



## **REPRESENTATIONS OF COMMUNALISM IN CONTEMPORARY HINDI LITERATURE**

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### **Abstract:**

In the latter half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, when nationalism began to simmer in Indian politics, the writings of Indian writers were also imbued with this ideology. During this period, Hindi literature was vocally conveying its message to the public. Writers of that time were satirizing communal bitterness through their works, stories, novels, and other works. It is said that a writer is a vigilant guardian of society. Every small and big event in society creates an imaginative spirit in the writer's emotions. A true writer is one who is constantly immersed in society, meaning he cannot remain isolated from it. He also makes his readers aware of the far-reaching effects of changes taking place in society. We can say that a writer holds the pulse of society in their hands, which increases their responsibility to chart the future of society and guide it in which direction. In the Indian context, the narrow-mindedness of colonial rule provoked a deep emotional concern for slavery, and a strong desire for change created a foundation for openness. Writers of Indian languages recognized the growing communalism in pre-independence Indian society. They were disturbed by it, and turned their pens to address this problem, educating the Indian public.

**Key Words:** Communalism, Hindi literature, Nationalism

### **Introduction:**

The literature of this period was also influenced by the social reform and revival movements of the 19th century. It is known that this was a time of the rise of self-respect and pride of Indianness. The spirit of nationalism was at its peak at this time. Naturally, writers sought cultural and religious elements from the forgotten past through various genres of Hindi literature: poetry,

short stories, plays, essays, and novels.

Here, we will highlight how Hindi writers from the United Provinces addressed the issue of communalism in their literature. Writers from the United Provinces were vocal and vigilant about the issues of religion and communalism in society. During this period, writers openly utilized communal symbols, signs, activities, and points of contention in their works. Communalism was attacked through satire, sarcasm, insistence, and criticism, while also targeting the British government. This was a spontaneous expression by writers. Writers took great care to ensure that their works did not disrupt social harmony. Therefore, they thoroughly criticized the hypocrisy and pretense prevalent in religion. Writers consistently strived to eliminate communal hatred. Their literature consistently strived for social unity. We will analyze the concerns expressed in the works of some important writers from the United Provinces through their works. In addition to prominent literary figures, an attempt will be made to examine the works of other writers from the Bharatendu era, the Dwivedi era, and the Premchand era, as well as their works, to understand how communal tendencies divided society and how colonial forces eroded our culture.

Bharatendu Harishchandra, the greatest figure in modern Hindi, possesses a vast creative universe. He is considered proficient in every literary genre. Born on September 9, 1850, in Varanasi, United Provinces, he is considered the father of modern Hindi literature. Bharatendu's era stood at the juncture of eras. He abandoned the distorted cultural tendencies of the Ritikal period, embraced a healthy tradition, and sowed the seeds of innovation. The modern era in Hindi literature is considered to have begun with Bharatendu Harishchandra. Hundreds of examples of patriotism can be found in Bharatendu's poetry and works. Bharatendu Ji made the country's poverty, subjugation, the inhuman exploitation of rulers, and the distortions caused by communal hatred the target of his literature. Due to Bharatendu Ji's extensive literary contributions, the period from 1857 to 1900 is known as the Bharatendu Era. Bharatendu Ji began his literary career at the age of 15. Besides being a poet, Bharatendu Ji was also a journalist. 'Kavi Vachan Sudha' and 'Harishchandra Chandrika' were famous magazines published under his editorship. Despite being loyal to the monarch, he was also a patriot.

Bharatendu Harishchandra also had connections with contemporary national politicians and social reformers. When Surendranath Banerjee established the National Fund and visited Varanasi, Bharatendu Ji helped him and even greeted him at a gathering. Bharatendu Ji had a strong inclination towards religiosity, but he was not narrow-minded. Bharatendu ji was a supreme Vaishnav. By linking Vaishnavism with Prakrit religion, Bharatendu ji moulded the entire Vaishnav concept into a new dimension. He created such a new form of Vaishnavism which was also assimilated by Gandhiji. Bharatendu ji's time was the time of the new dawn of Hindi language. At this

time, the rampage of imperialist powers was also at its peak. In all these circumstances, it becomes necessary to discuss how a writer is able to mention his nationalist views in his writings. Bharatendu ji says in his speech 'How can India progress' that 'If we do not progress at this time despite having all kinds of resources and opportunities under the British rule, then our only future will be ruined. It is only the wrath of knowledge and God.'

