CHAPTER IV
SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE SHORT STORIES OF
SAADAT HASAN MANTO

As Vijay Tendulkar wrote in one of his writings “Sahityatun Sahitya kade” in the year 1988, seems to be something very true and applicable to Saadat Hassan Manto. Tendulkar writes in Marathi as:


As translated by Sharmila Gupte, in her M. Phil dissertation, submitted to university of Mumbai in the year 1992, she translates the written extract by Vijay Tendukar as:

“Social awareness is not necessary restriction for literature. But literature and the writer cannot be separated from society; he returns it to society in another. In this, the society is a very important and unavoidable factor, and any thinking writer is aware of this. Society is a subject of introspection for him, along with his own self.”

This seems something very true and applicable as Saadat Hassan Manto writes:

“Zamane ke jis daur se hum guzar rahe hai agar aap is se nawakif hai to mere afsane padhyee, agar
which M. Assudin translates as:

“If you are not familiar with the age in which we live, read my short stories. If you cannot endure my stories it means that this age is unbearable.”

In the short stories of Saadat Hassan Manto, social consciousness finds expression and awareness through a wide range of characters and themes, from start to finish one could make out a common tension and threat taking place mainly in Manto’s short stories - the interaction of individual psychology and the clash of it, with good or bad force of society is running all through his short stories. The society and individual, their interaction or clash, keeps the reader connected with reading as a result the characters of the story come alive. In the process of exposing conflict and tension, Saadat Hassan Manto depicts the hypocrisy and ruthlessness of society and social order under which the aspirations of an individual are getting suffocated.

The short stories of Saadat Hassan Manto are a barometer of society and time to which he belonged, and it is interesting to note that in the social context of the subcontinent in which Saadat Hassan Manto wrote his literature, specially the short stories, is not much different from the social scenario of India today. The topics and issues, which he raised in his short stories, continue to stare at our society in the same manner as they did sixty-five or seventy years ago. Poverty and morally corrupt people, the politicians and their tricks to attract attention, the accurate judgment and skill of dealing, the sensitive issues of mullahs and pundits, who divided people in the name of religion, the sufferings of great minds and the victory and success of the mediocre minds were one of themes and issues on which Saadat Hassan Manto wrote and these issues are troublesome in our present life too, which demand a solution. In his opinion and projection, the eternal characters in the universal short stories and creative work of Saadat Hassan Manto, are relevant and useful in the analysis which trespass space and time.

Certain features of Manto’s writings, accords a different identity and a different colour and complexion. Sometime his short stories seem to be full of things
 contrary of the truth but a careful reading of it reveals, that there is a philosophic calm and continuity in it. Saadat Hasan Manto refuses to get connected with any political ideology, but his sharp and true social consciousness, helped him to develop his own created attitude in writing, which was new in form and diction. Regarding this Manto wrote in one of his writings, which is translated by Riyaz Punjabi as:

“The common complaint against me is that I do not write love stories. Since there is no flavour of love and romance in my stories, they are usually drab.”

Saadat Hassan Manto was careful and precise in observing the basic requirements and technical norms of short story writings. He rebelled against the hypocrisy and bondage of society but he respected the artistic necessity of short story writings. For his different attitude of writings people called him a shallow and an indecent writer, but an evaluation of his writings reveals to his readers that he actually wanted to communicate with society and its holders on certain issue very consciously. Saadat Hassan Manto made use of the technique, which was introduced by Mirza Asadullah Khan Galib i.e. letter writings to communicate his thoughts and ideas, and the nine letters which he wrote to Uncle Sam, are the example of the use of this form by Saadat Hassan Manto.

‘Toba Tek Singh’ is a short story by Saadat Hassan Manto, for which he is famous internationally. This very story of Saadat Hassan Manto has been analysed and thought through, with many different perspectives. Few critics consider this particular short story of Saadat Hassan Manto as one, which speaks against partition; few see it as a cry of humanity, etc.

Saadat Hassan Manto is a writer of new habitation and the other way of cultivation. Manto saw only eight years of independence. He came in contact with the new habitat where reality was naked. If we see and consider the short stories of Saadat Hassan Manto, in a different way or with the connection of new habitation, we could get to understand some new meanings to his personality and stories. One of the common specialties of the new habitat’s literature is the ‘place’, ‘displacement’ ‘transition’ and dismantliness. Many of Indian and its subcontinent’s writers wrote on this particular theme, for example, Quraitulain Haider, Amitav Ghosh, Salman
People, who migrated from one place to another, were not only displaced from their land but also from their humanity. These scattered and uprooted people feel the fractures in their lives. Their lives were scattered into many pieces and they were passing through unknown identity crisis along with their beliefs, languages, emotions and routine. According to the critics this displacement resulted in the ‘Crisis of Identity’, which is the place where the post-colonial psychology got entangled. Native indigenous characters, in their new habitat which was based on fugitive racial superiority and it resulted in marginality and the ‘Others’; many of the important characters of Saadat Hassan Manto are the one who live an ‘Others’ or ‘Marginal’ life. The art of Manto was to depict the ‘change’ in the ‘Others’ for example ‘Bhushan Singh’ of the story ‘Toba Tek Singh’.

Famous Marxist scholar, Tarik Ali, has considered this particular story of Saadat Hassan Manto as the voice against injustice and the creation of Pakistan. He writes in his book, “The Clash of Fundamentalism” as:

“The price of separation was high, Saadat Hassan Manto, one of the most gifted Urdu writers of the subcontinent, wrote a four page masterpiece entitled “Toba Tek Singh” set in the lunatic asylum in Lahore at the time of Partition. When whole cities are being ethnically cleansed, how can the asylum escape? The Hindu and the Sikh lunatics are told that they will be transferred to the institutions in India. The inmates’ rebel. They hug each other and weep. They have to force on the trucks waiting to transport them to India. One of them Sikh, is so overcome by the rage that when the border is reached, he refused to move and dies on the demarcation line, which divides the new Pakistan from old India. When the real world is overcome by insanity normality only exists in the
asylum. The lunatics have a better understanding of the crime and that is being perpetrated than the politicians who agreed to it.”

As per my view as a reader and all critics, Marxist or democratic, think that this particular story of Saadat Hassan Manto, was actually based on the issue of partition and raised the question of identity, which many people were facing. In the character of Bhushan Singh, Saadat Hassan Manto, depicts the pain and agony of the common people, who were forced to migrate, leaving all they loved as follower of a particular religion.

Father Mohammad Malik, compares the central character of the story, Bhushan Singh, as the tree which gets completely destroyed while being uprooted from one place. Taking the character, from the mental asylum, Saadat Hassan Manto tried to depict the pain of the uprooted society, or in other words the ethical cleaning of the place or a particular region.

People belonging to the asylum were all tensed on the issue of India-Pakistan that they started behaving very differently and awkwardly, for example one of the lunatics in the asylum climbs a tree and declares it as the place where he will live, neither in India nor in Pakistan. The other one declares himself as the great leader Mohammed Ali Jinnah and like that other Sikh lunatics called him Master Tara Singh. It was very evident that they two could kill each other, or may harm others in the asylum, the authority considering them as ‘dangerous’ and locks them in separate blocks.

The other side, in the asylum, one of the lunatics declares himself as god to whom Bushan Singh inquires about the exact location of his village, Toba Tek. The lunatic answers:

“Neither in India nor in Pakistan, because, so far, we have issued no orders in this respect.”

After many attempts from Bhushan Singh, when the god didn’t answers his prayers, he told him angrily:
“You didn’t answer my prayers because you are a Muslim god. Had you been a Sikh god, you would have been a more sport.”\textsuperscript{116}

On this Fateh Mohammad Malik brings the conclusion that even the lunatics in the mental asylum were aware about their religion and they knew very confidently that the God of Muslims is quite different from the god of Sikhs. Here the issue which grabs our attention is not the one of religion and beliefs but about social awareness of Saadat Hassan Manto, who rejected the philosophy and division of people on the basis of religion.

The anxiety or worry, which forced or persuaded Manto, to shift or migrate from India to the newly formed Islamic state, Pakistan, continued to disturb him throughout his life. However, in Pakistan, a new and bitter reality become evident to him. He realised the fact that in India, they (Muslims) had been suspected or rejected on the basis of their religion and in Pakistan they had to face the difficult situation of being “Outsiders”. This resentful reality became a major social problem for the migrated Muslims in Pakistan. He depicts society and its behaviour towards the migrated people, in one of his essay “Zarroorat Hai” (wanted). Manto writes, which Tarranum Riyaz translated as:

“The special Service Department invites applications for the following posts. The inhabitants of Pakistan alone would be considered for these posts. The migrants should send a money order of rupees Twenty along with their application of the usual Rs. Ten….”\textsuperscript{117}

The problem and controversy of “locals” and “outsiders” is one, of the long lasting and complicated issues, which the south-east Asian countries and societies are facing till now. This particular problem has not been solved by separating the people on the basis of their religion and beliefs. Repeatedly, in his writings Manto highlighted this issue. He paid equal attention to other problems too, which were common to both newly independent countries, India and Pakistan. In the same essay, ‘Zarroorat hai’, Manto criticizes and highlights the issue of decaying social values,
the dangerous and troublesome favoritisms, in other words ‘nepotism’ and the lacking skill or ‘ignorance’ of the government and departments in solving it. In the essay ‘Zarroorat Hai’, ‘The Special Service Department’ wants to fill the vacancy of a research officer. The described qualifications for the post were as follows, which Tarannum Riyaz translated as:

“One Research officer; pay scale, Three-Hundred-Sixty-Five rupees and quarter of eight Annas monthly; Annual increment: Twenty-Five Rupees Eleven Annas and Nine Paisa.

The upper limit: Seven Hundred and twenty rupees, Eleven Annas and One paisa.

SPECIALISATION: The candidates should

(1) Strictly follow the routine of praying five times a day;
(2) Play the harmonium well;
(3) Have worked in a railway workshop for at least two year and three months;
(4) Speak through his nose;
(5) Know how to cook Khamira of Gaw-zaban-anbari wallah;
(6) Have sufficient knowledge on how to breed Buffaloes and be twenty-nine years and one day old. Preference will be given to a candidate who has been a teacher of theology in a girl’s schools.”

The observation of Manto, about society and people is very pertinent. This indicates his awareness and knowledge of different segments, beliefs of various people in the subcontinent. Manto has inspected social values from two different perspectives and explains and discusses them, in his own special pattern. His first matter of interest or the important issues in society is individual values, which we
could say are a result of past. The individuals in society cherished and preserved those values, which were inherited from their ancestors. Whenever Manto saw any ethical duplicity or fakeness, he exposes it without having another thought. As a result he had to pay a heavy price, in the form of court trials and insults, for his honesty. In a humorous manner he talks about all ill doings, in society.

