

Chapter One

Introduction: Partition, Manto and Responsibility

The partition of India in 1947 into a primarily Hindu India and an exclusively Muslim Pakistan was one of the most important historical events of the 20th century. It had an enormous impact on the population of the subcontinent. The defining moment of the partition was the massive violence that constituted it. Even by a conservative estimate ten million people took to the road in search of a new home. A million, however, did not make it. Trainloads of Indian and Pakistani citizens were killed. It refers to ideological representation of the trauma of violence in the partition of India. Especially the impact on women and children was unprecedented. Collectively remembered as a kind of intergenerational trauma, Partition still influences people today. Partition primarily designates the political separation of India's Hindu, Muslim and Sikhs population into distinctive independent countries, but this historical incident also refers to a traumatic experience for the people affected by those political changes.

The Indian Partition of 1947 is the drama of the identity politics of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. About this, Beerendra Pandey observes: "An exploration of the language of trauma in Indian English partition fiction reveals the presence of cultural trauma in fictional representation -- a presence this functions as a memory to settle old scores rather than a way to escape from the cycle of communal violence" (*Pedagogy*, 126). So, trauma tries to legitimize revenge rather than suggesting a way to escape from the cycle of communal violence. According to Dominick LaCapra's theory of trauma insists on the distinction between working through and acting out the trauma. For LaCapra, in *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2001) admits that "working through is itself a process that may never entirely transcend acting out and

that, even in the best of circumstances, is never achieved once and for all” (148–9). In this vein, Partition did not only induce killings, riots and rapes and, thus, left women widowed, mutilated and dishonoured, but also evoked psychological challenges, like the loss of one’s homeland and one’s friends or the disintegration of families.

A body of literature was thus born that gave voice to the traumatic realities of Partition, the disillusionment and the psychological trauma. The narratives of this event and its aftermath are dominated by nostalgia and feeling of exile felt on the both sides of the border; Partition writers try to effectively articulate the Partition-induced issues of refugees and the trauma of the displacement and anguish of the victims looted, abducted, raped, and murdered. Further, the emergence of the two nations gave birth to two contending and contesting diasporas. The division of the country and the violence and displacement that ensued has been a topic of discussion and debate among scholars and writers ever since. Some scholars, writers, and theorists concentrate on the causes of violence, others concern themselves with the trauma and loss associated with the division of India, and still others focus on the reconstructive work undertaken by the dispossessed and the displaced. Thus, Partition stories are valuable documents, indispensable for anyone studying human dimension of the event.

This dissertation explores Partition stories of Saadat Hasan Manto to establish him as a responsible writer whose stories show his thrust on humanism through the notion of responsibility to the Other by giving agency to the traumatised victims. He makes the most determined effort to remain neutral in his representation of characters and situation. Ayesha Jalal opines that Manto, who is considered to embody humanism, writes about his experiences with an unflinching faith in humanity and without trying to “glorify or demonize any community” (*Pity*, 23). This remark shows Manto’s marked tendency which is not to provoke any community for further

violence. Unlike other Partition literature such as Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* and Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India* which evoke love for one nation and hatred for Other, Manto's stories depict the unspeakable horrors of Partition which captures the catastrophe or carnage like the killings, arson, disappearances, rapes, mass murder, mass sacrifices just as it unfolded in front of him as objectively possible. He was deeply shocked and traumatised by the very fact that "entire communities that until recently had lived together turned against one another" and also "the carnage that followed undermined long-held practices of shared existence and tolerance" (Ali 2).

Furthermore, Manto's stories are the expression of tremendous insight knowledge based on what had been witnessed and experienced by the affected writers during the trauma of Partition which is related in his stories in precise and unflinching detail. In his book, *Pedagogy of Indian Literature in the Light of Trauma Theory*, Beerendra Pandey says that "Saadat Hassan Manto excels as a writer of realistic fiction, as one who refuses to turn his gaze away from the devastatingly shocking violence of his time" (Pandey 49). Manto was shattered by the cataclysmic event known as Partition personally and as well as a writer. However, he had the capacity to look at the senseless violence without any ideological blinkers and any communal prejudices. His stories represent true picture of the macabre violence due to partition without any cover-up or religious tone.

M. Asaduddin in the Introduction to the book titled *Black Margins* remarks "it is undeniable that Manto's most powerful stories deal with the Partition of India and its aftermath." (28). His stories "Toba Tek Singh," "Cold Meat," "Open It!," "Saha'e" and "Black Margins" depict the unbearable pain, shock and barbarism of Partition. In addition, Manto's stories also deal with sexual morality which hold up "a mirror to society's double standards" (Asaduddin 24) in regard to it; and "Mozel" and "Saha'e"

are such stories which capture the brutality wrecked upon pimps, prostitutes and other sundry characters. In the same vein, Pandey in his book titled *Historiography of Partition* observes “The collection of thirty-two vignettes or capsule stories shows Manto as a shocked witness to the naked dance of violence in which ordinary human beings turn predators or victims with the former wallowing in the macabre and the latter screaming with pain” (55).

Manto’s stories portray the pains, dislocations, identity crisis, up-rootedness, brutality wrecked and faced by Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims after the Partition, which left them in the condition termed *Muselmann*. Leslie A. Flemming in “Riots and Refugees: The Post-Partition Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto” reiterates that Manto genuinely comes to the grip with the human pain of partition, exploring with a remarkable combination of anger, sarcasm, and tenderness the effects of the violence and dislocation of its victims. His stories enable us to look critically at history, nation, politics, sex, and some assumption about them. Asaduddin opines a close reading of Manto’s stories reveals that he gives higher status to certain values and concepts such as –“frankness, honesty, the discrepancy between appearance and reality, the validity of sex in life, the ethics of human relations, and the ambiguous nature of reality” (11). Manto’s sympathy towards downtrodden, poor, marginalised and the victims are hallmark of his writings which reflects his humanistic side and sense of responsibility. Similarly, Asaduddin states “Manto’s politics, whatever his disagreement with the Progressive, draws its sustenance from his genuine humanitarianism, his love for the oppressed and his sense of fairness and justice” (40).

This dissertation through the analysis of the theory of responsibility to the Other, argues that Manto is a true realist and a humanist who does not turn a blind eye towards the unspeakable horrors of senseless violence due to the Partition. His

stories mention the “unmentionables” and speak the bitter truth in straight manner without exaggeration and prejudices. Manto through his Partition stories successfully captures the pain and sufferings of the traumatised victims which reflects his empathy towards the victims. His characters come from different sphere of life. Manto depicted Partition as the height of insanity exposing the insanity of the leaders as well as the mob that blindly followed them. Shaken by the repercussions of the political decision to break up the unity of the subcontinent, Manto wondered if people who only recently were friends, neighbours and compatriots had lost all sense of their humanity. He too was a human being, “the same human being who raped mankind, who indulged in killing” and had “all those weaknesses and qualities that other human beings have” (quoted in Jalal). Yet human depravity, however pervasive and deplorable, could not kill all sense of humanity. With faith in that kind of humanity, Manto wrote riveting short stories about the human tragedy of 1947.

The second chapter discusses the theory of responsibility to the Other as discussed by Hanah Arendt, Immanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida and Giorgio Agamben; and attempts to clarify the concepts used in this dissertation. In this sense, this chapter can be called theory section. The third chapter discusses Manto’s Partition stories in the light of theory of a responsibility and argues through analysis that Manto’s Partition stories are true and authentic representation of the macabre violence. The fourth chapter analyses Manto’s Partition stories from the perspective of *Muselmann* and argues by giving agency to the Other, Manto’s stories present his belief and thrust on humanism. The final chapter reiterates that Manto’s Partition stories are true and authentic representation of the communal violence which is purged of all his sentimentality which projects him as a responsible writer and a true humanists, a champion of the human rights.

Chapter Two

Responsibility to the Traumatized Other

This dissertation draws upon Hannah Arendt and Emmanuel Levinas's theory of responsibility to the Other, Jacques Derrida's concepts such as "democracy to come," "cosmopolitanism," and "forgiveness"; and Giorgio Agamben's concepts such as "Muselmann," bare life, and agency. By drawing upon the mentioned theorists, this dissertation argues that Manto's partition stories are true and authentic representation of macabre violence which invests the victims with the agency of their trauma; and projects him as a responsible writer and a true humanist, a champion of the human rights.

Human right as we understand from 21st century comes from the Holocaust. Hannah Arendt, writing in the wake of the destruction wrought by World War II and the atrocities of the Holocaust, sought ways of making sense of and affirming life within a post-totalitarian world. Arendt's task was complicated by the fact that, as she argues, unprecedented events had rendered modern political, legal, and moral concepts, categories, and principles not only useless but also potentially harmful. The events like the Holocaust and World War II took place at the time of Enlightenment.

Enlightenment gave human beings a false impression that humans are capable of reason and they can do nothing unreasonable; they ignored the fact that they can be equally unreasonable and are basically irrational. The capacity to have these polar attributes creates a predicament. Our predicament lies in the double face of humanity. This shows the Other side of humanity and rationality. For Arendt, the ideal of humanity is terrifying (6). Humanity is both the element that can unite us as well as

the element of terror. This difficult situation calls for common responsibility on part of human beings.

Arendt says that a common sharing of responsibility is possible because the ideal of humanity when purged of all sentimentality, demands that humanity assume political responsibility for all the crimes and evils committed by human beings. She argues that the sense of shame is the non-political expression of the insight that humans must assume responsibility for all crimes committed and that all nations share the onus of evil committed by all. The international solidarity of humanity lies in this almost-unbearable burden of global political responsibility. This is where we can see departure of Arendt from her Enlightenment predecessors- facing up to the human capacity for evil. She disavows the goodness of human nature, insisting on our very real capacity for evil.

Arendt calls for a universal principle of humanity that will provide a new guarantee of human dignity. According to her, the failure of present notion of human rights is due to the philosophically invalid and politically impotent notion of human rights. It is deeply rooted in racism and imperialism. She argues in favour of a notion of a common, shared humanity. For her, humanity's guarantee lies not in the end of humanity but in its beginning. Her notion of humanity is not grounded in reason or autonomy but rather in the event of natality. And this event of natality might function as an ontological basis for common responsibility and the rights to have rights.

