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**Muslim Images Depicted in the Novels of Rāhī Māsūm Razā****Hideaki ISHIDA****1. Introduction**

Indian Muslims are a big community. Their population is about 172 million, which is 14.2% of the total population of India (2011 census). However, when compared with 966 million Hindus that constitutes 79.8% of the total Indian population (2011 census), Indian Muslims are regarded as a minority.

Muslims have been inhabitants of India for more than a thousand years. They were the main rulers of India for several hundred years before the British began their rule. The relationship of Muslims with Hindus has been both peaceful and harsh.

India has a long history of immigration. It is generally believed that the Indo-Aryans were immigrants from somewhere near the Caucasus Mountains, Southern Russia; after their immigration, many other groups of different origin came to India and settled. When these post-Aryan immigrants came to India, the Indo-Aryan people had already established their superiority in every sphere of the regional society. If the newcomers were strong, they could have successfully defeated the former occupants and become the new ruler of the area, else they became subordinate to the earlier inhabitants. Notably, the newcomers, regardless of their status in the new colony as rulers or subjects, became accustomed to the way of life of the earlier residents, who were mostly Hindus. Hindus had already developed their special social system based on Varna (class) and Jati (caste). If the newcomers became rulers, they were granted the status of Kshatriya and if they became subordinates, they were allotted the status of Shudra or lower. Except for a few cases, such as Christians, Jews, Parsis, and so on, almost all the newcomers were incorporated into the Hindu society and became full-fledged Hindus. Incorporation of the newcomers into the Hindu society continued until the arrival of Muslims.

Soon after Islam began to spread in Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century, Arabian Muslim merchants came to the coastal areas of Southern India. Some resided at the market

places in Southern India but they remained Muslims. At the beginning of the 8th century, Muhammad bin Qasim invaded Sindh and ruled the area. Islamic influence spread in and around Sindh and caused conversion to Islam among the local Hindus, but the Muslim newcomers did not convert to Hinduism. This kind of situation, in general, has continued even today.

Hindu society, as mentioned before, had (and has) a caste system, in which non-Hindus were allotted a lower status than Hindus. If the Muslims were rulers or aristocrats, they were of course given high status, but the general Hindu population did not respect them religiously. If the Muslims belonged to the general public, they were looked down upon socially. Especially, if they were converted Muslims from the lower strata of the Hindu society, they were often looked down and were the targets of discrimination. This kind of relationship between Hindus and Muslims continued for several hundred years since the arrival of the latter, which sometimes led to a tense situation in Indian society. However, the relationship between them was not always tense; instead, it was peaceful and friendly as far as simple daily life was concerned. Indian society is a caste-ridden society. People do not bother to interfere in the affairs of other groups (castes), which leads to a peaceful social life as long as things go well. However, once the balance is tipped, things change rapidly; tension arises and, in the worst case, riots occur.

The Hindu-Muslim relationship had faced many hard times in history. It experienced the worst crisis at the time of Partition of India in 1947. Many communal riots occurred and more than ten million people had to move to the land where their coreligionists lived in the majority. Statistics show that almost seven million Muslims moved to Pakistan, whereas almost the same number of Hindus and Sikhs shifted to India. More than one million people were murdered. All kinds of crimes against humanity were committed, which left indelible scars in the hearts of the people of both sides.

After independence, according to the 1951 census, the population of Muslims in India was about 35.4 million, 9.8% of the total population. In 1941, British India had a Muslim population of about 94 million, 24% of the total population; out of 94 million, about 42.4 million were in the area later to become India and about 52 million were in the area later to become Pakistan. It means that the Muslim population in India decreased by about 7 million in the decade from 1941 to 1951. The Muslim population of the erstwhile

United Provinces (UP, present Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand) was around 8.5 million, constituting 14.2% of the total population of the state in 1951, while in 1941, it was around 8.4 million, constituting 15.4% of the total population of the state. Astonishingly, the Muslim population in UP increased a little (percentage decreased) when compared with Punjab and West Bengal where the Muslim population decreased a lot.

The author of this paper could not find even a rough estimate of Muslims who emigrated to Pakistan from UP. However, based on the abovementioned numbers of the Muslim population in UP, it stands to reason that the number of Muslims who remained in UP was greater than that of Muslims who left UP for Pakistan. There must have been various reasons why they remained in UP. In any case, those Muslims who remained in India chose the life to live as a minority in a Hindu-majority society. In India, as long as communal tension is minimum, daily life is just normal. However, once the balance is lost and tension mounts, one may even have to face a dangerous communal riot. Muslims may sometimes be asked why they remain in India, why they do not leave for Pakistan.

Rāhī Māsūm Razā was the first Muslim modern writer who wrote in Hindi and became famous. Rāhī, as a Muslim who chose to remain in India, kept thinking of the reasons why he remained in India and expressed his thoughts in his literary works. This paper is a journey to understand his thoughts through his novels.

## **2. Personal History of Rāhī Māsūm Razā**

The real name of Rāhī Māsūm Razā (Aug. 1, 1927 – Mar. 15, 1992) was (Saiyad) Māsūm Razā Ābdī. Rāhī was born in Ghazipur district, UP. His father's old house was in the Gangauli village, 17 km north-east of Ghazipur city. His great-grandfather's house was in Azamgarh district. His grandfather married a woman from Gangauli. She did not want to move to her husband's house, so the husband came to his wife's house and became a resident of Gangauli. Rāhī's family are Saiyad, which is an honorific title given to a family accepted as descendants of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, so Saiyads are highly respected among Muslim people. Rāhī's family belongs to the Shia Islam sect.

Rāhī's father, a lawyer at the municipal court of Ghazipur, had a house in Ghazipur city, where he lived with his family. Rāhī was the second son of his father and fourth of

nine siblings. He had three brothers and five sisters. His father was a rich man and one of the celebrities in the city. The novels tell us that Rāhī was a bright, active, and a bit mischievous boy. However, when he was about 11 years old, he contracted polio (or bone tuberculosis) and could no longer move around freely. He mostly had to stay inside the house and a private tutor taught him. The disease was cured after some years, but an aftereffect of slight lameness remained, which changed a cheerful boy into a sensitive, introspective, and a bit obstinate young man. Sensitivity and introspection helped him to develop a liking for literature and obstinacy helped him to keep his mind stable in oppressive situations. As for his academic career, he sat for promotion exams as a private student and passed BA. He enrolled in the MA Urdu course at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) in 1958 when he was 31 years old. He obtained a PhD degree from AMU in 1964.

Gangauli, the village where Rāhī's father was from and many relatives lived, has a tradition of celebrating Shia festivals very eagerly. Muharram is the most important festival; all the relatives gather and stay in the village for the period of Muharram. People, life, and the atmosphere of Gangauli, as depicted in the novel *Ādhā Gāmv*, had a great influence on Rāhī. His attachment to his native place, Ghazipur and Gangauli, is one of the main important factors to understand his thoughts and writings.

Rāhī' started composing poems in his teens. He adopted the pen name "Rāhī" at some time around 1948. In those days, he wrote in Urdu. He has also written some stories under another pen name. He stayed in Allahabad for several years in the 1950s and became acquainted with many Urdu and Hindi authors. Due to his elder brother's influence, Rāhī got close to leftist thinking and progressive writers' movement. Later, when he was in Aligarh, he became a member of the Communist Party.

Rāhī's father, being worried about his sick son's future, tried to make him run a grocery shop, but Rāhī was not interested in that. His father even arranged a marriage for his son, but Rāhī did not show any interest in it as well. At last, this marriage ended in divorce.

In 1958, when Rāhī was 31 years old, he enrolled in the MA Urdu course at AMU. He was much older than his batchmates and already a famous poet. He was also very active in the drama circle as a playwright, director, and actor. These things made him very popular among students.