In his story “Dekh Kabira Roya”, which Khalid Hasan translated with the title “Free For Alf”, Manto talks about different happenings in society of the newly formed independent states. The story begins with the announcement that, nobody will beg on the streets, and if found doing so would be sent to jail. People were happy with the announcement but ‘Kabira’, who represents humanity in society wept. When being inquired about his grief he answered:

“I am sad because cloth is woven with two threads. One runs horizontally, the other vertically. The arrests are horizontal, but feeding the hungry is vertical. How are you going to wave this fabric?” ¹¹⁹

The entire story is set in society and its living. With the story Manto, unveils the ill doings in society. Manto, with his bold manners of writing speaks about the unfaithful and the selfishness of the members of the society, for example when the people ask and argue on the necessity and importance of art in the society. When partition took place and people started migrating, concern was about only their lives, who will think about literature being produced in any particular part of the nation. For example, in the story when Kabira sees the man on the street turning the pages of a book into the paper bags, he could not stop tears rolling out of his eyes. When the men inquired the reason for his grief, he answered:

“Inscribed on the paper out of which you have fashioned these bags is the mystic poetry of the blind Hindu saint, Bhagat Sur Das, answered Kabira.” ¹²⁰

Manto was well aware about the society and the politician, who with their false and week humanity, seduced and misguided people of society. In the story
when Kabira, the humanity, hears a politician talks and showing concern about the abducted women he cries, making it clear to the reader, with the answer, which Kabira gives:

“I wept because I know that you have remained unmarried because you haven’t yet found a rich bride.”

Manto is a writer who, with his just and without any fear, narrates brings out the truth and reality of society and its people which gnaw the conscience of humanity and we see it laminating on the loss. Saadat Hasan Manto is the writer, who portrays the bitter truth of society with his short stories. He is not just a writer, but a writer of humanity, who, without any hypocrisy bring in front of his readers the society, as it is and not as it should be.

“Babu Gopi Nath” is one of his masterpieces of short story which Saadat Hasan Manto, wrote on society. In the story, there is one character called ‘Manto’, who narrates the story and is involved in one of the weekly magazines published from Bombay. One of the mediators called Abdul Rahim Sando, who belongs to Lahore but, was present in the office of the magazine. One day he brings in Babu Gopi Nath to the office and with his very particular style, introduces Babu Gopi Nath to Manto. He says:

“Babu Gopi Nath, you are shaking hands with India’s number one writer’. . . ‘When he writes’, Sando continuous, ‘it is dharan takhta.”

After formal introduction and conversation Babu Gopi Nath invites Manto to his place and as decided Manto reaches on time, to the flat of Babu Gopi Nath and he sees few other people over there. Sando introduces all of them to Manto. There were two men and two women living there, called Gaffar Sain, Gulam Ali, Zeenat Bagum and Sardar Begum. Sando introduces Zeenat Begum, as an inexperienced prostitute, Gaffar Sain as a man of god, Gulam Ali as his Shagird and Sardar Begum as Mrs. Abdul Rahim Sando (his wife).
When Babu Gopi Nath shifted to Bombay, he called Zeenat along with her trainer Sardar Begum too, as a result, all four of them shifted to his place in Mumbai from Lahore. Babu Gopi Nath, is the one who is responsible for providing food to all of them. Once, during the talk, Babu Gopi Nath reveals his actual aim of shifting to Bombay as that he loves Zeenat very much, but she is completely naive. So now he is trying to make her learn all professional capabilities, to get her married to a rich person so that he could secure her future. He was trying hard for either one and towards the end of the story Zeenat gets married with a land lord named Gulam Hussain, which brings happiness to Babu Gopi Nath.

Though the subject of this story of Saadat Hasan Manto is the life of a prostitute but the central character ‘Zeenat’ is not a prostitute. All the characters in the story are somehow related to ‘the business’. Many of the stories written by Manto hold the subject of the life of prostitution. He gets this subject from the society, which lets this business grow. Manto brings in front the reality that though the people in society consider this business as a curse and think the people involved in it as lowly, but they are the same people who let it grow and that is the reason why we see these types of people everywhere in the society.

According to societal pattern, Babu Gopi Nath seems to be a spectator and a drunkard but Manto, with his intelligence and hold over characters, brings the inner values and judgments of Babu Gopi Nath, which gives him an image of a good dispositional man. This particular absurdity is the beauty of this story.

Babu Gopi Nath has spent all his life at the brothels, has spoiled lakhs of rupees on the fake grace and expressions of prostitutes. He is always along with his companions, who all are selfish and are of no use. They are living on the money and mercy of Babu Gopi Nath. They are ugly and indecent from inside as well as intra self. They deceive Babu Gopi Nath and at the same time talk indecently and insult him. Babu Gopi Nath knew everything, but he never gets frustrated nor does he reject anybody’s given advice. All the people in the flat consider him as a fool, whereas Babu Gopi Nath considers them as the intelligent people, who understood his weakness, because of which they befool him and get their work done. Babu Gopi Nath loves the beggars and prostitutes.
The simplicity, with which he acts, is not his simplicity but a height of his matured and wise way of living. He is not a fool but acts as one. He never deceives anyone. Knowingly he oversees the fun, jokes, taunts, and decisiveness of all his companions. He has seen many ups and downs in his life, and acts as neither as a spectators nor an actor. He likes to give money to prostitute more than listening to her singing he says:

“I can spend an entire evening listening to the most flat-voiced women in the world and still feel happy...Everybody knows, of course, that in kotha parents prostitute their daughters and in shrine men prostitutes their God.”

Babu Gopi Nath is well aware about the fact that girls put into business by their parents and God by the men just to earn money. Here in the story Manto taunts people of the society, who, with their fake attire and pattern loots common people in the name of religion. We could see the elaboration of this thought of Manto, in another story ‘Saheeb-e-Karamat’ by him. Babu Gopi Nath speaks:

“Because both establishments are an illusion. What better refuge can there be for someone who wants to deceive himself?”

This very sentence is a complete outcome of the character of Babu Gopi Nath. It is for sure that the people who visit the brothel or the Shrine are ones, who live a meaningless life. Babu Gopi Nath knew his weaknesses, mistakes and instability, but he never tries to hide them from the people or society. He could understand the weakness and mistakes of others too, but never passed any comment on it. He loves all. His youth is going down but the only question in front of him is the stability of Zeenat, he wants her to be a courtesan or a wife of a wealthy person.

Society is a combination of many ills, good, vulgar and decent people. People living in society are good and bad, tyrant and compassionate, usurper and pure, hypocrite and sharp, soft clear and opaque. A human is neither an angel nor a satan altogether. The more we study humans, the more difficult it seems full of mysteries. Every human is the basic unit of society, who, all together form it. A
society cannot be without humans and a human cannot live without a society. They both are interdependent people who are the inhabitants of it and to understand humans we have to understand society they belong to.

In the view of the society a human can have two faces, it could be good or bad, shallow or deep, saint or evil, etc. To understand a human, one needs to pass through all knots, twist, and layers of one’s personality. Saadat Hasan Manto is the writer who trespasses all these difficulties to understand a human and in turn to understand society. We form a concept of human when we oversee a society and about a society by the humans who live in it. Saadat Hasan Manto is one of the units of society, which he talks about in his short stories. He is sensitive and along with it he minutely observes society. That is the reason of his awareness and consciousness of society and the people belonging to it.

With his short stories, Manto brings in front the pattern of society and the people. He brings to the forefront that if the people like Gurmukh Singh, of ‘The Assignment’, who leaves a retired judge, Main Abdul Hai, his daughter and little son, Sugara and Basharat, alone to fight the rioters, exits in society, at the same time the society holds people like Babu Gopi Nath too, who tries to mold a woman as a better courtesan or wants a better groom to get her married. Society, to which Manto patronized, Babu Gopi Nath, is one of the inhabitants in it.

Whenever, a reader reads the stories written by Saadat Hasan Manto, he or she finds a new secret, pattern of on-going society and its people. The time to which Saadat Hasan Manto belonged, was the time of colonial India. A creative writer had the freedom of writing. They were free to produce or write something of their choice, but not against the British Raj. Manto wrote on topics, issues, in the pattern and structure in which he wanted to write. It is an unspoken truth that creative writing cannot flourish if it is not blessed with the freedom of writing; political, cultural, social, and individual’s freedom, something which is required by the writer to produce master literature. If these all mentioned, freedoms are not available to a writer, it would result in non-creative and unproductive society.

Saadat Hasan Manto being a writer of humanity saw the humans as a human. According to his writings we could form a view of human behaviour and can understand his point of view. Manto has a view point and believes that when a
person wants to do something negative or destructive for society and people, it is the
time, when he loses the power of creativeness and behaviour in the human
settlement.

In the story “Thanda Gosht” or “Colder Than Ice”, Manto talks about the
psychology of human behaviour in a society. The story is set in the background of
partition 1947 and the communal riots followed thereof. In the story, Ishwar Singh is
the central character, who is being presented as strong and brave. Saadat Hasan
Manto describes the personality and physical structure of Ishwar Singh. Manto was
well aware about society, its behaviour and psychology, at the time of partition. In
the story Manto depicts all the ill doings, during riots along with it the response of
humans towards it.

The story begins with Ishwar Singh, who seems to be full of anxiety,
confusion and it seems absentmindedness has taken over him as he was holding his
kirpan and standing in a corner of the room, where Kalwant Kaur was waiting for
him to return. Kalwant kaur is the women with great strength and resolution. She
gets this act of Ishwar Singh as one insulting to her and connects the issue with some
other unknown woman in the life of her partner.

As the story begins we see the tension between Kalwant Kaur and Ishwar
Singh. They both are physical partners and are living in a hotel. Kalwant Kaur
wanted to know the reason for the strange behaviour of Ishwar, who was acting rude
to her, as she thinks. She inquires a lot, forces him to speak up his problems but was
not successful in getting the reason. She tries all her known tricks, to make Ishwar
Singh comfortable and to be physical, but because of some strange reason he was
unable to do so. He tried all his tricks to get aroused but they all ended futile. This
situation made Kalwant Kaur angry and in fury; she gets out of the bed and inquires
about the reason of his inability for doing so. She was angry on Ishwar and connects
his inability, to some other woman in the life of her partner.

In fury she gets down from bed and asks Ishwar on his inability. She was so
furious and angry that she keeps the kirpan on the throat of Ishwar Singh, gives the
oath of Guru and inquires about the other woman. She was so angry that she didn’t
realise the fact that the kirpan is somehow sloughing the throat of Ishwar Singh. She
just needed the answer and wanted to know about the other woman.
As the story proceeds we see Ishwar Singh speaking the truth of his coldness and inability as the girl, whom he picked up in the riots. After finishing or killing the six members of her family, he takes her on his shoulders with the view of having sexual pleasure. He succeeded in doing so by getting her into a strange area. At that point he realises the fact that she died. He was carrying a dead body and wanted to satisfy himself with her body, but the truth, she dies that makes him cold and as he explains the reason he dies.

