

## **Representation of Emotions in Manto's Partition Literature**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to explore the representation of emotions such as fear and grief in Manto's partition literature. The use and portrayal of emotions in Manto's partition literature remained a topic of great interest in understanding the religion, culture and society before, during and after the partition of British India. Emotions represented the dark side which often remained behind the curtains and the closed doors. His stories such as Karamat, Munasib Karawai, Khuda ki Qasam, Toba Tek Singh show the horrors and tragedy in the history of the sub-continent. Moreover, it highlights the emotions and suffering through the characters of stories. His words at first glance may seem like an ink work but one wonders if they were the imaginative creativity of the writer or the actual suffering of someone in the journey to freedom. This research is an insight to all these wonderings, bridging the gap between the realistic and imaginary literary world and the thoughts of Manto gauged with the emotions.*

**Keywords:** Manto, Partition Literature, Emotions, Partition of India, History of Emotions, Fear

The use and expression of emotions has always been one of the hidden motives of the literary psychologists. The writers such as Bano Qudsia (1928-2017), Abdul Haq (1870-1961) or Saadat Hasan Manto (1912-1955) represented emotions through their writings. Without emotion, there will be no relevance of literature in the historical perspective. The reason, expression of emotion is necessary in literature is that it helps us in understanding the course of history. The emotions of people alter with the altering situations in their historical setting. This aids us in understanding the dynamics and their impact of certain events in the society. The aim of this research is to highlight emotions in Manto's partition literature. In his literature, he tried to present the actual picture of violence during partition. This violence includes rape, kidnapping, loss of life, murder and many more. Many works have done on partition of British India but the role of emotions is less explored. Statically data does not portray the deep-down emotions of the people. Manto through his writings highlighted the actual sufferings of the people that what people exactly faced at that time and how badly they were treated. These were the emotions that were widely on the horizon, but many failed to focus on its detailing in the literature on the both sides of the border. There is less discussions and discourse on the dark side of the Manto's work and how it clearly presented the human nature in relation with the tragic agony it was going through during the times of Partition. Many people thought that partition was an event after which people got their separate homeland, religious freedom and live their life happily but realities are far deeper and darker.

Though partition people lost their actual identities, their identities were divided, faced socio-cultural crisis. Apart from men and children, the women were most affected who were forcefully converted to other religion, abducted, and assaulted. Overall, the work of Manto is an excellent insight into the dark color of partition as there is no distinction of age, gender, and religion. It is because during this chaotic time, everyone and

everything was either Pakistani or Hindustani. Men, women, children, dogs, trees, doctors, prostitutes – everything was an object of tyranny. The only thing constant was the instinct of survival amidst anger, fear, and hatred.

Manto's literature is mostly based on the common people of the society such as prostitutes and workers. Manto was the writer who wrote openly about the unsaid issues of the society. In his essay, he mentioned: If you do not know the circumstances of your age then read my short stories. If you do not tolerate these, it means this era is not able to be tolerated. If you find anything indecent, these are the indecencies of your times. There is no error in my writing, and the error which are attributed to my name, is the error of this system. I do not like chaos; I do not want to emotionalize the people and their thoughts. How I uncover the civilization and society which is already naked, and I do not want to cover it. Through the power of storytelling and writings he uncovered all the bitter facts which were hidden under the surface.<sup>1</sup>

Another famous India who writes short stories and novels in Urdu and Hindi, Krishan Chander (1914-1977) opines, "Manto melt himself to observe things from real life. He is the Shankar of Urdu literature, who drank the poison of life. Shankar's neck became blue after taking poison; similarly, Manto also lost his health. It is only Manto who took this poison, if any other person has taken it; he definitely became mad or would lose his senses."<sup>2</sup> Manto's literature illustrates that partition of British India not only affected people physically through killing, murdered, or raping but also had an impact on their ethos and sensibilities. When people were separated from their loved one's or they had to leave their ancestral lands which they had an emotional attachment also affected them psychologically.