He had already written some 20 to 30 stories in Urdu by another pen name in secret. Many of them were mystery or detective stories. He told this secret to his friend, who advised Rāhī to translate them into Hindi. Around 1962, Rāhī started to translate or rewrite his Urdu novel *Muhabbat ke Siwā* into Hindi. Later, in 1966, this Hindi novel was published under the title *Ādhā Gāmv*, which was welcomed warmly in the Hindi literary world, and thus, gave birth a Hindi writer, Rāhī Māsūm Razā.

In 1964, Rāhī submitted his PhD dissertation. It was about Indian elements found in the Persian novel *Tilasm-e-Hośrūbā*. Soon after obtaining the PhD degree, Rāhī was appointed as a lecturer at the Urdu department of AMU. In 1966, Rāhī married a divorcee. Some people did not like Rāhī because he was too popular among students and he was a member of the Communist Party. His remarriage allowed them to create a scandal, which, in the end, forced Rāhī to leave Aligarh.

In 1968, Rāhī moved to Bombay (present Mumbai), where he started a new life working in the film industry. He became a screenwriter and kept at it for the rest of his life. He wrote more than 300 screenplays. He also wrote scripts for TV dramas and serials, among which *Mahābhārata* (1988-90) was the most famous. Rāhī wrote screenplays to earn money and went on writing novels, poems, essays, and so on.

In 1991, he was diagnosed with throat cancer and he passed away on March 15, 1992. He was 64 years old.

### 3. Novels Published in Hindi

In this paper, only Rāhī's novels written in Hindi will be examined as the main material. Following is the list of the novels. Headings are as follows; the title of the novel in Roman letters based on pronunciation, title in Devanagari script, year of publication.

1. Ādhā Gāmv, आधा गाँव, 1966.
2. Himmat Jaunpurī, हिम्मत जौनपुरी, 1969.
3. Ṭopī Śuklā, टोपी शुक्ला, 1969.
4. Os kī Būnd, ओस की बूँद, 1970.
5. Dil Ek Sādā Kāgaz, दिल एक सादा कागज़, 1973.

6. Sīn 75, सीन ७५, 1977.
7. Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū, कटरा बी आरज़ू, 1978.
8. Asantoṣ ke Din, असंतोष के दिन, 1986.
9. Nīm kā Peṛ, नीम का पेड़, 2003.

There is one more novel titled *Chote Ādmī kī Baṛī Kahānī* (छोटे आदमी की बड़ी कहानी). The author of this paper could not get this novel, so it is not included in this paper. According to the comments found in some articles, this small novel is about a Muslim soldier who was killed in the Second Indo-Pakistan war and awarded a bravery medal. This was written before the publication of *Ādhā Gāmv* and therefore, may be considered as Rāhī Māsūm Razā's first Hindi novel.

#### 4. Summary of Novels

##### 4-1. *Ādhā Gāmv*

*Ādhā Gāmv* is the very novel that made Rāhī famous in the Hindi literary world. Its themes include people, life, and society of Gangauli, where Rāhī's relatives live in reality. His attachment to this place explains his main motive to write this novel. The described period is roughly from 1937 to 1952. The timeline of the novel overlaps before and after the Independence of India and Pakistan; therefore, it is interesting to compare how the Saiyad community in Gangauli changed before and after Independence. At the beginning of the story, scenes of Muharram, the ardor and excitement of people preparing to celebrate the festival, including the tajiya (miniature model of Imam Husain's grave) procession as well as recitals of devotional songs and requiems in the Mosque, are depicted. For the first time, readers, especially Hindu readers, had a chance to see the details of Muharram and the Shia society, which was one of the reasons to make this novel a great success.

After the scenes of Muharram, the novel shows various aspects of the life and society of the Saiyad community of the village. Saiyads are generally most respected among Muslims. Many Saiyads of Gangauli are land-owners of various statures and they conduct themselves as high-class people. However, the novel exposes the reality of these honored

people. Formerly, it was a custom for Saiyad men to marry within the Saiyad community; however, in those days before Independence, some Saiyad men in Gangauli took a wife or just kept a woman from non-Saiyad families, sometimes from a family of low caste. Even if they had a formal marriage, it was not always accepted as unchallengeable. If there was no formal marriage, that is, the woman was merely a kept woman, their children were often regarded as degraded or pseudo-Saiyad. Each Saiyad family is related to other Saiyad families and thus, as long as the mutual relationship is peaceful, there is no problem; however, once something undesirable happens, hidden faults are exposed and abusive words are exchanged.

The timeline of the novel gradually entered into the era of India's pre-Independence struggle. Though Gangauli is a bit far from urban areas, workers of All-India Muslim League or students of AMU sometimes visited the village and explained about Independence, Pakistan, separation, and so on. In Gangauli, where Muslims were dominant, there was no communal tension and therefore, people were not very much interested in Pakistan. Saiyad people were mostly land-owners, which is why they did not show much interest in Pakistan. Still, some people left for Pakistan. In some cases, whole families left together, but in other cases, men of the family left alone leaving behind other family members. Wives with children were abandoned and young unmarried girls could not find suitable grooms. Now, Saiyad people who used to be particular about their noble lineage could no longer afford to be meticulous about such things if they had unmarried girls or boys. There was another serious reason for the change of Saiyad people's mind. As mentioned before, Saiyad people in Gangauli were mostly land-owners (zamindar). In 1950, The UP Zamindari Abolition and Land Reform Act was approved, which affected the Saiyad land-owners of Gangauli very badly. In an instant, they became almost landless and poor. These changes that Saiyad people suffered after Independence were depicted in this novel.

The title *Ādhā Gāmv* literally means "half village." In Gangauli village, people other than Saiyads also live; however, Rāhī mainly described the Saiyads who were a mere fraction of the village and gave the novel its title.

#### 4-2. *Himmat Jaunpurī*

*Himmat Jaunpurī* is the second novel by the author. *Himmat Jaunpurī* is the name of the protagonist. He belongs to the Sheikh community. Generally, Indian Sheikhs are supposed to be the descendants of converted Muslims who were formerly high-caste Hindus. Himmat's ancestors were the residents of Jaunpur, but during the Sharqi dynasty period (15th century), they shifted to Ghazipur; however, they kept using the surname Jaunpuri and took wives from Jaunpur. Later, they stopped taking wives from Jaunpur and started taking wives from Ghazipur. At the time of Himmat's great-grandfather, they were completely Ghazipuri by blood, but they did not change their surname.

Himmat's ancestors were rich and lived in a big mansion (haveli). However, his great-grandfather Dilgīr married a woman who belonged to a low caste and was a servant of the family. Dilgīr was ousted from the house and had to live in a house that he had built in an area with no rich people nearby. His house was a big one but much smaller than his ancestors' mansion.

The younger sister of Dilgīr's wife married a man who became a famous and rich tailor. Dilgīr's wife often visited the younger sister's house with her second son Ārzū. Later, Ārzū fell in love with tailor's daughter, namely his cousin. Dilgīr was not in favor of this marriage but agreed at the end. Ārzū had a son Nādir; he was a poet who had married a dancing girl (tawaif) and was ousted from the house. He shifted to a small hut in the poor neighborhood. Himmat was born in this hut on August 1, 1927, which is Rāhī's birthday.

Himmat grew up in poverty. He had the talent to be a poet but dreamed of unrealistic things. He wanted a girl who had left for Bombay, so he ran after her to Bombay when he was about 20 years old. In Bombay, he wanted to work in the film industry as a story writer, but his dream was never realized and he had to live as a street vendor. He wooed a girl to marry him and go to his hometown Ghazipur with him, but his proposal was rejected. While in despair, he was run over by a bus and died. He was around 40 years old at the time of death.