For Arendt, the event of natality is the *arche* in the double etymological sense of origin and rule. Further, the unpredictable anarchic origin carries its rule or principle within we are born, of the histories and it. She divides the principle of natality into two: principle of the publicness and principle of the givenness. Natality,

for Arendt, refers to the fact that individual human beings are born into the world, and this fact has two dimensions of significance. It means, first, that human existence is characterized by the ongoing appearance and reappearance of the new: of new persons and of the new words and deeds that they utter and perform. And it means, second, that as human beings we are invariably confronted by "givenness" -- the givenness of the bodies with which relationships we are born into, and of the other people with whom we share a world. For Birmingham, these two dimensions of natality constitute Arendt's new "universal basis" for human rights and in particular for the "right to have rights" (12). The event of natality, Birmingham argues, "carries within it the principle of publicness," in the sense that the appearance of the new can only take place in a public space. As a fundamental aspect of the human condition, natality thus "demands that the actor" -- any human actor -- "have the right to appear" (57), a right that is violated by any form of power that exiles human beings from political membership *tout court* and from the very possibility of public appearance that such membership carries with it. And the event of natality understood as the appearance of givenness -- of the "single, unique, unchangeable" physical forms and historical legacies each of us bears in being born (73) -- also demands that any human actor have the right to appear *as* an "embodied singular individual," a right that is violated by forms of power that express resentment rather than gratitude toward givenness, and seek to master that givenness by -- for instance -- reducing unique persons to racial categories, as European imperialist ideologies had done (91, 103).

Arendt argues the principle of *initium* allows for radical reformulations of the modern framework of human rights such that the rights of freedom and agency are rooted in the more fundamental right of action and speech. The principle of *initium* rejects the right of sovereignty, individual or collective, and replaces it with the right

to belong to an organized political space, with its inherent plurality of actors. It also rejects natural sentiment as basis of human rights but affective sentiment should be the basis of human rights. This principle of publicness demands the actor have right to appear. This initium leads to public behaviour, it shapes our public behaviour. This is political. This kind of things should not be basis of human rights. So, it is more important to be responsible. Our responsibility is that we should generate such actions that are all equal. It should not result into empowerment of one community but it should result into empowerment of all communities. For Arendt, the right to have rights is a fundamental political right. Our beginning contains the principle of humanity and it provides us with necessary norm to guide all thinking and action.

For Arendt, our capacity for beginning is the only promise left after the horrifying events of the twentieth century. The event of natality is also about that which is given—indeed, mysteriously given—and which cannot be changed. Despite the fact that givenness is usually articulated in the private sphere, Arendt does not dismiss givenness from the concerns of the public space. Her understanding of the “given” is elaborated in the three subsequent places. First, she suggests that at the heart of plurality, it is the givenness of difference. Second, she calls for the political acceptance of the “miracle of givenness,” arguing that the acceptance of this difference is not cause for resignation but is the condition for the very possibility of the human capacity for action. Finally, for her, embodiment, including differences in gender as well as ethnicity are included in the “birth of the given” (73). She suggests that givenness is at the very heart of human plurality and is the condition for human action. Givenness carries the ethical demand of unconditional affirmation and gratitude. Through the criticism of sovereignty from both principle of initium and

givenness, another sense of the right to have rights emerges: the right of givenness, unqualified mere existence, to appear and to belong to a political space (87).

Nativity's archaic principle is double: beginning and givenness. Consequently, the animating affection is itself double: pleasure in the company of others and gratitude for givenness. Arendt especially celebrates pleasure, understanding it to be the animating affection of public life as the desire to appear is "innate impulse" of self-preservation (104). She locates the ethical dimension of public life in desire to be seen, heard, and talked of. Arendt argues that pleasure and horror are important components of common responsibility and the right to have rights.

Summing up, Arendt bases her entire work and the ontological foundation of human rights on the event of natality. For her, human rights should be given as birth right and not to be based on the political institutions like sovereignty, citizenship, nation-state, internationalism. It is our common responsibility to safe guard rights of each other. Like Arendt, Levinas's philosophy is also grounded on the theory of responsibility- each of us is responsible for all the Other.

According to the French-Jewish thinker Emmanuel Levinas, ethics arise first and foremost out of our fundamental responsibility for the other. For him, ethics and human relations begins with the encounter with the "face." This face-to-face relation comes with an ethical demand, i.e., before the face of the other "Thou shall not kill" and in fact, one has to defend the life of the other. As one encounters another's face, one cannot escape from this ethical command. It is inescapable. One cannot *not* respond to the face of the other whom s/he encounters, and this response always comes with one's responsibility for the other.

Responsibility is usually understood in relation to the “I” and its actions. If I fail to do this job, I have to be responsible for this failure. If the other fails, responsibility belongs to the other. If the other does something wrong, s/he has to be responsible for that. Responsibility belongs to the subject who acts willingly and intentionally. This form of responsibility is limited to the doer and someone who cooperates in this doing. One can calculate how far this responsibility extends, and how many persons are concerned. For Levinas, however, responsibility is irreducible to any calculation and is not limited to any individual person.

Responsibility, for Levinas, is not conditioned by any knowledge. Instead, it happens at the moment we encounter the face of the other. This ethical responsibility is prior to any knowledge of the other; in other words: I have to be responsible for the other even though I do not know him or her. As Levinas puts it in *Ethics and Infinity* : “I understand responsibility as responsibility for the Other, thus as responsibility for what is not my deed, or for what does not even matter to me; or which precisely does matter to me, is met by me as face” (95). Before the other, we have no choice, and we cannot escape from our responsibility for the other. If the other is beyond any limit and grasp, then responsibility is limitless. Levinas uses the term “infinite responsibility.” Before the other I have no choice, I have to be responsible for the other. To escape from this responsibility, for Levinas, is not possible. For Levinas, being is a radically interdependent condition, a condition made possible only because of my responsibility to the “other.”

To be responsible for the other is, for Levinas, essentially to be a “substitution” for the other. Being a substitution means: to put myself in the other’s place, not to appropriate him or her according to my wishes, but to offer to the other what he or she needs, starting with basic material needs. To be an I is to substitute for

the other. To be an I does not begin and end in itself, but departs from the self to the other without any return into the self. To substitute for the other is to leave oneself for the other. It is to transcend one's egoism. In *Otherwise than Being*, Levinas says: "Responsibility, the signification of which is non-indifference, goes one way, from me to the other. In the saying of responsibility, which is an exposure to an obligation for which no one could replace me, I am unique. Peace with the other is first of all my business" (138-139).

Concerning this substitution, I am unique and no one can replace my responsibility. And this responsibility for the other stems from the alterity of the other. An ethical relation from the I toward the other is asymmetrical, and no one can take my place to be responsible for the other. The uniqueness of the I is the uniqueness of being irreplaceable. My responsibility for the other also has to regard the other as other, and the other is unique. This uniqueness of the other cannot be reduced to be the same genus. This is the ethical relation of the uniqueness of the I to the uniqueness of the other.

The irreplaceability of the I as substitution for the other as an absolute other is Levinas's essential teaching on ethical responsibility. To substitute for the other is to be hostage of the other. I have no choice of being a hostage of the other. I could not run away from the other, and I could not avoid my responsibility. Responsibility as substitution is to even be responsible for the crimes of the other. The destiny of the hostage is to be responsible for the other and even responsible for all the other's responsibilities. Levinas seems to put ethical responsibility as a substitution for and a hostage of the other prior to any other philosophical concepts. This is the priority of ethical responsibility over ontology and epistemology. To be human, for Levinas, is therefore to be for the other, to bear responsibility for the other, to

substitute for the other, and to be a hostage of the other. This ethical responsibility for the other is, for Levinas, the essence of subjectivity. The meaning of the human person begins with this ethical moment. Levinas's ideas concerning substitution and hostage emphasize the infinite responsibility for the other, an openness of the I for the other. "For-the-other" now becomes a key phrase for his account of ethics. Levinas posits responsibility for the other as the essential structure of subjectivity.

Thus, Levinas's ethics attempts to move away from the trap of egoism, which seems to be the central problem of Western philosophy. He wants philosophy to begin at the ethical relation between the I and the other. This ethical relation moves from the I toward the other without any return to the I, and this movement is done only for the other without any reciprocity. His ethical responsibility is prior to ontology, epistemology, and this is beyond our self-interest, or even self-preservation. In other words, ethical responsibility for the other stems from the love of the other without any interest. It is an ethics of disinterestedness. This disinterestedness does not mean indifference to the other, but it is always to awaken to the presence of the other. This wakefulness for the other is never approached as a response to my self-interest. It is a love for the other that never sleeps, or insomnia. Responsibility, for Levinas, is love without Eros, without any wish to be loved, and thus in a sense different from the one in which we usually employ the verb. According to Levinas, human rights are born out of responsibility "to-and-for-the-Other," which emerges precisely in the rights belonging to the weak and vulnerable Other (185). Like Levinas, Derridean deconstructive ethics is also other-centred. For both, it is the Other who plays more decisive role in ethical humanity. For Derrida, the phrase "democracy to come" implies insistence on the need to rise above the identitarian self so as to be able to

explore the Other. It also carries the futural promise to resolve the age long paradoxes between human ideals and authoritarian values.

“The democracy to come” is perhaps the most enduring principle that emerges in Derrida’s *Rogues* assessed in relation to “autoimmunity.” Derrida makes a sustained case for thinking of democracy as being governed by an autoimmune logic. Biologically, autoimmunity describes a kind of bodily self-destruction whereby the body’s immune system produces antibodies or lymphocytes that work against substances naturally present in the body. Whilst clearly inspired by the biological inference, Derrida uses the term to describe a gesture of self-defence or self-preservation of something that in fact leads to that thing’s destruction. So, to suggest that democracy is autoimmune is to claim that it is threatened internally by its very own logic. This internal compromise or flaw to democracy is crucial to Derrida’s thinking of the “democracy to come.” There are two ways in which Derrida accounts for this self-inflicted dehiscence within democracy.

