you cannot draw lines and compartments, and refuse to budge beyond them
… You have to maintain a fine balance between hope and despair … In the end, it’s all a question of balance. (AFB, 231)

It started in Such a Long Journey and continued in A Fine Balance. As a social humanist, Rohinton Mistry is provoked by the atrocities continued against the downtrodden and suffered people. Here, is no doubt that Rohinton Mistry strives hard to reform the society by exposing various problems of society like Mulkraj Anand. In short, Mistry desires peace to prevail in the society by understanding the various problems of individuals. In Mistry’s novels, there are no references to Canada but only nostalgia of the political and social disorder of India’s postcolonial experience.

The clear difference between Mistry’s living location (Canada) and his fiction (India) with Parsi community that makes it difficult to bracket him either as a Parsi, an Indian, or a Canadian writer. Meenakshi mukherjee, while speaking of immigrant writers, remarks,

These novelists cannot be discussed in terms of one nationality alone. Whether they are ‘peregrine’ writers stationary, their apprehension of reality has been
affected by the experience of more than one country and conditioned by exposure of more than one culture. (Meenakshi, 86)

As many other writers, Rohinton Mistry has interests in many cross cultural issues. It is probably best to study him as a writer free of all labels of an objective inquiry, as a representative of a global culture. Rohinton Mistry made out himself as a writer of his own choice and treatment of the themes. An unchallengeable feature of Mistry’s humanism is the theme of condemnation of struggle for peace.

Ambition and dreams of his protagonists are tied with hope and despair about the life of the modern world. Mistry shows the basic ambivalence of common men, as a realist and humanist through his works. Rohinton Mistry reveals the social problems as a social novelist in the pantheon of writers such as Anand, Charles Dickens, Salman Rushide, Chaman Nahal, Thomas Hardy, etc.

His humanistic convictions and concept of arts show his thoughts of revolutionary. There are two types of revolutions against the feudal system with caste structure and socialist revolution led by the working class against the capitalist system. Revolution’s main characteristic elements are its determination to put end to imperialist rule. All forms of feudal exploitation, oppression, especially evil social practices of casteism and untouchability uplift to downtrodden and suffered people. Therefore, Mistry has become a spokesman of this revolution. Socialism and humanism co-mingle to form a manifesto for the welfare of the Indian masses through his novels.
Mistry’s characters grow in self-knowledge and fight against an aggressive social environment to create a new world and freedom. Rohinton Mistry’s protagonists are young and middle age people. His novels deal with major Indian social problems and imbalances of Indian society where the protagonists themselves are the downtrodden and the underdogs. He narrates his stories through the eyes and the voices of the dispossessed at the lower rung. Especially, the middle classes and underdogs are affected by emergency and society.

None of the novels written at that time gave a ringside view of the atrocities of the emergency period. His interest lies with the average people of India struggling to wrest a basic life that is brutal against the poor and downtrodden. Mistry usually speaks of his characters as though they have life of their own. His characters actions are very clear but their motives are always disputable. One of his interviewers, Mistry replied and remarked that one has to believe that characters have a life of their own in order to give them ‘free rein’. In his explanation to ‘free rein’, Mistry opines,

I mean, you are in control but you must let them suggest things. The more they develop, the more complex they become, the more they will reveal their possibilities. For example the rent-collector (in A Fine Balance) the more I developed him, (or) the more he developed, the more Possibilities he suggested to me... I mean, I am doing it to him; at the same time, all I am doing is turning him into a more complex person or Dina. Even if Dina was a living Person, and you asked her, ‘why did you do this?’ she might say, I did it because of this! But you are completely at liberty to think... (Mistry, 16)
Mistry’s works lie in the experience of finding emotional truths of common men. The truth of characters and actions is so rooted in human nature that they go on existing in the imagination. In A Fine Balance, some of Mistry’s characters like beggarmaster whose rag tag band of desperate, mutilated wretches and panhandlers are almost too grotesque. Rohinton Mistry’s writing becomes the reflection of outside reality and the expression of time experience.

His protagonists are the recurrent victims that doomed to bear the burden of their country’s chequered history. Mistry avoids the bitterness of satire since he projects a sympathetic view of the predicament of his characters. Still, his writings perceive loneliness and alienation that is reflective in way of the psyche in a strange land and society. A Fine Balance, the novel routes through a series of political events on various issues such as corruption in high places, minority complexes and fragmentation of the social order. However, this novel is not merely a political novel. The author succeeds interweaving national history with the personal life of the protagonists. The main action of the novel is set in a city by the sea, apparently Bombay and it takes place during the emergency of 1975.

A Fine Balance reflects the reality of India’s the greedy politics of corruption, oppression, exploitation and violence. Mistry’s strong opposition to social and class differences have extended the spectrum of contemporary reality through this novel. The narrative centres within urban setting that is the tiny cramped house of Dina Dalal in Bombay. The novel also offers an insight into rural India that focusing on injustice, cruelty and horror of deprivation.
In *A Fine Balance*, Mistry portrays atrocities committed on two untouchables from a village and suffering of the poor characters from Parsi community. Mistry uses four main characters a woman and three men, and a handful of extraordinary minor ones. Each of the four protagonists has their own story and the characters begin to live together under one roof in the city. The novel is about sufferings and pains of the poor people and individuals.

The novel is wonderful presentation of three major themes. Then, this novel blends political history with the personal life of the individuals. The first is the life of middle class and urban world, Dina Dalal. She is a pretty widow in her forties who is struggling hard to lead an independent life. Second, there is another world symbolized by Maneck Kohlah, a sensitive Parsi boy. He feels life a great burden to lead and lift. The last, the novel focuses another sight into rural India provided by Ishvar Darji and his nephew Omprakash who struggle to exist in this world. Ansari says,

This microcosm of Indian society that Mistry writes about conflict at an individual level as well as at a larger level, Mistry is committed towards his cultural roots that provide him infinite inspirational material for his fiction and with great sensitivity and truthfulness he renders the tales of protagonists from Parsi community caught in their beliefs, lifestyles and peculiar situations. (Ansari, 124)

The story in *A Fine Balance* revolves around a widow Dina Dalal living alone in the city of Bombay. Maneck Kohlah is a student from a hill side town of the Himalayas
and a paying guest of Dina. Then, the two untouchables named Ishvar Darji and his nephew Omprakash are the tailors of Dina. They are the four innocents crabbed in the breaking gears of history in *A Fine Balance*. This novel sets in the period of mid 1970s when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declares a “State of internal emergency” and suspends India’s constitution to save her political power. Here Mistry portrays the fragments of political history and its cruelty and corruption during Indira Gandhi’s time.