In this novel, Rāhī showed the downfall of Himmat's family. Himmat's ancestors were rich but, in a few generations, all their riches were exhausted. Himmat was killed by a traffic accident, which ended his family line. He lived for about 20 years before and



after the Independence, respectively, but there is almost no reference to Independence or political changes in India in the novel. There is one instance when Himmat as a schoolboy had sung the famous patriotic song of Muhammad Iqbal, which made his father Nādir angry enough to hit him. Himmat sang the song under the covert direction of his grandfather's elder brother Barq, who was pro-Congress and a sworn enemy of Nādir who was pro-Pakistan. This is the only episode related to the Independence struggle in the novel. It is difficult to guess what Rāhī intended to say in this novel.

#### 4-3. *Ṭopī Śuklā*

*Ṭopī Śuklā* is the third novel by the author. Ṭopī's real name is Balbhadra Nārāyaṇ Śuklā. Ṭopī is a nickname given to him when he was a student of AMU; however, he usually does not wear a ṭopī (cap) at all. He is from a Brahman family that lives in Banaras. His father is a doctor and famous for a medicine made from a blue-colored oil. He is constantly in a kind of election mania and fails in every election. Ṭopī has two brothers. The elder brother is a flirt, whereas the younger brother is pro-Congress and a greedy would-be politician. Ṭopī's mother is simple and obedient to her elders. The strongest character in this family is Ṭopī's grandmother. She is a daughter of a scholar of Persian and Arabic languages, so she is fluent in Persian. She dislikes not only the local dialect but also Hindi, saying the latter is a rustic tongue. Ṭopī was born ugly with thick baby hairs. He was disliked by his grandmother and his mother who simply obeyed her mother-in-law. One day, when he was 6 years old, he was scolded by his grandmother and mother, so he ran away from home. On the way, he met a Muslim boy whose nickname was Iffan. Iffan was a few years older than Ṭopī and they became friends with each other. Iffan was the son of a high-ranking government official. His ancestors were very proud and strict Muslims. Iffan's grandmother was from a rich landlord family but she was very gentle to Ṭopī. Ṭopī was very much surprised to see the difference between his grandmother and Iffan's grandmother. He often visited Iffan's house just to see his grandmother.

Two years later Iffan's family moved to Muradabad because of his father's transfer. Ṭopī was left alone. After Independence, one day when he was watching the RSS performing physical exercises, he was unwittingly recruited by them. He attended the exercises regularly. The RSS repeatedly emphasized how bad Muslims were. After some

years, Ṭopī became an earnest Jan Sangh sympathizer.

After Independence, Iffan's family remained in India. Iffan's father did not intend to move to Pakistan. However, Iffan saw Hindus and Muslims were separating from each other in school. Iffan wanted a Hindustani culture or Hindustani history in which Hindu and Muslim live together. After his father's death, Iffan's elder sister married a Pakistani man. She advised Iffan to come to Pakistan, but he remained in India. He just wanted to overcome the fear he was feeling as a Muslim. Later, he got a job as a lecturer of history at AMU, where he met Ṭopī who was a research student in the Hindi department.

It was astonishing that Ṭopī, an earnest Jan Sangh sympathizer, studied at AMU. Ṭopī raised three reasons. First, he needed a scholarship. Second, he wanted to know why Muslims remained in India when Pakistan existed. Third, he wanted to know about the dreams of Muslim youth. Ṭopī joined the students' association, where he met various kinds of students. They said that they remained in India because they were Indians. Not only Muslims but Hindus also had immigrated and India was made of outsiders. Ṭopī forgot that he was a Jan Sangh sympathizer. Later, he even became a member of the Communist Party.

Iffan's wife Sakīnā's father was a famous Congress party member. He was a lawyer and from a Saiyad family. He worked for harmony and integration of all communities all his life. One day, when a communal riot broke out, he went to the spot to calm people down; however, he was killed with his two sons by the rioters, which made Sakīnā hate Hindus. Still, Ṭopī often visits Iffan's house because Iffan is his friend. Ṭopī even eats food prepared by Sakīnā, though it was a rule for Ṭopī not to touch any food at a Muslim's house. However, his repeated visits to Iffan's house breeds misunderstanding. People begin to suspect an affair between Ṭopī and Sakīnā. Truth is that Ṭopī only wanted Sakīnā to bind a Rakhi on his wrist as his sister. However, at the same time, Ṭopī begins to think seriously about marriage with a Muslim girl. He gets a Muslim girlfriend Salīmā who is a Hindi research scholar. Ṭopī helped her prepare her dissertation. Now, Ṭopī needs a job to get married. He interviews at colleges for a Hindi lectureship but is unsuccessful. Meanwhile, there is an election in Benares. Both Ṭopī's brothers are candidates. They call back Ṭopī to help in their election, but Ṭopī supports their rival candidate. Moreover, Ṭopī rejects a marriage proposal that his father recommends. Ṭopī wanted financial help for

his study but it was rejected. He had to go back hopelessly to Aligarh, where he found out that Salīmā got married and left for Pakistan as she preferred a man who had a job. Feeling he was rejected by everything, Ṭopī commits suicide.

It is not easy to understand Ṭopī's personality. When he was merely a child, all the family members disliked him. He could find comfort only in Iffan and his grandmother. At Aligarh, he wanted to be accepted as a brother by Sakīnā, though he did not realize he was in love with her. When he wants to be honest and natural, things around him seem false as well as dishonest and his mind tends to rebel against them. He needs a job, but at the interview, he cannot compromise and adjust himself according to the situation. His sensitivity and rebellious obstinacy did not let him change the course of his life, forcing him to commit suicide. His nickname is Ṭopī, which is the symbol of India. Anyone, irrespective of their religion, can put it on. However, it seems that this light cap was too heavy for Ṭopī. As for Iffan, he cannot consider emigrating to Pakistan because he is an Indian; he wants a Hindustani culture and history in which Hindu and Muslim live together in peace.

#### **4-4. *Os kī Būnd***

*Os kī Būnd* is the fourth novel of the author. The story takes place in Ghazipur. Several hundred years ago, two Rajput Hindu brothers lived in Ghazipur. The elder brother Udaybhān Siṃh converted to Islam and changed his name to Abdullāh Khām; the younger brother Jaypāl Siṃh remained Hindu. Abdullāh inherited the ancestral mansion, which contained a Hindu temple built by his Hindu ancestor. Abdullāh continued taking care of the temple and specified in his will that the temple be maintained by his descendants. His will was followed for many years. At present, Wazīr Hasan is a direct descendant but his great-grandfather had bequeathed the temple to Muslim authorities. The land around the mansion was also bequeathed; many had borrowed a small plot of land and built their houses. Due to lack of maintenance, the temple has become a bit dilapidated. A Hindu man, who was ousted from home, took shelter in the temple without any permission. One day he blew a conch shell. Hearing the sound, nearby Hindus and Muslims gathered, which suddenly created communal tension. Police officers were sent to guard the temple.

Before Independence, Wazīr Hasan was a member of the Muslim League; he was

pro-Pakistan, though he did not intend to move there. His son was against Pakistan who, due to unforeseen circumstances, moved to Pakistan leaving behind his wife and a daughter. Wazīr's wife began to lose her sanity after her son's departure. She believes that her husband and Allah are responsible for her son's disappearance. She conducts a mock trial in her room and asks her granddaughter Śahalā, who is acting as a judge, to give judgement on who is to blame. Śahalā says that Wazīr Hasan and Allah are to blame to placate her grandmother. One day, Wazīr saw this scene and on that night, he entered the temple, read a part of Quran, and blew the conch shell. Wazīr was shot dead by the guards. Next day, newspapers said that a Muslim entered the temple to destroy it and the intruder was shot dead.