Ishwar Singh of “Thanda Gosht” is the one who tries to experience sexual intercourse with a dead body, which he was unaware and when he came to know the fact he become mentally and physically tired. A strong man like Ishwar Singh, who has killed many people in the riots, becomes frozen on the act of doing so. With the story Saadat Hasan Manto tries to bring the actual picture of human in society.

For writing “Thanda Gosht”, Manto had to face a court trial for which he was charged with obscenity and got punishment of three months jail term and three hundred rupees fine. But when he applied in court he got relief from the jail term and paid three hundred rupees as fine. Critics and few other people consider this story of Manto as indecent, but we could see the belief of Saadat Hasan Manto, in humanity under many different circumstances, he tries to bring it in the forefront. In the story Manto, talks about the psychology of the people during riots, the ruthlessness of people towards each other and the height of ignorance of one’s rights.

The coming and the intervention of the Britishers, brings in the largest changes in the customs, languages, arts, literature, education, political scenario, etc. of the subcontinent. After the first war of independence, mutiny 1857 and the end of the Mughal Empire, the social scene and society of the subcontinent saw drastic changes, which formed a complete new pattern of society and politics. Regarding this Manto writes in one of his essays as:

“Agar Mughals hukumat ka daur doora hota to mumkin hai mera ek haram sara hoti na hoti kum az kum ek biwi ghar me hoti aur do teen tawaifee meri mulazmat me hoti. Muje bateeree ladane ka bahot shauq hota. Ye mazboon padhne ke bajaye me principal sahib ki shaan me ek kasida sonata jo
(If it would be time and rule of the Mughal Empire, it would be possible that a brothel could have been present in my house and if not at least one wife at home and two to three prostitutes were at my service. I could have developed the love for games like cock fighting. Rather than reading or writing this essay, I would be singing an encomium for the principal, who could have awarded me lots of money or must have given the Jogeshwari College on my name, to which I would turn into a stable…. The writers of that time were the satisfied humans. The writer of the present generation is a dissatisfied human; they are dissatisfied with their environment, pattern of government, their society, literature, and art, even from self too. We have given different name to this restlessness).

The dramatic twists and turns of events in India in 1947, gave extra ordinary opportunity to creative writers like Manto who, much like a historian, captured something unusual, unseen but true and meaningful about life as it is and not as it should be. In a stark comment on the unreasonableness of the event of 1947, Manto wrote many short stories, which deal with society and people belonging to different communities, their problems and on-going madness. He, very craftily portrays the difficulties people were facing because of the partition. He framed many stories on the day to day basis, difficulties and hardships of society. He was well aware of the facts that Hindus and Muslims, the two large communities of India, were ruthlessly thirsty for blood of each other, as we could see in one of his story ‘The Assignment’ where Santosh Singh kept his wow that he gave to his dying father, to give seewayan to Judge Sahib, who helped him in one false court case on every Id, but was not ready to protect the judge and his daughter from the rioters, who were waiting out of their house for him to leave, so that they could complete their work, to riot the house and destroy everything.
Manto showed his annoyance on the societal change after partition 1947, which had changed our social structure altogether regarding this issue of change. Manto’s short stories like “Sahaye”, “Titwal ka Kutta”, “Aakhri Salute”, “Jhoti Kahani”, “Gurmukh Singh ki Wasiyat” are among a few representative stories. Behind these short stories of the social changes in India and Pakistan, Manto brings in the factor of coerce, which was the actual reason for the changes. He talks about the forced judgment, which is one of the subjects of literature produced in India and its sub-continent. The last line of the story “Gurmukh Singh ki Wasiyat” is quite meaningful. We, as readers know the art of Saadat Hasan Manto, who, in his last sentences especially always gnaws one’s consciousness. According to his father’s will when Santosh Singh, after giving the Id gift to the judge who helped his father out from a fake court trail, returns from the tumult area; few people who were standing near to the house ask him:

“Kyun sardarji kar aaye apna kaam?” Santosh Singh ne sar hila kar jawab diya “han kar aaya.”
Us aadmi ne dhate ke under se hans kar kaha
“tokarde maumla thanda judge ka”?“ han . . . Jaise tumhari marzi,” “ye keh kar sardar Gurmukh Singh ka ladka chal diya.”

(So sardarji, have you finished with your assignments? Santosh Singh replies “Yes I have finished.” That person asked “Then should we proceed to finish the matter of the judge?” Santosh Singh replies “As you wish”).

In the last line of the story “jaise tumhari marzi (as your wish)” Manto hides the pain of his time, which is the result of the unjust decision in the history; the decision, which resulted in the poor and helpless humanity of the society. Santosh Singh neither participates in the rioting the house, nor does he try to keep people away from doing so. In the story, Manto tries to make humanity aware about facts and happenings in the society and the regardless attitude of the people towards them.

It is not something new to talk about the attitude of Saadat Hasan Manto towards riots. Manto reflected all the happenings, during riots as accidents and incidents. At the same time he carefully selects the characters to talk about the society and riots. We could make out one hope being reflected from his short stories.
The hope of everything will settle down, as the judge, Mian Abdul Hai, of the story “The Assignment” is hopeful that riots will stop, in the same hope, when in the story “Sharifan” the father of the daughter moves out takes revenge of his daughter’s death, covers naked body of a Hindu girl, on the road with his shawl. Manto sees hope, he writes:

“Asal me ye chand log, ye chand afraad ek hadse ke paidawar the. Ye katal aur khoon ke aadi nahi the magar halat ne inhe aisa bana diya. Wo aapni maaoon se pyaar karte the, doosto se mohabat karte the, in ko apne baho beetiyon ki izzat-o-namos ka passtha, inko khuda ka khauf bhi tha magar ye sab ek hadse ne uda diya.”

(Actually these people are the result of one incident. They are not used to the murders and riots but the situation forced them to do so. They loved their mothers and friend and were conscious about the dignity of their daughters. At the same time they were afraid of God’s wrath. But all these disappeared because of one incident).

“Sahaye” is one of the important stories in which Manto gets deep to understand and reflect the changing social behaviour. He brings to forefront the fact and reason which made friends, relatives, protectors of honor comes in front of each other to take revenge or get into fights. In the story out of the four friends Mumtaz is the only Muslim to whom Jugal speaks:

“Main sooch raha hun ke agar hamre muhalee me faisad shooro ho gai tu main kya karoga?” Mumtaz ne is se poocha, “kya karoge?” Jugal ne badi sanjeedgi se jawab diya “Main sooch raha hun. Bahot mumkin hai main tumhe mar dalo.”

Ye sun kar Mumtaz bilkul hi khamosh ho gaya aur uski ye khamoshi takreeban aath rooz kayam rahii aur us waqt tooti jab us ne achanak hame bataya ke woh paune char baje samandari jahaz se Karachi ja raha hai.”
(I am thinking if the riots will start in our locality, what will I do? Mumtaz asked him, “what will you do?” in a very serious tone he replied, “May be I will kill you!” listening to this Mumtaz became silent and this silence continued for a week and it got over with the announcement from Mumtaz, who informed us that he is leaving for Karachi by a marine ship around quarter to four that day.”)

The story reflects the society and the individuals living in it as ruthless. Though Jugal understands his mistake but by that time it was too late and Mumtaz was all ready to leave. The story seems to be a type of biopic as even Saadat Hasan Manto was ready to migrate. He was living in Bombay when the massacre took place. Even he took an urgent decision and informed his friends and film personality Ashok Kumar.

The short story “Sahaye” and the character sketch of Ashok Kumar, seem to be something similar. In the sketch “Ashok Kumar” Manto writes on the blame of intolerance, which tagged on his name as:

“kuch samajh me na aaya. Akhir mein ne apne aap se kaha Manto Bhai…. Aage raasta nahi milenga...
motor rok lo… Idhar baju ki gali se nikal jao.”

(I was unable to understand anything, at last. I told myself, Brother Manto, there is no way ahead. Stop your car and move away from the thin line.) And from the side street Manto migrated to Pakistan as Mumtaz, by the Marine ship.

During the time to which Manto belonged, if one power overcomes the other, they used stone, empty soda bottles to injure each other. In today’s decades we do the same things with the exemption of knives, soda bottles or stone; now we use nuclear bombs and wars with mechanical arms. Manto could understand the cause of harshness during the riots but he is unable to understand the orthodox environment in which a human is not considers as human. This very attitude which society developed, Manto was aware about it. He could not understand the reason for this harshness after partition, when the demands were fulfilled. Partition took place, when migrants were trying to settle in the new localities and the market of allotments were on the rise. People wanted to take over each other as for getting allotments. Manto understood the very basic factor for the successful allotment, is to lie. He was
well aware about the crooked society and his one short story named “Mazdoori” translated at “Wages” by Khalid Hassan, is based on lootings and allotment business. He writes in the story:

“At the station, he made many efforts to present his case. ‘Exalted sirs, other people steal big things. All poor me take is one bag of rice. Me very poor man, just eat rice. . .’ Ultimately, he gave up. Wiping his brows with his dirty skullcap, he looked at the bag of rice longingly and, spreading both his hands in supplication before the police inspector, said, “All right, exalted sir, you keep the rice, all poor me ask is my wages for carrying this bag… just four annas.”

In the story, the issue that attracts our attention and makes us think is the society which is ignorant to loots and illegal allotment becomes very strict, rigid to a person, who is trying to get just the things by which he could satisfy his hunger.

In a similar story, on the same issue, written by Saadat Hasan Manto is ‘Nigrani Mein’ which Khalid Hasan translates as ‘In Due Supervision.’ The story revolves around the killing, during riots, which followed the partition of 1947. The story is quite short, which includes nearly seven to nine sentences, but is able to reflect what Saadat Hasan Manto wanted to depict about his society. In the story Manto didn’t give the names to characters and calls them as A and B.

The story begins with A and B. ‘A’ was moving together with ‘B’ to whom he said of the same religion to which ‘A’ belongs. He wanted to leave ‘B’ in a military camp for his safety and while passing by he saw a military or a police man. With the view of safety they inquired about any terror activity in the nearby areas to which the policeman replies as:

“koi khas nahi... fala mohale me albatta ek kutta mara gaya.”

(Nothing special but the dead body of a dog is being recovered from the area).
When inquired again he replies:

“Khas nahi . . . naher me teen kuttiyoon ki lash mili hai.”\(^{132}\)

(Nothing special other than we recovered dead bodies of three bitches from river).