*A Fine Balance* starts with the story through the voice of the student Maneck Kohlah. He is sent to study in Bombay and stays as a boarder at Dina’s house at Bombay. The tailors Ishvar and Omprakash are also at the same house in Bombay due to caste violence in their village. In this way, the life of Maneck, Dina and the tailors Ishvar and Omprakash get interconnected under one roof. Thus, Kapadia points out: “these characters from different class backgrounds start interacting with each other and the coincidence does not seem incongruous” (kapadia 128). The four main characters of this novel suffer from a sense of rootlessness.

Caste violence has driven in Ishvar and Omprakash life that forces them from a rural background to overcrowded Bombay for better life. Similarly, Maneck also moves from his home in the hills to Bombay for his higher education. His family lost its wealth and trade during the partition of India. Dina has grown up in Bombay but her sense of independence after her husband’s accidental death that keeps her away on her family. So, in a sense of all the four main characters are lonely and struggling for their identity and individuality. Social circumstances and loneliness bring them together to understand as they struggle to survive.
Ultimately, in *A Fine Balance*, the four main characters struggle to maintain their life. The novel starts on a note of coincidence. Maneck and the two tailors are sitting in the same compartment of a local train and travelling to the same purpose to Dina’s house. They start talk and search the same address. At first, both Ishvar and Omprakash are worried that Maneck is a rival for the job. However, they become friendly once they realise that Maneck is a student and boarder of Dina.

Initially, Ishvar has some anxious about Maneck because of his class background. But Omprakash is more independent and soon he becomes close friend to Maneck. The author implies at various levels of existence and struggle of common man. As a political and historical novel, Mistry sets the life of four main protagonists with the historical moment of modern India. In fact, Mistry observes India as a country with unclear problems that are not helpful to an individual’s ambitions. Therefore, their struggle for survival, poverty and exploitation are basic concerns of the novel. Their destiny keep them together learn to understand and appreciate the compulsion and aspiration of the other.

This is Mistry’s way of evoking a patch of dignity for them whose exist on the life that can fulfil individual aspirations. Indeed, Williams Raymond portrays the Diasporic elements of common people to survive that,

Mistry being a Diaspora writer and Parsis sensitive to the conditions of those who do not belong to the marginalized people have to struggle twice as hard for what come with lesser effort to those belonging to the mainstream because
strength with them and also because unable to fully comprehend and appreciate the socio-cultural context of the situation in which they are placed, these people constantly experience fear, alienation, rejection and insecurity. (Raymond, 301)

Thus, one of the major concerns of *A Fine Balance* is the exploration of the Indian experience through the eyes of a Diaspora writer. Mistry makes deep insight on Indian reality that translates the urban, the rural and the political experiences through the novel. Mistry often sets history and fiction to create a broad view of life of individuals’ struggles and of focus in existence.

The two untouchables have to endure the atrocities of the high class people and political power and their future becomes miserable. Due to economic and social reasons are displaced them from their familiar world. Even after, they become fully qualified tailors and return to their village and they are deeply conscious of their own roots in the society. After their entire family is cruelly murdered by village lords and they decide to emigrate to Bombay for the survival facts like Rajaram who says,

> thousands and thousands are coming to the city because of bad times in their native place. I came for the same reason. (AFB, 171)

Their life in Bombay is contrary to their expectations that symbolize the anguish, pain and anxiety of people cut off from their native villages. Like roamers, they move from their slum to the railway platform, then to the entrance of a chemist’s shop where they are mistaken for beggars. The police compelled them to slog as labourers and finally released from that hell by the Beggarmaster. They are caught in an unavoidable
dilemma between their native village and Bombay. They throw out from their native
because it holds no promise or hope to survive. In Bombay, again they have failed and
struggled to survive and stay on as trivial men. The tailors were born into a family of
untouchables who have risen in the world and become beggars in the end of their life.

Dina too, chooses to separate from her home because she wants to maintain her
individuality. She has grown up in Bombay but she keeps her away from her family after
her husband’s accidental death with sense of independence. She resolves to restructure
her life without being economically dependent on any one. But Dina’s life is a series of
emotional upheaval and relocations of emotional bonds.

Maneck too, is a victim of displacement because he is displaced from his home in
the hills to the college in the city where he is constantly humiliated by his seniors. He
strives to adapt himself to the political atmosphere of the college but he feels alienated
and commits suicide in the end. Emergency made both Dina and Maneck fail in their
attempt. Therefore, all the four major characters are displaced with lonely and struggle
for identity and survival in a cruel world. Social circumstances and sense of isolation
bring them together and shape a bond of understanding as they struggle to survive.

Rohinton Mistry is a socio-political novelist who emerges as a significant literary
figure during the recent years. Mistry has more interest in the untouchables that the poor
people whose voices are suppressed by the upper caste and the politicians. Untouchability exists in the society even after the Independence and the constitution of
India incorporated several laws to eliminate untouchability by imposing severe
punishment. But all these efforts still have not achieved their success completely that reflects by Rohinton Mistry in *A Fine Balance*.

Mistry reveals sensible and sensitive understanding of social exploitation in the class and structure of Colonial India. It also reveals the scale and degree of the painful struggle of the outcaste in an aggressive society. Untouchables are economically exploited by others. They lose their identity as individuals and join the banished section of humanity.

In *A Fine Balance*, Mistry highlights crucial events in the country’s chronicle by the background of each protagonist. The tailors and their forefathers’ life reflect the cruelty of the caste system in rural India where unbelievable horrors are committed on the lower caste. This illustration from the text is enough evidence for this:

The Thakur’s wife was watching from the kitchen window, ‘Oiee, my husband! Come quick!’ She screamed. ‘The Chamaar donkey has destroyed our mortar!’... ‘What have you done, you witless animal! Is this what I hired you for?’... ‘I swear on the heads of my children,’ begged Dukhi, ‘I was only pounding chillies, as I have done all day. Look Thakurji, the sack is almost empty, the work’. ‘Get up! Leave my land at once! I never want to see you again!’ ‘But, Thakurji, the work-’ He hit Dukhi across the back with his stick. “Get up, I said! And get Out!’...Thakurji, have pity, there has been no work for days, I don’t’... ‘Listen, You stinking dog! You have destroyed my property, yet I am letting you off! If I
wasn’t such a soft hearted fool, I would hand you to the police for your crime. Now get out!’ (AFB, 104)

The above lines expose the shameful, terrible beatings and ill treatment of Thakurji’s cruelty on poor people. But, Duki Mochi does not get angry who only feels shamed when he has been beaten for the straying goats and he himself admits that it is his fault. Now he has done nothing wrong and he has worked all day, but Duki Mochi has been cheated of his payment by land lord. Further, his foot is crushed in accident. This incident irritates him and increases his anger against the higher caste people. His anger increases into murderous thoughts.