Muslim authorities told Śahalā that she had legitimately inherited the temple so she should ask the court to protect her right. She followed the advice and the trial started. Ghazipur city was wrapped in tension. Some rich people, both Hindu and Muslim, moved their families to safer places. One day a cow was killed, which triggered a massive riot in the city, and Śahalā was murdered.

Wazīr, despite his pro-Pakistan stance, did not go to Pakistan because his ancestral home is here in India and his childhood best friend lives nearby, who is a Hindu and now supports the right-wing Hindu association. That night, he entered the temple, read Quran, and blew the conch shell because he wanted to show that he had both Hindu and Muslim ancestors. His thoughts were followed by his granddaughter Śahalā. Understanding her grandfather's thoughts, she decided to bring them to the court. Her aim was not to win the trial but to show her and her grandfather's thoughts to fellow Indians that Indian Muslims and Hindus share the same roots.

The title of the novel means "dewdrop," which is the symbol of impermanence and vanity of life. Both Wazīr and Śahalā are proud of their ancestry. They wanted to cherish this pride and leave clear footmarks of a person who lived proudly as a converted Muslim. However, their pride was trodden down, which disappeared just like a "dewdrop." It seems Rāhī is being a bit nihilistic here. The author of this paper thinks that he just wanted to say by this title that life is transient so one should enjoy life and that we share the same root, so communal quarrels are just meaningless.

#### 4-5. *Dil Ek Sādā Kāgaz*

*Dil Ek Sādā Kāgaz* is the fifth novel of the author. The title means “The heart is a piece of blank paper.” Like other novels, this novel also has autobiographical elements. The protagonist is Raffan, whose real name is Saiyad Alī Raf’at Zaidī. As the name shows, he is from a Saiyad family. He is a Shia Muslim. Raffan’s father built the “Zaidi Villa,” a gorgeous large mansion in English style near the Ganges in Ghazipur. Raffan spent his mischievous boyhood in the villa. Years passed and the villa was sold off. Now, Raffan is a high-school master and lives in a small house. He is also a famous poet. He met a girl Jannat at a party in Aligarh and married her. Raffan wanted to start his married life anew, so he decides to leave Ghazipur and gets a new job at a degree college in Narayanganj. It is a small town neighbored by the developing new town Jawaharnagar, where many government officials, engineers, workers, etc. live with their family. Raffan met some of his old friends in both towns. His political friends are active in laborers’ movements, whereas his poem-lovers are often women who are now homemakers or girlfriends of influential people who are against laborers’ movements. Raffan is a married man so he keeps some distance from the women who used to be his ardent fans. These circumstances place him in a delicate position. Śārdā is the girlfriend of one of Raffan’s political friends. She is a pretty girl and active in social movements. She works for a pharmacy in Jawaharnagar where she commutes by bicycle from her house in Narayanganj. One evening when she was going home from the pharmacy, her bicycle broke down. One governmental official passed the spot by car. He offered her a ride. He took her to a lonely place and raped her. Raffan happened to see the official’s car rushing away in full speed and then, Śārdā trying desperately to run away. Śārdā told him what had happened. Later, when Śārdā filed a lawsuit against the official, Raffan offered eyewitness evidence. However, the official’s witnesses, all of whom were Raffan’s friends or acquaintances, testified that the official was playing cards with them on that evening. On the contrary, they said Śārdā and Raffan were lovers and plotted against the official. Śārdā lost the suit and Raffan, being stigmatized, had to resign from school and leave the town.

Raffan is now in Bombay working hard in the film industry to be successful as a screenwriter. The film industry is full of scandal, machination, betrayal, and so on. Śārdā is also in the film industry and she wants to be an actor. She has already learned the

shortcut on how to be successful. Raffan always tries earnestly to earn the favor of influential producers, directors, actors, and so on. One day he learns that his new story was turned down due to Śārdā's interference.

Years passed. Now, Raffan is a successful screenwriter. One day he visits Ghazipur and buys back "Zaidi Villa." He says that he sold himself to buy back this mansion. Here, readers can notice Raffan's or the author's strong attachment for Ghazipur.

#### 4-6. *Śīn 75*

*Śīn 75* is the sixth novel of the author. This is again the story based on the film industry. The protagonist is Amjad, whose full name is Alī Amjad Naqvī. He is from Benares. Now, he is a considerably successful screenwriter and he often writes entertainment stories for the masses. He knows well that the secret of success in story-making for the masses lies in including obscene scenes. This is against the ideals he used to cherish when he was young, but he has no choice now. He sometimes feels vanity in his job and life. He has some friends in the film industry who were also his friends from his school days. He decided to make a film with them to entertain the masses. To make it more attractive, a rape scene will be inserted on the background of the recent Hindu-Muslim communal riot in Uttar Pradesh. Amjad is pondering over the victims' names. There will be two victims, one Hindu and one Muslim. Four names come to his mind. All of them are his past girlfriends. They wanted to marry him. The first two Muslim girls left him, moved to Pakistan, and married there. Now they are living happily. Next was a Hindu girl with a younger sister who wanted to marry as soon as possible. Her mother objected saying that the elder sister should marry first. Then, his girlfriend married a Hindu IAS officer in haste. Now, she is in Pakistan where her husband was transferred. The Hindu victim will be named after her. The last one was a Muslim girl whose father was against love marriage. She married a man whom her father chose as her husband. On the night of their marriage, a communal riot occurred. Some rioters broke into their house. Her husband was killed and she was gang-raped. Now, she is in Pakistan. Her name will be that of the Muslim victim. Amjad was also writing another screenplay along with that of this film. He finished writing Scene 75, the last scene of the film. In the scene, one character speaks to another character, a letter-scrivener on the road, "You are only a scrivener, not God. You

are only writing letters, not the destiny of your client.” Next morning Amjad was found dead. He seemed to have overdosed on sleeping pills. However, it was not known whether he did so knowingly.

In this novel, the lives of people in or around the film industry are described. Competitions and tactics among the screenwriters are interesting but horrible.

#### **4-7. *Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū***

*Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū* is the seventh novel of the author. The title means “*Bī Ārzū* area”. This is a nickname given to the area (*kaṭrā*) by a resident of the area. The story is set in Allahabad. The main timeline of the story is from 1975 to 77 during the years of Emergency. This novel shows how dictatorial power ruthlessly wrecks the lives of ordinary innocent people.

Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū is a poor neighborhood. Deśrāj is a young man who lives there and works for a maintenance-garage owned by a selfish Congress politician. Deśrāj formed a union and went on strike with the help of a young journalist, Āśārām. Both became good friends with each other. Some years later, when Deśrāj protested against the owner’s selfish management again, he was fired from his job. Āśārām’s grandfather, a veteran Congress party member of good character, wrote a letter to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi about Deśrāj’s plight. The Prime Minister reacted immediately and arranged for Deśrāj to get a bank loan. Deśrāj opened his own garage. Now he is very much thankful to the Prime Minister and Congress. Deśrāj’s wife Billo runs a laundry shop. Her husband’s success also made her a fan of the Prime Minister. It was 1975 and on losing the election violation trial, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi proclaimed the state of Emergency. In the beginning, Emergency was welcomed by the general public. Now government officials keep working hours and do not demand bribes. Trains arrive and depart on time. Black marketeers were arrested and the price of commodities dropped. Akashvani radio station started a program in which citizens are interviewed and they answer affirmatively about the Emergency. Deśrāj and Billo are invited to this program.