Before highlighting the representation of emotions in Manto's literature, it is important to trace a brief biographical sketch.<sup>3</sup> Saadat Hassan Manto was born in a Muslim family of barristers, on May 11, 1912. He got his early education at Muslim High School in Amritsar, but he endured a misfit throughout in his school years. With every passing year he lost

motivation in studies, in resultant he ended up even he failed twice in Matric. In his school which fascinated him the most that was study English novels, once he stole a book from bookstall at Amritsar Railway Station. In 1931, he completed his Intermediate in Arts at the Hindu Sabha College which was explosive due to independence movement. At the very young age he witnessed the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh in 1919 which had a great impact on his mind. According to Freud's idea of psychoanalysis, every act, incident, thoughts and emotion of a person's life has an influence on his unconscious mind which a person may realize to a limited extent.<sup>4</sup>

This theory further explains that all the emotions and experiences that arise from birth to the age of four or five are the basics of unconscious, which further develops, into a person's thoughts and emotions. These incidents had a great impact on him which later reflected in his writings. In 1932, when his father was died, he faced difficulties to hold up his mother, during this time another turn pointing came. In February 1934, he joined Aligarh Muslim University to complete his graduation and soon after he attached with "Indian Progressive Writers Association" (IPWA). When he met with Ali Sardar Jafri (1913-2000), who was a writer, he set up another new strength in his writing. In March 1935, another story *Inqilab Pasand* was in print in Aligarh Magazine. Actually, this was the turning point of his life and never looked back.

*"A writer picks up his pen only when his sensibility is hurt"—Manto to a court Judge"*<sup>5</sup>

When he shifted to Bombay after 1936, he also started working there like start writing scripts as well as dialogues for Hindi films. When he earned enough money, he married Safia on 26 April 1939. After marriage he faced economic crisis, despites all these ups and downs, he started his script writings for films. In 1941, he accepted the proposal from All India Radio, and he started writings in Urdu. After writing different dramas, he started to write different short stories. Stories which are

considered best that includes *Kali Shalwar*, *Dhuan* (1943) and *Bu* which was available in 1945 in *Qaumi Jang*. There were many more he wrote among of those are, which was story *Babu Gopinath*. He spends a long time in Bombay, but in January 1948, he shifted to Pakistan, after the one year of partition of India in 1947. Many of his friends asked him to stay in India, but he denied.

The reason behind his friends' request was that he was quite popular in Film industry as a film writer and was earning quite good money over there. But the reason of not staying in India was the law and order situation in India was not good. Muslims were in minority there, and there felt insecure over there, their rights were exploiting.<sup>6</sup> Manto also contributed in literary circles, most famous are *Thanda Ghost*, *Babu Gopi Nath*, *Toba Tek Singh* etc. He destructed himself by the poor-quality alcohol that he consumed destroyed his liver and suffered in liver cirrhosis. He died on 18 January 1955.

The writings of Manto helps to understand the dark side of the partition. Manto depicted the clear picture of the partition in his stories. By using them, it helps us to understand their emotions such as grief, anger, disgust, and fear at the time of partition. Manto's partition literature mainly deals with these kinds of emotions which is really important to understand the actual situation of the people during partition of British India. Peoples experienced different emotions in differ part of India. Through emotions we could feel the pain of the people which they had faced at the time of partition. The different representation of the emotions in Manto's partition literature that reflects that how partition affected people psychologically. As it is mentioned earlier, the significance of this study is mainly discussed as the need to explore the tragic happening of the partition and its impact in the people on the both sides of the border. The study tends to explore the feelings of Manto and relate it to the situation of the character.

Manto's work is taken to relate to partition tragedy and agony of people. It will help us eliminate the gap between the witnessed and the unsaid not only by the survivors but also the

accounts of writings of both literature and history. The arrogance of departure was visible to everybody and the discourse of 'Two Nation Theory' is a definite subject of Indo Pak partition. The subtle elaboration of work of Manto is a historical account of a living witness of what actually was felt by the victims and the oppressors in the society of that time. This covers the gap between the leaned and felt emotions.

The reviewed primary sources on partition which are written by Manto. Manto has produced a great literature on the incident of partition of British India and highlighted the sufferings of the people through their characters. The books such as *Manto Rama*<sup>7</sup> and *Khuliyat Manto*<sup>8</sup> are basically a collection of his different works which were produced before and after partition. Through these sources those stories which are directly related to partition are grabbed, and actual date of its publication reference which were not found in any other secondary sources. Amir Rizvi in *Manto Revisited*,<sup>9</sup> Khalid Hasan in *Manto's World*<sup>10</sup> & *Wet Afternoon*,<sup>11</sup> Muhammad Umar Memon in *For Freedom's Sake*<sup>12</sup> are some of the important sources to understand the representations of emotions in Manto's literature.

