

In the End is the Beginning
Chaman Nahal's *My True Faces*

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I am the Self, O Gu?akesa, seated in the hearts of all creatures.

I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all beings.

The Bhagavad-Gita

My True Faces is Chaman Nahal's first novel. The title, which clinches the basic theme, embodies the "Yoga of Divine Glories" enunciated in the tenth chapter of the Gita. Lord Krishna says, "There is no end of My divine manifestations" (The Bhagavad Gita 40). Every human being is one of the faces of the Lord, but they should strive to be one of His "true" faces, in other words, try to be true to Him and true to themselves.

The novel is about two individuals trying to recognize their true faces in the context of the struggle of the self against society. Nahal himself in an interview published in Commonwealth Novel in English states that, in this novel, "I have dealt with the theme of how to live personally in a society that is so inhibitive because it discourages individual living. One is constantly being asked to sacrifice one's pleasure for the sake of the society, for the sake of the clan, for the sake of the family" (40). Thus, the novel is about individuals torn between duty to the self and duty to society.

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