While the innocent public was expecting good effects of the Emergency, the government was eager to suppress any voice of protest. Police were ordered strictly to sniff out any signs of a plot against the government. Āśārām was writing serial articles about people of Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū for his magazine. He often visited the area. He was known

as a person of leftist thinking to the police. The Police station chief of the area wanted credit and recognition. His subordinate brought information that the leftist Āśārām often goes to the area to meet some people in secret, which prompted an investigation. The police came to know that Āśārām often meets Deśrāj. When Āśārām got information that investigation against him is going on, he went into hiding. The police decided there was a conspiracy in Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū area.

The day of Deśrāj and Billo's interview at the radio station arrived. Now they were expected by the people of the area to dispel suspicions about any conspiracy. The interview was successful. Billo praised Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and the Emergency, while Deśrāj admitted that he had met Āśārām at night in the park and so on. After the interview, Deśrāj was detained and tortured cruelly. In his absence, Billo gave birth to a baby girl. When police freed and threw him away in front of his house, he was in a vegetative state. At last, people understood the bitter truth of the Emergency. Radio news announced that Āśārām had surrendered and confessed about the conspiracy. The truth was that Āśārām feared torture and made a false confession.

A plan was announced by the local government to widen the road in front of Billo's laundry shop, which would require her shop to be removed. On the day when workers came to break Billo's shop using a bulldozer, they found the dead bodies of Billo and the baby inside the shop.

This novel shows the dreadfulness of the Emergency. At the end of the Emergency, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Congress were soundly defeated in the general election. The selfish Congress politician in the novel changed party and got elected as a Janata Party candidate. He held a victory parade with his supporters. Deśrāj recovered a bit and could move with the help of crutches. When he was watching the parade, he lost balance and was run over and killed by the lorry on which the elected politician was waving at the people on the roadside.

#### **4-8. *Asantoṣ ke Din***

*Asantoṣ ke Din* is the eighth novel of the author. The literal meaning of the title is "Days of Dissatisfaction." This novel is set in Bombay and describes the period from May 1984 when a communal riot occurred in Bombay to October of the same year when Prime



Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated. The protagonist is Abbās, whose full name is Alī Abbās Mūsvī. He is the editor of a newsweekly and a literary monthly magazine.

On May 17, 1984, a violent communal riot broke out in Bhiwandi adjoining Bombay. In that riot, Gopīnāth Barq Aurāṅgābādkar, sub-editor of the newsweekly, got injured and died after four days. He was 60 years old. He was a scholar of Persian and Urdu languages as well as medieval Marathi devotional poetry. He was the son of a Hindu mother and a Muslim father. He lived his whole life as a Hindu. His mother did not convert to Islam and raised her son as a Hindu. When he was ten years old, he ran away from home and came to Bombay. Since then, he was a Bambaiya (Bombay person).

Zarrīkalam works in the office of Abbās. His full name is Zarrīkalam Saiyad Alī Ahmad Jaunpurī. He lives in Jawaharnagar where a violent riot occurred. On the day he left the office early. Jawaharnagar is a Muslim-majority locality. Zarrīkalam managed to arrive home. He was enjoying watching TV with his family when the riot occurred. All members of his family were killed. Zarrīkalam was a descendant of a converted Muslim. In 1666, when Shivaji Maharaj was summoned to Agra, some Maratha soldiers accompanied him. Zarrīkalam's ancestor, Tukārām Mirājkar, was one of them. He could understand the Persian language, so he disguised himself as a Muslim and stayed at an inn run by Muslims. He fell in love with the daughter of the inn's owner. They got married but on the first night, the bride realized her husband was not Muslim. They talked over the matter and decided that he would maintain his disguise as a Muslim and their children will be Muslim. One of their grandchildren's grandchildren married a girl from a Saiyad family of Jaunpur and took his wife's family name. This is the reason the surname of Zarrīkalam is Jaunpurī.

Abbās has three children. The elder son Māzid is 21 years old, the daughter Fātmā is 19, and younger son Wāhid is 6. Abbās' wife is Saiyadā. Her father was a Congress minister in UP and a friend of Jawaharlal Nehru, so she likes Indira Gandhi, though she does not like Hindus. Viṣṇu Mehrotrā, who lives near Abbās, is pro-Congress and always emphasizes the importance of secularism. Mehrotrā has a son Ravi and a daughter Saṅgītā who are nearly as old as Abbās' elder children. Both families know that their sons love the daughters from the other family and want to get married. Abbās agrees to their marriages, but Saiyadā is against the daughter's marriage with a Hindu. The difference of

opinion resulted in their divorce. Saiyadā left with her second son. One day Abbās visits Mehrotrā and proposes their children's marriages. Mehrotrā agrees to his son's marriage but opposes daughter's marriage, saying daughter's conversion to Islam will cause trouble among his relatives and it is against the idea of national integration. His wife says that she does not mind the children's marriage, but she will separate her kitchen. Abbās is surprised to see the true nature of their secularism. Later, both their sons commit suicide.

This novel shows again the difficulty of the Hindu-Muslim relationship. Abbās says the problem of Amir Khusrau, whose father was Muslim and mother Hindu, continues to this day. Second, Rāhī wanted to show in this novel is that there are many converted Muslims from Hindus, which was emphasized in *Os kī Būnd* as well. Third, in Maharashtra, the Maratha regionalism of the Shiv Sena is another factor of communalism. Fourth, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination, which dragged the Sikh community into communal conflicts and resulted in the new "days of dissatisfaction."

#### **4-9. *Nīm kā Peṛ***

*Nīm kā Peṛ* is the ninth novel of the author. This was published 11 years after the author's death but seems to have been written before 1991. This was adapted into a TV drama serial and aired in 1991. According to the preface, the story of this novel has nothing to do with the author, which means this novel does not have an autobiographical background that readers see in the author's other novels except for *Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū*. In the preface, the author writes, "Two zamindars in the novel who always quarrel with each other are cousins. Their quarrel seems to me like fights between two countries, which only leaves a chain of hatred."

Budhīrām is a manual laborer of zamindar Zāmin Khām. When his son Sukhīrām was born on July 8, 1946, he planted a neem tree in front of the hut he lives. Zāmin Khām always has an ongoing quarrel, dispute, or lawsuit with another zamindar Muslim Miyām. Muslim Miyām was a member of the Muslim League, but after Independence, he smoothly changed his attitude and became a minister in the state cabinet of UP. On the other hand, Zāmin Khām was convicted in a murder case and was sentenced for life. Now, more than 30 years have passed and a new generation has emerged. Sukhīrām has become a powerful politician and a Member of the Parliament who is involved in illegal deeds.

Zāmin Khām's son Sāmin Khām is an honest volunteer. Muslim Miyām's son is worthless, but his wife is politically ambitious. All these characters except Budhīrām and Sāmin Khām immerse themselves in dirty activities. When the murder committed by Sukhīrām was revealed, his father, Budhīrām, could no longer stand his son's evil deeds and eventually killed him.

In this novel, there is no communal conflict or caste discrimination. Sukhīrām is a Dalit, but a very powerful politician. People in power often fall prey to selfishness and are manipulated through all kinds of trickery, cheating, violence, and so on. The neem tree has been watching these things in calm resignation, asking if this is the country the people of Independent India wanted.

## **5. Muslim Images Depicted in *Ādhā Gāmv***

In this chapter, Muslim images depicted in *Ādhā Gāmv* are examined. This will provide basic materials to compare with other novels and show how far the images have changed or remained unchanged.