I could kill that Thakur. Nothing but a lowly thief. And they are all like that. They treat us like animals. Always have, from the days of our forefathers. (AFB, 105)

Poverty drives the untouchables to depend upon the higher caste people to feed their family. For example, The Thakur obtains cheap labour from the lower caste villagers. When the workers demand their due wages, they are threatened with violence. Dukhi Mochi accepts to pack the Chillies alone for small wage. Though, the Thakur asks him, “Can you finish that by sunset?’... ‘Or maybe I should call two men” (AFB, 103).

There is class and communal intolerance because of birth and profession. Dukhi is treated slightly better than an animal but not certainly as a human being. So Dukhi Mochi decides to change his profession for these reasons of humiliations. Then he
migrates to the nearby city and becomes a cobbler. Fortunately, he meets his Muslim friend named Ashraf, tailor of his family.

In the city, a political leader speaks the Mahatma’s message:

This disease, brothers and sisters, is the nation of untouchability, ravaging us for centuries, denying dignity to our fellow human beings...No one is untouchable, for we are all children of the same God. Remember What Gandhi Says, that Untouchability poisons Hinduism as a drop of arsenic poisons milk. (AFB, 107)

The lower castes and classes need radical changes and revolutions but there is no the compassion and the charity of the upper classes. Dukhi works hardly towards an individual revolution and breathing with lifelong traditions. Thus, Dukhi decides to send his sons with Ashraf to apprentice as tailors. Now, Dukhi violates caste rules by making his sons as tailors in which his tendency shows surprising courage of a suffered one.

It soon became known in Dukhi’s village that his children were learning a trade other than leather-working. In the olden days, punishment for stepping outside one’s caste would have been death. Dukhi was spared his life, but it became a very hard life. He was allowed no more carcasses, and had to travel long distances to find work. Sometimes he obtained to hide secretly from fellow chamaars; it would have been difficult for them if they were found out. The items he fashioned from this illicit leather had to be sold in far-off places where they had not heard about him and his sons. (AFB, 118-19)
Dukhi recalls his younger days in which Bhola, Dosu, Gambhir, Dayeram, Sita, Dhiraj, Bhungi, and others are suffered by the hands of zamindars. It is used to know the stories of atrocities committed on the chamaars by the upper class zamindar. It is a feeling or a word of his father to be the truth of his existence. Dukhi’s wife Roopa is raped by the zamindar’s gardener and it does not get justice on her because they are only low-caste people. Another low caste character Budhu’s wife who is naked in the village street by zamindar. Yet another low caste character Bhola’s left hand fingers are cut off because he is accused for stealing.

The upper caste people punish the lower caste people severely which is inhuman for the minor crimes they commit either knowingly or unknowingly. He wants to stop this communal fault line of humiliation to survive in the village. Particularly, this is a moving section of the novel that brings the dirty life conditions of the lower caste in rural India.

No, it is Bhola’s turn. But where he was working, they accused him of stealing...they chopped off his left-hand fingers today’. ‘Bhola is Lucky’, said Dukhi’s mother, ‘Last year chhagan lost his hand at the wrist. Same reason’…Dosu got a whipping for getting too close to the well. (AFB, 96)

Then, Dukhi’s father remarks that the punishment granted to Budhu’s wife as:

She refused to go to the field with the zamindar’s son, so they shaved her head and walked her naked through the square. (AFB, 97)
Thus, Dukhi decides to send Narayan and Ishvar as apprentices of Ashraf’s tailor shop in a nearby town. They live and learn tailoring with Ashraf chacha for years and they turn from cobblers to tailors. Dukhi utters,

if someone asks your name, don’t say Ishvar Mochi or Narayan Mochi. From now on you are Ishvar Darji and Narayan Darji. (AFB, 115)

Thereafter, Ishvar and Narayan return to their village to set up business and everything appears peaceful. The Chamaars come into conflict with the land lords, Zamindars and the Thakurs during the general elections. Narayan’s own tailor shop and his questions against misuse the caste system are not tolerated by the majority community. Here, Mistry gives graphic details of ruthless exploitation, tortures, booth rigging, and sufferings of the poor and the downtrodden. Even after twenty years of independence nothing changes. Narayan says:

Government passes new laws, says no more untouchability, yet everything is the same. The upper-caste bastards still treat us worse than animals’... ‘More than twenty years have passed since independence. How much longer? I want to be able to drink from the village well, worship in the temple, walk where I like... ‘Son, those are dangerous things to want. You changed from chamaar to tailor. Be satisfied with that’. Narayan shook his head. ‘That was your victory’. (AFB, 142-43)
Narayan argues with officers that as a chamaar, he cannot still drink water at the village well, worship in the temples of the upper castes, or walk where he likes. When he attempts to assert his right to vote,

"Thumbprint? I will sign my full name. After you give me my ballot". Two men in the line behind Narayan were inspired by him. ‘Yes, give us our ballots, they said. ‘We also want to make our mark’. ‘We cannot do that, we don’t have instructions’. ‘You don’t need instructions’. It is our right as voters’... ‘After we vote’. This time he did not laugh, but raised his hand as though in farewell and left the booth. The men seized Narayan and the other two. They forced their thumbs to the ink pad and completed the registration. Thakur Dharamsi whispered to his assistant to take the three to his form... his men urinated on the three inverted faces... after the ballot boxes were taken away, burning coals were held to the three men’s genitals, then stuffed into their mouths. Their screams were heard through the village until their lips and tongues melted away. The still silent bodies were hanging down from the tree. When they began to stir, the ropes where transferred from their ankles to their necks, and the three were hanged. (AFB, 145-46)

His desire for his rights to vote is taken wrong by the Thakur’s men. Narayan and his two companions are cruelly tortured by Thakur and they are hanged in the village square. Other untouchables are beaten up at random, their women are raped and their huts are burnt down. Thakur decides that Dukhi’s family deserves special punishment.
His arrogance went against everything we hold sacred. What the ages had put together, Dukhi had dared to break asunder; he had turned cobblers into tailors, distorting society’s timeless balance. Crossing the line of caste had to be punished with the utmost severity, said the Thakur. (AFB, 147)

Dukhi, Roopa, Radha, and the daughters along with Narayan’s dead body are burnt alive at the command of the Thakur. To quote the incident from the novel,