Bharatendu Ji was never one-sided in his entirety. He praised the imperialist power when he found it pleasing, and criticized it when he found it distasteful. Bharatendu Ji says that the 1857 rebellion proved disastrous for the future relationship between the British and India. Here, Bharatendu Ji praises the government's policies. In this context, Shabhunath Joshi says, "When Bharatendu Ji wrote "Antardipika" in 1861, at the age of eleven, on the death of Queen Victoria, he was inspired by traditional patriotism. At the age of 19, he wrote "Shri Rajkumar Swagat Patra" on the arrival of the Duke of Edinburgh in India and offered floral tributes to him on his return to Kashi a year later. These too reflected traditional values. He also emphasizes that when Queen Victoria's proclamation was read, the kings and princes of India accepted Victoria as Empress in Lord Lytton's court. The Indian Council Act, the High Court Act, the Self-Government Act, and the establishment of roads, railways, telegraphs, and other services unified the country, greatly aiding industrial and scientific progress. Bharatendu's patriotism is also evident when, upon the death of Victoria's fourth son in 1884, he organized a condolence meeting at the Town Hall in Varanasi. But as I've already mentioned, Bharatendu never spoke one-sidedly in his writings. He also vehemently criticized the wrong and exploitative policies of the imperialist powers. Bharatendu writes vehemently in "Bharat Durdasha": "Above all, the disaster of the Tikkas struck; alas, India's plight cannot be seen." In "Andher Nagari," he says, "Hindu Churan is its name, Vilayat Pooran its work/Ever since Churan came to India/Its wealth and power have all diminished." In his article, "Reasons for India's Poverty," Bharatendu ji, while targeting the severe trend of imperialist exploitation, writes, "There is no hope of increasing wealth even from railways. The railway companies have to pay interest to the government on the money they spend, and the recipients are mostly foreigners. In total, 26 crore rupees go abroad." Bharatendu ji was right here. At that time, there was a serious debate going on about economic expropriation, about how and under what heads our money was being sent abroad by the exploitative empire. India's capital was used in railway construction and its dividends were going to England. Here, Bharatendu ji mentions the flow of Indian wealth abroad. In the political climate of that time, devotion to the government was common, and politicians often expressed this sentiment. Shiv Kumar Mishra comments on this trend, saying, "The concern for nationalism we have today was not possible in that era. Why should we demand nationalism appropriate to our times from Bharatendu Babu, when it is not found in that form in the Renaissance thinkers of that era?"

Bharatendu ji's hallmark was that while he wrote poetry on ancient themes like

God and devotion, he also passionately embraced new themes like social reform and patriotism. Bharatendu ji's works reflect opposition to British rule, a zeal for independence, aspiration, and a sense of nationalism. While depicting social problems, Bharatendu ji sharply satirizes the evils prevalent in society and even spares the bribe-taking moneylenders: "All the employees eat the powder, they immediately digest double the bribe, all the moneylenders eat the powder, with which they digest the deposits." In his patriotic poem, Bharatendu says, "India's might has protected the world, India's knowledge has enlightened the world, India's brilliance has spread throughout the world, India's fear has shaken the world." Bharatendu is proud of India's glorious past. He was displeased with the political climate of his time and also mentions the reasons responsible for it. Recalling past glory, Bharatendu writes, "Where have Vikrama, Bhoja, Rama, Bali, Karna, and Yudhishtira gone?

Where have Chandragupta and Chanakya, having become so stable?

Where have all the Kshatriyas died and burned, where have they all fallen?"

On the other hand, Bharatendu, pointing to the destructive nature of Muslim rule (the medieval period), writes, "Prithviraj and Jaichand called for war, Timir Lang, Genghis Khan, and others killed many people.

Aliuddin and Aurangzeb, together, could not see the religion.

Sensual lust, along with Muhammad, spread it."

In his poem, "Discourse on the Progress of Hindi," Bharatendu, alluding to internal divisions, says, "How can you write about all Muslims and Christians as one? Alas, we are divided, but we cannot understand the reason."

Bharatendu, while criticizing the evil tendencies of the medieval period, advocates religious conversion. He discusses, "For a penny, Brahmin to Muslim, for a penny, Hindu to Christian, for a penny, both religion and prestige were saved." During Muslim rule, destruction and divisive sentiments were spreading in the name of religion. On the pain caused by this within the Hindu society, Bharatendu ji says, "Where the temple of Visesar Somnath Madhav stood, there a mosque was built; now Allah Akbar would have been there." In his travelogue, "Journey to Saryupar," Bharatendu ji writes, "This is the same Ayodhya, which was the first capital in India. The kings of the entire world used to be crushed by the swords of this Ayodhya. That same Ayodhya is no longer visible. Wherever you look, you see the graves of Muslims." Here, Bharatendu ji compares the British rule with the Muslim rule. He describes the king as religiously liberal, but it would not be appropriate to interpret this as loyalty to the king. In the poem "Shri Rajkumar Shubhagaman," he writes, "Like a pleasant shade of happiness to the one scorched by the heat, your arrival at the end of the young king brings a rain of rain. Seeing the mosque, Bisunnath fell on the wound, your sight is like a balm, O King."