When ‘A’ asked about the role of military, aren’t they stopping all these happenings? Or what they do? The answers from the military man brings our consciousess to a halt, he says:

“Kyun nahi … Sab kaam issi ki nigrani me hota hai.”\(^{133}\)

(Why not? Everything which is happening is under supervision).

The story somehow brings the ruthlessness or the ignorance of the forces which were appointed to take care of society. At the same time they show their concern more towards dogs and bitches rather than the humans. In another way we could take or consider the dog and bitch as men and women who were being killed and the military is unable to take any action. The same story depicts the helpless and aimless army, which was ignorant to the happenings in the society.

On the same issue in another story “Takat ka Imtihan”, Saadat Hasan Manto brings in front the cruel society and the helpless human or individual of society. The story contains foot prints, a date as 5\(^{th}\) January, 1935 and first published from weekly ‘Khalk’. The story bears nameless characters as in the earlier discussed stories. Manto avoided to take, or to give names to characters as he didn’t want to blame any particular religion or community.

The story begins with a conversation between two friends, who were discussing a show which took place in the city, a few days back. One friend, who attended the show was going on praising the tricks and physical juggleries performed in the show, to which his friend denies and challenges that even a person who works on the daily wages, in the city, can do the same, if the matter comes to earning.

The discussion slowly turns into an argument and the one who rejected all the tricks as a common physical activity bet on the others. Both were presented as
students, who were sitting in a formal room on comfortable chairs and were puffing cigarettes. The argument annoys the other friend, who wanted to change the topic. But the earlier friend wanted to prove his point that even a person who works on the daily wages can do it without any problem.

As the story proceeds, we see both friends agree to test it and move out. The discussion turns to a game of cards and suddenly one inquires about the weight of an iron piece left in the market area. The other one answers that it could be around five to six hundred kilos in weight. The earlier one, friend, answers in a confident voice that the next day he will arrange a labour who will carry the iron piece to his flat.

It was raining the next day, they both reached to the place and were looking for the labourer. As they spotted one, they asked him to carry the iron piece to their flat. The labourer, who was happy to get work, gets ready to carry it for two annas (i.e. for eight paisa). Those two annas were sufficient to satisfy his hunger, he thinks and with two or three attempts gets the heavy iron plate on his back and follows the two youngsters. In this painful situation the two rich young boys were arguing rather than thinking about the labourer, who was so hungry that he got ready to carry the unbearable load on his back.

Towards the end of the story we see the labourer gets crushed under the heavy iron plate, in front of a shop whose owner cursed him as to die in front of his shop and by considering it as an ill omen postpones his business talk. On the other hand both the young boys fearing the police, leave the place silently. Nobody was ready to, at least get that body out from the iron plate. It was raining and that washed out the blood stains from the street. But the eyes of the labourer were still waiting for his wages and food.

The story depicts the ruthlessness of the rich people in society, who in arguments, bet on life of the poor. As the two young boys sitting in a comfortable room discussed and bet on the capacity of a hungry individuals in the society. The shopkeeper, from the upper class formation of society, considers the death of the labourer in front of his shop and disconnects the talk of business. But no one, the young boys, shopkeeper, people in the market think about the reason behind a weak labourer carrying the weight of an iron plate, which is actually beyond his capacity. The story talks about the ignorance of the upper class people towards the needs of the
poors and ill fortuned people in society. The story brings to us the cruel face of society which is ready to bet on somebody’s life, so as to keep their word. With the mentioned stories Manto brings in the necessity of attention for society where, on one hand the loots are on the rise and on another hand human beings dying because of hunger. At the same time Phaggu Bhangi, who gets a year’s jail term for stealing three and half annas from the pocket of the person, who owes to pay it to him as interest on the department.

Manto gets in front the mismanagement or the favoritism in society, which always supports the higher class, rejecting all the rights of living, of the poor.

Riots, camps for the migrants, imports and exports of the women, deeds of the known people, allotments, religion and its owner, society and its going, Manto saw or experienced all in close encounters. Partition gave birth to new countries and history holds the cruelest example of migration, problems of migrants, false supplication and irrational behaviour of humans. During the time, partition and riots followed after it, nobody was concerned about the helpless children, women, old people and their problems. Partition gave birth to a country on the base of religion and faith which Saadat Hasan Manto rejected all together. When Saadat Hasan Manto migrated to Pakistan he saw a new social pattern, which we could consider in few of the quotations from the story “Yum-e-Istiqlal” (Firmness Day). He writes:

“Pichlee saal yum-e- istiqlal par ek sahab sookha hoa darakh kaat kar ghar le jaane ki koshish farma rahe the. Main ne un se kaha “Ye aap kya kar rahe hai, ye darhakat kaatne ka aap ko koi haq nahi.” Aap ne farmaya, “Ye Pakistan hai, ye mera mall hai.” Main khamosh ho gaya.”

(Last year on the Firmness Day, I saw a person trying to cut the withered tree and to carry it home. I told him “What are you doing? You have no right to cut that tree.” He said, “This is Pakistan and I own this tree”. I keep quite).

“Mujhe phir roona aata hai jab main ye dekhta hun ke log apne ghar ke choohe pakadte hai aur doosre mohalle me chood aate hai. Apne ghar ka kuda karkat
(I still feel crying when I see that people catchs rats in their house and leaves them in the other locality. They clean their house and with a broom leave it near to the door of neighbours. They consider all these stupidity as the result of illiteracy. If this is the fact on which all are agree so what is the reason that they are unable to make literacy for all).

One of the few social changes, which Manto saw, after partition, was that the amount which was assured to be spent on public welfare was diverted to people who were in power. He wanted justice and equality for all in the society. He writes:

"Main jhujhula jata ho... ek shaks wazir banta hai to us ke ghar ki taraf jo sadak jaati hai, us par har roz chidkao shoro ho jaata hai, us ki safai ka khayal har darooga ko rakhna padta hai. Laikin woh makamat jahan safai aur chidkaoo ki ashad zaroorat hai, un ki taraf koi aankh utha kar nahi dekta, ek wazir ka halak gird-o-gubbar se kharab ho jaye ya doosre wazir ko machchar kaat jaye us se kya hota hai. Wo seekdoo aur hazaroo bache jo gandi moriyoon ke taafan aameez fiza me rehte hai, woh in waziroon se kahi zyada aham hai."

("I just get annoyed . . . when a person becomes a minister, the street to his home gets daily cleaning. It becomes the duty of all the security offices and in charges to keep the tracks of the area clean. Whereas the place where it is the requirement, nobody bothers to even have a look at it. Whether it matters, if the ministers get cough, because of dirt or a mosquito bites a minister. The issue of
hundreds and thousands of children, who live in the dirty stinking environment, is much more important than those of the ministers).

The short story called “Shaheed Saaz” by Manto brings to the forefront the reality of the trusts and its organizations. As we read the story, truth of trust’s hospitals, trust’s educational institution, distribution of sewing machines to the widows, trust’s maintained food counters, where we see long queues of the people and the politics of distribution of tokens, everything comes in clear picture before us. In the story Manto brings in all the possible good works, which could help humanity to sustain. But along with it he questions the motto of the trusts, as for their own benefit.

Towards the end of the story, we see a tragic incident taking place as one of the under construction buildings get to the ground and nearly three hundred of labourers die in the debris. But the owner of the construction house is far more satisfied by getting the insurance amount and the tag that they all died as martyrs. The story brings to front, the reality of the society, which is much more interested in the profit of its own at any cost.

Manto never talks or never gives the well decided formula for social changes. Manto is against society in which it is depicted as religion is in danger. He writes in one of his essays which Aakar Patel translates as:

“But the fact is that religion is what it used to be and will forever remain that. The principal of religion is intact, solid. It is inalterable, the sort of mountain that waves can never erode.

When these leaders shed tears and wail, “Mazhab khatre mein hai.” (Religion is in danger), it is all rubbish. Faith isn’t the sort of thing that can come in to danger in the first place.”  

In the book “Third Wave”, Elvin Toffler divides human social history into three different Phases. He considers the ancient tribal phase, as the background for development of the agrarian culture. He gets this phase as the first wave. The second phase he considers the one which brought in the Industrial Revolution.
Though the period of Industrial Revolution was very short, but it holds large and important effects on society. It was the revolution of changes. The basic values of the Agrarian Society, were replaced with the industrial one. Food for survival was the one and common motto of the ancient tribes or society, which manages the balance among people. Slowly civilization reaches to the “Barter System” and this system subsequently gave rise to the currency pattern. The pattern slowly developed the concepts of slavery, colonies and colonial rule in society.

After Industrial Revolution, the second largest change in society was brought up by the concept of Industrial world or the corporate culture. The changes were so drastic that the complete pattern of society was changed: small families, education, corporate cultures, are the gifts to society from the Industrial world. The colonies serve as the basic units for the availability of raw materials. The adverse effects of all those factors were seen and experienced directly on local industries, trades and professions, where people become jobless. Corporate culture took birth some where is the Eighteenth century and by the mid Twentieth century it was at its peak.

The corporate culture saw the birth of corporation, which took over the local market, trade and currency in different countries. The creative phase of Saadat Hasan Manto, is the one which was born and developed in the same corporate culture. The beginning of the creative life of Saadat Hasan Manto, as a writer, was the one with which he strongly shows his annoyance on the colonial societal patterns.

With one reading of ‘Saw Kendal ka Power Bulb’ one can make the impression as the one which talks about prostitution, flesh market and indecent issues. Like other few short stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, this one also is one which is full of controversy. This story is the one, which depicts oppressions in the corporate culture. The story is set in the then Bombay, as many of his other short stories. The location itself gives the impression of corporate city, and talks about all the evils, defects and troubles Manto talks about the cultural or societal changes in the story as:

“Do baras hua jab woh mulazmat ke silsile me
yahan aaya tha to ye tango ka adda bahot mashoor
jagah thi. Sab se umda aur sab se banke, tange
yaha hi khade rahte. Kyunki yahan se ayyashi ka har saman muhhaiya ho jaata tha. Achehe se achha restaurant aur hotel karib tha, behtarin chai, behtarin khana aur doosre lavazmat bhi shaheer ke jitney bade daldal the sab yahi se dastiyab hotee. Is liye ke kaisar Baug Park me badi badi companiyo ke paas ruppya aur sharab paani ki tarah behtee the.  

(It is two years since he first came to this place in search of job. That time this place used to be the biggest hub of tongas, because it was a famous place and many foppish tongas used to stand only here. One of the reasons for this was the availability of all jovial things at this place. Best hotels, restaurants, food, tea and many other factors needed for enjoyment were available there. The reason for all these things were the presence of huge corporate houses and companies at Kaisar Park and because of them money was very easily available for spending).