Two are missing’, said Thakur Dharamsi. ‘Son and grandson’... ‘Well, never mind, these five will do’... Only by the red birthmark on his chest could they recognize Narayan. A long howl broke from Radha. But the sound of grief soon mingled with the family’s death agony; the house was set alight. The first flames licked at the bound flesh. The dry winds, furiously fanning the fire, showed the only spark of mercy during this night. The blaze swiftly enfolded all six of them. (AFB, 147)

Shameful and horrible murders of Narayan and his companions are always the hapless victims at the hands of the heartless upper caste. Dukhi Mochi’s friend also fears for his family, “With wide-open eyes he is bringing destruction upon his household” (AFB, 95). Above this incident is not a socially and morally acceptable one. The untouchables lose their identities as human beings because of mistaken beliefs for them.

lot of duplication in our country’s laws,... For politicians, passing laws is like passing water... it all ends down the drain. (AFB, 143)
On the other hand, the untouchable children are very eager to learn like the upper caste children. But they are punished brutally beaten up by the teacher. This kind of bold insults show the suppressed and oppressed people’s mental aggression towards the upper caste.

Shameless little donkeys! Off with you or I’ll break your bones!... ‘You Chamaar rascals? Very brave you are getting, daring to enter the school!’ He twisted their ears till they yelped with pain and started to cry. The schoolchildren fearfully huddled together. ‘Is this what your parents teach you? To defile the tools of learning and knowledge?... ‘Wanted to look! Well, I will show you now! I will show you the back of my hand! Holding on to Narayan, he slapped six times in quick succession across the face, then delivered the same number to his brother’s face. (AFB, 109-10)

Then, Mistry cites the upper caste response of male children among its low caste neighbours as an example to the Brahmins. This is the result of disorder in the universe brought on by some misbehaviour in this world of the natural social order. Then increased vigilance and a more rigorous adherence to the caste system which obviously means more floggings and beatings, which is the real disorder. Moreover, it is also a site of the recurrence of caste-based brutality. The lower castes are beaten, tortured and killed for a number of minor offences. Partha Chatterjee’s comments on caste may suggest what is at stake in Dukhi’s refusal to endure hereditary.
The essence of caste, we may say, requires that the labouring bodies of the impure castes be reproduced in order that they can be subordinated to the need to maintain the bodies of the pure castes in their state of purity. All injunctions of dharma must work to this end. (Chatterjee, 194)

Then, in India, caste divisions not only exist between the lower and the upper classes but also within the class itself. Among the untouchables, there is class hierarchy too. For instance, the sweeper community is inferior to the tanner community, there is caste within caste. Mistry points out that Narayan’s mother advises him not to deal with the lower caste among them,

What-all nonsense is this, calling him back tomorrow? We are not going to deal with such low-caste people! How can you even think of measuring someone who carts the shit from people’s houses?’... I think, ma, that you are wrong... ‘I think I should sew for anybody who comes to me, Brahmin or Bhunghi. You do, do you? (AFB, 133-34)

For instance, Bhunghi is the lowest among the low caste person. He desires to get a suit stitched for him that is not appreciated by Dukhi’s wife. Because, she warns her son Narayan for even to stitch a suit for the Bhangi. It is significant to note that only Ashraf, the Muslim tailor in town stitches clothes for Dukhi as no Hindu tailor would sew for an untouchable. This curse of untouchability is deeply rooted in the Hindu psyche.
Afterwards, Dina Dalal also has her own contribution of journey to attain in the novel. She moves from girlhood under the soft care of her father to under the harsh protection of her brother Nusswan. Dina’s awareness of independent existence does not allow her to bend down to him. Dina is forced to marry one of Nusswan’s friends. She comes out from his protection for the economic well being and social security. She chooses to marry Rustom Shroff who had met at a music concert organized by a local music society. Dina’s happiness is short lived as Rustom is killed in an accident. The shocking death of Rustom, her husband, Dina accepts to go back to live with her brother and his family. Very soon, the brother and sister relationship spoil in the way of typical Parsi exchange of attacks and insults.

Do you know how fortunate you are in our Community? Among the unenlightened, widows are thrown away like garbage. If you were a Hindu, in the old days you would have had to be a good little sati and leap into your husband’s funeral pyre, be roasted with him.’ I can always go to the towers of silence and let the vultures eat me up, if that will make you happy. (AFB, 52)

Nusswan’s words reflect the deep-rooted Parsi feeling of the superiority of his religion and against the Hindu religion. However, his words are ironical since Dina considers Nusswan to be the oppressor.

Mistry highlights the history of crucial events in the country by the background of the major characters. Then, the novel shows good examples of interpersonal relationships in which how affect and change everyone’s life. For example, the tailors
suffers quite lot when their hut is demolished as part of the slum elimination programme. Therefore, they search for an alternative accommodation with hopeless. Only Parsi widow, Dina Dalal, is capable of feeling for untouchables by giving shelter to Ishvar and Om. But, Dina knows that the city will not allow her to share her shelter with them.

A trunk, a bag, or even a satchel with just two pyjamas and a shirt is the first step in to a flat. Personal items stored on the premises- that’s the most common way of staking a claim. And the court system takes years to settle the case, years during which the crooks are allowed to stay in the flat. (AFB, 305)

Thereafter, the mutual dependence among them makes her mind and the tailors are allowed to sleep in her veranda. They observe her reflection.

But how firm to stand, how much to bend? Where was the line between compassion and foolishness, kindness and weakness? And that was from her position. From theirs, it might be a line between mercy and cruelty, consideration, and callousness. She could draw it on this side. But they might see it on that side. (AFB, 382)

At first, Dina Dalal initially resists the closeness between Maneck and the tailors. Maneck is put off by Dina’s refusal to accommodate even tailor’s trunk.