Bharatendu ji sarcastically comments on the history written in the medieval era, saying that these attempts were made to portray Hindus in a low light. In response to this, Bharatendu ji wrote a book titled "Kashmir Kusum," based on

Kalhan's *Rajtaangiini* of Kashmir, which was published in 1884. It provides a chronological account of the kings of Kashmir and also compares it with the history written by Muslims. The logic behind choosing *Rajtarangini* for discussion is that in the darkness that has engulfed the sky of Hindu history, in the words of Bharatendu himself, "In such darkness, the one star that we see in the history of the kings of Kashmir, we consider it more than many suns." In this short introduction, Bharatendu remembers the Muslims three times – "All this was there, in the end the Muslims came and burnt whatever books were left." "All the books that were left in Kashmir were burnt by the wicked. The craftsmanship in the temples, idols etc. of the Aryans, the fame pillars, the inscriptions on the pillars etc. and the books were completely destroyed by these wicked people. Bharatendu ji says that Parashuram destroyed not only the bodies of the kings, but he destroyed not only the body, strength, knowledge, wealth and life but also the pillar of fame." and "From Gondard to Sahadev, about one hundred and fifty Hindu kings ruled Kashmir for thirty-seven hundred years, then Muslims oppressed it for five hundred years. Then Kashmir was nominally under the rule of Christians and has again come under the control of Hindus for the last 64 years. Now may God always protect it from disturbances." While taking a dig at the internal divisions and the traitors within the house, he indicates in 'Bharat Durdasha' that "By creating discord, the young army was called to be heavy. In this very play, Bharatendu ji makes 'Satyanash Faujdar' say - "Being Jaichand, we once / opened the gates of India / Halaku, Genghis, Taimur / our insignificant Sur / distant Ahmed Nadir Shah / my insignificant soldiers of the army." Then Bharatendu ji makes this character say, "Then in the end, differences came, it tore everyone like moss, that language, religion, conduct, behavior, food and drink, everything was separated by a yojana." Bharatendu ji depicts the medieval conflict and the plight of Hindus in his literature - "Darkness has fallen, I cannot see the way..... The eyes of the Hindus shed tears day and night. He clearly depicts the Hindu-Muslim conflict in the play 'Neel Devi'. In the play "Neeldevi," the conflict between Suryadev, the ruler of Punjab, and Abdussharif, the commander of the Delhi Emperor, provides insight into the tense atmosphere of the time. Abdussharif says, "The Rajputs here are truly infidels. God save us from these wretched creatures. Victory cannot be achieved by fighting that dishonest man face to face. If God wishes to show the cloak of Islam's light as a symbol of oppression in India, then my wish will undoubtedly be fulfilled." In the same play, "The chieftain of Punjab is an infidel, beware." Here too, the play discusses internal divisions. "The people of India have turned away from their own Hari, they are fighting with Hindus for the benefit of the Turks, they are bowing their heads at the feet of the Yavanas." However, this play depicts the victory of the Hindus: "Kumar Somdev arrives with the Rajputs, ties up and kills the Muslims, and the Kshatriyas proclaim victory for India, victory for the Aryan clan." Bharatendu ji was a writer during the period when the British rule was prevalent and on the other hand Hindu-Muslim animosity was also on the rise. At one place he compares the rule of Muslims and the British.

And in this context he also refutes extremism. In the preface of *Badshah Darpan*, Bharatendu ji writes that- "Whether Muslims or the British, everyone conquered India, but even then there is a big difference between them. During the Muslim period there were hundreds of big defects but there were two qualities, firstly they all made their necklaces here, due to which the Lakshmi of this place used to reside here. Secondly, in between when some insistent Muslim kings used to emerge, the blood of Hindus used to get heated and due to this the culture of bravery also remained. Someone has rightly said that Muslim rule is like the disease of cholera and the British rule is like the disease of decay. Under their rule, our wealth and valor are being depleted. ...Be that as it may, unlike the Muslims, they did not destroy our idols before our eyes or rape our women, nor did they chop off our heads like grass, nor were we forcibly converted to Islam by spitting in our mouths. ...We are especially indebted to the British for the good education we received from them. India is not ungrateful. It will always accept with open arms that the British freed us from the harsh punishments of the Muslims and, although they took our wealth in many ways, also taught us the art of begging to fill our stomachs.