The first issue involves the relation between democracy and sovereignty. Derrida suggests that in order for democracy, understood quite literally as the rule (*cratos*) of the people (*demos*), to have any discernable “effect” in ruling it must rely on some form of sovereignty. Sovereignty and democracy are inseparable but contradictory partners. The efficacy of democracy relies on sovereignty: without sovereignty, the *demos* would be usurped by some other power and an effective rule of the *demos* would never be achieved. In striving to protect itself and guarantee its dominance through a co-option of sovereignty, democracy suffers from an autoimmune self-destruction. In an attempt to immunise and protect itself from destruction, democracy destroys itself by closing off, unifying and essentialising the

multiplicity that enables the formation of democracy in the first place. The plurality of the demos must be contained and restrained in a sovereign community: “the people” or “a nation.” In this move, there are inevitable exclusions and elisions that morph a heterogeneous collectivity into a homogenous unit. These omissions always return to haunt the supposed sovereignty of any political community, destroying the community’s immunity from difference and otherness. Democracy and sovereignty are bound in a destructive clasp that means democracy as such (that is, a democracy without sovereignty) remains an impossibility.

The second issue turns on the canonical problem of the relationship between equality and freedom. Again, equality and freedom are two necessary but contradictory claims that unite in democracy. Equality hopes to guarantee that each actor within a community has equal value; most clearly this is seen in the ascription of one equal vote to each individual in a community. Freedom, on the other hand, is a question of each individual’s singularity, the freedom to exceed a determination of “the same” that equality tries to establish. But, Derrida suggests, freedom is impossible without a concept of equality — the suggestion being that freedom must always take place in relation to limits imposed by others and we must, in theory at least, all be equally free. Democratic freedom only makes sense, then, if everyone within the demos is equally free. So, equality becomes an integral part of freedom and because such equality is inscribed within freedom, equality is no longer merely a question of number and calculation but it becomes incalculable. The two concepts are intrinsically bound but in an autoimmune relation. Equality confines every singularity to a measurable unit that is infinitely substitutable. Freedom, on the other hand, exceeds this calculation and enables each singularity to be heterogeneous to others, it is a guarantee of the singularity of each individual, enabling every other to be treated as

(wholly) other. For democracy, these two competing factors are mutually dependent — liberty must take place in the context of liberty for all — so this represents an internal corruption within the very structure of democracy.

Democracy, on this reading, is always at war with itself, never capable of resolving its inner tensions and contradictions. To put it in terms that echo Derrida's earliest concerns with metaphysics of presence, we could say that democracy is never *present* but is always *deferred*. In its claim to presence ("this is democracy here-and-now") democracy evokes the sovereignty that calls forth its destruction. Democracy is, then, never fully present in the (sovereign) claim that democracy has arrived or been achieved. It is in this sense that democracy is always "to come". Significantly, the "to come" here is not the positing of some horizon of possibility for democracy, as if it were just an idea that we must move towards. Rather the "to come" expresses the dislocation that structures the very possibility of democracy from within. The futural inference of the "to come" is significant. Derrida distinguishes between "the future" — thought of as a future-present, predictable and programmable — and "the future" which names an unforeseeable coming of the event, a rupture or disturbance that is unpredictable and open, without "telos" or knowable destination. The "to come" in Derrida's formulation, then, points to a transformative and disruptive potential at the heart of democracy, it points to a promise of change in the here and now. For Derrida, autoimmunity reveals that absolute immunity is impossible: in an attempt to achieve absolute protection, destruction ensues. If democracy were absolutely immune from compromise, it would be absolutely sovereign, unchanging, inert, lifeless. Autoimmunity, paradoxically, gives democracy life and play, it nurtures an openness to what is "to come," to the possibility of infinite recasting, reworking and reiteration.

Derrida's approach to democracy has two interrelated aims. His first gesture inquires into the conditions of possibility for democracy, revealing contradiction at its heart. In this sense a critical distance must be observed when it comes to democracy as it is currently understood, practiced and reproduced. Proclamations of democracy having been achieved or perfected in current regimes and practices must be radically questioned and displaced. A second gesture in his thinking of the democracy to come — with the emphasis now on the “to come” — urges for intervention, disruption, transformation and resistance.

Derrida, then, uses the notion of the democracy to come not simply to describe the way in which modern democratic politics falls short of its proclaimed ideals but democracy is “to come” in a much more radical sense. The autoimmuniary flaw to democracy is the very thing that opens the possibility of a democratic future. This opening to the future, it must be stressed, is not blindly optimistic, as if there are only better, more democratic days ahead. Derrida's syntagm names the necessary coming of the future, both the best and the very worst. And whilst offering no normative guidance or assurances, Derrida does point to a necessary restlessness at the heart of democracy, the urgency of the need for ongoing work and engagement. Democracy in this sense would always be “coming,” always a site of promise and open potential. Similar is the case with Derrida's another concept- “cosmopolitanism.” According to him, cosmopolitanism is yet to come in the true sense.

In the two essays, *Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, Jacques Derrida addresses issues regarding social projects of legitimacy, hospitality, religion and politics. *Cosmopolitanism* provides an entry point into traditional European and especially French social virtue. It is a tradition at play for over twenty centuries, but

Derrida questions this past in order to understand the present state and use of cosmopolitanism. Like Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt whom he quotes here, he is primarily asking about the nature of banality and the human ability to act inhumanely to others with whom they live. Derrida stands with these two seminal thinkers by continuing to point out the problem of banality today. He questions a European Union which opens its internal borders only to close its external borders. Likewise the actions of police who are allowed to control immigration and even deport legal aliens beyond the limits of a legitimate police power. Yet there is in all of this certain recognition of the necessity of borders and police.

A proposal is made for the establishment of Cities of Refuge, a proposal for the limitation of borders and police. Cities of Refuge are more than a traditional notion from times gone by, but a convergence of traditions within a concept as yet unfulfilled, an opening from which to think as well as to act without perversion of the law/right of hospitality.

This is neither a call for revolution nor evolution, neither a matter of newness nor progress, but rather a call for an opening from within which is a matter of recognition and decision. Derrida wants cosmopolitanism to be a traditional hospitality: more aware, more awake. If it is not, it becomes a banal triumphalism that again divides the foreigners from fellow-citizens. He says that cosmopolitanism needs to be reformed and does not want contradictions to keep underpinning in the way cosmopolitanism in practice.

If cosmopolitanism can gain resources for renewal it will be in the recognition of its wrong turns -- it must be a confessing cosmopolitanism. One such wrong turn may be Immanuel Kant's formulation of cosmopolitanism as natural law. As always,

Kant is faced with the decision between unconditional and conditional aspects. In this case, it is cosmopolitanism. The unconditional is the "common possession of the surface of the earth" while the conditional is that which is "*erected, constructed, or what sets itself up* above the soil: habitat, culture, institution, State, etc" (21). Because Kant decides upon this strictly delimited condition he can then inscribe two paradigms, which counts in Derrida's eyes as some progress. But it is the decision to make this split where he does that politicizes all hospitality. The crux of the problem according to Derrida is that hospitality is made by Kant a sign dependent upon juridical notions of peace and thus then finally a matter of State sovereignty. "Hospitality signifies here the *public nature* of public space... hospitality, whether public or private, is dependent on and controlled by the law and the state police" (22).

For Derrida, hospitality is a natural right. And the Western notion of sovereignty, nation state, citizenship is institutional and not natural which makes the situation much worse. Derrida opines that we need to think an ethics of hospitality as the way out of the problem created by institutionalization. However, ethics is sometimes influenced by appropriation; so ethics is also contradictory. For Derrida, deconstructive ethics is an interruption as it helps us in realising that even though human are ethical, we have the potential to be unethical through appropriation and domestication. Derrida's point is the Western thinking regarding hospitality and rationality is problematic as they take themselves as rational and hospitable beings. In reality, they are neither rational nor hospitable. So, cosmopolitanism in a true sense is yet to come for Derrida.

The thrust of Derrida's second essay, *On Forgiveness*, is "forgiveness forgives only the unforgivable" (32). Derrida opines that the Western world who claims to be

greater forgiver is not forgiver. For him, forgiveness must be purely disinterested. He asserts that pure forgiveness is madness. If we forgive the unforgivable then we are contributing to a greater humanity of society; but unfortunately people think the act of forgiveness as madness. Forgiveness leads to a kind of reconciliation and when reconciliation starts, it no longer remains pure due to a confrontation between “self” and “other”. Derrida argues that despite the impossibility of pure forgiveness, we should keep striving for creating absolute forgiveness in order to create more egalitarian society.

Forgiveness should be free of condition. Derridean unconditional are mad acts as he regards madness as the expression for the possibility of man’s creative freedom. The community considers unconditional forgiveness as a deviation from the system and order and calls this act as madness because it is act of will and not in interest of community and system. Forgiveness becomes the essence of humanity as it is aimed at seeing Other as a human being.

Thus, it would be right to remark that at the heart of Derridean deconstructive ethics lies responsibility to the Other. Derrida opines that humanism is humanism of the other and for the other. In the same vein, Giorgio Agamben has developed the notions such as *Muselmann*, bare life and biopolitics to give voice or agency to the traumatised Other and show the other side of humanity, rationality, nationalism and sovereignty. His major concern is how the Western world views the rest as the alien Other and are indifferent towards their problems and trauma.

Giorgio Agamben’s *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* is divided into two parts: the first deals with the sovereign, the one who decides over life and death of its subjects; and the second deals with the enigmatic figure of homo sacer,

the "sacred man", one who can be killed and not sacrificed; but who can be killed with impunity.

According to Agamben, the connection between politics and life is fundamental to the Western tradition and there is a close and originary bond between sovereignty and this politics of life. Agamben takes up the notion of sovereign as borderline or limit concept to argue the defining characteristics of sovereignty is that the sovereign determines when law is applicable and what it applies to, and, in doing so, must also create the conditions necessary for law to operate since the law presupposes normal order for its operation. The sovereign operates as the threshold of order and exception, determining the purview of the law (19). This means that the state of the exception is not simply the chaos that precedes order. For Agamben, it operates both as a condition of law's operation and an effect of the sovereign decision such that the exception is not simply outside the realm of the law, but is in fact created through the law's exception.