### **5-1. Saiyads**

*Ādhā Gāmv* depicts the Muslims of Gangauli, District Ghazipur, UP. They belong to the Saiyad community who are accepted as descendants of the Islamic prophet Muhammad or his nearest relatives; therefore, Saiyads are given the highest status in the Muslim world. In the novel, most of the Saiyads are economically prosperous as well because they are land-owners, at least until Independence. Some scenes described in the novel show the superiority of Saiyad people. In one example, a Saiyad child plays with the boys of the Julaha (weavers) community, but he is scolded for playing with boys of lower status. People of the Raqi community are often rich because they are merchants, but they are inferior to Saiyad and do not have equal status.

### **5-2. Marriage and Lineage**

It is the stated principle that marriages of Saiyads are arranged within the Saiyad community, which assures their superiority. However, this novel shows many exceptions

to this principle. They sometimes marry women from other communities, even women of low status (in the past) such as Chamar, Julaha, Nai, and so on. More importantly, if the marriage is not accepted as lawful by the people around, the woman is just regarded as a kept woman. This decides whether children, who were born from a low-status mother or a kept woman, can be completely accepted as a Saiyad. In the days before Independence, keeping a woman was not regarded as a bad custom among Saiyads, which helped to expand this kind of disorder.

For example, Sulaimān is a Saiyad married to a Chamar woman, Jhaṅgatiyā-bo. He cannot eat food cooked by his wife because he is a religious man and his wife is regarded as impure. Hammād is a rich land-lord, but his mother is a Julahin, so he is not respected by Saiyad people. Migdād is a son of Hammād, but he does not think he is Saiyad. Kalāmuddīn (Kammo) is a son of Jawād (Saiyad), but his mother is regarded as a kept woman, so he suffers from inferiority complex.

Marriages of Saiyads are arranged by the parents. It is an unwritten rule for Saiyads' children to obey their parents' decision. In the novel, Tannū could not accept his late father's will, so he left for Pakistan, though he did not have any intention to go there before marriage.

In the pre- and post-Independence era, many men moved to Pakistan from Gangauli, which reduced the number of Saiyad men. Parents of unmarried young girls were at a loss to find suitable Saiyad boys for their daughters. Now, parents could no longer afford to examine if the other party was fully Saiyad.

### **5-3. Partition and Independence**

Toward the end of 1930s, the Muslim League party members began to appear at Gangauli and seek support for their cause. In 1942, when the Quit India movement began, a mob attacked the police station and a young Saiyad man was killed. After the Second World War, the Muslim League became more active, but Saiyads in Gangauli did not react promptly. Pakistan was something unreal for them not only geographically but also conceptually. They had an attachment for their ancestors' land. For most Saiyad people, the biggest reason was that they could not abandon the land they owned. Still, some people moved to Pakistan. In this novel, we notice that thoughts or mental conflicts of

men who left for Pakistan are not explained well, although it was a serious problem for family members who were left in India. The following lines are some examples that express the thoughts or feeling of Gangauli people concerning Pakistan. In the parenthesis, Aye means “in favor of Pakistan,” Nay means “against Pakistan.”

1. It is a destiny of Indian Muslim to regret and cry. (Aye, villager, Raqi community, p.52)
2. If Gangauli is not included in Pakistan, we have nothing to do with it. We have ancestors' tombs, our masjid, our land here. Why should we abandon this place? (Nay, villager)  
When Britishers leave, Hindus will rule here. (Aye, outsider)  
There are good people in Hindus too. When Sunnis tried to disturb our “tajiya” procession, it was Hindu people who helped us. Does your Jinna do it for us? (Nay, villager, p.155)
3. I am a farmer. I have my field here. Those who are ashamed of plow and bullock had better leave for Pakistan. (?, villager, p.216)
4. Pakistan will be made, but even Jinna does not know what will happen in the future. (Nay, villager, p.221)
5. Senior governmental officers can get promotion easily. (Aye, villager, p.222)
6. If we do not make Pakistan, 80 million Musalmans will be made untouchables. Hindus will take away your mothers and sisters. (Aye, outsider)  
It is quite impossible that our Hindu untouchables should take away our mothers or sisters. (Nay, villager)  
We never do such a thing. (?, passer-by village untouchable, p.239-240)
7. Pakistan is necessary to protect our prayer. (Aye, outsider)  
Pakistan has nothing to do with prayer. They say your Jinna does not pray. (Nay, villager)  
If we lose the protecting umbrella of English people, Hindus will destroy us. We need our land where we can live in safety with respect. (Aye, outsider)  
We do not see any English people around here, but we are always safe. Hindus had not attacked us before English came. If Pakistan is made, will Saiyads and Julahas be made equal and get married? (Nay, villager, p.241-243)

8. When I was on the battlefield in Europe, I always remembered my village, not Makkah or Karbala. (Nay, villager)  
 A person like you betrays your fellow countrymen. (Aye, outsider)  
 I do not think it a shame to love the homeland. (Nay, villager, p.250)
9. What is built on hatred and fear can never be good. So, I do not agree to Pakistan. (Nay, villager)  
 If we vote for Congress, the zamindari system will be destroyed. (?, villager)  
 Muslim landowners are more than Hindu landowners, so Congress will definitely destroy the zamindari system. But Pakistan will send Islamic army to attack Delhi. (Aye, outsider)  
 Do we Indian Muslims not belong to India? How can you vote for Pakistan, when you do not know how it will be like? (Nay, villager, p.251)
10. Pakistan is very far. It is just a source of quick money-making for activists. (Nay, villager, p.257)
11. It is said Pakistan was made to separate Muslims from Hindus, but for us, it was made to break our family. (Nay, villager, after Independence, p.284)

#### **5-4. Shia Islam**

Saiyads of Gangauli are Shia Muslims. Muharram is the most important event for Shia Islam and the novel generously describes the events. People gather at Majlis meeting and sing devotional songs such as marsia, nauha, and so on. When people get highly excited, most of them begin to cry. Some people even become unconscious.

Shia Islam is in opposition to Sunni Islam. If a rumor circulates that someone studying at AMU has fallen in love with a Sunni person, not only their family but almost all the villagers get worried about it. Some people did not move to Pakistan because it is a Sunni country. One description in *Ādhā Gāmv* (p.77) refers to a person of the Raqi community who belongs to the Wahhabi sect and is critical of Shia Islam.

#### **5-5. Zamindari System**

Before Independence, many Saiyads in Gangauli were zamindars (landowners) of various stature. They were considerably rich and doing well. However, when the zamindari

system was abolished in UP in 1950, things drastically changed. Their lands were taken away and they suffered a downfall. They bore grudge against Congress and Mahatma Gandhi who let the low caste tenants rise. They bore grudge against Pakistan as well because it drove Congress to adopt this policy. One old ex-zamindar said on the verge of death, “I forgive Congress.”

## 5-6. Women

When Saiyad women get married, they are no longer called with their real names. They are respectfully called “bride,” “sister-in-law,” “wife,” and so on, in her husband’s family. When they get old, they are called “mother,” “grandmother,” and so on. This is regarded as a matter of honor. The women whose marriages are not accepted as lawful, the kept women or those from low caste or entering a second marriage are called with their real name, such as Jhaṅgatiyā-bo, Rahmān-bo, and so on.

Before Independence, Saiyad women could rarely get an education. Saīdā was an exception and she was fairly spoken ill of. However, after Independence, when her father’s family became poor as the zamindari system was abolished, she supported her father’s family. She could do so because she was a school teacher thanks to the education she had.

## 6. Muslim Images Depicted in the Novels other than *Ādhā Gāmv*

### 6-1. Saiyad

There are not many Saiyad men protagonists or main characters in the novels after *Ādhā Gāmv*. Iffan of *Ṭopī Śuklā* and Raffān of *Dil Ek Sādā Kāgaz* are Saiyad. Amjad of *Sīn 75* and Abbās of *Asantoṣ ke Din* appear to be Saiyad but the superiority of the Saiyad community among Muslims is mentioned only in *Ādhā Gāmv*.