Bharatendu ji always maintained a harmonious tone in his speeches. He believed that writers hold a mirror to society; this class is the intellectual class. Their words have a deep impact on society, therefore, writers should avoid saying things that could lead to communal conflict. Bharatendu also speaks on religious issues, but in a convincing manner, he shows his affection towards Hindus and cautions He says that "it is appropriate to advance religion first." In a speech in Ballia, he says, "Hindu brothers! You too should give up your insistence on differences of opinion. Increase love among yourselves. Chant this great mantra. Whoever lives in India, regardless of their color or caste, is a Hindu. Help the Hindus." He also warns Muslims in the same language that "Muslim brothers, after settling in India, should stop considering their Hindu brothers inferior. Do not say anything that hurts Hindus." Friends, now those days are gone when Delhi and Lucknow were kings. Bharatendu ji always talked about harmony. He talked about the unity of all religions - Hindu, Jain, and Muslim. Hemant Sharma says that he considered the relationship between Hindus and Muslims to be that of sister-in-law and elder sister-in-law. He talked about equality of all religions. Bharatendu ji has also translated the Quran into Hindi. Bharatendu was a visionary who thought far ahead of his time, a vision clearly evident in his writings. Bharatendu fully understood the British policy of divide and rule and appealed to all religions in India to unite. He expressed his anguish over the current tense situation, but his writings never harbored any one-sided bias against any sect. He is often accused of being a loyalist, but he praised those British initiatives that benefit India today, such as the railways. He also criticized imperialist policies, arguing that they had deeply damaged India's unity.

It was during the Bharatendu era that some novels and stories were written that featured Hindu and Muslim characters and revolved around communal issues. For example, *Nishai Hindu* (1890), written by Radhakrishna Das, is the first novel to focus on cow slaughter. This novel's central theme is cow slaughter. In this story, Madan Mohan campaigns to stop cow slaughter. His campaign is supported by a liberal Muslim named Abdul Aziz. Narrow-minded fanatics oppose Abdul Aziz and call him a heretic. Abdul Aziz remains neutral in his views. Ultimately, Madan Mohan and Abdul Aziz are murdered, creating a tense atmosphere. However, the example of communal harmony established by this novel registers a creative resistance to the magnitude of the communal problem that was brewing between the two communities in the 19th century. 'Nishahaya Hindu' is a symbol of communal unity and human generosity. Acknowledging Bharatendu's primary influence on this novel, Madhuresh says, "Bharatendu himself demonstrates a conscious writer's perspective on Hindu-Muslim harmony. This novel is written with the problem of cow slaughter at its center. However, its praiseworthy aspect is that it is free from enthusiastic support of any orthodox Hindu or religious perspective." Its protagonist, Madan Mohan, strives to stop cow slaughter. He is assisted in this work by his Muslim friend, Abdul Aziz. There are individuals within both Hindu and Muslim communities who, due to their different and radical perspectives on the issue, become opponents of both. Both friends sacrifice themselves to fulfill their assigned goals and tasks. Regarding this novel, Gopal Rai states that "*Nishahaya Hindu*" is the first Hindi novel to depict Muslim society. For the first time, Muslim characters are included in "*Nishahaya Hindu*." Those who lament the absence of Muslim characters in Hindi novels should read "*Nishahaya Hindu*." Contemporary Muslim society was divided into two classes. One class consisted of fundamentalist, fanatic Muslims, led by elite Muslims. The conservative religious leaders of Muslims, such as the mullahs, were also part of this class. This class had nexus with the British rulers. This class also infiltrated the police department. The second class consisted of liberal Muslims with a nationalist ideology, including figures like Maulvi Aziz. Muslims of this class harbored no animosity towards Hindus and cooperated with them in national causes. They had friendly and familial ties with Hindus. Thus, it can be seen that the growing communal animosity between Hindus and Muslims attracted the attention of the authors from the very beginning of novel writing. This novel is also significant because we see that in the latter half of the 19th century, cow protection became both a religious issue and a political one. While the Muslim community encouraged cow slaughter to enhance their political power, the Hindu elite, through organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha, formed the Gorakshani Sabha to demonstrate their political power, thus fueling Hindu-Muslim tensions. Dayanand Saraswati, by writing "*Gokaruna Nidhi*" in 1880, and Bharatendu Harishchandra, by writing "*Gomahima*" in 1881, rekindled the sacredness of the cow and made cow protection a matter of Hindu identity.

A prominent novelist of the Bharatendu era was Kishorilal Goswami, whose works are considered literary. Most of Kishorilal Goswami's novels deal with Muslim rule. Because medieval writers were Muslims, Goswami argues that medieval historians distorted events to disparage Hindus in favor of their own caste rulers and fabricated numerous false and fictitious stories. This is why he favored relying on the material of European authors. Goswamiji interpreted historical events from a Hindu-Muslim perspective. His writings also reflect a desire and tendency to seek revenge against Muslims. He describes events in awe of Muslim atrocities against Hindus. He also champions Rajput valor and the dignity of women in opposition to Muslim atrocities and brutality. "Goswamiji fiercely attacked Muslim rulers and their cultures. He never considered any positive aspect of Muslim culture."