Agamben admits that there is an essential correlation between life under a law in force without significance passes into life while always subsists in relation to the law. Importantly, Agamben is not simply suggesting that natural or biological life founds the existence of law. Rather, the key figure in the inclusive exclusive is bare life, understood as zone of indistinction or hinge through which political and natural life articulates. For him, bare life arises because "human life is politicized only through abandonment to an unconditional power of death" (90).

Agamben argues that the Greek understanding of politics contained two conceptions of life: *zoe*, or bare life, which is distinguished from *bios*, or politically or morally qualified life, the particular form of life of a community. The constitution of

the political is made possible by an exclusion of bare life from political life that simultaneously makes bare life a condition of politics. In contrast to arguments that understand political community as essentially a common 'belonging' in a shared national, ethnic, religious, or moral identity, Agamben argues that 'the original political relation is the ban' in which a mode of life is actively and continuously excluded or shut out from the polis. Thus, neither bios nor zoe, bare life emerges through the irreparable exposure of life to death in the sovereign ban. The capture of bare life within the exception is a general condition of existence, such that the rule and the exception, inclusion and exclusion, and right and violence are no longer clearly distinguishable.

Agamben cites the Roman legal figure of homo sacer, a genocidal violence, the apparently ever-expanding phenomenon of concentration camps. Noting the etymology of the word life, Agamben highlights that the Ancient Greeks had two semantically distinct terms for it: "zoe which expressed the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men or gods) and bios, which indicated a form or way of living proper to an individual or a group" (1). He argues that the sacredness of life emerges only to the extent that life is incorporated into the sovereign exception. He states that "sacredness of life, which is invoked today as an absolutely fundamental right in opposition to sovereign power, in fact originally expresses precisely both lives' subjection to a power over death and life's irreparable exposure in relation of abandonment" (83).

The decision as to what constitutes the life that is thereby taken outside of the polis is a sovereign decision. Sovereignty is therefore not a historically specific form of political authority that arises with modern nation-states and their conceptualization

by Hobbes and Bodin, but rather the essence of the political. The sovereign decision as a cut in life, one that separates real life from merely existent life, political and human life from the life of the non-human. Consequently, there is a difference for Agamben between biopolitical life and bare life:----the former being the managed political subject of power relations, and the latter being the necessary negative referent by which power-relations (through the sovereign exception) demarcates what counts as legal life, life that matters. So there is a limit, or an 'outside' to power relations in biopolitical life.

Summing up, we can say that the category of 'bare life' is used to refer to subjects who are denied both political and legal representation. For Giorgio Agamben, the subject who most immediately exemplifies the plight of 'bare life' is the stateless refugee. However, this can be extended; the author would suggest, to include political prisoners, the disappeared, victims of torture, and the dispossessed – all of whom are excluded, to different degrees, from the fraternity of the social sphere, appeal to the safety net of the nation-state and recourse to international law. The concept of 'bare life' also provides a significant way of reflecting on contemporary art practices that take migration, statelessness, diasporic communities, human rights, and zones of conflict as their subject matter; nowhere more so than when they represent 'zones of indistinction' to which 'bare life' is consigned.

Similarly, in *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Agamben is giving us a theory for interpreting trauma literature, of the unimaginable horrific event like the Holocaust, which talks about the living corpse and void. In this book, Agamben is theorizing both events of the Holocaust as well as developing aesthetics for such literature that represents event like the Holocaust. Agamben develops an account of an ethics of

testimony as an ethos bearing witness to that for which one cannot bear witness. The key figure in his account of an ethic of testimony is that of the *Muselmanner* or those in the camps who had reached such a state of physical decrepitude and existential disregard that “one hesitates to call them living: one hesitates to call their death death” (1). But rather than seeing the *Muselmanner* as the limit-figure between life and death, Agamben argues that the *Muselmanner* is more correctly understood as the limit-figure of humane and inhuman. As the threshold between the human and the inhuman, the *Muselmanner* simply does not mark the limit beyond which the human is no longer human.

The *Muselmanner* indicates a more fundamental lack of distinction between the human and inhuman, in which it is impossible definitively to separate one from the other, and which calls into the question the moral distinctions that rest on this designation. The key question that arises for Agamben, then, is whether there is humanity to human over and above biologically belonging to the species, and it is in reflecting this question that Agamben develops his account of ethics. In doing so, he rejects recourse to standard moral concepts such as dignity and respect, claiming that “Auschwitz marks the end and the ruin of every ethics of dignity and conformity to a norm. The *Muselmanner* is the guard on the threshold of a new ethics, an ethics of a form of life that begins where dignity ends” (69).

The privileged figure within Agamben’s ethical discourse is that of the *Muselmanner*, who were perhaps the most wretched of the inhabitants of the camp in so far as they were reduced to the status of merely existing-living without purpose, desire or sensation. He locates the figure of *Muselmanner* at the zone of indistinction between the human and the inhuman. Agamben argues that the *Muselmanner* should not

be seen as occupying a threshold between life and death, but is more correctly understood as the limit-figure of human and inhuman. Rather than simply being geared towards the manufacturing of death, then, Auschwitz is the site of extreme biopolitical experiment. However, as the threshold between human and inhuman, the figure of *Muselmann* does not simply mark the limit beyond which the human is no longer human. Agamben argues that such a stance would merely repeat the experiment of Auschwitz that places the *Muselmann* outside the limits of the human and the moral status that rests on the categorization. Instead, the *Muselmann* indicates a more fundamental indistinction between human and inhuman, in which it becomes impossible to distinguish one from the other. Agamben describes the *Muselmann* as “the non-human who obstinately appears as human: he is the human that cannot be told apart from the inhuman” (82).

Thus, Agamben’s term *Muselmann* denotes a passive victim, in this case a prisoner, who had given up, has no consciousness or conscience, is despised and not object of sympathy, is a mere staggering corpse, a bundle of physicality of no consequence (41-43). More importantly, the *Muselmann* has no agency, no dignity, and is not a survivor who could testify as s/he is devoid of his humanity. This state of being the *Muselmann* is the limit case, the exception, and the objectified Other. Agamben argues that the witness writers should go through the process of “desubjectification” and their writing should be free from their socio-cultural politics. They should let the body of *Muselmann* take the agency by remaining passive and appeal to universal morality.

In *Means Without an End*, Giorgio Agamben develops his hypothesis with response to the way the Western world has responded to the refugees. For Agamben,

the state is so cold and hostile towards the refugees. He claims that the so called sovereign state is itself the creator of the refugee problem. So, it is time to look at the human rights from of one and only figure of the refugee. For him, the root of problem lies in the trinity of nation, state and territory. He argues that the problem of refugee can be solved by perforating the wall through gesture. For Agamben, gesture is the means without an end for the true promotion of the human rights as gesture is not mediated through socio-cultural politics.

Agamben argues that the so called sovereign state is itself the creator and violator of the human rights and the way the national state reacts and responds to the human rights violence is a matter of concern. Further, he argues that despite the so much emphasis on securing the human rights in the 20th century, nothing has been actually done to promote the human rights. Agamben argues that if we are serious about the human rights, then we should look at it from the new perspective of the refugee rather than from the perspective of nation-state and nationalism. Agamben further claims that all organisations in regard to the human rights are failure and incapable for solving the refugee problem as well as for facing up to it in an adequate manner.

For Agamben, it is time to cease to look at all the declarations of the rights as proclamations of eternal metajuridical values aimed at binding the legislator to the respect of such values; rather it is time to understand them according to their real function in the modern state. He believes that human life in natural life must be preserved as it is the most intense in the natural state. The civilized nation-state comes in the way of the human rights as it disallows natural right and thus making human life political. The concept of nation-state means a state that makes nativity or birth the

foundation of its own sovereignty. Without citizenship right, the human rights cannot be protected. Thus, the natural right and the citizen right are in conflict with the notion of sovereignty. The refugee is marginal figure in the modern nation-state but it deserves to be regarded as the central figure in political history. The problem lies in the trinity of nation-state-territory. The problem of refugee can be solved only by perforating the wall through gesture. According to Agamben, gestural communication can perforate the wall that Israeli built.

Gesture is the only way out in the present world which is the world represented through language and spectacle as there is no 'mediality' in gesture. Language has nexus in cultural politics as is entwined with people and state. Language is full of jargons which creates problem as it gives narrow cultural lens. Similarly, spectacle is ocular proof and a visual representation. Like language, spectacle can present the distorted truths but in much more powerful way. Distorted visuals are biased and prejudiced. Thus, language and spectacle can be mediated according to the interest of individuals as well as states.

Summing up, gesture is the means without an end as it is not mediated through cultural politics. For Agamben, gesture is the only way out for promotion of human rights. He further says that the agency should be given to *Muselmann* by appealing to the universal morality. For him, refugees are the examples of bare life, and the nation plays politics on their body rendering them non-human; and they are denied even fundamental human right. Similarly, Derrida rightly states that forgiveness, hospitality, democracy, responsibility is yet to come in the true sense to the Western world. There is a huge difference in what the Western world thinks of itself and what it really is. Like Agamben, Derrida opines that the state is the greatest violator of

human rights and the greatest obstacle in the promotion of human rights. They are concerned for the Other. Levinas is no exception to this. Like Derrida and Agamben, he is also all in for responsibility to-and-for all Other. So is the case with Hannah Arendt. She argues that we should take responsibility for all the evils and crimes committed against fellow human beings. All the theorists discussed above have one thing in common, that is, we should be responsible for the Other and should take responsibility of each other. They have presented the other side of humanity, nationality, sovereignty, nationhood.

