has a Muslim classmate Munir as his best friend in the college. Arun moreover has fallen in love with Nur, a Muslim girl.

There is utter harmony among Muslim and Hindu and Sikh in pre-partition Punjab. They worship their gods in their own ways but only inside the home. They are never divided even though they follow different religions. Similarly, they share many things “they speak a common tongue, wear identical clothes, in an identical manner. If they worship different gods, it is only in their homes. This refers to the communal harmony prevalent in pre-partition India. They were not Muslim or Hindus, they were Punjabi” (Nahal 54). The communal bond however, begins to deteriorate as the time for Indian independence draws closer and as talk grows more explicit regarding a possible India-Pakistan partition and disintegrates completely after the announcement of partition.

The disintegration of human relationship starts with the announcement of the partition of India in two independent countries. Gradually, the fire of communal tension grows into inferno. Sialkot, where Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus minority had been living since decades go inside the Pakistani territory. As Pakistan comes into being terrifying scenes of looting, humiliating, murders, rape and atrocities of other kinds mount up. In this situation, Muslims insist taking a procession through the Mohalla where only Hindus and Sikhs live. India being a free from the colonial rule of British and emergence of new country Pakistan throws the religious minorities like Lala Kanshi Ram into the inferno of communal hatred. Amidst this, Lala Kanshi Ram finds nothing but leaving his dearly loved place and property to seek shelter in free India as difficult existence. As stated earlier, Sialkot falls in the territory of Pakistan, freedom turns Hindu and Sikh minority there as an occasion of crisis and catastrophe. Having persuaded that there is no way except migrating to mother India, Lala Kanshi Ram and other Hindu and Sikh neighbors move to a refugee camp at the end of Sialkot. The partition brings not only split of India into two countries but it also separates many families, relations and

drives innocent civilians like Lala Kanshi Ram to unknown place away from their own home. They are compelled to abandon their dwelling place willy-nilly. “As Arun and Prabha Rani packed, Lala Kanshi Ram watched them with an immense tightening of the heart. They were stripping the walls bare, and Lala Kanshi Ram felt they were stripping his flesh from his body. The bone was showing-whichever way he turned” (144).

On their way to Indian boarder of Dera Baba Nanak, the first attack falls on the convoy. Lala Kanshi Ram is shaken by noise of “machine gun firing and men of Indian army shouting: stop where you are. Sit down. Sit down on the road. Don’t panic!” (Nahal 284). This attack leaves refugees with fear and tension. They start shivering and murmuring full of fear. The convoy gets ambushed and parts of unit two and three are affected. A large number of marauding mobs in horse back systematically kills and loots people in convoy. “The Muslim mob disappeared on horses, carrying away a number of young refugee girls with them and raising a storm of dust in the air” (285). Lala Kanshi Ram consoles himself though he is shivering because tragic as the attack is, it has hit only a small segment of the convoy.

The convoy is again a target of severe attack. The convoy receives second attack at Narowal, a town mainly populated by Muslim Zamindar. Muslims atrocities up on Hindus and Sikhs reach to apex as a number of Hindu-Sikh women abducted are paraded naked. These women are abducted first, and then raped publicly by a large mass of Muslims. Other abducted women are raped first and their breasts are chopped and many of the pregnant women’s wombs are torn open. Then, the women are brought to the parade. As soon as the women come near, that section of the crowd became hysterical. Those Hindu women are insulted saying:

‘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 published forward inside of their

teeth and hundreds of lips twisted into ugly openings and hundreds of uplifted faces canon-like fired the saliva. Bits of the saliva fell on the crowd ahead, but no one minded, so long as the main salvo hit the women. Many men in the front rows of the crowd lifted their lungis to display their genitals to them. Others aimed small articles at them and tried to hit them. (296)