That period was also a period of renaissance, where efforts were being made to look at the glorious aspects of the past. Until this time, British studies of India were strongly advocating that Indians had no culture of their own and had always lived a life of subjugation, first under Muslims and then under the British. Colonel Tod has presented the story of the Rajputs' bravery against Muslim invaders in a very interesting way, which was also coming to Hindi from Bengali. This was giving rise to a symbolic nationalism. Bipin Chandra calls it "establishment nationalism." But it was seen that making Muslims scapegoats instead of the British was bound to have harmful consequences. In response, "establishment nationalism" emerged among Muslims as well, and they began praising emperors like Aurangzeb. The way the flag of Islam was previously hoisted throughout the world also became a subject of literature.

Literary writing was also taking place amidst the communal turmoil in the United Provinces during the independence movement. Naturally, this had a profound impact on writing. During this period, the great Hindi storyteller and writer Munshi Premchand was also portraying Indian society through his writing. During the Indian independence movement, Munshi Premchand's fiction, in both Hindi and Urdu, amplified and strengthened the political fervor, enthusiasm, and movement in every way, further strengthening Munshi's writing. Premchand's literature provides a vivid depiction of the communal atmosphere of his era. By the time Premchand was stirring public consciousness with his writings, the demon of communalism had already emerged in its most monstrous form. Premchand, based on the intense communal sentiments prevalent in contemporary society, periodically raised the issue of communalism, highlighting its consequences and offering critical suggestions for overcoming it.

Premchand can certainly be called Hindi's first progressive writer. In 1936, he addressed the first conference of the Progressive Writers' Association as its chairman. His speech became the foundation of the progressive movement. A writer like Premchand was a sensitive writer, and it was difficult for him to remain neutral on any issue. After a long time, the Hindi novel industry

witnessed the emergence of a personality who transformed the novel from a purely entertaining genre to a social one. Premchand fearlessly depicted every distortion present in Indian society in his novels. Whether it was religion, politics, or the decay of Indian society under British rule, Premchand deeply examined each issue. A strong supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity, his works extensively addressed Hindu-Muslim issues, making his literature equally popular among both Hindus and Muslims. He highlighted contemporary tensions in his works and consistently offered suggestions for resolving them. Premchand grasped the pulse of his era and brought society face to face with its realities. He called the novel a "portrait of humanity," describing its fundamental essence as "illuminating human character and unraveling its mysteries." Premchand focuses on the issues of the lower classes in his stories. Socio-cultural issues related to these communities are a part of his novels. While writing about various aspects of society, he also attempted to examine the centuries-old Hindu-Muslim relationship. Many of his editorials and articles in newspapers like *Hans*, *Jagran*, and others focused on Hindu-Muslim relations and communalism. Citing historical examples of Hindu-Muslim unity, Premchand blamed British politics and selfish elements for the animosity. Explaining the closeness of Hindu-Muslim cultural ties, Premchand states, "Hindus are idol worshippers, while Muslims are not grave worshippers or place worshippers. Who offers sherbet and syrup to the *taziya* (red wine), who considers the mosque the house of God?" If there is a sect among Muslims that considers even bowing before great prophets to be blasphemy, there is also a sect among Hindus that considers gods to be pieces of stone, rivers to be streams of water, and religious texts to be lies. Even this much we see a difference between the two cultures. Premchand's words reflect Kabir's ideology, where he also attacks the misconceptions prevalent within the Hindu and Muslim religions.

Premchand believed that the issue of Hindu-Muslim unity was extremely delicate and, if not handled with utmost caution, patience, restraint, and trepidation, it would prove to be the biggest obstacle in the path of the *Swaraj* movement. Premchand was a liberal. He was a Hindu. Premchand also introduces every Indian trapped in the web of religion to the true essence of religion. Along with his own freedom, he advocates for the freedom of every section of society. He was a staunch opponent of the ostentation and conservatism prevalent within the Hindu community. Since Hindus were the majority in India, and he himself was a Hindu, he advocated the active participation of Hindus in resolving communal issues. Premchand was well aware that the British government was dividing the country's people in the name of reform. On the one hand, he sarcastically criticized Indians, saying, "Then why should we assume that a Muslim majority will harm the interests of Hindus or Sikhs? Muslims have ruled India for hundreds of years. If Muslims could not crush Hindus then, there is no possibility of doing so now. There are numerous examples of Hindus collaborating with Muslims during Muslim rule. Even today, Muslims hold high positions in Hindu princely

states." This is a false illusion, and the welfare of the country lies in removing it from the mind. Premchand had no ambiguity on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. He declared, "Hindus and Muslims have never been, nor will they be, nor should they be. Their distinct personalities must and will remain. What is needed is a spirit of mutual tolerance and sacrifice among their leaders."