Chapter Three

Responsibility to the Other in Manto's Partition Stories

The Partition of India in 1947 and the Second World War were the most catastrophic historical events of the 20th century. The Holocaust in Europe and the macabre communal violence of Partition in India put question mark on the Enlightenment philosophy. The atrocities of these events had rendered the modern political, legal, and moral concepts, categories, and principles not only useless but potentially harmful. These events were a kind of wake-up call for humanity to come out of Enlightenment's false impression and consciousness- humans are a rational being and they can do nothing unreasonable, and unspeakable. These events showed the Other side of humanity. The writers of this period faced challenge on how to represent such horrific event as the shock of such incomprehensible acts drove many to silence, denial, rage, guilt, lamentation, and despair. In the book titled *Crossing Over*, the editor Frank Stewart tries to answer the question the writers of this period faced by stating "the best writers work in a more subtle realm, where the truth is revealed in a nonpartisan narration of life experience, and where such essential human values as social justice, compassion, and love are not put aside" (viii). One of the contemporary writers whose work captures the stark realism of the macabre communal violence of Partition is Saadat Hasan Manto. This Chapter deals with the short stories of Saadat Hasan Manto who concentrates on the depiction of the Other side of humanity amidst scenes of violence, conflict, and chaos through the emphasis on responsibility to the Other, in this case, towards the Partition victims.

One of the greatest Urdu writers, Manto, in his short stories and vignettes, recreates the cataclysmic violence of the South Asian Partition of 1947. He celebrates neither the independence of India nor the birth of Pakistan. Many of his characters are

left confused by the two-nation theory. For them, as for the writer himself, separate identities or nationalities of India and Pakistan make no sense. For him, humanity should not be based on identity, nationality and religion. Manto and his characters identify themselves with their native place, and suffer much when they are forced to migrate. Manto looks at the event of Indian independence as the tragedy of Partition and writes about the pain it caused to the millions both in India and Pakistan. He does not care much for the causes and the culprits of the division of the subcontinent as the historians do, but rather focuses on how easily normal human beings can be swept into barbarism and commit unspeakable and evil deeds on fellow beings. He captures the Other side of humanity which is irrationality and barbarism; and the human capacity for evils.

How paradoxical it is, Gyanendra Pandey says, in his classic essay “The Prose of Otherness,” that, although Partition’s history is constituted of, surrounded, and accompanied by violence, this very fact has been overlooked by most historians for decades (204). The historian’s history has discussed the causes or the origins of the ruthless violent deeds rather than describing the specific events of violence. The causes are attributed to outsiders, criminals, political reactionaries, fanatics, or communalists and so on, simply eliding the issue of human carnage. The historians create the “prose of otherness” while blaming the other community or people, or leaders or attitudes, and try to present their own community or people, or leaders or attitudes as pure, innocent and free from blemishes (Pandey 213).

Pandey further says that by using the language of “othering,” the historians have always marginalized violence in their writing. They do not describe the actual acts of abduction, uprooting, train raids, trauma, madness, suicide, killings, and other acts inflicting death and destruction, thus doing injustice to the very craft of

historiography. The high point of the nationalist history of India is the campaign for the achievement of independence from colonial British rule in 1947. It rejoices at the self-rule of the Indians as the crowning glory of the almost century-old aspiration for freedom. It appears as if “historian’s history were concerned not with partition but the shadow of partition” (205). It does not discuss the history of rape and abduction, killing and the state-sponsored drive that followed to evict aliens and recover the abducted women and children without regard for their personal wishes, all of which “disturbingly capture the meaning of partition” (234).

Much praised by Pandey, Manto is highly objective in rendering the violent and traumatic scenes and events of the South Asian Partition in 1947. He focuses on the very issues neglected by the official historians, assimilating the truth that the history of partition is the history of violence. His writings are free from stereotyping, disparaging, or demonizing of the other community in terms of religion, culture, politics, or nationality. In comparison to other writers of the period, Manto to a great extent avoids nationalist biases on the partition violence of 1947. He shows the consciousness of the sufferers as witnesses, survivors, and victims by remaining outside the narrow perspective of the nationalist historians; thus showing his responsibility to the Other.

The cataclysmic event of Partition affected Manto’s great sensibility. He was dumbfounded when he had to migrate to Pakistan. Although for a long time he carried his beloved Bombay in his head, later he became confused and could not separate India and Pakistan. He found it impossible to decide whether India or Pakistan was his real homeland. The depiction of the pain and trauma of victims and survivors due to uprootedness can be seen in his allegorical story “Toba Tek Singh.” It is needless to say that Manto opposed Partition and considered it to be an absurd, irrational,

inhumane act that led to the victimization of many Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims which scarred their memory with trauma. He saw the irrationality and inhumane acts of the people of both sides and wrote stories from the victims' point of views, recreating the trauma suffered by the unknown and unidentified millions on the margins. He, too, was one among the suffering millions. As a sufferer himself, he very well realized that the history of Partition was the history of dislocation, separation, competing loyalties, loss of self or identity, religious intolerance, communal hatred, riot, rape, arson, plunder, irrationality, absurdity, and madness. He channelizes all the pain and trauma suffered by the victims of partition through his short stories. It is somewhat difficult to write about Manto's stories because he leaves out so much for the readers to comprehend demanding responsibility on the part of the readers. The anecdotal stories written around disturbing situations read like painful riddles and present a challenge to the readers. They have a quality of incomprehensibility in them perhaps because of their brevity, the disparity between the narrative tone and situation it describes, and the irony embedded in the action, language, and situation themselves. Despite the enigmatic quality, however, Manto's stories convey a clear sense of the time they describe and constitute an unbiased record of a critical juncture in South Asian history showing his responsibility to the Other and humanity. Stories such as "Open It," "Cold Meat," "The Dog of Titwal," "Mozel," "Toba TekSingh," "Saha'e," and the vignettes in "Black Margins" provide stark but honest representation of the violent history of Indian subcontinent remaining true to the atrocities that took place. They "give a more immediate and penetrating account of those troubled and troubling than do most journalistic accounts of partition" (Jalal 23).

In *Black Margins*, there is a neutral depiction of human savagery during the Partition violence of 1947. In *Black Margins*, Manto produced thirty-two vignettes of

scenes that bear witness to the cataclysmic event when the contending nationalisms of India and Pakistan were at a highly provocative juncture. The anecdotes are narrated in an impassive tone, and a minimalist style, and disallowing character development at all in order to present the readers with sense of immediacy of horrors and the beastly nature of human beings. Told by a distant third person narrator, some of the stories--which are no more than a few sentences long--represent in a most poignant manner the cruelties of the time. Some of these stories are apparently funny and grotesque and produce a chilling effect on the readers. The victims and the victimizers here belong to all communities—Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs and do not mostly inhabit the same story. Read together they give us the impression of the monstrosity of the most crucial phase of south Asian history where human turned against humans committing unimaginable crimes and unspeakable evils.

The vignettes reflect the Other side of humanity as they depict murder, rape, slaughter, thuggery as the most natural preoccupation of human beings. For Hannah Arendt, the ideal of humanity is terrifying (6). The stories reflect this inhumane horrifying attitude of human beings towards the Other. In the story “Sorry,” Manto writes:

The knife slashed his stomach all the way to his navel.

His pyjama cord was severed.

Words of regret escaped the knifewielder’s tongue,

“Tsch, tsch, tsch ... I’ve made a mistake!” (Manto, *Black Margins*,

186)

The lines seemingly very casually record a grotesque incident as an example of the irrationality and inhumanity of Partition days. The mistake here is related to the identity inscribed in the genitals of the person who is killed, an identity that is realized

after the brutal killing. The person killed can belong to either community--Hindu or Muslim--, or the killers, too. The mistake may have occurred because the killers are Hindus and the man is not circumcised or because the man is circumcised and the killers are Muslims. This short story successfully captures the essence of “the double face of humanity” (Arendt 6). The identity of a person is linked with religion which is the wrong basis to judge whether one has the right to live or die. The killing of the “Other” is alright and justifiable but killing own is a mistake. It also supports Arendt’s claim that humanity is both the element that can unite human as well as element of terror (112). All human are born equally and should have “the rights to have right” (12) whose basis should be based on the event of natality whose thrust is on plurality and not the individual self and is the condition for human action; and should not be based on the institutions such as nation, religion, culture, sovereignty and citizenship. In “Appropriate Action,” a Muslim couple seeks shelter in a house whose new occupants are Jains. The couple, fed up with the life of confinement and fear, asks the host to kill them: “We’ve come to surrender, please kill us” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 183). The host/custodians out of reverence for their non-violent, peace loving religion declare, “Killing is a sin in our religion” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 183), refuse to oblige, and hand over the couple to the neighboring non-Jain residents for appropriate action, i.e., cold blooded murder. Manto finds irony in the actions of people based on the religion. On the one hand, they say that killing is not allowed in their religion and on the other hand, they do not feel responsible while handling the Others for appropriate actions to the adjoining neighbourhood. Manto is appalled to see the lack of sense of shame and the first true human philosophy- love for all, in such hypocrites. For Manto, one has to defend the life of the Other. For Levinas, this is human’s first and fundamental responsibility to-and-for-the Others. The story shows

the dangers of institutions like religion and sovereignty. Through this story, Manto is showing the predicament of the religious responsibility and the need to assume moral and ethical responsibility towards the Other. In “Jelly” the innocence of a child turns macabre when the child says “Look Mummy, jelly!” pointing at the coagulated blood of the ice seller that mixed and merged with the ice cream (Manto, *Black Margins*, 187). In “Correction,” Dharamchand, a Hindu is killed by his own brothers because he underwent circumcision in order to save his life from the Muslims. Despite his struggle to prove his Hindu identity by shouting Hindu slogans and claiming to know the *Vedas*, he is asked to show his lower body. When he confesses that being a Hindu, he had committed the sole mistake of undergoing circumcision, one of the Hindu mob leaders orders his men to “Chop off his mistake,” leading to Dharamchand’s instant death (Manto, *Black Margins*, 184). In “What's the Difference,” Manto writes “And the one who had slaughtered in the prescribed manner (i.e., Islamic *halaal* way) was himself slaughtered in the *jhatka* way” of the Hindu/Sikh (Manto, *Black Margins*, 187). These vignettes together with others, presented with stark realism by Manto, show the utter cruelty of humanity at the time of crisis. The “mistake” in “Sorry,” or the chopping off of the mistake in “Correction” for example, remains a part of the genocide, an act of violence committed by humanity gone terribly mad. The characters lack the ethical responsibility which happens at the moment one encounters the “face” of the Other. Manto emphasises the need of this ethical and moral responsibility which one must have towards the Other even if one does not know him/her. As Levinas puts it: “I understand the responsibility as responsibility for the Other, thus as responsibility for what is not my deed, or for what does not even matter to me; or which precisely does matter to me, is met by me as face” (*Ethics*, 95). This

shows that one must assume moral and common responsibility for all the crimes and evils committed against humanity.

