ABSTRACT

Social Consciousness and Political Ideology in the Short Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto; is the topic of my dissertation for the degree of Ph. D. The relevance of the topic lies to be very strong as because the literature produced by Saadat Hasan Manto is the mirror image of the society and the politics in pre, during and post partition of India 1947. To study and analyse the literature produced in different languages comes naturally to a student of literature. We could do the justice with the literature written in other languages only if we are aware of it completely. The writer Saadat Hasan Manto produced his entire work in Urdu, and we could justify his literature only if we understand the language very well. One of the reasons to choose the language of Urdu is because the fiction appears to be one of the very popular medium and in it particularly the short stories, a variety of different everyday situations, happenings, issues and problems are reflected in them in which the ups and downs of the life are being narrated. Second and the most important reason comes as the literature gets the images of society and the short stories by Saadat Hasan Manto reflects the way of society of his time. When we study two or more languages it becomes fruitful to compare, study, analyse and to get away the literature with different thoughts, thoughtful, contradictory views, different customs, practice, beliefs and superstitions. As we see the motto, the research is to rebuild, reconstruct and to invent something new from what has already been mentioned things. One hand, in the language of Urdu, where Krishna Chandra, Quraıtul Ain Haider, Abdullah Hussain, Khadija Mastoor, Qazi Abdul Sattar, Asmat Chughtai, Hayatullah Ansari, Ramanand Sagar and Intezar Hussain, etc. wrote on the issue and topic of partition on the other hand they considered it as one of the natural event and deviated from considering it as the result of ‘Two Nation Theory’. In the same attitude and with cruel writings they speak of Hindu Muslim religious intolerance, ruined philosophy of the people and its effects.

Saadat Hasan Manto stands out in the crowd. He is one of the different, disputed, and loved short stories writers. As by reading his short stories we could understand the attitude of Saadat Hasan Manto, who pinches the veils of the rotten society and politics with his sharp nails and gets them naked in front of his readers.
The attitude of Saadat Hasan Manto towards the human behaviour seems to be something very rough and unemotional but as we get deeper we could understand his overflowed sharp consciousness which emerges from his acute observation of the society. He, with close encounters, experienced the oppression, injustice, and human dishonesty which he reflects on the broad canvas of his short stories.

The first chapter titled ‘Introductions’ deals with the history and an overview of the popularity of short stories as a medium in India. The second chapter ‘Who was Saadat Hasan Manto: A Biography’ puts lights on the writer, his early life, and his life as a writer in a different scenario. The third chapter ‘Social Consciousness in the Short Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto’ describes and discusses the awareness of Manto about the difficulties, hardship and psychology of the society to which he belonged. The next chapter ‘Political Ideology in the Short Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto’ discusses Manto’s views and his awareness about the politics which took place during the time of partition. In the fifth chapter, ‘Partition as Reflected in the Short Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto’, it describes and discusses the awareness of Manto about the wrong and destructive decision of partition. With a very sharp attitude Saadat Hasan Manto discusses the riots and communal intolerance taking place during partition. The sixth chapter ‘Different Shades and Pictures of Women in the Short Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto’ deals with and brings out the different shades and pictures of women, who were the worst hit gender of the event of partition. It will also include his famous prostitute characters which will throw a light on the political and social scenario of the age. The last chapter ‘Conclusion’ attempts to overall conclude and bring the relevance of Saadat Hasan Manto’s work in today’s life and summarizes the research work and its findings.

A critical study is undertaken, to seek and to discover the views of Saadat Hasan Manto, on the society and politics in the divided India. Though all most all of the literature by Saadat Hasan Manto, was originally written in Urdu, is available in English translation but I could not get hold of the translated version of many of his short stories despite my continuous efforts. Therefore, my arguments for those stories are based on the original Urdu version. The necessary portions of the short
stories are translated from Urdu to English by me, as I have sufficient knowledge of both of the languages. The original story or the dialogues, which the character speaks, are in Urdu, hence they are reproduced in Urdu, as original, and some translated.

Saadat Hasan Manto is a short story writer who stands out as one of the most revolutionary writers, both in terms of the themes he had handled, as well as the new experiments in the form and structure. Social and political awareness are the concepts and themes of the short stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, which are born out of his keen observation. His ability and awareness has given the great depth and maturity to his writings and especially to his short stories. The strength of his writing lies in his uncompromising consciousness with which he treats his characters and themes in his short stories. So, after passing through many difficulties and hurdles of collecting material, finally this dissertation was completed as a comprehensive whole which translates the author and his views and his relevance in today’s world.