On the problem of communalism, Premchand says, "As long as we continue to sacrifice our history, civilization, culture, and the fundamental principles of the nation for the sake of such sham, such conflicts will continue. Until it becomes impossible to incite public outrage over issues like aarti and namaz, cow protection, sacrifice, and musical instruments, this issue of harmony will remain unresolved." To achieve this goal, Premchand wrote in *Hans* magazine, "Hindu and Muslim communities should not be considered mere objects of political necessity; they should be made part of human conduct, so that the future of the country and the nation can be secured." Premchand was deeply concerned about the deterioration in Hindu-Muslim relations. In his stories, he always emphasizes the positive side of both communities. He blames the British government for the bitterness between the two communities. Premchand was a staunch opponent of communalism. He was far removed from the communal ideology that considered Muslims foreigners and anti-Hindu. He attempted to free the Hindi novel from the narrow ideology that portrayed Muslim characters as black and Hindu characters as white. Premchand primarily addressed communalism, along with the communal movement, in his novel "Kayakalp" and the story "Mandir aur Masjid." Explaining the meaning of true religion in "Kayakalpam," Premchand writes, "Until we understand the meaning of true religion, our condition will remain the same. The problem is that the great men from whom we expect great piety become even more arrogant than their uneducated brethren. I consider morality to be religion, and the morality of all sects is the same; if there is any difference, it is very slight. ...The future religion of the world will be built on the basis of truth, justice, and love, and if we are to survive in this world, we will have to inculcate these sentiments in our hearts." In the novel "Kayakalpam," the root cause of the first riot in Agra is the Shuddhi movement and, in practice, the Muslim plan to slaughter cows in protest against it. A riot erupts in Agra over cow sacrifice. Premchand sheds light on the people and causes behind this. When Yashodanandan, minister of the Agra Hindu Sabha and a member of the Seva Samiti, arrives in Agra from Kashi, a police officer begins inspecting his belongings. Yashodanandan, surprised, asks, "Why, sir, why is there such strictness today?" The officer replies, "This is the fruit of the thorns you have sown. There is unrest in the city." Meanwhile, another character in the novel, Khwaja Mahmud, revered by Hindus as a messenger of God and a member of the Seva Samiti representing both Hindus and Muslims, becomes so moved by Maulvi Deen Muhammad's speech that he takes charge of the riots and unrest over the issue of sacrifice. Surprised by this transformation, Yashodanandan says, "If Mahmud has truly

undergone such a transformation, then I would say that nothing in the world breeds more hatred than religion." In the novel "Kayakalp," another character, Khwaja Mahmood, influenced by the speeches of Maulvi Deen Muhammad, argues in favor of sacrifice: "It is our right to sacrifice. Until now, we have respected your sentiments, forgetting our own recognized rights. But when you ignore our sentiments in the face of your own rights, there is no reason for us to care about your sentiments in the face of our own. You have every right to purify Muslims, but there has been no example of purification among you in at least 500 years. You have revived a dead right, not to diminish the power and influence of Muslims." The communal riots in the story "Mandir Aur Masjid" are caused by a Muslim attack on the Thakurdwara. Krishna's birth anniversary was being celebrated at the Thakurdwara at midnight. Suddenly, a group of Muslims arrived armed with sticks and began pelting the temple with stones. Premchand raises the urgent issues of society through the novel 'Kayakalp' and the story 'Mandir aur Masjid'. These distortions show how religiously fueled communal tensions, and how those most affected are the lower classes of both communities. The elite were merely inciting riots to further their own political interests.

In another story by Premchand, "Hinsa Paramodharma," the threat of communal riots arises simply because "a Muslim's hen enters a Brahmin's house." An excerpt from this story depicts Hindus purifying Jamid. He incurs the wrath of Hindus for saving a Muslim from being beaten by a Brahmin, and then becomes an enemy of Muslims for protecting a Hindu woman from Muslim thugs.

Premchand's first novel, "Sevasadan," was published in 1917, written in Urdu under the title "Bazaar-e-Husn." Sevasadan deals with the lives of prostitutes, whose main problem is the subjugation of Indian women. But when a controversy arises over the removal of prostitutes from the city, and even within that, a dispute arises over housing Hindu and Muslim prostitutes in separate locations, a communal issue can be seen. In Sevasadan, Premchand also connects Hindu-Muslim relations with prostitution. It is in Sevasadan that we first see how the economic interests of businessmen transform social and political problems into communalism. Among those who visit Suman's (a character in the story) brothel are both Hindus and Muslims. There are also men who were not ashamed of enjoying themselves with a prostitute in the open market. How do issues change when an association of respectable people discusses the rehabilitation of prostitutes? When Abul Waffa says, "This is an attempt to reduce our numbers. 90% of prostitutes are Muslim; They observe fasts, hold land leases, and organize Maulud and Urs. We have no argument with their caste affiliations. We are only concerned with their numbers. This debate takes the form of hostility towards Hindus, Teg Ali sarcastically remarks. This satire is Premchand's scathing satire on those who politicize Hindu-Muslim relations. "These days, political gain is the key; don't mention

rights and justice. If you are a teacher, punish Hindus; if you are a thief, rob a Hindu home; if you are obsessed with beauty or love, abduct a Hindu beauty; then you are the community's servant, the community's benefactor, the national shipwrecker—everything." This debate holds the threads of communalism, which emerge as reactions even among Hindu members. Chimanlal also condemns such arguments, saying, "I am saddened to see that you are turning even social issues into a Hindu-Muslim dispute."