Most vignettes in *Black Margins* are bitterly ironic. The effect of the fragments lies in the gap between what the characters understand about their situation and what the readers perceive of it. For example in the capsule story “Sharing the Loot” the owner of a building, a frail middle-aged man,” apparently helps the looters to raid his own house telling them “Brothers, this house is filled with wealth, innumerable, priceless objects. Come on, let’s take it over and divide up the booty” (Manto, *Black Margin*, 180). The looters, plundering the house in great commotion, are slowly directed towards a big Alsatian dog of the owner. It holds the collar of one of the looters in mouth whereas the others run away. When the man notices that the dog answers the command of the frail looking man, he asks: “who are you?” To a great shock of the looter the frail man answers, “The owner of the house” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 180). The story has a powerful effect because long before the owner of the building announces his identity, the reader has guessed who he is, and when his large dog suddenly attacks the looters at the end, the reader is not surprised whereas the looter is. The story “An Enterprise” presents the bizarre human acts at the time of Partition violence with a touch of irony. Manto writes:

Fire broke out. The entire mohalla (hamlet) went up in flames.

Only one shop escaped. The signboard on the shop read,

‘A complete range of building materials sold here.’

(Manto, *Black Margins*, 184-185)

Beerendra Pandey opines that “the collection of thirty-two vignettes or capsule stories shows Manto as the shocked witness to the naked dance of violence” (*Historiography* 55). Further, the vignettes show that Manto does not write with an

aim to appeal to the emotions of his readers. He rather depicts the essential human condition and aims at the intellect of the readers. Almost all his stories are capable of conveying the trauma to the readers because of the tension between emotional and intellectual appeal and the ironic treatment of the subject. His literary works force people to confront anew the shocks of the original trauma. Manto thus recreates the partition violence in the text to enable the readers to experience it visually and vicariously and to receive an intellectual and emotional shock. All thirty-two “capsule stories” in *Black Margins* contain this ability to shock. We can say that in these vignettes, Manto has exactly recreated the gruesome scenes of violence with the intensity in which they had occurred. “Sorry,” “Fifty-Fifty,” and “Correction” are the supreme examples of the exact depiction of the violent scenes and the authentic depiction of the human capacity for evils and irrationality. Here as elsewhere, Manto's ironic technique gives the readers a glimpse of the true history of the violent Partition when millions of Indians and Pakistanis experienced the trauma of dislocation, madness, rape, and looting, and he registers their revulsion against it, too. One may argue that Manto's longer stories have not exactly recreated the monstrous scenes of inhuman violence, but they also vividly communicate the effect of violence with stark realism. By doing so, Manto's works force people to assume responsibility for such irrational and inhumane actions on the part of the readers. Manto, through these vignettes, presents his view that all humans are equal and humans' committing violence on fellow humans is being inhumane which Arendt rightly claims- “the ideal of humanity is terrifying” (6) . Manto opines that one should not commit violence on fellow beings in the name of institutions such as nationhood, sovereignty and religion. His thrust is on presenting the macabre violence just as it unfolded in front of him;

thus, assuming political responsibility for the evil crimes that happened during Partition.

Manto writes the issues of Partition violence with such remarkable intensity, depth and objectivity that disrupt the present notion of human rights which is deeply imbedded in racism and imperialism showing the inherent flaws in the ideals of humanity. He is very critical of the state policy which is fragmentary in nature. Infact, Derrida asserts that due to inherent autoimmune logic of democracy, in the attempt of self-defense or self-preservation, in fact leads to the destruction. In Partition case, state divided people on the basis of territory and religion. Furthermore, Derrida sees an inherent problem with the Western notion of sovereignty, nationhood and citizenship as they are the basis of creating the attitude of “Us versus Them.” The story “Toba Tek Singh” captures the arbitrariness of borders and boundaries that divide people, history and cultures.

In “Toba Tek Singh,” Manto creates a character that is so confused by the absurd notion of dividing a land into two halves and sending citizens to a new, alien location, and so much affected by the trauma of displacement, that he collapses in a no-man’s land between India and Pakistan. At the end of the story, Manto writes:

Just before sunrise, a deafening cry erupted from the throat of a mute and immovable Bishan Singh. Several officials rushed to the spot and found that the man, who had remained on his legs, day and night for fifteen years, was now lying on his face. Over there, behind the barbed wire, was Hindustan. Over here, behind identical wires, lay Pakistan. In between, on a bit of land that had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh.

(Manto, *Black Margins*, 220)

After showing the protagonist's rejection of an absurd and artificially constructed identity through nationhood, which is expressed time and again in the question--

Where is Toba

Tek Singh, in Pakistan or in India?--, Manto leads Bishan Singh toward this pathetic end.

Bishan Singh stretches on the ground and the piece of ground itself becomes, at that moment for him, the place Toba Tek Singh where Bishan Singh most wants to be.

Manto characterises Bishan Singh in such a way that it is difficult to distinguish him from the place he comes from and in his death, Bishan Singh finally seems to reach his home in Toba Tek Singh, with which he is now totally identified. Bishan Singh remains immobilized between the two nations illustrating the traumatic state of those uprooted by the absurd division of the Indian subcontinent. Bishan Singh's confusion about Toba Tek Singh's exact location and the prisoners' confusion about Pakistan and India portray the exact situation faced by millions of people during the Partition. In Bishan Singh's ear-splitting cry and death are focused all the pain and grief of the millions, who, like Bishan Singh, were forced to leave their homes. It may thus be said that dislocation leading to madness and death is most poignantly described in "Toba Tek Singh" in which the protagonist, Bishan Singh dies in a most pathetic manner. At the same time, Bishan Singh is shown resisting/defying the artificial line of division drawn by the leaders of the nation, which caused death and destruction, tension and trauma to millions, and relegated about a million to the status of homeless refugees. Bishan Singh's death takes place in the no-man's land where the writ of neither nation--India or Pakistan--prevails. Through the story of Toba Tek Singh, Manto has skilfully criticizes the evil consequences of partition upon society where the fundamental human rights of many people was denied. The state played very

negative role during the partition. The people became stateless overnight and there was identity crisis among the people. Many people were traumatized by the condition of statelessness. This story tries to depict the traumatized condition of partition, which played a significant role in distancing men from men, land from land and by drawing the barrier between India and Pakistan. Furthermore, through the death of Bishan Singh on “no-man’s land,” Manto ironizes the state’s policy which renders a person as a refugee because of changed status of person does not conform to birth nation, state and territory. He believes that the root of the problem lies in the “trinity of state-nation-territory” (Agamben, *Means*, 22). Through the characters of his stories, Manto highlights the plight of victims of the partition and reinforces the resistance theme. The sympathy of the writer goes towards the partition victims. Manto’s partition prose like “Toba Tek Singh” comes as a medium to show his responsibility to non-citizens who are the victims of state policy and partition through the use of irony.

In “The Prose of Otherness,” Gyanendra Pandey reads “Toba Tek Singh” at the simple level of irony explaining that the leaders outside the prison are more insane than the lunatics in the asylum (186). The story does not seem to concern much about the ironic resolution of the tension between the insane and sane as Pandey argues. If this paradox is the point of the story, then it is long resolved by the storyteller--much before we come to the end of the story. Some of the lunatics’ identification with Jinnah, the Muslim leader, Tara Singh, the Sikh leader, and *Khuda*, who announces himself as God, bear testimony to it. The identification of the mad prisoners with the leaders and the act of shutting the prisoners in separate cells as dangerous beings who can incite communal tension suggests Manto’s opinion about them. It looks funny that these lunatics are separated for fear of causing disturbance in the jail community whereas the so-called leaders had caused devastation to the society at large outside the

walls of the jail. For Manto, the leaders are more dangerous than and at least as insane as the prisoners in the asylum. As an answer to the question of Bishan Singh where his native Toba Tek Singh is, Khuda's announcement "neither in India nor in Pakistan, because, so far, we have issued no orders in this respect," further endorses the idea of confusion among the leaders (including God?) themselves in the aftermath of Partition (Manto, *Black Margins*, 217). However, Manto is doing more than this. This is particularly evidenced in the story's ending when Bishan Singh refuses to move towards Hindustan or Pakistan and rather prefers to die on the boundary, or when a lunatic earlier in the story says with rage, "I wish to live neither in India nor in Pakistan. I wish to live in this tree" (Manto, *Black Margins*, 214). Several incidents in "Toba Tek Singh" clearly illustrate the way Manto produces his powerful effect on the readers. To give an example, we may look at the scene between Bishan Singh and Fazal Deen where the latter narrates what has happened to the Sardar's family:

Your people have all reached Hindustan safely. I did whatever I could for them. Your daughter, Roop Kaur . . . He stopped in the mid-sentence. 'Daughter Roop Kaur?' Bishan Singh tried to recall something. Fazal Deen went on haltingly, 'Yes, yes she too is quite well. She too has gone away with the others.' (Manto, *Black Margins* 218)

The way Fazal Deen utters his words haltingly, or his incapability to speak smoothly, suggests, to the shock of the readers, the violence perpetrated upon Roop Kaur. It was a common feature of the calamitous time that a young girl like her was mercilessly raped. The event of rape shows how low human can stoop to the level of beast and commit such mad act.