*Himmat Jaunpurī* and *Os kī Būmd* have scenes in which superiority or inferiority of the lineage is questioned. *Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū* and *Nīm kā Per* do not raise such questions. The main Muslim characters of *Os kī Būmd* and *Asantoṣ ke Din* show pride and respect for their Hindu ancestors who converted to Islam.

## 6-2. Marriage and Lineage

As shown above, Saiyad families are not much mentioned in the novels other than *Ādhā Gāmv*. In *Ṭopī Śuklā*, Iffan's grandmother's case is interesting. Though it is not mentioned, Iffan's grandmother must have been a Saiyad. She was from eastern India (Bihar?), daughter of a rich landlord. She got married when she was ten years old. Her in-law's family was a strict Muslim family. Her husband and father-in-law were maulvis (Islamic scholars) whose ancestors were buried in Karbala. In her husband's family, people spoke in Urdu, but she could not speak Urdu well. She kept speaking in her Eastern dialect. When she visited her father's house, she enjoyed the food and entertainments as much as she could because those were unavailable at her husband's house. She was very kind to Ṭopī as well and narrated fairy tales in her Eastern dialect.

Himmat of *Himmat Jaunpurī* is from a Sheikh family. Indian Sheikhs are generally accepted as descendants of converted Muslims from high caste Hindus. *Himmat Jaunpurī* is the story of Himmat's family's downfall. Himmat's great-grandfather Dilgīr was ousted from his father's mansion because he had married a woman of low caste, rejecting his father's arrangement. His son Ārzū married his mother's niece. Ārzū's son Nādir had married a dancing girl; he was ousted from his father's house and lived in a poor hut. Nādir's son was Himmat. He lived his whole life in poverty and died childless in Bombay. This was how Himmat's lineage ended.

Śahalā of *Os kī Būmd* is the daughter of a Rajput Muslim family whose Hindu ancestors converted to Islam several hundred years ago. She is attracted to her friend's brother, but he is Ansari (generally said to be converted Muslims from Hindu weavers, a low caste), so she thinks she cannot marry him.

In *Asantoṣ ke Din*, lineage is an important theme. This novel is set in Bombay and describes communal riots that occurred in and around Bombay in May 1984, in which two men working at Abbās' office were killed. These riots are said to have a strong connection with the Shiv Sena, a right-wing Hindu nationalist party. In these riots, non-Hindus, especially Muslims, and non-Maharashtrians were targeted. One of the victims was Gopīnāth Barq Aurangābādkar who had a Muslim father and a Hindu mother. He had lived his entire life as a Hindu because his mother raised him so. His killer is unknown, but he was both a Hindu and a Maharashtrian, that is, he should be the last one to be killed



in these riots.

Another victim was Zarrīkalam. His lineage has been explained before. He is a Muslim and his name gives the impression that he is not a Maharashtrian. However, his ancestor was a Maratha soldier under Shivaji Maharaj whom Maharashtrians sincerely adore. His name shows that he is from UP but his ancestor was a Maharashtrian and he is a Bambahiya. Both victims should have avoided death during the riots.

Another example of Hindu-Muslim marriage is the case of Abbās' sister Sakīnā. She has married a Hindu and lives happily in London. She is worried about her daughter's Black boyfriend. Abbās thinks she has forgotten about the days when almost all the relatives had opposed her desire to marry a Hindu man.

One more example of Hindu-Muslim marriage is the case of Abbās' children. Interestingly, both Mehrotrā (the other party) and Saiyadā (Abbās' wife) opposed his and her own daughter's marriage, respectively, as the daughter has to convert to the husband's religion, which cannot be overlooked. They both agree to their own son's marriage because the bride will convert to the husband's religion. Mehrotrā is from a pro-Congress family; he always emphasizes the value of secularism, but both he and his wife are hypocrites in reality. She does not oppose the children's marriages, but she says she will not touch the food her Muslim daughter-in-law prepares.

### 6-3. Partition and Independence

Iffan of *Ṭopī Śuklā* experienced India's Independence when he was a high-school student. In those days, riots were rampant and the country was in turmoil. Muslim students faced disadvantages as Hindu students disappeared from Urdu classes and Hindu teachers turned against Muslim students. After Independence, his elder sister moved to Pakistan with her husband. She told him to come to Pakistan, but he remained in India to overcome the fear he felt as an Indian Muslim. Iffan's wife Sakīnā is from a pro-Congress Muslim family; however, now she hates Hindus because her father and two brothers were killed in the riot by a Hindu mob. She refuses to bind thread on Ṭopī's wrist as a token of the brother-sister relationship.

In *Ṭopī Śuklā*, *Os kī Būmd*, and *Nīm kā Per*, there are examples of Muslims who belonged to the Muslim League before Independence and changed their party-stance to

Congress after Independence, pretending to never have been anti-Hindu.

Śahalā's father in *Os kī Būmd* left for Pakistan, abandoning his wife and daughter in India, and married anew. In the beginning, he was against Pakistan opposing his father Wazīr who was pro-Pakistan. Wazīr remained in India because he did not want to abandon his ancestor's house and land as well as his childhood friend Dīndayāl who is at present a strong sympathizer of Hindu Mahasabha, a right-wing Hindu nationalist organization. Wazīr and Dīndayāl still share a strong bond of friendship with each other. Śahalā, when her classmates harass her by falsely accusing her to be a Pakistani spy, retaliates by saying that medieval poets such as Raskhan and Kabir were originally Hindus and her ancestors were also Hindus.

#### **6-4 Shia Islam**

There are Muslim characters in every novel, but there is no mention of Shia Islam.

#### **6-5. Zamindar System**

In Rāhī's last novel *Nīm kā Per*, two zamindars appear. They are on extremely bad terms. One zamindar, Zāmin Khān, is straightforward and the other, Muslim Miyān, is cunning and shrewd. Before Independence, Muslim Miyān belonged to the Muslim League, but after Independence, he became pro-Congress and succeeded as a politician. These characters, including other characters of the novel, show the emptiness of a selfish and greedy life. Both the story and the characters may seem stereotypical, but this novel shows a distinct sense of maturity that Rāhī attained through his long life as a writer.

#### **6-6. Women**

In *Ādhā Gāmv*, Saīdā, as a woman character, opened a door for the next era, though it may have happened unknowingly. In the other novels of Rāhī Māsūm Razā, we rarely come across such a character.

One exception is Śahalā of *Os kī Būmd*. She gives the impression of having a spine of steel. She wants to live with the pride of being a descendant of converted Muslims. She emphasizes that converted Muslims also have the same right to live in India just as Hindus do because their ancestors were Hindus. She was killed young during the riot. If

she had lived longer, who would she have become?

However, in other respect, she is also bound by old values. She is attracted to her friend's brother who is an Ansari. Ansaris are generally said to be converted Muslims from Hindu weavers, a low caste. She is from a Muslim Rajput family, much higher in status than Ansari. She thinks she cannot marry him, so she breaks up with him. This attitude, when compared with her decision to live with pride as a descendant of converted Muslim, is too contradictory.

Another exception is Šārdā of *Dil Ek Sādā Kāgaz*. She was a girl with a constructive lifestyle. She works for a pharmacy shop in the next town and she uses a bicycle to commute. She is the first woman bicycle rider around the area. She takes part in the group for social reform movements. If she had advanced as she should have, she would have opened the door for the new era. However, she was as unfortunate as Šahalā. After the rape incident and losing the lawsuit, her mindset changed and she went to Bombay to become an actor. Her ambition to become an actor is commendable, but she has lost social values in her life. Now, she is living only for her sake.