Lala Kanshi Ram is saddened by this scene. As the parade takes place in the afternoon, refugees receive systematic attack at around eight in the evening. In this raid, Kanshi Ram's close companions are lost. Arun, who earlier had agonized bitterly in leaving behind Muslim friend and beloved, undergoes even greater loss in the disappearance of new love - Chandani. Sunanda, daughter-in-law of Lala Kanshi Ram's landlady in Sialkot, is abducted. Arun finds his college friend now Pakistani army officer Rahamat-Ullah Khan raping Sunanda. He automatically and almost routinely kills the man with a single blow. The raid comes in the wave for several hours where refugees scatter with panic. This time also a marauding mob of attacker abducts many other refugee women and many other get butchered when a crowd of Muslim "brandishing guns, sticks, and knives surge into the [refugee] camp" (304). Only after such horrors and suffering on an epic scale refugees reach their first goal Dera Baba Nanak: a place inside Indian territory.

Lala Kanshi Ram is left dispirited totally and defeated now in Indian Territory. Now he is no longer leader. Even when the refugees reach India their troubles are not over. In India, more tribulations await them. Boarding into refugee train Lala Kanshi Ram reaches Amritsar. There, to his dismay, he discovers his relatives' unwelcoming attitude. "The relations smiled. They said they were happy they had safely got out. Some offered them tea. Some offered food. Yet none offered them shelter. They offered apologies; they were already over crowded, they said" (325). He still does not want to lose his dignity. So he sets out for Delhi the capital city of India. The refugee train crawls so slow that it takes two days to cover

the distance that is normally covered in four hours. Within India there are more atrocities, this time it is Hindus-Sikhs who have attacked Muslims. “The screams were heart rending. It sounded like someone being slowly slaughtered” (333).

In Delhi, Kanshi Ram discovers an ultimate disillusion awaiting them. All housing promised to refugees has already been allotted. Jobs are the rarest things to find. Nevertheless, after a big struggle he manages to settle his family again in the refugee camp. This time, they are allotted rooms in tin-roofed refugees barrack. There Lala Kanshi Ram sets up a small shop and sells groceries in an attempt to earn a meager minimum livelihood for himself and his family. Now he learns his dream is shattered when he discovers Indian bureaucracy is corrupted as instead of expressing sympathy to the refugees for what has befallen on them, the official ill-treated and humiliated them. Moreover, the independence has not given freedom and a new sense of dignity. Rather the suffering and horror, the loss of home, of loved ones and friends and incurable wound in mind and pains in body.

### **Characters Traumatized in the Novel *Azadi***

In the novel *Azadi*, presenting the violence that took place during the partition of India in 1947, the novelist Chaman Nahal has vividly sent a message that violence benefits no one. The consequence of violence is always heart rending, and its adverse impact lasts very long. If a reader penetrates into the novel *Azadi* thoroughly, he/she can easily identify several characters that are bitterly traumatized owing to the partition violence of 1947 in India.

The first character to be traumatized is Prabha Rani. The root cause of her trauma is not anything else, but the death of her beloved daughter Madhu that was an outcome of the partition violence. When she knows the news that Madhu, her only daughter, is killed by Muslims while coming from Wazirpur to Sialkot, she does not shed tears. She simply says to Arun “now you have no sister left” and reacts very strangely as if nothing has happened to

Madhu” (169). Instead of sorrow she just displays anger. But later, Prabha Rani is so much shocked. She does not show any movement. Neither she speaks nor she cries or interacts with her husband and son. She seems mummified by the shock of her daughter’s death. She is broken deep down. The family of Kanshi Ram is able to survive all the attacks and reach Delhi. There also Prabha Rani for days after the news of Madhu’s death refuses to speak with any one. It is so because she is still shocked and “feels as same snare as does Kanshi Ram, her husband. She [has] lost the ease and become confined to her own single self and she has been detached from all the bonds she used to have with her husband” (369). She has lost vigor of life along with the ability to communicate with other because of trauma.