War, which is one of the important factors, for change in society, was the reason for the barren streets of Kaisar Park. Now it is not a hub for corporate activities and gives an image of the fall of culture, which was very rich in its art and tradition. In the process of the fall of Kaisar Park, all the businesses which were a result of the new culture became barren. The women who were connected to business, in some way, automatically becomes an unseparable part of the fractured society. She was not annoyed by the loss of customers but on the mediator, for forcing her to get ready for a customer.

The lost situation is not a result of desire but it depicts the oppression of society to a woman to do something for which she is not ready. In the story we see the agent first forcing and next entreat the unnamed woman, in the story to get ready for customer.

We can see the attitude of Manto towards the downtrodden of his country. He was aware of the situations, crooked conditions of the poor and their agitation. His story “Khoni Thook” is an example of his awareness towards the people, who were not that fortunate to live a trouble free life. The main protagonist of the story, Khalid is a common person, who along with his friend, Masood, was roaming on
the railway station. The picturisation of the railway station seems to be very true. Manto describes the platform with a particular type of narration which makes the picture of the situation very clear; as the passenger is waiting for the train, roams on the platform to pass time. The hawkers selling their fruits and other items in the stalls, a person alone was singing a song to pass time, a newly married couple busy in happy whispers and one person who was wearing a western suite was in the refreshment room, trying to kill time.

Khalid and Masood, while passing by a group of porters, show pity on their profession. The discussion from the helplessness of the porters to earn a living turns to the other different realities of life. Masood talks about one of the sweepers working on platform, the day before, who died while working, as the train crashed him down. Masood shows his concern on the issue and wanted to visit the home of the sweeper to give, if possible, some help to the family members. On this Khalid says:

“Ye ek nek aur mubarak jazba hai. Magar is saath hi shaher se kuch fasle par chand aise loog bhi hai jinhe ek waqkat ke liye sookhi roti ka nisf tookda bhi mayassar nahi. Galion me aise bachee bhi hain jin ke saroon per koi pyaar dene wala nahi. Aisi sekdoo aurtain mojod hai jin ka husan gurbat ke kichad me gal sadh raha hai. Batao tum kis ki madad karonge? In phaile hoi haton me se kis kis ki mutthi bharonge? Hazaron nangee jismoo me se kitnoo ki sattar pooshi karoge.”

(This is one of the good, kind and blessed desires. But along with them there are people, not quite away from the city, who are not fortunate enough to have even a square of bread. Many children in the lanes and alleys are deprived of a lovable pat. There are many women whose beauty and youth is getting dispersed in the mire of poverty. Tell me to whom will you help? How many palms, which are empty, will you fill? Here are many thousands naked bodies, for how many will you provide clothes.)
The social cruel reality which was hidden under the cover of culture, Saadat Hasan Manto brings it to the upper base in the questions of Khalid. He marks all the things which were a result of a new cultural pattern, which acted as destroyer to culture. He gives a loud voice to the oppressed voices in society. Saadat Hasan Manto is a writer who gave voice to shivering bodies of damsels who get into the sinful world, because of poverty and helplessness. Manto while in search of truth got the bitter experiences of the result and of poverty and took into consideration the hate and pitiful attitude of people for poor and unfortunate. Khalid speaks in the same story:

“Insaniyat ek dil hai. Har shaks ke pehloo me ek hi tarah ka dil moojood hai. Agar tumhare boot garib mazdooroon ke nange seeno pe thokree lagate hai, agar tum apne shehwani jazbatoo ki bhadakti hoi aag kisi hamsaya nadar ladki ki asmatdari se thandi karte ho, agar tumhari gaflat se hazar ha yateem bachche gahware jahalat me pal kar jailon ko aabad karte hai, agar tumhara dil jal kar kajal ki mannid siyah hai to ye tumhara kasoor nahi. Aivanee mashrat hi kuch iss dhab par astavair kiya gaya hai.”

(Humanity is the heart. Every human holds the same pattern of it. If your shoes hit the naked chest of a labourer, if in your emotions you rape a girl in your neighbourhood, if because of your unconscious thousands of orphan children remain uneducated and if your heart is as black as antimony, so it is not your fault. The governance of society is actually based on this pattern).

In the story Manto depicts anger in the common people of society by the crowds and people present on the platform. Khalid, the main character of the story, reaches to a porter who gets injured. Few minutes before he saw the same porter carrying luggage of an English man, who was waiting in the refreshment room of the station, to the unnamed English men, porter was waiting for wages, when he inquired about his stick. He argues that the stick was with the porter whereas the porter says he carried only his luggage.
The argument started and the man calls the porter with bad names. It was the cook of the man, who was carrying the stick and the cigarette box. When the porter points this to the man, he becomes angry and hits on the porter’s chest with his heavy iron shoes, because of which the porter falls on the platform and vomits out blood. Khalid was the first to reach the man in the first class compartment and gets him out. When the English man sees the angry crowd gathered near to the porter he becomes upset. He feared the anger of the common people and in hurry gets a ten rupee note out of his pocket and asks Khalid to give it to the porter and by turning to the semi unconscious porter he informs about this to the porter who was not in a condition to react.

In the story Manto depicts the cruel and unconcerned nature of the British Government towards the people of the sub-continent. But the story takes a turn when the porter, in the same poor conditions, spits on the face of the English man and dies. Both of the friends, Khalid and Masood, leave the dead body of the porter to the people and by nabbing the man, hands him over to the police. At the end when the story was ending we see the British man getting releif from the case on the minimum penalty, to which Manto writes:

“Kanoon ka fakal sirf talai chabi se khol sakta hai.”

(The lock of the constitution can get open only with golden key of money.)

In the story Saadat Hasan Manto brings to the forefront the reality of society, though it is indecent or disgusting but when the time comes, it can be together to fight for justice. Khalid and Masood represent the class of the society, who are well aware, bold, and courageous and one who demands justice. Whereas on the other hand the man as the one, who, in the pride of power go on oppressing common people, and consider money a solution to avoid any bad experiences.

Nobody is unaware of the fact that for survival or birth of a new life there is only one factor which forms a unit, a man and woman. It is the woman who takes all the risks to give birth to a new life. She is the one, who carries the baby in her womb for nine months, takes extra care of the child when young, works hard to get a new life to survive in the world and other different factors for which woman is the
only solution. She is the one who is responsible for the upbringing of the child but in a male dominated society, she just becomes as one of the commodity for the male to be happy and content. The society divides the role a woman to perform in it as mother, sister, daughter, wife and lover. Other than from these mentioned roles the woman is subjected to perform many different roles in society which is male dominated. Some times with her wish or aim and sometimes by force and oppression, she becomes a part of the market. We see different roles being given to the woman other than family, as: prostitution, mediator, model, actress, heroine, lady secretary, etc. where we see woman as working along with men of the society to earn her livelihood. But one sentence is quite enough to reduce woman to the ground when somebody or the society points out that ‘she is a woman’, like the main female protagonist of the story, ‘Licenses’ was denied of riding a tonga because she was a female.

Manto’s short stories under the title ‘Shikari Auratein’ (woman of prey) are an example of Manto’s awareness about different shades of woman in society. He was well aware about the fact that though oppressed and subjugated a woman in the society can go to the upper limits to reach to her goals. Like in the story ‘Saw Kendal ka Power Bulb’, the woman, to whom the dalal was forcing to do business, crushed his head with a heavy brick and then falls asleep very soundly, as if she was getting the rest after a long time. Other example could be Kalwant Kaur who kills her beloved who falls in a wrong act, like Mozail who helps Tarlochan to get his lady love, his finance, out from the Muslim dominated society at the cost of her life.

The short story “Mozail” is again one of the stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, in which he talks about society, after partition. The male protagonist in the story, Tarlochan, was well aware about the fact that society is now very different; people are behaving madly towards people of other faith. The story begins with tension, which Tarlochan felt, on the issue of Kripal Kaur, her family and their safety.

Saadat Hasan Manto was a keen observer of society and its conditions. In the story, very painfully he described the after effects of partition on the life of the people and community. The story speaks about the situations, when and where the riots were unmanageable. Even though Tarlochan wanted to go and pick up his fiancée from her parents’ home in a mohalla, which was predominantly and
ferociously Muslims, he couldn’t, because of forty eight hours of curfew he was helpless. People were concerned about their own self and their family only. As Niranjan, his brother-in-law, warned him in clear words:

“Forget about your business for the time being.
We are passing through difficult times. You should stay with your family or, better still, move to my flat. I know there isn’t enough space, but these are not normal times. We’ll manage somehow.”

People were selfish, thinking about their own selves and their family and safety. In the midst is the character of Mozail, a Jew girl, is the ray of hope who helped and motivated him to go in a Muslim locality, being a Sikh, and get her love of life, for which she sacrificed her life.

In the story, we see Tarlochan getting attracted to a Jewish girl of a very free nature. She agrees to marry him, but on the decided day she leaves for Pune, with one of her old friend. When Tarlochan expresses his anger on her behaviour she rejects it and jokes on religion of Tarlochan and expresses her annoyance on the people who carried their religion on their head and consider the hair on different parts of the body as a part of it. Mozail says:

“I know that you wear a silly garment under your pant, which is similar to the nicker. This moustache and the long haired is something that you consider as one of the parts of your religion. You must feel ashamed, as at this age you think that your religion is hiding in your underwears).”

In the story, Mozail helps Tarlochan to free his lady love at the cost of her own life. By the character of Mozail, Manto, depicted the other face of women
in society who would help others to get something on the cost of self’s life. Here, in the story, Manto talks about the different faces of the society, which is a concern enough to help others without the consideration of religion or faith and believers in the character of Mozail Saadat Hasan Manto shows another face or the quality of the woman of society. Manto depicts Mozail as a brave girl who knows well to deceive the people, who work at the call of few unsocial elements. Mozail is a representative of the people who are concerned and want to help others in society.

In another story, ‘Munasib Karwai’ Manto shows the other face of the people who are not sensitive, for the issue of people belonging to other religion or beliefs. In the story, one married couple, takes refugee in the basement of their home fearing slaughter by the people of other religion. After a few days, when hunger and thirst become unbearable, they decide to come out from the basement.

When the couple comes out from the hiding, they see their home was taken over by a family of strange people. At first the new occupants of the house shows their amazement on the hiding couple. The couple was in so bad condition, because of unavailability of food and water, that they demanded and requested the new occupants to kill them. But it was not acceptable for them, as those new people belong to the religion which forbids killing. They were Jains and so to do the necessary action they handover the couple to the rioters to kill them, rather than to give food and shelter. Manto over here, in this short story, brings in front the mindset of the people and society, who keep in mind their religion, while doing something or anything. In the story Manto talks about new occupants who rather than giving food to the couple give them to the rioters, to be tyrant and merciless with them.