In this regard Asaduddin in his introduction to *Black Margins* remarks, “It is the madness of the sane which is a million times more destructive than the madness of the insane” (34). Readers can also feel a powerful shock when Bishan Singh frequently talks about his native place Toba Tek Singh saying, “Opar di gurgur di annexe di bay dhiana di mung di daal of Toba Tek Singh and Pakistan” (Manto, *Black Margins* 220). Though incomprehensible in its entirety, some of the words in this sentence are sensible. Words like “daal” (preparation of pulses such as lentils, peas, beans), “mung” (a kind of lentil), “government of Pakistan/Toba Tek Singh” suggest how attached he is to his native place and how disturbing it is for him to be dislocated. Bishan Singh’s death in the no-man’s land creates a kind of bond of empathy among the victim, the writer, and the readers obliterating all the gaps whatsoever. The tragedy in “Toba Tek Singh” not only shocks the dislocated Bishan Singh and the writer, but also the readers. Although an art form, the story does not merely tell and show the readers the tragedy of the dislocated; it appeals to their intellect and implicates them in the tragedy creating at the same time an ironic distance. By breaking the boundary between art and life, it forces readers to come out of their complacency, bear witness to human tragedy of a large scale, and to share the trauma of the uprooted with all its monstrous horrors.

“Toba Tek Singh,” a “powerful and disturbing” story enables the writer to send powerful shock waves to the readers recreating and recapturing the trauma of uprooting. Manto produces this effect also in “The Dog of Tetwal”--which particularly deals with the peculiar conflict of loyalties felt by the soldiers on each side while fighting over Kashmir in the aftermath of Partition. The story “The Dog of Tetwal” illustrates the absurdity and irrationality of the military and political situations in India and Pakistan. It is a story about the plight of the victims of

nationhood, showing the fatal dangers caused by human notions of national boundaries and national identities. The boundaries are made so sacrosanct that they not only deprive ordinary masses of their free movement but also reduce them to the status of homeless refugees, causing immense suffering and death.

A stray dog representing the millions of refugees meets its end by getting caught in the cross-fire between the Indian and the Pakistani troops--formerly comrades-in-arms fighting a common enemy--the British. Although they faced a serious dilemma, they had to make a choice to belong to a specific national army based on religious affiliation or denomination and to fight for their respective nation and geographical boundaries. The artificial national border became all important for them, more important even than their fellow beings, their former friends, allies, comrades and compatriots. They forgot what it means to be human and one's responsibility to the fellow human. The dog is explicitly described as a displaced creature. Banta Singh says, "He is only a poor refugee" (Manto, *Black Margins* 192). The dog occupies the position of all the confused, displaced, dislocated, uprooted, and hungry millions on both sides of the boundary in the aftermath of partition. Its vagabond status not only recalls that of the many refugees wandering about, looking for shelter and food, but the dog also symbolizes the soldiers themselves who are no less confused and anxious about their own "belongingness" as well as "identity." The dog is shot by both armies at the end. Manto mocks the foolish gullibility and mindlessness of people in relation to discourses of power and authority that create confusion and ambiguity, which are causes enough for suffering. Despite the confusion, however, Manto makes it clear that the canine dies "a dog's death" hinting at Derridean notion of "responsibility is yet to come" to these two newly independent countries and its people.

The dog's situation embodies the dilemma of all people who faced such a closure of choice because of Partition. Millions faced this problem, including Manto himself who could never forget his Indian root as he lived the life of an exile in Pakistan until his death. Through his own experience as well as the general experience of millions of nameless people during the genocidal violence of 1947, Manto achieves a searing critique of the oppressive structure that came into being with the division of the subcontinent through the allegorical presentation of the dog's plight and its ultimate death. The story not only allegorizes the predicament of the uprooted and exiled people but also comments on the dehumanization of war which fostered irreconcilable mutual hatreds. For Manto, the end of British Raj was an occasion not for celebration but for mourning. In the name of independence from the British Raj, instead of striving to become a true democratic nation, India turned to a "rouge" state. In the name of freedom and equality, the people turned against each other. This hints at democracy being governed by autoimmune logic. He always talked about the breakdown of a civilization into mutually hostile and warring nation states. Hence, the story illustrates his deep hatred for nationalism and remarks that it is hard to say whether the dog "died a noble death" or "he died a dog's death" (152). Those who believe that that the dog died noble death might argue that he died for the cause of nationalism as a loyal patriot; however, it is evident in the text that nationalism, patriotism and loyalty in this case are all vague concepts. The dog does not die for any clear noble reason, and even if it had, the death would ultimately be irrational and miserable in the context. So, democracy in a true sense is yet to come in the implied sense that human need to rise above the 'identitarian' self as to explore the Other, in this case, the traumatised Other.

During Partition, like the dog, the female body became a kind of contested territory for assault and conquest. The opposing community vigorously attacked the body and honor of the women of the other community. Many young girls and married women were raped and killed, bought and sold, or made mistresses by the males of the other community. Manto uses the method of irony in “Open It!” not only to shock but also to affect the readers by the trauma either of the victim/survivor or the perpetrator of the violence assuming the predicament of common responsibility on the part of witness, victims, and survivors. “Open It!” depicts most powerfully how Manto comes to grip with the human pain of Partition, exploring with a combination of anger, sarcasm, and tenderness the effects of the violence and dislocation on its victims. Manto represents pessimistic story through “dramatisation of the macbre violence—the predatoriness of the rescuers themselves and the helplessness of the traumatised victim, traumatised father and the traumatised doctor” (Pandey, *Pedagogy* 63). An old man attempts to find his only daughter, from whom he has become separated while escaping looters. When he wakes up in a crowded refugee camp, Old Sirajuddin at first feels completely numb, unable to recollect anything about the night in which Sakina disappeared:

At ten in the morning when Sirajuddin opened his eyes in the camp and saw the tumultuous crowds of men and boys around him, he almost lost his wits. For a long time he kept staring at the sky. The camp was filled with noise but it seemed as if old Sirajuddin’s ears were sealed. He couldn’t hear anything. . . . But he had become senseless. It was as though he was suspended in space. (Manto, *Black Margins*, 200)

When he comes back to his senses, the father engages the help of eight volunteers, who cross the border in search of the lost and abandoned. After ten days of praying and waiting, Sirajuddin is present when the corpse of a girl found on the roadside is brought into a make-shift hospital. When the doctor turns on the light, Sirajuddin recognizes the girl as his daughter. On the heels of this discovery, however, comes yet another discovery no less disconcerting than the first one. The doctor looked at the body lying on the stretcher and felt its pulse. Then he pointed toward the window and said to him, ‘Open it.’ The body stirred slightly on the stretcher. The lifeless hands untied the waistband. And lowered the *shalwar*. “‘She’s alive! My daughter’s alive!’ Old Sirajuddin shouted with joy. The doctor broke into a cold sweat” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 203). Trauma-afflicted Sakina, at the end of the story, is in such a state of mind that she cannot distinguish the voice of a rapist from the voice of a doctor.

Pandey in his thesis states:

“Manto inserts double ironic moments in the ending of the story, where the abducted and severely raped teenager, Sakina fails to distinguish between a predatory male command and a sympathetic male voice, and where her father, Sirajuddin exclaims with joy that she is alive whereas she is condemned to living death.” (*Exploration*, 35-36)

The father seems happy to find his daughter alive, but the doctor knows better the future of a girl raped and left to live. She is not going to be accepted by her family or society. Manto’s rhetorical strategy particularly in these last few lines of the story dramatizes the grisly aspect in humanity—enabling the writer to greatly shock the readers. The story brings forth the predatoriness of the volunteers who represents the bourgeoisie aesthetics and reflects state policy. The volunteers who are supposed to

preserve human rights, themselves turn out to be the greatest violator. This creates the predicament due to double face of humanity and emphasises on the need to assume political responsible indicating that the element that unites us most- humanity- is also the cause of terror.

Unlike the pessimism in “Open It!” Manto presents optimism in “Cold Meat.” The story shows the transformation of human beings into beasts which highlights human capacity for unprecedented violence. After a six day spree of raid, rape and murder, Ishar Singh behaves like a deeply shocked person. He develops a sense of shame towards his beastly action- copulating a corpse. Due to the sense of shame which is a non-political expression, Singh becomes a non-violent repentant. This shows the moral cognition that comes out of subaltern Singh which brings transformation in him- from violent hot person to a non-violent cold person. This transformation transfers to Kalwant Kaur at the end of the story. This transformation highlights the inversion of values can be a boon or blessing in disguise which leads to the promotion of human rights by assuming responsibility to the Other from the side of perpetrator. For Manto like Levinas, humans should be responsible to the Other. The encounter with the face of the corpse led Singh to feel responsible for his as well as his fellow beings crimes and evils. As Levinas puts it: “I understand responsibility as responsibility for the Other, thus as responsibility for what is not my deed, or for what does not even matter to me; or which precisely does matter to me, is met by me as face” (*Ethics*, 95). So, the thrust is on being responsible for all the crimes and evils committed by humans on fellow humans by the virtue of being humans. Similarly, Singh is represented as a banal character. He commits the crime because he is beguiled by the elite’s commentary. Here, the agency is the provocations of elites. The actions of common man are because of power centered people who back them.

They behest in the vested interest of the elites. Derrida says that cosmopolitanism needs to be reformed because the Western world's thinking towards rationality and hospitality is problematic. In reality, they are neither rational nor hospitable. So, responsibility to the Others is yet to come for him. So is the case with the state policy and power holders. They provoke subaltern people in the name of nationhood, sovereignty and responsibility. But actually they are repressing human rights in the name of being and acting responsibly to the Other.

Manto writes the issues of Partition with such remarkable intensity, depth and objectivity that disrupts the present notion of humanity, morality, rationality, cosmopolitanism, and forgiveness. In "Mozel," and "Saha'e" Manto deals with sexual morality which holds up "a mirror to society's double standard" (Asaduddin 24). Mozal, the protagonist of Jewish descent, refuses to marry Trilochan for the latter is a Sikh. She is portrayed as a carefree, forward, direct and characterless person. All boys want her and are 'ok' to date and sleep with her but call her with names behind her back because of her outspoken behaviour, neglect of social norms and religious defiance. She makes fun of Trilochan's hair, turban, and other cultural paraphernalia associated with his religion. She, in her short hair, ugly lipstick and frocks is a cultural stereotype of a bohemian girl. Trilochan is another stereotype with his long hair, beard, and turban, and so is his would be wife Kirpal Kaur, the virtuous and religious Sikh girl. However, later, the same Trilochan who earlier fumed at Mozal for ridiculing his religion gets his beard shaved. Mozal also saves Trilochan's fiancée, rising above the sanctions of religion, and in the process she is killed at the hands of rioters. Just before she dies, pointing toward Trilochan's turban, Mozal says: "Take away this rag of your religion" (Monto, *Crossing Over*, 127). Manto diminishes the importance of the Sikh religious symbol through the words and acts of Mozal, which

place the humanitarian ideas of love, help, and sacrifice above any ritualness. Mozel is a character who carries the Levinasan “wisdom of love” in true sense because she sacrifices herself in order to save Trilochan’s fiancée. Her sacrifice for the Other is disinterested. According to Levinas, human rights are born out of responsibility “to-and-for-the-Other,” which emerges precisely in the rights belonging to weak and vulnerable Other (185). Through the characterization of Mozel, Manto can be called a true promoter of human rights as he depicts Mozel as a true human and nothing more.