They ignored each other for most of evening. But while working on the quit after dinner, she spread out the squares and tried to get him to talk. ‘Well, Maneck?
How does it look now?’ ‘Looks terrible.’ He was not ready to forgive her while the tailor remained unaccommodated in the night. (AFB, 305)

The tailors receive another problem when they sleep on footpath of chemist shop that night. They are picked up the police to work as part of the city beautification project. The tailors’ absence makes worries to Dina and Maneck tries to calm her:

‘Ishvar and Om wouldn’t stay absent just like that,’ said Maneck, ‘something urgent must have come up’. ‘Rubbish. What could be so urgent that they cannot take a few minutes to stop by?’ (AFB, 333)

In fact, the suspicion and inconvenience of long absence of the tailors makes Dina longing for them:

She did not notice that already, in her memory, those months with Ishvar and Om, of fretting and tardiness, quarrels and crooked seams, had been transmuted into something precious, to be remembered with yearning. (AFB, 355)

During this period, Dina comes to know the real life of the tailors through Maneck.

she added the pieces to what Maneck had already revealed about their life in the village. Like her quilt the tailors’ chronicle was gradually gathering shape. (AFB, 385)
Memory allows one to connect with one’s own past. She thinks,

Compared to theirs, my life is nothing but comfort and happiness. And now they are in more trouble. I hope they come back all right. People keep saying God is great, God is just, but I’m not sure. (AFB, 340)

Dina is relieved when the tailors eventually return and she offers them her veranda to live in. Though, problematic situation continues to worry her and is spoken thus:

Morning light did not bring answers to the questions Dina had wrested with all night. She could not risk losing the tailors again... From theirs, it might be a line between mercy and cruelty, consideration and callousness. When could draw it on this side, but they might see it on that side. (AFB, 382)

All the four major characters struggle for their own identities to survive. The major protagonist Dina Dalal wants an independent life but struggles most of the time to achieve it. First is the great loss of her parents and later she is caught in the protection of her brother. Then, she is forced to marry a rich man by her brother but it does not last long as her husband dies in an accident.

Along with Om and Ishvar, Dina becomes a successful businesswoman in a short period. But her identity collapses when the emergency is exploited by the capitalists like Mrs. Gupta, the proprietor of Au Revoir export house. So, Dina has to finish the huge assignment with only two tailors. Dina and her team worked hard to meet the deadlines
of the orders. Then, she is forced to vacate the house by landlord with the help of a gent Ibrahim. But Dina is helped by Beggar Master who has some influence over the landlord. Besides, Dina has to face the complaint of Om about poor wages. But, she loses her independence and has to depend on her brother Nusswan at end.

As an angry reformist, Rohinton Mistry passionately deals with the unfortunate villages and their poverty, cruelties of caste, orphans, intolerance and political disasters in Indian society in his fiction. Both Om and Ishvar lose their family in village and move to city because of the caste violation. It takes months to adjust themselves to city circumstances. They join as labours to Dina but they do not coincide with her thoughts. Particularly, Om cannot adjust himself with Dina’s attitude. Dina does not approve the friendship of Maneck with the tailors. This attitude further makes them to feel that they are again treated with class-consciousness.

Again Om and Ishvar are suffered and shuffled by the city beautification program of the government. Their slum area is destructed by government and they become homeless. And when they are not allowed to stay in Dina’s flat they feel much isolated from the society. During emergency, Om is sterilized and is made impotent by the officials. Ishvar also loses his both legs and left as beggar on the streets of Mumbai. So, the tailors suffer lot and completely lose their identity in the society.

Another thing is argued in this novel that is the natural concerns. Mistry cares for the loss of man and nature relationship. Farokh Kohlah, the father of Maneck Kohlah
becomes the victim of the partition of India in 1947. He lives in the northern hill area and his emotions are expressed as,

there was another, gorier parturition, when two nations incarnated out of one. A foreigner drew a magic line on a map and called it the new border; it becomes a river of blood upon the earth. And the orchards fields, factories, business, all on the wrong side of that line, vanished with a wave of the pale conjuror’s wand. (AFB, 205)

Though, Farokh lives in the mountain area with his wife Aban and son Maneck Kohlah. The mountain is a part of their life and other residents of the hillside. The hillside nature is soon disturbed by the governments’ plan to connect the hillside to the cities. The people cannot imagine the mountain leaving them and this is shown as,

These were to be modern roads, they promised, roads that would hum with swift passage of modern traffic. Roads, wide and heavy-duty, to replace the scenic mountain paths too narrow for the broad vision of nation-builders and World Bank officials. (AFB, 215)

But, the government continues to destruct the mountain area with widen plan. Farokh Kohlah feels that he is thrown away from his motherland. The destruction of nature affects him terribly and he is mentally depressed, his feelings are expressed as,

Mr. Kohlah watched helpless as the asphalting began, changing the brown rivers into black, completing the transmogrification of his beloved birthplace where his
fore fathers had lived as in paradise. He watched powerlessly while, for the second time, lines on paper ruined the life of the Kohlah family. (AFB, 216)

The government promises the hillside people including Farokh to offer better business offers in the City. But Farokh cannot accept the atmosphere of city. This shows how Farokh’s mind is fixed with nature and he weeps lonely. There is no way to escape from the clutches of modernism. The author expresses this as:

If meaning there was, it was too new and terrifying for him to explore. There was no place of escape. Not for himself, at any rate. His dreams had succumbed as they must, during their collisions with the passing years. He had struggled, he had won, he had lost. He would keep on struggling – what else was there for him? (AFB, 219)

Maneck has perspective view on life and human suffering through the tailor’s life. All the four main characters are lonely and struggling for identity and survival. Social circumstances bring them together and in time they forge a bond of understanding as they struggle to survive. Then, William’s statement on the tradition in fiction remarks,

When I think of the realist tradition in fiction, I think of the kind of novel which creates and judges the quality of a whole way of life in terms of the qualities of persons. The balance involved in this achievement is perhaps the most novels do…Yet the distinction of this kind is that it offers a valuing of a whole way of life, a society that is larger than any of the individuals composing it, and at the same time valuing creations of human being who, while belonging to and
affected by and helping to define this way if life, are also in this own terms, absolute ends in themselves. (Raymond, 304)

As Indian novel in English, *A Fine Balance* is able to achieve this kind of balance between the general and the personal. In this novel, each character is presented with its own suffering and reasons to suffer.

*A Fine Balance* also has a more varied paces and tones than Mistry’s other novels. As David Selbourne has noted,

the conjunction of suffering, inflation and recession, and the cyclical collision of mounting opposition from right, left and centre to the misgovernment of India and the draconian intolerance of such opposition began to deepen and quicken. (Selbourne, 23)

One of the characters in the novel, Vasantrao Valmik remarks ironically on this development:

Who knows why, madam. Why is there disease and starvation and suffering? We can only answer the how and the where and the when of it. The prime minister cheats in the election, and the relevant law is promptly modified. *Ergo*, she is not guilty. We poor mortals have to accept that bygone events are beyond our clutch, while the Prime Minister performs juggling acts with time past. (AFB, 563)
At the beginning of the novel, Ishvar and Omprakash have their first fearful experience when their train journey to the city is interrupted by a dead body on the line ahead. The passengers merely lament this passing inconvenience.