The second character to be traumatized owing to the partition violence is the central character of the novel *Azadi*, Lala Kanshi Ram. He is also traumatized so much that he has lost the ability to communicate with his family. Although he tries his level best to be bold enough to tolerate whatsoever happened owing to partition violence easily, internally, he is completely broken down and restless. After he comes to know that he has to leave Silkot, it makes him completely restless. He can not decide what to do. It becomes clear to him how vulnerable the minority is and that soon he too might have to leave. The word 'refusee' hurts him a lot. "Refusee, refusee, indeed! He shouts, when he had understood the word. 'I was born around here, this is my home-how can I be refuse in my own home?" (130). He has lost everything that he was the owner of once. After Madhu’s death he has estranged himself even from his wife and son. “You should have seen the way it glitters. Millions of lights, said Prabha Rani on their return. Lala Kanshi Ram paid no attention. He was busy thinking. They had lost everything-everything” (344). He gives no external expressions of his pain and grief. Only much later when the exodus is over, he is almost numbed by the memory of Madhu. At first, Kanshi Ram could not recall the memory of Madhu because in:

...a few month times it had become difficult for him to recall and rebuild Madhu from memory! What kind of nose did she have, what kind of eyes? He remembered, to be sure he remembered but the images overlapped and then it was so difficult for him to give out no fragrance, held no sense of being. But when he was alone with his wife [his memory triggered] and Madhu came back to him in person; he would suddenly become aware of her. (Nahal 351)

The reaction of partition violence on Lala Kanshi Ram is so immense that even after reaching Indian boarder he can not turn to be normal as like the pre-partition's Lala Kanshi Ram. He becomes pale by degrees and it seems as if there is no blood left in him. "He positively did not want to go to another refuse camp. Four months of that had shrunk of his heart. Never before in his life had he felt so exposed, so naked, so defenseless" (350). His experience of trauma due to the partition violence is so immense that he can not even close his eyes and take rest for a while. He is tired, but he does not want to lie in the bed and take rest for some time. "He lay awake and thought. He felt so tired, his legs sagging heavily-even as he lay supine on the bed. If he closed his eyes, he saw the rough corridors of 'P' Block and the harsh, rude faces of the men who were to decide his future. If he opened them, he saw the grey, unfeeling corrugated ceiling of the roof" (369).

Similarly, the third character who is thrown into the immense sorrow and highly traumatized because of partition violence is the second major character of the novel, Arun, Lala Kanshi Ram's son. His traumatic experience can be explored and presented from the point of view of a sacred lover. Although he loses his all belonging, study and even his sister, the root cause of his traumatic experience is lose of his beloved, namely, Nur and later Chandani. After he hears the news of Chandani's disappearance, he does not feel to eat, not does he feel to sleep. He has his first meal only after twenty four hours. His trauma in the absence of Chandani is so immense that he wants to live no more. "Arun drank the tea in one

gulp and he was glad it burnt his gullet and chest as it went down; he wanted it to crumble him up as acid does, when it falls on something” (319). He feels as though he is left alone in the world. He finds nothing significant and valuable for him except Chandani. Although there is chaos, crowd, wailing and weeping of thousands of refugees coming from different parts of the camps, he cares of nothing. “If the whole world were to go up in flames, he would forgive if he could have Chandani back” (318-19).

Arun, who is seen to be very excited to reach the Indian border, takes no interest in the movement of the convoy now. When he leaves Narwal along with his family and other refugees, he is seized by a strange frenzy on the march, an unhealthy, sickly demented frenzy. He does not stay with his family, but walks up fast and then walks way back to the rear. He is seen entirely restless. His mind is full of the by-gone memory of Nur and Chandani. “Nur was only the beginning; he had walked only the foothills with her. But Chandani had taken him up the slopes to the summit. What would he be without her; without his hamrahi?” (322). The pain and suffering because of Chandani’s disappearance is so deep and strong that it imposes him to act as if he is the person out of mind. He does not care who the person he is talking to:

Restlessly he ran back and forth, a storm raging with in his young friend.