Another story by Saadat Hasan Manto, ‘Halal aur Jhatka’, to which Khalid Hasan translates as ‘Ritualistic Differences’. This story is the one which attempts to bring to our understanding about the society and is ruthless behaviour towards people of other religion. In the story, the unknown characters discuss and argue about a better and correct way of killing someone. This seems to be very awkward and strange to know about the cruel thoughts of killing a human. In the story, the character says:
“I placed my knife across his windpipe and, slowly, very slowly, I slaughtered him.’ … “You should have chopped his neck off with one single blow.”

As rightly said earlier Saadat Hasan Manto’s stories are a barometer of society. He was well aware about society and the individuals belonging to it. He was against the dominance of male on the woman. He wrote many a story depicting the pain and suffering of woman in the society. He is one of the few writers who talks about incest issues. Those issues were the topics to which many writers, readers and critics considered as the vulgar ones.

“Kahani Ka Khulasa” is a story in which Manto discusses this issue boldly. The story begins with the narration about the surroundings and people of the story. Anwar is the first character to whom we are introduced with. Shamim is the elder sister of Anwar, who is an expert of making embroidery and knitty. She teaches the art of embroidery to the girls of her locality. Bimla is the daughter of a school teacher. Her mother dies when she was very young. Her father, Lala Hari Charan, didn’t marry after the death of his wife. He loves his daughter and was taking good care of her.

But, Bimla used to be very silent; she was very shy and used to concentrate only on her work. She loved reading and always used to ask Anwar for books to read. Anwar gives her the books but was always confused by her silence. She seemed as the explanation of the book to him. He tried many times to provoke her to speak but never succeeded in doing so. He felt many times that she wanted to speak or tell something to him but never attempted to speak. Anwar loved reading books and was fond of Saeeda but Bimla always used to divert his attention. Though she was not unattractive but Anwar used to think about the reason for her silence. She always used to be punctual, but one day she didn’t come for class. The next day every one inquired about her absence and she explained that her father was not well.

After that day she used to be regularly absent from the class, and one day when Shamim was not at home she comes and asks Anwar to inform her, that she will be unable to attain the class any more. When Anwar inquired about the reason she said that she got a job and because of which she will not come. When she was
leaving Anwar felt as if though she wanted to say something more but then decides not to speak and leaves. It is after ten months that newspapers broke into a report which was shocking for all. The report said:

“Badi sadak ki badro me ek navzayad bachcha mara hoa paya gaya. Tahkeekat ki gai to maloom hua ke bachcha Lala Hari Chandra ki beti Bimla ka tha aur us ka baap khud Lala Hari Charan tha. Sab pe sakta chaa gaya.

Anwar ne soocha, “To sari kitab ka khulasa ye tha.”

(In the sewer drain of the big street a newborn baby was found dead. An inquiry revealed that the baby belonged to Bimla, who is the daughter of school teacher Lala Hari Charan, and he is the father of the infant. Everyone was in shock and Anwar was thinking that this was the matter which Bimla wanted to speak to him).

In the same way another story “Allah Data”, Manto talks about the same issue again. In this story we see two brothers Allah Rakha and Allah Datta living happily together with their families. They were working in a government office and were content with the life. But as the riots broke out after partition the family gets ruined as the wives of both the brothers got killed and the husband of Zainab, Allha Datta’s daughter, too falls prey to the rioters.

After the riots reach their ends both the brothers started living separately at Gajranwala and Lahore. Sugra, daughter of Allah Rakha, was living with her father and was happy. But the trouble for Sugra was not over in her fortune. Allah Data dies leaving her alone to face society and trouble. The officer for whom he used to work was good enough to give her place in his house. He took good care of her and when her uncle, Allah Datta, arrived to take her along and expresses his wish to get her married with his son, the officer gets ready to bear the expenses of her marriage.

When Allah Datta reaches back to his home, Zainab inquires about the reason of his long stay at Lahore. He expressed his wish that he wants his son Toofail to get marry with Sugra, which Zainab rejected. After some attempts she got ready and Sugra come to their place by marring Toofail. She was all adjusted in the house as
both her uncle and husband were good with her but feared Zainab, who was actually her elder sister in law but used to behave and act like the mother-in-law with her. Allah Datta was very open in showing his affection towards her. She used to be afraid from Allah Datta, his love and affection.

One day when she comes to know about the relationship between Zainab and Allah Datta, daughter and father, she trembled in fear, and used to think the way out from both of them. But one day when she was alone and cooking food, Allah Datta, who is her uncle and now father-in-law, catches her from behind and tries to seduce her. He wanted to get in a physical relationship with her, as the way he was with his daughter, Zainab. In the meantime Zainab comes and scolds Allah Datta on his action. The words which Zainab speaks bring to front, the cruel reality of the uprooted families and people who pose themselves as very pure from outside were actually corrupt from within. She says:

“Kya ek kafi nahi thi- tumhe tab to sharam nahi aai
par ab to aani chahiya thi. Mujhe maloom tha ke
aisa he honga isliye shaadi ke khilaf thi. Ab sun loo
Sugara is ghar me nahi rahege . . . aakhir ek din
aaya ke us ne talaknama us ke hath me diya aur
ghar se bahar nikal diya.”

(Wasn’t I enough for you? You didn’t feel ashamed when made relationship with me but at least you must have thought this time. That is the reason I was against to this marriage of Toofail. Now listens she will no more live in this house. At last one day she gets the divorce paper from her husband, who made her out of house.)

Both the stories talk about incest issues, which were though hidden but were very much present in society. The ups and downs in politics and government, the decision of partition, and its after effects, gave rise to indecent relationships which Saadat Hasan Manto depicted in his short stories. Here in the story as Manto talks about the unusual relationships between people of the society, on the other hand brings in front the oppression and subjugation of male on the women of society. On one hand, as he brings in front the reality, on the other, he talks about the pain and fear of woman, to talk related to this oppression with any other person.
In the other story “Nangi Aawazee”, Saadat Hasan Manto talks about the jovial and teasing attitude of people towards newly married couples. The story begins, as people shifting from their homes to the terrace of the building to sleep during night, those were the hot summer nights. The building was under control of the refuges. Gama and Bholu were brothers and were living in the same building. Bholu was a tin smith and Gama was a vendor. Both were hard working so were satisfied with life. The problem was the summer nights as it used to be very hot in the rooms. Bholu used to sleep on the terrace during the time was but Gama could not as he was married and the problem of his wife and daughters stopping him move to terrace.

Kallan, who was living in the same building, one night, comes up with one idea. He tied few mats and canvases around the bed of his wife and the problem was solved as the mats used to act as the curtain for him and his wife. Many other people followed the idea of Kallan and in a short time almost all shifted to the terrace of the building. Before summer Bholu used to deny his brother’s wish, who wanted to get him married. But now when the families shifted to the terrace, behind the curtain he becomes curious about the relationship between man and woman and asked his brothers to urgently arrange for his marriage. The night whispers between husband and wife paved the way for his decision.

In a few days he got married with a beautiful girl, according to his sister-in-law’s wish. But the problem, because of which he was afraid, their sleeping position on an open terrace. He was very much concerned that the way he used to listen to the other couples earlier, now people will listen to them. He was so much entangled in the issue, that for many days he couldn’t talk to his wife. He was afraid of the jokes, teasing of the people.

The story depicts the simplicity in society, where many different means of entertainment were out of reach or unaffordable. People used to take pleasure by teasing and cracking jokes between family and friends. But the story ends on a sad note, as we see, Bholu gets mad and out of his senses as his wife and people consider his this very attitude of shyness, to his impotency. Where, on one hand Saadat Hasan Manto talks about the simplicity of society, on the other he reflects the cruel
attitude of the same society, which is much better in assuming things on baseless information.

In sarcastic manner and humorous tone, Saadat Hasan Manto talks different problems in society and the attitude of people in the story “Apni Apni Daflī”. The story talks about different situations, in which different unnamed characters react to different situations. The story includes all together fourteen different situations.

In the first situation a person, a great religious preacher and inquires about his religious journey. The way the person talks to the preacher, it seems that he is very friendly with him. When the person was taking leave, the preacher asks him secretly to arrange for a buyer for two large bags of sugar, and seduces him with cheap amount and a commission. It sounds awkward as a preacher with two large bags of sugar. By writing this, Manto brings out the corrupt nature of preachers in the society, who deceive others to earn benefits.

In the second situation Saadat Hasan Manto talks about the unemployment problem prevailing in society. The unnamed character informs about the sad news about his company that he along with his other two hundred coworkers were out of work since last month. When inquired about the protest, he answered in a positive but at the same time speaks about its failure. He, somehow was hopeful of getting some cereals from someone, but at the same time shows his annoyance as:

“Allah ab rahem nahi karega … Itne aadmi hai woh kis kis ki hajat rava kareen. Mera to khayal hai uper bhi rationing system shru ho gaya hai.”

(Now God will not answer our prayers… There are many people. Whom will he take into consideration? I think now, even he must have started a rationing system).

In the next snap, Saadat Hasan Manto brings to the front the inability of people for getting or buying reasonable items for living. In the snap, a man used to carry empty boxes of cigarettes and tins of pan masala. When the owner of the shop got suspicious and asks about the pattern of his working with empty boxes and tins, he replies, which make us think about the financial conditions of the common people, or poor in the society. He says:
“Meri bachchiyan in se khelti hai. Meri itni astaat nahi ke main in ke liye ghar khilone le jaun. Is liye main ne un ko is taur se samjhaya hai ke woh in nikammey chizon ko hi duniya ke behtarin khilone samajhti hein.”

(My daughters play with these. I don’t have that much money to buy those toys. So I made them understand, in such manner, that now they believe these useless items are the best toys of the world and enjoy playing with them).

In the next snap, the master of the house shouts on the cook for cooking something so tasteless that his wife feels like vomiting. He gets angry on the servant and orders him to throw everything out in the dustbin. The servant requests that rather than wasting the food, all the servants together will eat it. The master’s words bring up attitudes of rich people, towards the poor people in society, he says:

“Nahi, bahar dustbin me pheeka aao. Tum sazaa ke taur pe bhooke rahonge. Uttaye begum saheeba hum “Shezan” chalet hai.”

(No, throw this out in the dustbin. And as punishment you will remain hungry. Come dear wife we will go hotel Shezan)

The next snap brings to our understanding, the corruption in the police departments. When a prisoner inquires to another prisoner about his strong habit of drugs, and the ways of getting it, as the surrounding seems to be the location of jail or prison, it is strange to know about the availability of drugs inside the jail. In the story a prisoner speaks to another, to inquire and ask the way of getting drugs into the four walls of the protected prison. The answer of another prisoner gets us the understanding about the way. He says:

“Ek Khaki market hai… jo black market se zayda imandar hai.”