Premchand always writes with seriousness that the current political landscape is playing a leading role in further escalating the communal issue. He says that riots in various places had turned the two communities against each other and were beginning to influence national politics. Pointing to the tendencies of communal strife amid the political turmoil that swept the country after the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement, Premchand remarks, "On the one hand, the Congress was considering the terms of the Round Table Conference, on the other, the fires of rebellion were raging in Kashi, and at the same time, the Congress was about to announce its decision on accepting the agreement. A horrific massacre had also begun in Kanpur." If the caste-based animosity that escalated to such a ferocious proportions in Kashi, Mirzapur, Agra, Kanpur, and other places within a month teaches us anything, it's that we made the mistake of not taking our Muslim brothers along. It's true that we always held out our hands for their help, always soliciting their sympathy, but it must also be admitted that initiating the Satyagraha movement without mutual agreement not only displeased our Muslim brothers, but also aroused some suspicion. Perhaps the movement's success frightened them. In his magazine, *Hans*, Premchand writes, "There is still a powerful group among our brothers who fear Swaraj. They fear that the Hindu majority will crush them in Swaraj. At this time, all our efforts should be focused on gaining the sympathy of our Muslim brothers and eradicating doubt and distrust in their hearts. This is the key to our political salvation."

Premchand wrote extensively, satirizing Hindu-Muslim politicians. In an article published in *Hans* in 1931, questioning the foolishness of Muslim leaders at the Round Table Conference, he wrote with a sad heart, "Golmaal in the Round Table Conference," "If Mahatma Gandhi had known that Muslim members would create obstacles, why would he have gone? Hindus are in the majority; no amount of wisdom can reduce their numbers. On the other hand, Muslims will not accept any arrangement that could harm the majority. Therefore, India will have to remain in this state of subjugation for generations to come. British rule over India is essential for their protection. ... The Muslim representatives at the Round Table do not trust Hindus; they trust the British, with whom they are closely allied, but they do not trust those with whom they share a brotherhood."

Premchand wrote the novel "Premashray" in 1921, which Ram Vilas Sharma calls "the epic of peasant life." This quote is apt. The characters in the novel, farmers, landlords, and government employees, are both Hindu and Muslim. However, Premchand focuses more on the relationship between landlords and

farmers. Along with Hindus Balraj and Manohar, Muslim Qadir also suffers from the atrocities of Gaus Khan. Premchand depicts the mutual harmony of villagers in this novel. Premchand portrays Qadir as a strong supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity. Throughout the novel, it is stated that "there is no sign of Hindu-Muslim communalism in the villages. People of both religions suffer from the atrocities of the officials. During the deputy's rule, farmers' daughters are abducted, and Qadir Mian's goat is also sacrificed." Under the officials' oppression, there is no Hindu or Muslim distinction. The common people are the victims of this exploitation. In Premashray, Premchand also mentions government jobs. We see that, as part of the spread of communalism, people were being told that Muslims were being denied jobs. When Jwala Singh, deputy of Premashray, scolded Gaus Khan, Ijad said, "God bless these Hindus, they are a disaster. Our Sahib Bahadur also pretends to be a great magistrate, but when a vacancy arises, he gives it to a Hindu." Premchand tried to convey that the common man has no religious fanaticism of his own.

Munshi Premchand's writings were simple and devoid of ostentation, focusing primarily on the lowest strata of society. He criticized communalism most vehemently. Premchand wanted to see communalism eradicated at the national level. He said, "Religion is related to man and God; no country, caste, or nation has the right to interfere between them." (Hans, October 1931 issue) Premchand says that only a handful of people promote the demon of communalism, spreading this poison, and the common people fall victim to it. Premchand believed that every community should cherish and protect its traditional traditions, but should not try to impose them on anyone. Premchand suggested a Panchayat to resolve Hindu-Muslim problems. In his novel *Kayakalp*, Premchand writes, "To resolve mutual disputes and problems, Khwaja Mahmud and Chakradhar decide to form a Panchayat, and their disputes should be resolved through it." Premchand beautifully describes Hindu-Muslim unity in his novel *Karmabhoomi*. "When Sethji returned from evening prayers, he saw two blankets spread out and plates placed. Sethji was pleased and said, 'You have made a very good arrangement.'" Salim laughed and said, "I thought, why not accept your religion? I only have one blanket. If that's your concern, then come and sit on my blanket, otherwise I'll come." He picked up the plate and sat on Salim's blanket. In his mind, he had made a great sacrifice in his life. Even donating all his wealth wouldn't have filled his heart with such pride. Salim quipped, "Now you've become a Muslim." Sethji said, "I'm not a Muslim, you've become a Hindu."