### **Fear and Grief as Represented in Manto's Partition literature**

Fear is one of the basic emotions.<sup>13</sup> There are many dynamics of fear in Manto's partition literature such as fear of being caught by police, fear of being killed by rioters, fear of being separated from their ancestral lands and a fear of being disrespected by families and society. This part of the study is divided into four sections. First section discusses that many people also took benefit from the incident of partition like looted goods etc. But at the same time they also had a fear inside of being punished. Second section highlights that during partition many people just locked themselves in houses in the fear of being killed the rioters. Third section highlights the stories of all those girls which were affected due to partition like many were raped, mutilated, forcefully converted, got pregnant and many more abuses they faced. After facing all

these issues, they had a fear that how they will face their families or live in a society with the burden of negative emotions. Because of this fear many girls either committed suicide or preferred to live alone. Fourth section is about on the divided identities which caused by partition. People had a fear and grief for being separated by their ancestral lands.

### ***Karamat (1948)***

This story '*Karamat*' is about the recollection of all those looted or stolen goods which many rioters and robbers collected or snatch from the people at the time of partition of British India. In this story, Manto not only talks about the social violence, destruction and financial loss of the people but also highlight the ignorance of the people.

“Homes were being raided by the police to recovered looted goods. Out of fear, people started to chuck their ‘hot cargo’ out of their window after nightfall.”<sup>14</sup>

In the above-mentioned lines showed that on one side many people took benefit due the incident of partition like looted goods, forcefully took people’s homes, and shops. While on the other side, people suffered with financial losses also lost their lives due to slaughter. This story also raised the emotion of fear that how people tried to save them of being caught by the police and also exposed the level of ignorance of the people that how people made a criminal into a saint. This story showed that without knowing anything people considered him a Saint which was in actual a thief. This showed the people ignorance. In the incident of the partition, many bad people were portrayed as good human.

### ***Munasib Karavai (1948)***

The story '*Munasib Karavai*' reflects the conditions which were faced my people at the time of partition. People killed each other and some were separated by their families, and some people were successful in saving their lives from rioters. In this story Manto, highlighted the living condition and emotions of

those people who were tried to save their lives. But they were living in more miserable situation as being alive. They had always a fear in the minds or hearts that they could be killed at any time by the rioters.

“Two more days passed. Their fear of death lessened. Their need for food and water became more pressing.”<sup>15</sup>

The emotion of fear was a constant one in the stories of partition. It mostly ended with death. But sometimes the fear lied not for the death but the way they will be dying. The starvation, thirst, inadequate dietary supplies, and deprivation from essentials. The partition evoked the sense of fear of survival in the people.

“In a feeble voice, the husband tried to attract people’s attention: ‘We’ve come to surrender, please kill us.’”<sup>39</sup>

The emotion of fear, vulnerability and hopelessness comes into play in this story. The intensity of atrocities made the victims to plead for death as it seemed to be their only refuge. The notion of surrender presents the hopelessness of people in the prevailing conditions of their surroundings. The people who were once the backbone turned backs to each other.

This story is about a couple, who live in that area where mixed communities lived. There was an attack on that area and mostly those people were not involved in riots. A man and his wife hide themselves in the basement of their house; they had a fear in their hearts that they will be killed by the rioters. They both stayed there for two days but the rioter had not come. Now the fear of death was reducing from their hearts. They were hungry for days; four more days has passed but nobody came. They both lost interest in life and death. They both were distress and sad. Because for many days they were living a miserable life, they have not eaten anything for days. They thought death is better than living in this state. At last both come out from the basement and made decision to surrender them. Having pride in his voice, he got attention of the people and said, “We both



are ready to surrender...kill our self'. The all people in the group were in deep thinking, and said, "Killing creature is forbidden in our religion" they all were belongs to Jain community, but having discussion with each other; they sent the couple for appropriate proceeding.

*Munasib Karawai* basically reflects the meaning of this story. This group handed this couple to another group who were allocated in the other area. This reflects the story of those people who were able to save their lives by rioters. But in reality, their lives become more depressed because they have not enough food to eat, some have no shelters to live and many other difficulties they had faced. Because of this poor situation, they give more preference to death over life. Some people commit suicide, some surrendered themselves and many people die because of hunger. This shows that partition of India was not a pleasant event for everyone, in fact the realities were beyond imaginations.