(There is one brown market…..and that is more reliable than the black market.)
In the next snap two people talk about different reports in the newspaper. They show their confusion and regrets on the different views being published by the newspaper reporters. One suggests that now they should stop reading newspaper, to which other denies as he was with the view that without newspaper it is not possible to know the happenings in the nation and the world.

With their views we could get the consciousness of Saadat Hasan Manto, who understood the society very well. One side if they deny anything, the other side they support it. In the same story Manto talks about the attitude of the reporters, who while giving the reports of the happenings, they bend it the way that people get entangled to understand the real facts.

Manto, while depicting and talking about the ills and evils of society, he talks, about people, who, by their inner self were true and humanity was present in their attitude and doings. As when we read the story “Mammad Bhai” we gets to understand the very sharp and perceptive views and analysis, of Saadat Hasan Manto, about society and its tenants, humans, very well. The story starts with the catchy introduction of Faras Road and the Safed Galli of Mumbai where Manto, was living somewhere after his marriage. Many times he gives reference of Byculla area of Mumbai in his stories and essays. A little bit ahead from Safeed Galli, the famous location comes that is, Kamathipura, which was famous for the availability of prostitutes, during Saadat Hasan Manto’s times. The story gets the location of Safeed Galli, where the character Manto used to live on rent. Manto comes as a character in the story. The story seems to be a personal experience of Saadat Hasan Manto as even he lived in Byculla and was a writer, in the story the character’s name is Manto, and he too was living at Byculla. The narration of the place comes all together as bringing the complete area in front of our eyes.

In the story, the character Manto gets a room to live in Arab Gali on the rent of nine and half rupees a month. Manto talks about the real nature and attitudes of the Bombay (Mumbai), as he says:

“Agar aap ka Bombay me kayam nahi raha to shayed ke aap mushkil se yakin kare ke waha kisi ko kisi se sarwookar nahi hota. Agar aap kholi me mar rahe hoge to koi aap ko nahi poonchega. Aap
ke padoos mai katal ho jayee majal hai jo aap ko is
ki khabar ho jai.”

(If you are not familiar with Bombay you will hardly believe that the people there never get concerned and entangle themselves in somebody else’s affair. If you are dying in your room nobody will come to ask for help. If somebody gets killed in your neighbourhood it is rare that you will come to know about it).

In this type of self-concerned society, Manto depicts a ray of hope in the character of Mammad Bhai, who actually is the unspoken don of the locality. Manto talks about his fierce nature by giving details of the character, as he carried a sharp knife in his waist belt always. People used to talk about his very sharp aim and also that as nobody could do any harm to him. Listening much about the unseen Mammad Bhai, Manto was with very strong wish to meet him. But he was unable to do so because of his schedule. Manto tried many a times to somehow meet Mohammad Bhai but could not succeed in his aim.

One day when he falls ill, he sees his long wish coming true. Manto was living alone in Bombay. There was no one to take care and provide a doctor or medicine to him. Manto wanted somebody to talk and take care for him. In this dark situation Mammad Bhai comes to his help. He very quickly arranges a doctor and medicine for him. He was waiting for the doctor to arrive and instructs him to diagnose the problem properly. When the doctor was leaving, Manto tried to pay him the fees which Mammad Bhai denies.

Mammad Bhai is the person who is always available to help people. Though by profession he was killer, but when it comes to help he was always ready, with his same goodness he kills a man who dishonored a girl in his locality. He was to face a court trial for which he was quite afraid. As with the suggestion from his friends and people in the locality he cuts off his moustache. He gets punishment of leaving the place, he was sad and people too.

With the character of Mammad Bhai, Manto brings to front, people of the society. If they are cruel, they are soft too. Mammad could kill the person with his sharp knife, but is afraid of watching somebody getting an injection.
In the same manner depicting or showing, thought in wrong business, but good hearted individuals of society, the story “Mummy” attracts our attention. In this story Mrs. Stella Jackson is called as ‘Mummy’. She is the wife of a soldier who got killed in the world war and is receiving pension from the government. Manto describes his first meeting with her in a very dramatic manner. In this story too, we see a character named as Manto, who, when visited Pune being introduced by one of his friends to the lady, who was living in Saeeda cottage, with four or five men named, Chadda, Garib Nawaz, Venkutrey, Ranjeet Kumar, and few girls named; Phyllis, Polly, Dolly, kitty, Elma and Thelma.

Actually Stella Jackson is a lady, who runs the business of flesh market. She was the ‘Mummy’ for all whomever living in her house. She used to take care for all presents in the home in all respects and never got angry on any one. She was a woman of substance; everything meant for enjoyment were present and available in her house. She used to take a lot of care of the people and was well mannered. Chadda is the spoken son of Mummy, Stella Jackson, who was the favorite resident of the house.

She was very particular about the girls present in the house. When Chadda, her very favorite person, tries to take on Phyllis, Mummy rejects and asks him to be in his limit. To stop him, from doing so, she slaps and asked him to leave the house. After some days when Chadda falls ill, Mummy gets him back to her house. Though she was a business woman, but was good with her heart. When the judicial court of Pune charges her on running the flesh business and orders her to leave the place everyone in Saeeda Cottage became sad. Though she was in the wrong trade, but her heart was good, because of which everyone remembered her. We could make out the love, affection, and respect of the people for a woman as in the words of Chadda, who says:

“With her purity has vanished from our lives. Do you remember that awful night? She cleansed me of my lust and meanness. I am sorry she’s gone, but I should be sorry. She has only left Poona. She will go elsewhere and meet more young men like
me and she will cleanse their souls and make them whole. I hereby bestow my Mummy on them.”

A researcher cannot ignore the character ‘Ram Khalawan’ of the story written by Saadat Hasan Manto. Ram Khalawan like earlier spoken characters, Mummy and Mammad Bhai, is an individual, who works as a washer man, and was good by heart. He was so clean with his work and manner that he never used to keep record of the clothes. He was in the bad habits of drinking alcohol, because of the same habit falls severely ill. When the wife of the narrator came to know about it, she, with the help of two other people, gets him to a doctor in a taxi. He was so touched with her act that every time when he used to come, to collect the dirty clothes, he uses to shower his blessing on her. When the partition took place and the unnamed narrator was to migrate, he remembered his balance amount to be paid to the washer man. On rememraing he hired a taxi and reached to his place.

To his horror, he sees the whole community of washer men completely drunk asking him about his faith and ready to kill him, as he will show his identity. He gathers courage and asks for Ram Khalawan, as wanted to pay the wages. All the washermen gathered there and decided that it will be Ram Khalawn only who will kill this Muslim man.

The narrator of the story, or the unnamed character was hopeful that Ram Khalawan will recognise him and so his life will be saved, but the hope of the narrator gets scum in his throat, when he sees a drunken Ram Khalawan, carrying a stick in hand ready to kill him. As he raised his stick the narrator calls his name as if giving an order. Though in the drunken condition, he recognises the voice of his old master and apologises for his behaviour. He says:

“Śaḥb muje maaf kar do. Ye sab daaroo ka kasoor tha. Daaro aaj kal muft me milti hai. Seth log boltta hai ke pee kar musalmin ko maro... Hum ko maaf kardo saab piyeela tha ... Tum mulk jana-begum saab se maat bolna.”

(Sir please forgive me. That all happened because of liquor. Now a days liquor is freely available, rich people provide us with free liquor and ask us to drink it and kill
the Muslims. Sir please forgive me I was drunk at that time. As you are leaving to your country please don’t speak about my drinking to madam).

With the story, Saadat Hasan Manto brings his point of view that if we do well to someone we will get good in return. As even though Ram Khalawan was drunk, his whole community was with him, the situation was full of the blood stories but when he sees a sympathizer, whose wife was kind enough to take him to a doctor when he was seriously ill, he drops his stick and asks his fellow friends to let him go as he is one good person, whose wife helped him, and in the drunk condition gets the narrator out of danger. Ram Khalawan is the representative of humanity which was present in community but sometimes gets corrupt because of different interference.

In the story “Rishwat” Saadat Hasan Manto brings in front the attitude of the society and people. In the story, Ahmed Deen is the son of a rich man, who wanted his son to go to western foreign country, to complete his education. He loved his son very much. Every formality was completed, passport was ready, but suddenly when his father gets into the wrong business and started investing his money in gambling and thus gets ruined financially, during his last years. When he died, his son, to whom he protected from all odds of life, left with no money to arrange for living. He tried very hard for getting a job but failed in getting so, after struggling for many days he comes to understand the fact that if he will give bribe to a high post office the problem could get solved. But the problem was from where he will arrange money because his father had ruined every penny in gambling.

On the qualification of a bachelor’s degree he applies for the post of head clerk in an office, but failed in getting it, as the clerk in the office informs him that for the post there are already two hundred and fifty applications received and he could help him in getting the job only if he gives five hundred rupees as token to him. He tries to please the clerk by saying that for sure he will pay five hundred rupees to him but first let him get the job and from the salary he will pay off the amount as at present he does not have a single penny, but the clerk rejects his idea. As to earn money, at least for food, he started the work of labourer. He holds a bachelor’s degree but is ready to work as a labourer because of unemployment and the problem of money which he cannot arrange for bribing.
With hard work and his nature, he saved around thirty rupees. He thinks for some time and putting those thirty rupees in the paper packet along with a handwritten note which addressed to god and asks him to keep those thirty rupees and to arrange a job for him because he was getting very weak without proper food. To his surprise within a few days he receives a letter from the newspaper editor of “Kainat” who offers him a job as a translator in his newspaper office. It so happened because he mentioned the address on envelop as “Malik-e-Kainat”.

Though it was a co-incident but brings to our understanding the fact, that no work will get over until and unless bribe is paid. So did Ahmed Deen and thus received a job.

In another story “Saade Teen Aane,” Manto talks about crime, people and society as a participant. In the story again we see the name of the character appearing as Manto. The topic which they were discussing was to decide whether the prison is a place where a person could get corrected of his ill and wrong deeds. A person interrupts their discussion and introduces himself as Rizvi. In the discussion he reveals his identity, as a killer, who was well aware about the jail and its system. The talk of Rizvi brings to our notice the fact of crime. He asks the reason because of which somebody is forced to do illegal things. He like a psychologist says:

“Manto sahib aadmi jurm kyun karta hai? Jurm kya hai, sazaa kya hai? Main samjhta hun har jurm ke peecha ek history hoti hai. Zindagi ke wakiyat ka ek bahout bada tukta hota hai. Bahot uljha hua aur teedha medha . . . Insan se khud jurm nahi hota halat se hota hai”.

(Manto sir, what is the reason that a person commits crime. What is a crime and what is punishment? ... According to my understanding, there is always a history behind crime. A large piece of happenings, in life which is much entangled and full of criss cross roads… Human is not the owner of crime, but it is the situation which forced him to do so).