Why does everybody have to choose the railway tracks only for dying?’ grumbled another. ‘No consideration for people like us... What is wrong with poison or tall buildings or knives? (AFB, 5-6)

The bodies on railway tracks symbolise the modern world’s cruelty and inability. It is revealed that one such body belongs to the troublesome Avinash. Similarly, it is only after Maneck’s suicide on railway track at the end of the novel.

In this novel, violence against the body takes its most radical form in the compulsory sterilisations. Ishvar and Om are captured and sterilised by the landlord who is also responsible for the torture and murder of their family. Om is castrated on an impulse of the Thakur, while Ishvar suffers the fate of many victims. Ishvar wounds turn septic, then gangrenous and eventually his legs are removed. There is a sense in which the evils of this society are historically connoted on physical violence that its wounds self-inflicted.

The novel spans backwards in time to fill in the earlier life of its protagonists and their ancestors. Mistry observes the paradox of the desire for explanation and order.
all such lines are artificial and there are stronger forces at work and if such a line is made to persist it will lead to chaos or lead to even more problems. Partition was just such a line and history has amply shown this. (Mistry, 17)

Maneck forgets Vasantrao Valmik’s sensible counsel: ‘the secret of survival is to embrace change, and to adapt’ (AFB, 230) Maneck allows himself to become disconnected from his past and all the support networks have sustained him. Detachment leads to death for Maneck or death like experiences.

Ironically, before his suicide, Maneck has found again an old friend of the tailors in unexpected surroundings. Rajaram, the hair collector, first appears as a fellow slum dweller when the tailors arrive in the city. He helps them to settle in and teaches them the behaviour of a scavenger’s life. When the slum is broken up he disappears and becomes soon after as a family planning motivator. Eight years later, Maneck finds him back in the city as Bal Baba. Maneck tries to make Rajaram confront his past but he is rejected.

Rajaram the hair-collector renounced his life, his joys and sorrows, his vices and virtues. Why? So that Bal Baba could be incarnated and could use his humble gift to assist humanity along the pathway to moksha’… ‘I already have the answer. I’m searching for the question.’... ‘That was another life, another person. That’s all finished, don’t you understand? (AFB, 602–03)

The theme of this balance is expressed most effectively by Valmik in a discussion with Maneck during a train journey. Rohinton Mistry’s characters are also
mentally aggressive. The circumstances of their living stimulate them to think for revenge. It is only the mental aggression which leads to the physical aggression. Here, Omprakash makes plans to punish his communal enemy, Thakur who killed all the members of his family. Not only the untouchables but also Parsis become mentally aggressive. It is vividly pictured in A Fine Balance.

I will gather a small army of chamaars, provide them with weapons, then march to the landlord’s houses,’ said Omprakash, his sewing-machine racing. ‘It will be easy to find enough men. We’ll do it like the Naxalites.’... ‘At the end of it we will cut off their heads and put them on spikes in the market place. Their kind will never dare to oppress our community again’...We’ll slaughter the Thakurs and their goondas. And those police devils. (AFB, 149)

Then, Rohinton discusses the gender discrimination that women are forced to a secondary status in the family and in the society. After their marriage, women become the property of their husbands to be abused and harassed. Even the upper caste women are not exempt from oppression. The upper caste women were harassed by their husband’s family members for giving birth to a girl child. It is revealed through the birth of two daughters to Dukhi:

It was hard for them not to be resentful - the birth of daughters often brought them beatings from their husbands and their husband’s families. Sometimes they were ordered to discreetly get rid of the newborn. Then they had no choice but to
strangle the infant with her swaddling clothes, poison her, or let her starve to death. (AFB, 99-100)

Then, the writer describes another plight of a poor college student and Maneck’s close friend named Avinash and his family’s struggles to marry their three daughters. Avinash’s family is too poor and he is the only source of future income for his family. Then, there is no way to provide dowries of his three sisters’ marriage. So, this inability forces them to commit suicide by hanging from a ceiling fan without him. A picture of his family hanging from a ceiling appears in the newspaper that terribly affects and collapses Avinash’s life. Then after, he is also killed in police custody for the reason of political harassment.

Mistry portrays this shameful aspect of Indian society. He highlights the injustices done to women that the inequality is caused by the “cultural construction of gender differences.” Dina’s brother, Nusswan suggests her to remarry after her husband’s death. It personifies the difference between the cultural pattern of Hindu and Parsi Community. He points out Parsi community which won’t stop a widow to remarry. Here, Mistry highlights the generosity of his own culture or community. Even in Parsi community, there is discrimination between male and female. Dina’s brother too, ill treats her and does not allow her to visit her friends. Nusswan makes her do the household chores, and even to polish his shoes.

After Mrs. Shroff’s death, Dina eager to pursue her education but she is not allowed. Nusswan tries to compel and suggests to her that she could marry a person of
his choice but Dina resists and maintains her individuality. But she loves deeply Rustom Dalal and marries bravely him without any permission of her brother. Dina is the symbol of the new woman who does not accept the usual feminine role allotted to her. But, unfortunately her husband dies in an accident of her wedding anniversary day. Even that cruel night, she behaves in a very dignified manner of her husband death.

No wailing, no beating the chest or tearing the hair like you might expect from a woman who had suffered such a shock, such a loss. (AFB, 46)

Dina decides to rebuild her life without being economically dependent any one. She emerges as a strong, progressive and an independent woman. She appoints two tailors, Ishvar and Om, and starts working for Au Revoir Exports. Mistry emphasizes the fact that the plight of the common people is no different and it requires freedom from exploitation and injustice. But the Indian government has failed to resolve the basic problems of poverty, hunger and unemployment. Mistry draws a gloomy picture of sufferings of the common men and their life in Bombay’s slums.

Outside the platform, a woman sat in the sun with a small basket of vegetables beside her. She was drying her laundered sari, one half at a time. One end was wound wet round her waist and over her shrunken breasts, as far as it would go. The drying half was stretched along the railway fence. (AFB, 281)

Bombay has always appeared very grim and bleak to narrator. The inner section of Bombay does not suitable for a group of people to live comfortably.
Eight, nine, or ten people in a small room. Sleeping one over the other on big shelves, from floor to ceiling, like third-class, railway berths. Or in cupboards, or in the bathroom. Surviving like goods in a warehouse. (AFB, 471)

Thus, Bombay’s slums are mostly like inhuman places where the people lead to survive with struggles and problems. The familiar sight of beggars with their bowls can melt even the hardened hearts. The beggar master pays a small sum of money to the police every week to avoid harassment against beggars. Here, Mistry describes the Beggar master’s imaginative mind to set beggars’ dressing and training that evokes sympathy to public.