Iffan's wife Sakīnā of *Ṭopī Śuklā* hates Hindus because her father and brothers were killed by Hindus. Though understandable, she could not open a door for the new era because she was bound by her personal feelings and could not move forward. Abbās' wife Saiyadā of *Asantoṣ ke Din* seems to be an intellectual but she is stuck with old values.

That Rāhī did not create a woman character marching towards a new future, is an important topic to be studied.

## **6-7. The Film Industry and Life in Bombay**

Some years after the publication of *Ādhā Gāmv*, Rāhī came to Bombay to start a new life in the film industry. Muslim images found in the daily life and film industry in Bombay are shown here.

*Sīn* 75 describes people in and around the film industry. When Amjad was a novice screenwriter, he often offered story ideas to a Hindu film producer. The producer avoided food touched by a Muslim; therefore, Amjad had to conceal his identity. He introduced himself as a Hindu revolutionist. Later, his identity was disclosed and he was dismissed. He has trouble finding a room for rent because he is a Muslim and connected with the

film industry.

It is a well-known fact that actors often use a screen name or a stage name. As is often the case, the name is connected with religion. Thus, when they change their name, religion follows their name. In this way, Hindu actors sometimes use Muslim names and vice versa. *Śīn 75* shows the same thing happening in the world of house servants in Bombay. They change their name according to their master's religion.

The film industry is a world full of vanity, machination, and deception. It is depicted in *Dil Ek Sādā Kāgaz* as well. Rāhī entered the film industry to support his family's life. He might have had the epiphany that he had lost his true self just like Amjad in *Śīn 75*.

## 7. Conclusion

In this paper, Muslim images depicted in Rāhī Māsūm Razā's nine novels have been examined to create an example of coexistence consciousness and a sense of estrangement, which Indian Muslims may feel in their daily life.

*Ādhā Gāmv* is Rāhī's first Hindi novel and his most important novel. It depicts the changes in the people and society of Rāhī's home-village Gangauli roughly from 1937 to 1952 during which the Partition and the Independence, the two most shocking incidents of modern Indian history, took place. As a motive to write this novel, Rāhī highlights his attachment to his homeland and the people living there. In this novel, the author mainly described the Saiyad community to which he belongs. Saiyads are accepted as a noble community among Muslims, but in reality, it has various aspects. One condition which assures their nobility is their pure lineage and thus, it is necessary to find a spouse from a pure Saiyad family. However, the reality is different from the ideal and thus, Saiyad men sometimes do not mind marrying women who are not from pure Saiyad families or even women who are from a low caste. The Partition of India changed the situation even more. It became more difficult to find a spouse from a suitable family. They had to compromise with the actual situation of society. Rāhī depicted this change of Saiyad community that happened after the Partition.

The problem of marriage with other Muslim communities is shown in *Himmat Jaunpurī* and *Os kī Būnd*; however, it seems Rāhī's main interest in marital problems

shifted to marriage between Hindus and Muslims. Amjad, the protagonist of *Sīn 75*, had a Hindu girlfriend. He could not marry her because she had to marry a man her parents chose. He could not convince himself to let the matter go and used her name in an obscene scene in his film. He becomes desperate noticing the ugliness in his mind.

The main theme of *Asantoṣ ke Din* is Hindu-Muslim marriage. The protagonist Abbās' sister married a Hindu for which she had to face strong objection from her family and relatives, but now she lives happily in London. If she had kept living in India, what would have happened to her and her family? This question is based on another episode in the novel, in which Abbās' son committed suicide as he could not marry his Hindu girlfriend. If he and his girlfriend had lived outside of India, could they have married safely?

Hindu-Muslim marriage has a historical background and it is related to the religious conversion problem. *Asantoṣ ke Din* explores this theme as well. Zarrīkalam was killed in a communal riot. He is a descendant of a converted Muslim. His ancestor was a Hindu Maratha soldier of Shivaji Maharaj whom Maharashtrian Hindus love and adore. If the rioters had been aware of this fact, would he have not been killed? Another victim of the riot was Gopīnāth Barq, who was the son of a Muslim father and a Hindu mother. He was raised as a Hindu and lived his whole life as a Hindu; however, sometimes he felt a vague vexation.

Śahalā of *Os kī Būmd* is also a descendant of converted Muslims and she is proud of it. However, unfortunately, she was killed in the riot. In the same riot, a Hindu man was killed by a Hindu mob. He belonged to the Kayastha caste, but the mob said Kayasthas were half Muslim.

Rāhī depicted the downfall of Saiyad community in the first novel *Ādhā Gāmv*. In the second novel *Himmat Jaunpurī*, he wrote about the downfall of Himmat's family. In the third novel *Ṭopī Śuklā*, he depicted Iffan, a Muslim intellectual who cannot decide a place to settle down despite the decision to remain in India. In the fourth novel *Os kī Būmd*, he described the difficult ways to remain a proud Muslim in India. Rāhī had just started a new life in Bombay and it seems he was facing various troubles. In the fifth novel *Dil Ek Sādā Kāgaz*, he recounted his past and decided to settle down in the film industry in Bombay. The problem of Muslims is not the theme of this novel. In the sixth

novel *Sīn 75*, Rāhī depicted the vanity of a screenwriter who had to abandon his ideals to “entertain masses”. The consciousness of vanity is strengthened in Bombay where one has to sometimes conceal one’s identity to avoid unnecessary troubles in life. The seventh novel *Kaṭrā Bī Ārzū* depicted Emergency. It shows that ordinary people, regardless of religion, are helpless in front of the violent cruelty of a dictatorial ruler. The eighth novel *Asantoṣ ke Din* showed that the perennially existing Hindu-Muslim communal problem has become more complicated due to the Shiv Sena’s regionalism. The ninth novel *Nīm kā Peṛ* depicts the downfall of zamindars and upliftment of down-trodden people, which are the same factors shown in the first novel *Ādhā Gāmv*; however, regardless of religion or class, those who are selfish and lack human values wither away or destroy themselves in the end. The difference between these two novels lies in the author’s perception of the characters. In *Nīm kā Peṛ*, Rāhī remained an objective observer. He kept his distance from all the characters and depicted the changes in people and society in an unattached manner. In *Os kī Būnd*, Rāhī touched the vanity of a “dewdrop;” then, in *Sīn 75*, he highlighted the vanity of a screenwriter. Lastly, he reached *Nīm kā Peṛ* and became an objective observer free from all restraints.

The main reason Rāhī remained in India after Independence is his attachment to his homeland. Attachment for one’s homeland has nothing to do with any particular religion. It comprises nature, life, culture, history, and so on, that is to say, the undivided India before Independence. Therefore, the Partition of India and Pakistan do not have any meaning for him. *Mahābhārata*, which he later dramatized for TV serial, is of course included in the objects of his attachment. Rāhī says he has three mothers. His first mother is his birth mother, the second mother is the Ganges River that flows by Ghazipur city, and the third mother is Aligarh Muslim University. The Ganges that flows by Ghazipur, not by Allahabad or Benares, is not only the river of his homeland but is the river without any religious color.

How far do the people of present India sympathize with his feelings? Coexistence consciousness and the sense of estrangement that Indian Muslims may feel exist not only inside the Muslim community but also outside of the community when they have contact with non-Muslim communities. Rāhī sincerely faced these feelings of coexistence and estrangement in his novels. We should keep in mind that Rāhī’s attachment for homeland

and India supported his activities in literature and his life.

### **Novels of Rāhī Māsūm Razā**

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6. Rahi Masum Raza, 1977, *Sīn 75*, New Delhi: Rajkamal Prakashan.
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