In the discussion Rizvi, speaks about one of his experiences during his jail term and shows his distress on the issue, that a sweeper, who was along with them in
the cell, got complete a year jail term because he stole a three and half pennies from the pocket of Karim, who owned the sum of five rupees from him. The time when he was not getting his monthly payments, though he was regular on his cleaning work and he was hungry for the last two days so he dared and tried to take some amount as to arrange food. But it was his misfortune that he got caught and was punished with a year’s jail term. He got the punishment on the basis as the police presented him as a habitual robber, who, once got caught of stealing fifty paisa to buy him a bunch of cheap cigarettes. When he tried to run away from the police, he broke one of his legs for which he was visiting doctors for a complete month.

Rizvi talks about the jail term, which he spends with the sweeper and is of the view that though he is a robber, but is very loyal to the deposit. As, while Rizvi was under strict, observation, the sweeper was free to move into the prison and with this benefit used to get a bunch of cigarettes which Rizvi’s friends will give him every week, honestly to him. Though he was caught on the crime of stealing, he never repeated it. When he was becoming free he was not happy and was very sure that within some days he will be back to the jail, as hunger cannot be confined and to satisfy it, he would steal again.

Human life and society is the basic topic of the short stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, the great reounter. Manto reflected and portrays the every section and people of all different localities, psychology, emotions on the wide canvas of his short stories. He observed his environment, society and people very minutely. He, by himself felt the joys, happiness, sorrows, grief, and problems of the people in the society. Labourers, prostitutes, clerks, honest, cheaters etc. were the topics for Saadat Hasan Manto’s stories. The critics along with the readers agree with the fact that Saadat Hasan Manto wrote different characters with all their defects, imperfections, quality and excellences in his short stories. Either the talk about reality or the depiction of emotions, Manto’s pen reached to its excellence. It is the art of Saadat Hasan Manto, as starting from the physical unlawful exploitation of woman’s body to the killing of humanity in the name of religion and depicted many true situations, which somehow give rise to our hidden humanity.

Manto is a disobedient writer, who reflected on all the ills and evils of society starting from individual, group, family, and community in his short stories. Along
with all the odds he presented in his short stories whatever defect, anarchy, immodesty which Manto saw in society reflected in open words to his reader. ‘Kohl Do’, ‘Thanda Gosht’, ‘Mozail’, ‘Bu’, ‘Kali Shalwar’, ‘Allah Datta’, ‘Das Rupay’, ‘Uper Neeche Darmiyani’, ‘Hitak’, ‘Blouse’, ‘Mommad Bhai’, are the stories for which Manto was accused of using bold topics. The span of life which Saadat Hasan Manto spends in different locations like Punjab, Bombay, Pune and Delhi gave him extra ordinary opportunities to understand and observe society and people minutely. Saadat Hasan Manto studies human life along with its special social, religious and class background. Cruel realities are reflected from the inner and outer personality of the characters. By reading his stories, the reader can understand human misery and the blind oppression along with it we see in the stories the sorrowful effects of partition on society and people.

The life and times in which Saadat Hasan Manto was living was full of bad, evils immorality, indecency, oppression, darkness, injustice, dishonesty, violence and killings. Through the medium of his short stories, Saadat Hasan Manto introduces his readers to all the evils of the society and people belonging to it. As discussed in the introduction, Manto is the writer who gets good outcome, from all the bad, so in the same manner along with the evils and bad, Saadat Hasan Manto brings the saint and good side of society also.

We could conclude by quoting the lines which Ali Sardar Jafri wrote as:

“Manto ke hath me ye samaj sade hoi payaz ki ganth ki tarah tha. Jis ke chilke wo bade nazakat aur chabak dasti se utarta jata tha aur ye keh keh kar hansta jaata tha ke dekho tumhara samaj pyaaz ke badboodar chilkoo ke dheer se jyada kuch nahi.”

(The society seems to be like a rotten onion in the hands of Saadat Hasan Manto. He in very dexterous and elegant manner peels off the husk of it and while doing so he laughed and points that society is nothing more than a heap of rotten husk).

The lines which are being written by Vijay Tendulkar, could sum up the point of view of the great short story writer Saadat Hasan Manto. Tendulkar writes:
“Aajchaya ladaya harnaya sathich aahe asa me mahnto. Tayat udayacha vijayachi he apeksha aahe. Paranto aaj tu ‘Udaya’ mala diso shakat nahi. Tu kehwa kasa ujdel te mala mahit nahi … pun bahutalcha wastwakade doode jaak karoone ‘romantic’ sawapne paahnyache aani dakhwaniya cha avasthatet me aaj nahi. Vijayacha khotaya kahaniya rangvaniyat maala kahi he ras nahi. Me parbhutanch tatwagyan mandto parabhuetteche nahi.”

(According to me today’s battles are meant for losing but I can’t overlook the possibilities of overcoming and winning in the coming morning. But at present I can’t see that morning. I don’t know how and when it will arise…? But I am not in a situation of ignoring the circumstances present in my vicinity. Along with it, I am not in favour of glorifying a false win. I don’t take any pleasure in doing so. I develop or talk about the philosophy of those who failed and not about failure).

In the same manner as discussed, Saadat Hasan Manto too, throughout his literary career, was struggling because of his writings, which depict truth or may be the bitter truth, about society and in a way asks questions to our sensibility to decide the decent and indecent issues. Manto made creative use of his personal memories and experiences to give a detailed and partial view into the collective cultural and social history of the subcontinent that have been kept aside by force of the selective nationalist reconstructor of the nations. With his powers of keen and candid observation he wrote about individuals and events. As a result his writings are evidence more than any other historians.

Manto being the writer of society was clear to portray human feelings and selfishness. He was well aware about people, their conditions, psychology, hardship, and ongoing disasters. In the story ‘The Return’, he made the character of Sirajuddin, father of Sakina- a very beautiful girl, according to him, and come true to life which could get us, some drops of sweat on our body and a cry to humanity.

Sirajuddin, who, wanted to search his daughter Sakina whom he lost in that mayhem, met with some young volunteers, who were working by helping the women and children left behind, on the other side by getting them to their relatives. One of the team of volunteers got Sakina but they gave up their morals for the
hunger inside them and kept her in their custody and after a week left her in a hospital. On getting the news of his daughter Sirajuddin reaches the hospital and found an unconscious Sakina lying on a stretcher. When the doctor enters Sirajuddin introduces himself as the father of the girl, the doctor checkes for pulse and pointing at the window asked the old man, ‘Open it.’ And:

“The woman on the stretcher moved slightly. Her hands groped for the cord that kept her salwar tied round her waist, with painful slowness, she unfastened it, pulled the garment down and opened her tighs.”

“‘She is alive. My daughter is alive,’ Sirajuddin shouted with joy. The doctor broke into a cold sweat.”

The reality brings sweat on our forehead and shame to humanity that what kind of humans we are? The worst hit gender of the partition was women, on which Manto wrote very skillfully and brought out the sea of pain and clarity of partition in front of his readers.

Manto, in his stories, talked about people who were ignorant on the name of religion and will be ready to do anything or accept everything for the name of religion. Religion was the driving force among the people pre and post-independence period, and still it is, that is evident by the different riots taken place in India till now. People were blind in following customs and faiths.

Short sketches like; ‘Miracle Man’, ‘For Necessary Action’, ‘Ritualistic Differences’ are among few writings by Manto in which he talked about the religious beliefs and happenings. He waved both, religion and happenings, together to paint a clear picture in front of the readers to get unmindful people who blindly, without any knowledge and understanding, work just because they believe in one or another religion.

In ‘The Miracle Man’, when the police started raiding homes to recover looted goods people started storing them out of their homes. And a man who had two large sacks of sugar, trying to hide them somewhere, he fell into a well and after
rescue died in few hours. Because of Sugar, the water of the well became sweet but people related it with the man who fell in the well and started lighting lamps near his grave.

Blindness of people for faith can be evident by one of the story of Manto ‘A Man of God’ in which Chaudhary Maujoo, a farmer, gave his beautiful daughter and then wife to a preventive, false, fraud and cunning maulve sahib, just because he was uneducated and wanted to get his wife Phatan back in life, as he had divorced her. Taking advantage of his ignorance the pretentive maulve used his wife as well as daughter and left behind his false beard and hair pieces to which Maujoo touches with his eyes and gives it to Jeena, his daughter, instructing her to keep it safely as he considered it the grace of God, whereas, on the other hand his wife remained silent. The story begins and ends with Maujoo and his decision, leaving Jeena and Pathan suffer for it. In the story Manto, very clearly showed the helplessness of women in society, they have to do everything and anything as instructed by father, brother or husband, having no judgment and wish for self.

In full of irony, he talked about people and in the action mocked on their glory. He wrote skillfully on human psychology and thus, brought out masterpieces characters like Sirajuddin, Ram Khalawan, Sakina, Mozail, and Tuba Tek Sigh etc. which bring in front of us the naked reality of partition, its effects and unmindful disturbances causing unrepairable damages to humanity, the pain of which we feel till today. When a father talks about his journey to Pakistan or to India to meet his daughter, he gets things come alive for her as well as for him. In the same way Manto wrote reality for his readers; to read, analyse, understand, and feel with a warning.

Commonly, Manto is famous for controversies regarding writing indecent, and about the prostitutes. For the same reason he faced more than a dozen court cases. On the issue Manto said defending himself against the same, that prostitutes are the very truth of our society. No woman readily accepts this business. If we hate these types of women and writings about them, so why do we create such type of circumstances which force her to be a part of the flesh market. Why don’t we create opportunities, so nobody will be forced to be a prostitute? When a husband denies his
wife to love with him, when the parents of the girl don’t want to accept her and when society with lusty eyes, is waiting for her, then the dalals, just capture these innocent souls and sell them to somebody who owns the market of flesh. For example: in the novel ‘Umrao Jaan Ada’ 1905, by Mirza Hadi Ruswa, which is considered as the first novel on prostitutes in Urdu, a social person kidnapa an innocent girl and sells her to Khanam, who afterwards forces her to sell herself for money.

Along with many evils in society, he talked and wrote about prostitutes and prostitution boldly. In his writings he showed that, as like other people even the prostitutes have good moral and beliefs. Even they want a real and truthful husband and the blessings of children, but our society does not allow them to achieve so. In his bold way of narration and attitude towards society, his awareness of the good and evil, and his art in narrating the psychological twist, Manto’s writing became a mirror to the society. The bitterness and the ugly picture of the society are visible in his stories. The images of people and characters, which he describes, seems very true and a lot about trends, customs, society and its ways became clearly visible in front of the eyes of his readers, forcing his readers to justify their attitude and behaviour.