#### ***Khuda ki Qasam (1953)***

This story *Khuda ki Qasam* is basically about the expression of women emotions and their families who were abducted, raped, and forcefully converted at the time of partition. Due to partition, many girls were separated from their families; they were smuggled from one state to other. This had not only impact on the life on those girls but also on their families. Many parents lost their mental stability because of this trauma; some still have hoped to find them. This story highlights the emotions of grief and embarrassment. This story is about a girl who was abducted during partition and her mother got mad in this trauma. Along with Pakistani officer, daughters' mother searching her from one city to another. There were many girls who have not come back to their families because of embarrassment. This story is narrating by a man to another man, who had witnessed the entire situation of the women.

“Many girls committed suicide on the way out of fear of their parents; some went insane due to trauma.”<sup>16</sup> “If I thought about these

recovered girls and women, only swollen stomachs would come to my mind. What will happen to these stomachs? Who owns what is full of them? Pakistan or India? And that nine-month load...”<sup>17</sup> “So, I was heartbroken and said, “Your daughter was killed “The fool looked at me, “Murder?” No, no. “There was a tough tone in his tone, “No one can kill her...No one can kill my daughter”. And she left, looking for her dream.”<sup>18</sup>“The last time I saw him in Amritsar. It was sign of his broken condition that I had tears in my eyes; I decided that I would take him to Pakistan and put him in a lunatic asylum.”<sup>19</sup>“He said again, “She is dead, my mother” He shouted, “You are lying!” This time, to reassure her, I said, “I swear to God she’s dead.” As soon as she heard this, she piled up in Puglia Chowk.”<sup>20</sup>

In the above-mentioned lines there are multiple emotion like fear, a sheer kind of helplessness and hopelessness is there. The psychological impact of a physical pain. The emotion of empathy, sympathy and passion is there along with the one of despair for the future and the sorry condition of the girls. The emotion grief and anger were there. The tone of the story relates to it in every bit of the scene and in the intensity of the lines. The emotion of empathy is there, the feelings of concern and love for the next person. There is pain, emotion of anger and negation. One clear thing is that of the use of the relationships in presenting the emotion of fear. Out of all the worldly gains and loss, the one that seems unmatched and unpatchable. The story speaks of the physical separation of the relations. It is an eminent fact of all the migrations and diasporas that separation is a cost bound to be paid in most relations no matter what the root cause, condition, force and reasons.

The dare to be separated is not the only obstacle in the face of movement but it is the one most people fail to cope with. No amount of fear of living the life alone, shedding of bitter tears,

the cold nights can pay the price of the vacant plot the loved one leave. The most agony is hit when you are not even confirming of the current conditions of life, whether alive or dead, struggling to live, searching for you too or just lost in the stitches of time forever to be wondered upon only. The story is the best depiction of feelings of the one undertaking the daunting and daring journey of Indo-Pak Partition. Every soul of living and dead speaks for itself, the injustice done the torment of life and the bulging burden of a life to be led alone that too on the belief of being a mono or polytheist. The author is the one who fell prey to a certain condition too. The story is a wrench of draining blood and tear of the unsaid and cruel suffered times of Manto. Each word depicts a similar story with a little or less alteration of the characters only. The tyranny and cruelty are the product that gaps the feelings of the author with the one being felt by the character. In understanding the work of Manto, many fails to understand the fact that he doesn't create characters. He takes his life, the situation, the temper, the suffering and project it through a different body. The one non-living but giving meaning to all his words unsaid despite feelings reckoning.

#### ***Toba Tek Singh (1954)***

This story 'Toba Tek Singh' was published in 1954. The incident of partition not only affected people lives in different ways. The total venomous and slaughter obliterated the entire occasion and had repercussions for the whole group of the two nations. People were puzzled about their identities whether they are political, national, or geographical. This story talks about tragedy, separation, identity, and sanity. Manto consciously conflates the individual's name and the spot's name and alluding to how partition of India revamped characters by discovering them. This story depicts that how partition of India affected people psychologically and what were there emotions when they separated from their native lands. This story represents the emotion of fear, grief, love and anger. After the partition of India, the government of both sides decided that mental prisoners were also to their representative's

country. Prisoners who are Muslims will be sent to Pakistan and Hindus and Sikh's will be sent to India.

The story of the exchange of prisoners was very tragic and full of grief. "When the guards asked him to get down, he climbed higher. When he was threatened with further with further actions, he shouted, "I don't want to live either in Hindustan or Pakistan. I shall live on this tree. After some time when his tempered cooled down, he descended and started embracing his Hindu and Sikh friends and burst out in tears. Tears came to eyes at the thought that they will leave him soon and go to Hindustan."<sup>21</sup>The emotion of fear of separation was there. The fear that may be loved ones will never see each other and their fates will be forever separated. The religion that binds everyone was now the dividing force.