Also, Beggar master has to be very imaginative. If all beggars have the same injury, public gets used to it and feels no pity. Public likes to see variety... putting out a baby’s eyes will not automatically earn money. Blind beggars are everywhere. But blind, with eye balls missing, face showing empty sockets, plus nose chopped off—now any one will give money for that. Diseases are also useful. (AFB, 329)

The Beggarmaster is not only the saviour of Om and Ishvar, but also the saviour of Dina and Maneck from the harassment of the land lord. Indeed, the text is full of performers and performances. Shankar on platform, Beggarmaster’s ideal and Valmik co-ordinates are basically coordinated performances for political effect. However, there is one particular scene in which the democratic possible of carnival appears temporarily to be realized. Then, it happens when the local beggars join Shankar’s funeral march
after he has been run over on his wheeled platform. Shankar’s funeral march joins the protest march of disaffected citizens in such a long journey as a mode of popular expression. Afterwards, the line of mourners is charged by a crowd of riot police. But, Beggarmaster’s influential presence convinces the commanding officer of his mistake:

a report had been received on the wireless that a mock funeral was underway, intended to make some kind of political statement… Suspicion had been aroused, in particular, by the assembly of so many beggars, he explained. ‘They were mistaken for political activists in fancy dress - troublemakers indulging in street theatre, portraying government figures as crooks and criminals embarked on beggaring the nation. You know the sort of thing. (AFB, 506)

In the funeral, Dina’s brother Nusswan is shocked to find his sister participating in a beggar’s funeral. He demands that she get into the car but Dina refuses. Therefore, Beggarmaster and the commanding officer approach them and they try to help Dina.

Is this man bothering you? ‘Not at all,’ said Dina. ‘He’s my brother. He is just offering condolences for Shankar’s death.’ ‘Thank you,’ said Beggarmaster. ‘May I invite you to join us?’ Nusswan faltered. ‘Uh… I’m very busy. Sorry, another time.’ He slipped inside the car, hurriedly pulling the door shut. (AFB, 507-08)

Ultimately, the power disfigures relationships and the strange behaviour become in A Fine Balance. Dina and tailors relationship, begin to shape only as the co-ordinates
of power that the real communication can take place and connection starts to grow it. Tabish Khair has objected that caste and class differences mean,

Mistry’s main protagonists in the novel would not even be able to hold an extended, “intellectual” conversation with each other in real life—thanks to the widely separate linguistic-discursive and socio-economic spaces that they occupy. (Tabish, 324)

Two final examples should explain this point. In an unexpected plot twist, the poor Shankar and the powerful Beggarmaster are discovered as half brothers. A doubtful turn of this action spirals away from all pretence of realism. Otherwise, Religion based sexual exploitation is one of the major perspectives of Rohinton Mistry.

In A Fine Balance, the Guard in the orchard is so victim of the social exception, a domestic woman is also subjected to:

‘One shout from me and they will come running’... ‘I only have to shout, and the owner and his sons would be here at once. They would strip you and whip you for stealing’... They would take turns doing shameful things to your lovely soft body... ‘I don’t have anything. That’s why I came here in the night, for the sake of my child’... ‘I only have to shout once’, he warned, and slipped his hand inside her blouse... Take off your clothes’... She wept softly while undressing and lay down as he instructed. She continued to weep during the time he moved and patted on top of her. She heard the breeze rustle the leaves in trees that stood like worthless sentinels. Dukhi pretended to be asleep as she entered the hut. He
heard her muffled sobs several times during the night, and knew, from her smell, what had happened to her while she was gone... He wept silently, venting his shame, anger, humiliation in tears; he wished he would die that night. (AFB, 98-99)

Roopa’s exploitation by the watchman of the rich man’s orchard is Mistry’s harsh comment in the manner of untouchability. A tanner woman’s starvation, poverty, and helplessness lead to lose her chastity under compulsion and inhuman sexploitation by land lord.

And you won’t for many more. She must be hiding in her hut. She refused to go to the field with the zamindar’s son, so they shaved her head and walked her naked through the square. (AFB, 97)

Mistry pictures how the women are harassed by the priest in temples and churches. Here, the best example is priest Dustoor Framji who exploits young women who come on his way.

His reputation for squeezing and fondling had earned him the title of Dustoor Daab-Chaab... his refusal to disguise his embraces with fatherly or spiritual concern. They feared that one day would go too far, drool over his victim or something, and disgrace the fire-temple. (AFB, 19-20)

On the other hand, Dina is threatened to vacate her flat by land lord with help of Goondas. She decides to approach the court for her human rights. But in court gates, she
is advised to choose a right lawyer carefully among them because some of them make indecent advances,

in the crush, a hand squeezed her bottom, while another passed neatly over her breast, ‘you rogues! You shameless rascals!’ She struck out with her elbows, and managed to kick a shin or two before they scattered. She wished she had her pagoda parasol with her—what a lesson she would teach them. (AFB, 560)

Mistry comments on the superstitious Indian people through a minor character named Rajaram. He transforms himself from hair-collector to family planning motivator and then to murderer who kills two beggars for their lovely hair. Thus, he escapes to the Himalayas from the clutches of the police. Finally, he becomes the highly respected Bal Baba as a spiritualist.

Violence and division are caused by such BalBabas, Thakurjis to take advantages among the people to protect them. It is not only in India but also in the whole world with in different forms. Rohinton Mistry gives examples from the memories of Hindu-Muslim clashes during post-partition days.

They brought with them stories of Muslims attacking Hindu in many parts of the country. ‘We must get ready to defend ourselves,’ they said... If they spill the blood of our Hindu brothers, this country shall run red with rivers of Muslim blood... only bakery in town owned by a Muslim, had already been burned to the ground... ‘Every day trains are crossing that new border, carrying nothing but corpses. My agent arrived yesterday from the north, he has seen it with his own
eyes. The trains are stopped at the station and everyone butchered. On both sides of the border.’ (AFB, 122-126)

During the Hindu-Muslim fight, Omprakash and Ishvar save the life of Ashraf and his family from the riots. But, the Hindu tailors have been humiliated by their own Hindu community people.

Listen, smart boy. If you are lying, I will myself skewer you on the three points of my trishul’. ‘Why should I lie?’ said Ishvar. ‘I’m the same as you. You think I want to die to save a Muslim? ...step on the pavement and remove your pyjamas,’ said the leader. ‘Both of you.’ what? ...There was general agreement that the foreskins were intact... ‘What’s going on? Why are you harassing Hindu boys? Have you run out of Muslims?’ (AFB, 129-30)

Ashraf chacha’s family is too saved from the Hindu raider by the cleverness and timely action of Ishvar and Om. It shows humanity succeeds even in such dark hours and leads to a greater human bonds among them.