Shivkumar Mishra believes that Premchand is the only writer of the modern era who boldly declares himself to be "neither Hindu nor Muslim" and boldly considers his humanity, his being human, greater than being Hindu or Muslim. It is Premchand who, with authority and ease, enters Hindu homes and with the same ease and comfort he also enters ordinary Muslim families. Premchand made the spirit of Hindu-Muslim unity a key theme of his literary writing. He doesn't make any direct accusations; he simply conveys his message through the characters in his stories. Even today, Premchand's

literature is as vibrant as it was in his time. The only sad thing is that the communal harmony he dreamed of was neither immediately after him nor today.

Another great writer from the United Provinces was Jaishankar Prasad, a master of Chhayavad. Jaishankar Prasad was one of the great writers of Premchand's era. In a way, Jaishankar Prasad established Chhayavad in Hindi poetry. Prasad was born on January 30, 1889, in Sarai Govardhan, Varanasi district, United Provinces. He belonged to the Sunghani Sahu family. His father, Babu Devi Prasad, was renowned for his respect for artists and was highly respected in Kashi. Due to the early deaths of his mother and elder brother, Prasad faced difficulties at the age of 15-16. A fragile household, a mere widowed sister-in-law as a support system, and conspiracies by family members and other family members to usurp the family's property—all of these challenges were faced by Prasad Ji seriously, and Indian philosophy provided him with immense support during these difficult times. Prasad Ji received his early education at Queen's College in Banaras, and later, extensive arrangements were made for his home education. The virtuous and religious values of his family had a profound influence on Prasad Ji. He was constantly inculcated with religious values by his family, father, and pilgrimages, as evidenced by his generosity and sensitivity. The home environment fostered his interest in literature and art from a young age. It is said that at the age of nine, he wrote a Savaiya in Braj Bhasha under the pen name 'Kaladhar' and presented it to 'Rasmay Siddha'.

Premchand and Prasad Ji were contemporaries, but Unlike Premchand, Prasad Ji uses historical symbols as a medium to explore current problems. Prasad Ji's friend Vinod Shankar Vyas writes, "Prasad Ji's principles were firmly established. He pursued his work like a silent ascetic, never yearning for publicity or fame... Prasad Ji used to say, 'Why do you panic now? The future will judge.'" In his writings, Prasad Ji always considers the criteria for establishing a healthy society. He ensures harmony within society. In "Indu," Prasad Ji writes, "Unless a poet's pen has done something for the benefit of society, we cannot, by merely focusing on his similes, words, and figures of speech, elevate him to the status of a poet who has not, with his pen, endeavored to infuse every work of society with life and pulsate it with life." Prasad Ji's literary creativity is vast, and even if we dive into it, we cannot reach its depths. He was a balanced literary figure of his time. He was deeply imbued with religiosity, yet there is no trace of religious one-sidedness in his writings. We will attempt to explore only those aspects of Prasad's writing that depict Hindu-Muslim differences or conflicts during the national movement of his time. Many of Prasad's works feature Hindu and Muslim characters, but his works will not display any bias. Prasad differed from the literary writers of his time. He sought to provide a direction to society by incorporating historical context into his literature. Prasad's time was a time when politicians and

sociologists were glorifying the traditions of ancient glory. At this time, the activities of Arya Samajists and Muslim revivalists had brought widespread communal differences to the fore. In this situation, a sense of despair pervaded the Indian psyche. In this context, a focus on the distant past was considered natural and inevitable. Although Prasad never served as a historian, he was a prominent figure. In "Kaavya Kala" and other essays, Prasad wrote, "A writer is neither a historian nor a theologian. The duties of both are independent; literature serves to fill the void. Literature establishes the harmony of idealism within society by showing its true state." Avdhesh Prasad Singh says of Prasad, "The past that Prasad depicted provided Indians with the self-confidence to determine the direction of development. Prasad was not writing pure history.

**Conclusion:**

The pages that Prasad explores, identifies, and reinterprets are not merely aimed at glorifying the past, but at outlining the Indian historical crisis in the context of the Renaissance." Prasad does not consider any myth essential to the veracity of history. He considers his literature to be based on presenting ancient literary facts in the form of a narrative. Prasad believes, "The emotional chronicles collected by every group of ancient humans in their quest for knowledge are today dismissed as ballads or mythological anecdotes, because the characters seem to be emotionally intertwined with them. While the events sometimes seem exaggerated, we must admit that there is some truth in them. Therefore, we have had to interpret our ancient scriptures through Nirukta, so that those meanings can be reconciled with our current interests."

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