Needlessly he urged others along. 'Step out, hurry up!' he shouted. Needlessly

he offered help to others- carried a bag or child and then suddenly dumped it

on the ground and departed abruptly. To and fro he went in his fury, not

knowing what to do. With his hands on his hips he stood watching the long

line of the convoy and burst into laughter. 'You bloody fools,' he said, not

knowing what he meant by that. As he walked, he kicked the stones in his way

and sent them flying into the fields. 'You bloody fool, you bloody fool,' he

said. He was cursing himself. (322-23)

Owing to his restless and uncertain behavior, even the children who used to love him a lot are scared and run away from him in fear. He does not respect the elder, nor does he love the younger. He waves stick over the other refusee. Seeing such unpredicted and unexpected behavior, one of the refusees says, "The boy has lost his mind" (324). But in the core of reality, he is not out of his mind, but is unable to hold and hide the traumatic experience that is the outcome of the partition violence.

In the same way, if we penetrate into the traumatic experience undergone by the characters given in the novel, we find Sunanda being no less victimized. The evil catastrophe of partition violence does not leave even Sunanda from its grip who is the mother of two children. She is another survivor who is also compelled to live with shattered psyche. In Narowal, she not only loses her husband but also loses her chastity. She is abducted there by a Pakistani army officer and raped. She is victim of abduction and rape. After being raped by Captain Rahmat Ullah Khan, Sunanda acts hysterically. She is not even under the control of herself. "In reply, she broke into yet another burst of weeping. She also slapped the ground with her closed fists" (309).

Her traumatic experience is so immense that when Arun suggests her to dress up as a man, she replies Arun saying, "What is there left of me to lose" (310). Furthermore, her traumatic experience is not only related to what has happened on her but also what will her family and other people think after discovering her reality. Because of fear of social death, she hides her trauma. She fears of being rejected and out-casted from her own family. So, she says to Arun, "Arun, do not say a word about what you saw" (314). After reaching the camp, when she is asked by her mother in law where she was, owing to trauma, she fails to answer properly. She mumbles and takes Arun's help to prove her. She chooses to live by pretending as if nothing has happened to her. In fact, deep inside, she is shattered and broken.



The flame of partition violence not only compels the victims to lose their belongings, chastity and relatives but also compels the characters like Nirajan Singh sacrifice own self. In the refugee camp, the Sikhs are instructed to cut their hair. Nirajan Singh becomes increasingly morose as the days pass by. "The subject of their hair came up each night, and he maintained as strongly he would not cut it" (259). In such critical situation, Nirajan Singh chooses self-sacrifice to cutting his hair. The consequence related to Nirajan Singh is guided by agony of trauma that is unquestionably caused by partition violence. Even after setting fire on self he shouts in agony but distinctly and clearly, "I belong to Waheguru, Waheguru is great" (262).

Not only the aforementioned characters but also other refugees are psychologically traumatized due to the flame of partition violence. They have a sort of uncertainty in themselves regarding what will happen the next. They all are restless. "There was hardly any discipline. There was not a family which had not been hit in some manner, and the refugees were totally dispirited. They did not march in units now, but in large hordes" (320). The characters like Isher Kaur and Teja Singh are also taken under the grip of trauma as an adverse impact of partition violence. When they find Nirajan Singh burning self, they are so broken down that they also try to jump into the burning fire. "At this Teja Singh started sobbing. He too wanted to rush into the flames, but he was being held back by Arun and Suraj Prakash" (262).

In this way, the characters included in the novel *Azadi* are severely splashed and traumatized, and the root cause of their trauma is nothing else but partition violence of India.

## Chapter IV: Conclusion

### Everlasting Impact on Human Psychology

*Azadi* is a master piece created by an Indian writer Chaman Nahal. The novel has reflected the overall scenery of Indo-Pak partition and the violence that followed partition. In the novel, Chaman Nahal has depicted how the partition violence can traumatize the innocent civilians and how the impact of trauma disturbs the victims throughout their lives. Actually, trauma is an experience that is emotionally painful, distressful or shocking which often results psychological and physical effects in the end. Similarly, it brings the substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a person often leading to neurosis. Trauma involves an event or repetitive events and a reaction or response that includes an overwhelming experience of helplessness or powerlessness.