Forever and ever, my life, my children, my husband’s life, my home- everything, I owe to you!’ she clung to them, weeping. (AFB, 130)

Then, Rohinton Mistry vividly sketches the bloody consequence of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi’s murder. Sikh security guards killed Indira Gandhi who set brutal operation in their holy temple and violence were unleashed against innocent
Sikhs. History is also borrowed to indicate or to develop the plot to know the reality of life by writer’s different manner.

Sikhs are the ones being massacred in the riots. For three days they have been burning Sikh shops and homes, chopping up Sikh boys and men. And the police are just running about here and there, pretending to protect the neighbourhoods’... ‘Same way all her problem started. With her own mischief-making. Just like in Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Assam, Tamil Nadu. In Punjab, she was helping one group to make trouble for state government. After words the group became so powerful, fighting for separation and Khalistan, they made trouble for her only. (AFB, 580-82)

Mistry’s furious anger is against society and higher authority that is to find social space to common men to survive. The ideological concerns of Rohinton Mistry make him one of the foremost Indian English political novelists of the twentieth century. One of the emotional scenes in A Fine Balance describes crowd renting for political purposes. In the name of poverty alleviation and civic beautification, beggars and many poor people are carried away and made to be slaves in labour camps.

The poor people are compelled to board the buses which take them to Prime Minister’s rally. The poor people have been assured of some meal and a small amount which is less than some of the people’s income for a day. The two poor tailors also to be a part of the crowd and they lost their one day wages unwillingly. Here Mistry shows the corrupt political scenario of India.
The Prime Minister’s message is that she is your servant, and wants to help you. She wants to hear about things from your own lips’... ‘There will be a payment of five rupees for each person. Also free tea and snack’... ‘Attention, attention! Two people from each jhopdi must get on the bus! In five minutes - no delay. Otherwise, you will be arrested for trespassing on municipal property! (AFB 258-59)

Mistry conveys his own moral attitudes and liberal views through characters. Various episodes in the novel reveal Mistry’s sympathy for the oppressed people and his righteous anger excesses during the period of Emergency. Mistry vehemently satires the political parties’ brutal activities against common and poor people during the Emergency period.

Haven’t seen you for some time, he said. ‘Any news of Nawaz since the police took him?’ ‘Police? For what?’ ‘Smuggling gold from the Gulf.’ ...He showed up there, to embarrass him among his colleagues. ‘And that was a big mistake. The bastard took his revenge. That same night the police came for Nawaz.’ ...With the Emergency, everything is upside-down. ...with the right influence and a little cash, sending people to jail is very easy. There’s even a new law called MISA to simplify the whole procedure. (AFB, 298-99)

Countless number of beggars, slum-dwellers, and the poor are forced and dragged under the pretext of city beautification. In the name of poverty alleviation and
civic beautification, beggars and many poor people are carried away and made to be slaves in labour camps.

Ironically, the two tailors are shown to suffer the most under the fate of Emergency. The tailors return to native for Om’s wedding with the compulsion of Ishvar. In village, the tailors’ life comes to end in the form of sudden police raid by the command of Thakur. The two tailors are picked up with others and compulsorily sterilized and additionally Om is castrated by the order of Thakur. Ishvar begs the doctors and tries to save Omprakash’s life but there is no use.

Doctorji, you are like mother and father to us poor people, your good work keeps us healthy. And I also think nussbandhi is very important for the country... Please Doctorji! Not my nephew! Cut me as much as you like! But forgive my nephew! His marriage is being arranged! ...Our family name will die without children, it is the end of everything - everything is lost!’... ‘Quick, turn your face, Om,’ whispered urgently, as the Thakur approached their row. ‘Cover it with your arms, pretend you are asleep’. ‘Testicular tumour’, he felt obliged to explain to them. ‘Thakurji has authorized removal, as a special favour to the boy’. The quaver in his voice betrayed the lie. (AFB, 534-36)

Then, the doctors’ faulty operation also results and develops gangrene on Ishvar’s legs. Finally, Ishvar’s legs are removed and they become as beggars in the Bombay streets. All brutal events of emergency drive in also the young, old, married, and unmarried person.
During the Emergency, corruption has a vital role in the society by politicians and land lords. The common people suffer a lot because of the corruption. The Thakur Dharamsi cheats payment amount from the family planning camp without providing sufficient money to buy equipment. Policeman also threatens the poor people and gets money from them based on their poverty.

We are waiting for the train,’ said Ishvar. ‘This is not that kind of station. No waiting room. Come back in the morning.’ ‘But these other people are sleeping.’ ‘They have special permission.’ The policeman jingled the coins in his pocket. ‘Okay, we won’t sleep on the platform, we will just sit.’ ...’Ssst,’ called a woman lying next to them. ‘Ssst. You have to pay him’ ...the policeman returned with a bucket of cold water and emptied it over the sleeping tailors. They howled and jumped off their bedding. (AFB, 300-01)

The officers also understand the government who knows how to cheat the government and exploit the poor by the way of helping them.

You see, since the Emergency started, there’s a new rule in the department - every officer has to encourage people to get sterilized. If he doesn’t fill his quota, no promotion for him. What to do, poor fellow, he is also trapped, no?’... ‘That’s why I am here, no. Just pick the names you want on the ration card, up to a maximum of six, and whatever address you like. Cost is only two hundred rupees. Hundred now, and hundred when you get the card. (AFB, 178)
Holy places and courts are also no exception to corruption. In courts, one cannot get justice against the money power. The emergency time is a terrible thing in which money can buy the necessary police order and ‘justice’ is sold to the highest bidder.

The sacred hair disappeared one day, and there were big riots. Everyone was saying the government should resign, that the politicians must have something to do with it. To cause trouble, you know, because Kashmiris were asking for independence... ‘after two weeks of riots and curfews, the government investigators announced they had found the sacred hair. (AFB, 174)

At end, Maneck is deeply upset at the misfortunes of his life and he feels with gloomy when he visits Bombay and finds Dina. Now Dina has lost her independence and stays with her brother house like a servant. Then, when Maneck returns from Dina’s house, he shocks at the sight of Ishvar and Om as beggars in the streets. Maneck falls into extreme depression and anxiety then he commits suicide by throwing himself in front of a train. It is Mistry’s way of showing how the middle class people lose their balance and struggle to maintain their life. *A Fine Balance* opens with a train journey and concludes with miseries of all characters. Now, Dina completes her journey of liberation and self-realization. Ishvar and Om are now beggars in the streets who have emptiness with in life journey.