At the beginning of the story, there is an outrageous asylum, and air was filled with different emotions due to partition. Bishan Singh is the main character of this story and in asylum everyone call him Toba Tek Singh. There were many people in asylum who were confused about their geographical identities. And this division put them in more confusing situation. They were completely unaware about Pakistan. There was a mad who were stuck in the discussion of India and Pakistan and in this confusing he becomes madder. One day he climbed up on the tree, and said, "I do not want to live in India or Pakistan... I want to live on this tree" this statement showing the emotion of grief and distress.

Bishan Singh had a daughter who in these fifteen years had, from a child grown up into a young girl. Singh did not recognize her. She used to cry seeing her father when she was a child. Even as a young girl she could not hold back her tears."<sup>22</sup> Partition made the time stretched. The people with love and passion became lonely and perplexed. The people separated at that time now cannot recognize each other. "When Bishan Singh's turn came back and the concerned officers on the other side were entering his name in their register, he asked, "Where is Toba Tek Singh – In Hindustan or Pakistan?" The officer laughed a replied, "In Pakistan." Hearing this Bishan Singh

jumped to one side and ran towards his other companions. The Pakistan police caught hold of him and tried to take him to the other side. But he refused to move and started shouting, “Toba Tek Singh is here”. In the above-mention lines, the emotion of joy is present here. The hopes of getting fulfilled, the separated on the verge of meeting again and if not so being under the same sky was the last thing to accept.

Secondly, there was another character, “There was a Hindu lawyer of Lahore who had lost his mind on account of an unsuccessful love affair. When he learnt that Amritsar has gone to Hindustan, he was very upset. The girl he loved belongs to Amritsar. Although she had rejected him, the lawyer had not forgotten her and abused all the Hindu and Muslim leaders who had divided the country making the girl he loved a Hindustani and him a Pakistani.”<sup>23</sup> The emotion of love and anger is expressed. The locals have religious division but that never came to the brim before the partition and now there was another step to it, of the nationality.

Because of partition, people lost their original identities. In this statement he expressed his grief, pain, and anger of being deprived from their native homeland. When that man came down from tree, he start crying with the thought that they all gone to Hindustan and he will be separated from his Hindu and Sikh’s friends. Due to Partition of India many people were separated from the loved one’s and this had a great impact on their minds and lives. There was another Hindu man in the asylum, which belongs to Lahore and by profession he was lawyer. After being failed in his love, he got mad. When he heard the news that Amritsar is now the part of India, he became sad. Because his beloved was belonging to Amritsar. He abused all those Hindus and Muslims leader who took part in the division of Hindustan. He became Pakistani and his beloved became Hindustani. He expressed his grief of being away and apart from his lovers and this division created more distance among them. There were also some inmates who were Anglo-Indian’s. They shocked with the news that Hindustan is free from British and they went back to their homeland.

## Conclusion

Manto's partition stories are an excellent representation of emotions such as fear and grief. Fear and absence of hope were eminent in these stories. Through emotions the depth to the misery of the people were reflected. It is visible that the circumstances shatter the confidence and make them hopeless for a bright turn out. The presence of fear was mainly for the life, dignity, and even physical identity. The fear demanded to be considered a severe life saver. The representation of emotion as written by Manto is meant to show that there is no light at the end of the tunnel. The *Karamat* showed that without knowing anything people considered him a Saint which was in actual a thief. This showed the people ignorance. In the incident of the partition, many bad people were portrayed as good human. Because of Partition of India, people of both countries faced a lot cause of people ignorance's, their greed etc. their identities were divided etc. In *Munasib Karawai* those people who were able to save their lives by rioters. But in reality, their lives become more depressed because they have not enough food to eat, some have no shelters to live and many other difficulties they had faced. Because of this poor situation, they give more preference to die rather than lived this depressing life which has no meaning to lead. In *Toba Tek Singh* like Bishan Singh due to division of lands many people lost their original identities which affected them psychologically. They were in grief, distress of being separated from their families, friends and more important from their ancestral lands where they lived their whole live.

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- <sup>13</sup> This study does not claim that only fear and grief were the only emotions which was felt by the Indian communities, but there were multiple emotions which were evoked and experienced at the same time.
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- <sup>17</sup> Ibid, 207
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<sup>21</sup> Manto, Saadat Hassan. *The Best of Manto*, ed & trans. Jai Ratan (India: Vanguard Books, 1900) p. 150

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