The traumatic events can be categorized into three different categories that can affect the human psychology. The different traumatic events are the recent acute traumatic events (e.g. car crash, violent assault, etc.). Similarly, past single traumatic events (e.g. rape, death of spouse, accident etc.). And the events that last a period of time (e.g. a natural disaster or outbreak of political violence or war). Experiencing traumatic events can lead to a person developing simple or complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Recent acute traumatic events or past single traumatic events are most likely to lead to simple PTSD. Long-term chronic abuse including sexual abuse can lead to complex PTSD. Complex PTSD is more difficult to treat and can involve more complex, psychosocial factors that affect a person's ability to form healthy, trusting relationship.

If we penetrate into the core level of the novel *Azadi*, the ever lasting impact of trauma on human psychology can be vividly seen. The psychological impact invited by the partition violence, and the traumatic experience upon the central character of the novel Lala

Kanshi Ram together with some other characters like Arun, Prabharani, Sunanda, Nirajan Singh and Isher Kaur is found to be everlasting. Uprooted from the original homeland Kanshi Ram loses home, business and other possession along with their attachment with the land. Kanshi Ram is no more a leader, nor is he Lala of his business. Now he is in a canvas in the refusee camp. It is intolerable to Lala Kanshi Ram to accept himself as a refusee in his own home land. Meanwhile, he receives a sad news that his only daughter and son-in-law are killed in a train while coming from Wzirpur to Silkot. This heart rending news leaves him entirely broken. He is so traumatized that he loses his ability to communicate with his family. After Madhu's death, he has estranged himself even from his wife and son. He gives no external expressions of his pain and grief. Even after reaching India, he is ill-treated by his relatives. He had to spend many nights sitting under the open sky without any roof. He survives and rears his family working as a vendor. The same person who once was Lala to all other businessmen in Silkot lives the life of vendor in India, his mother country.

Similarly, the second major character of the novel, Arun also undergoes the everlasting impact of traumatic events. He not only loses his belongings but also his beloved owing to the partition violence. The pain of losing his beloved breaks him deep down and takes no care of anything seriously. The everlasting impact of traumatic experience can also be seen upon Prabha Rani. When she knows the news that Madhu, her only daughter, is killed by Muslims while coming from Wazirpur to Sialkot she does not shed tears. She simply says to Arun that he has no sister left and reacts very strangely as if nothing has happened to Madhu. Instead of sorrow she just displays anger. But later, Prabha Rani is so much shocked. She does not show any movement. Neither she speaks nor she cries or interacts with her husband and son. She seems mummified by the shock of her daughter's death. She is broken deep down.

Furthermore, Sunanda is another survivor who is also compelled to live with shattered psyche. In Narowal she not only loses her husband but also loses her chastity. She is abducted there by a Pakistani army officer and raped. She is victim of abduction and rape. But because of fear of social death she hides her trauma. She fears being rejected and ostracized from her own family. So, she chooses to live by pretending as if nothing has happened to her. In fact, deep inside, she is shattered and broken. Even those who are survived of the Narowal attack, are left fully torn out and broken both mentally or physically. The wound they receive is unbearable and incurable. Every survivor is extremely traumatized and the impact of such traumatization can be seen amongst the victims through out their lives.

Hence, in the novel *Azadi*, it is vivid that the impact of trauma created by violence or any sorts of chronic prejudice action is everlasting, and the novelist Chaman Nahal has been successful to draw the picture of this reality in this novel. In short, no one can hide trauma, suffering and pain. It reveals when it gets chance. It is a human psychology that can suppress the suffering only for a short time. But its effect lasts for a long time and come out affecting the person's personality as in Kanshiram and Arun in Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*.

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