Similarly, Manto’s “Saha’e” is a semi-autobiographical story that gives some clues for Manto’s migration to Pakistan and presents the complex web of circumstances that led to his decision. The very opening segment of “Saha’e” presents what might actually happen in 1947:

The three of us were Hindus. Our relatives in West Punjab had incurred heavy losses in terms of both property and lives ... presumably why Mumtaz had decided to leave. Juggal had received a letter from Lahore informing him about his uncle’s death in communal riots, affecting him badly. Still under the impact of the news, he casually said to Mumtaz one day, “I’m wondering what I would do if riots broke out in my neighbourhood.” “Yes, what would you do?” Mumtaz asked. “I might kill you,” Juggal said in all seriousness. (Manto, *Black Margins*, 168-169)

The above excerpt provides a key for understanding some aspects of communal violence that occurred during Partition and why so many people risked their lives to migrate to both sides. It hints at the nature of retaliatory action prompted by unconfirmed reports or rumours of killings and arsons in another part of the country. This shows that human by nature cannot “forget and forgive,” in other terms,

forgiveness is not possible. Forgiveness leads to reconciliation. For Derrida, “forgiveness forgives only the unforgivable” (*Cosmopolitanism*, 32). But, Juggal’s statement reflects that friends can turn into enemies with rumours and presents the absurdity and banality of the retaliatory actions. During Partition, many innocent people lost their lives in the name of retaliations and retributions. These actions added fuel to the communal violence and contributed to the greater inhumanity and irrationality. The “right to have rights” is the fundamental right of humans which is linked to the “event of natality.” Humans should assume common responsibility for crimes and evils committed upon fellow humans, and should be responsible towards each other; but unfortunately, humans are the victims of institutions like religion, politics and are confounded by the notions of nationhood, citizenship, and sovereignty. Humans cannot rise above their ‘identarian’ self. In the same story, Manto depicts the fallibility of humanity and the need of characters like Saha’e, a pimp. Through Mumtaz, Manto relates the humanity of Saha’e. Even in the dangerous time and situations of communal riots, Saha’e risks his life to keep his promise. There is no difference between his words and actions. The very last line of the story “How I wish I were Saha’e’s spirit! (Manto, *Black Margins*, 195) hints at the desire to be a true human being.

Thus, Manto’s Partition stories embody intellectual rather than emotional elements, strikes no phony balance, and contains no scenes of retaliatory revenge. Highly realistic in mode, it achieves remarkable objectivity because it neither shows any bias for the contending nationalisms of the traumatic times, nor his socialism, nor the specific cultural visibility of most characters, nor any geographical, political or religious markers. Minimalist in style, Manto’s writing avoids detailed characterization and grants no authorial voice to his narrators. His stories exhibit

remarkable neutrality with the employment of the victim's point of view, and remain free from the tendency of "othering" of all sorts. Despite these accomplishments, however, Manto leaves out many important aspects of Partition. He neither tries to delve deeply into the causes of Partition nor tries to write on the serious issues facing India and Pakistan. He seems content with bearing the witness to the violent scenes and presenting a few examples of resistance. Despite recording the traumatic episodes in a shocking manner, his vignettes by themselves seem inadequate responses to the momentous event of Partition. Even the longer stories cannot accommodate elaborate psychological study of characters and their motivations.

Thus, Manto's partition prose like "Saha'e" comes to reveal or provide clues that retaliatory nature of humans which provoked further communal violence have led to the mass migration on the both sides; and show how humans cannot "forgive and forget" the unimaginable and unspeakable horrific events of Partition violence. His story "Mozel" shows the responsibility towards the Other and the Other side of humanity. Both "Saha'e" and "Mozel" deal with sexual morality of human beings. The story "Toba Tek Singh" comes as a medium to show his responsibility to non-citizens who are the victims of state policy and partition. His narrative like "Cold Meat" comes as a contrast to "Open It" which shows that the State-controlled upholders morality which can stoop to low levels; and on the other hand, the moral cognition that comes out of subaltern Ishar Singh's experience of violence can lead to regenerative transformation of the violent psyche. His sympathy lies with the victims of the partition violence who undergo unspeakable violence in the name of the concepts such as nationhood, citizenship, sovereignty. The story "The Dog of Tetwal" depicts the plight of the uprooted and displaced people and the dilemma and devastation caused by the absurd notion of nationality which provokes irrational and

inhumane actions like killing without reason in the state of confusion. In the vignettes of “Black Margins,” Manto presents the “double face of humanity” and projects human barbarism at its height. Using scathing irony, avoiding the use of an authorial voice and adopting the victim’s point of view, refraining from detailed characterizations and the use of cultural markers for his characters, Manto objectively and honestly depicts the brutal violence perpetrated by humanity that had gone mad. Blaming neither Hindus nor Muslims, he represents the cruelty of the 1947 violence with a sad understanding that there is a capacity for evil and inhumanity in all people during terrible times. The form of the short story, as the name suggests, seems to have helped him to present just the naked reality without much ado. Some of his stories are just a line or two in length describing inhuman brutality: a way of mirroring the suddenness of the violence. The compressed expression enables Manto to capture the specificity and intensity of the violence, adopting the perspective of a detached observer, and also grants him moral intensity. Thus, making him a true realist who presents the realism of Partition violence starkly.

Chapter Four

Muselmann and Humanism in Manto's Partition Stories

The catastrophic event of Partition of India in 1947 had a tremendous impact on the psychology or memory of the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. The Partition caused millions of people to migrate from their homeland to the newly formed state. The mass migration that took place during the Partition was marked by macabre communal violence tainted with murder, mass killings, rapes of women and children, abduction, mass sacrifices, arsons, loot, robbery and thuggery. The writers of this time faced a difficult challenge of how to represent the events of this time. The writers writing during this time were either witness or victims or survivors. One of the contemporary writers of this period was Saadat Hasan Manto. He was a witness, a victim as well as a survivor of Partition violence. He was uprooted from India and driven to Pakistan during Partition. His post-partition stories portray the pains, dislocations, identity crisis, up-rootedness, brutality wrecked and faced by Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims after the partition, which left them in the condition termed *Muselmann*. Manto's sympathy towards the victims of Partition who have suffered in one way or other and the effects of such circumstances on the traumatised Other could be better understood in the light of Agamben's notion of *Muselmann*, bare life and gesture which invest the victims with the agency of trauma. So, this chapter analyses Manto's Partition stories from the perspective of *Muselmann* and argues by giving agency to the Other, Manto's stories present his belief and thrust on humanism.

Manto uses the short story form as a fitting vehicle to represent the violence of 1947. In a highly balanced manner, he depicts the cruelty of human beings and the violence perpetrated by them. Unlike his contemporary writers like Chaman Nahal, Bapsi Sidhwa, he raises himself above the cultural and religious barriers of the time

and portrays the grim realities of the day. Some of his very short stories faithfully capture and mirror the sudden violent eruptions of the times. Manto's characters come from different spheres of life as he successfully captures the pain and trauma of the victims, survivors, witnesses as well as perpetrators while there are very few who are so much traumatised by the violence that it becomes difficult to differentiate whether they are dead or alive. Such characters evoke the image of bare life and *Muselmann*, which Agamben talks about in his two major works *Homo Sacer* and *Remnants of Auschwitz* respectively. He developed these notions to give voice or agency to the traumatised Other which show the other side of humanity, rationality, nationalism and sovereignty. His major concern is how the Western World views the rest as the alien Other and are indifferent towards their problems and trauma.

Giorgio's Agamben's *Homo Sacer* is the historic-philosophical analysis of the relation between politics and life. Astha Subba in her M. Phil. Dissertation explains *Homo Sacer* as "it begins with the Greek separation of *zoe* which expresses the simple face of living common to all living beings and *bios*, which indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group" (33). Further, the second part of this book deals with the enigmatic figure of homo sacer, the "sacred man," one who can be killed and not sacrificed; but can be killed with impunity (*Homo Sacer*, 25). Similarly, in *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Agamben is giving us a theory for interpreting trauma literature, of the unimaginable horrific event like the Holocaust, which talks about the living corpse and void. In this book, Agamben is theorizing both events of the Holocaust as well as developing aesthetics for such literature that represents event like the Holocaust. Agamben develops an account of an ethics of testimony as an ethos bearing witness to that for which one cannot bear witness. The key figure in his account of an ethic of testimony is that of the

Muselmanner or those in the camps who had reached such a state of physical decrepitude and existential disregard that “one hesitates to call them living: one hesitates to call their death death” (1). But rather than seeing the *Muselmann* as the limit-figure between life and death, Agamben argues that the *Muselmann* is more correctly understood as the limit-figure of humane and inhuman. As the threshold between the human and the inhuman, the *Muselmann* simply does not mark the limit beyond which the human is no longer human. The pivot which connects Agamben’s *Homo Sacer* and *Remnants of Auschwitz* is the *Muselmann*, the figure which he forwards as the exemplary case of bare life, the best example of the homo sacer. For Agamben, *Muselmann* were the living corpse (*Remnants*, 85), those to in whom “the divine spark was dead, already too empty to the horror, which makes it forever impossible to distinguish man and non-man” (*Remnants*, 20).

Agamben’s terms bare life and *Muselmann* is used to refer to subjects who are denied both the political and legal representation; and denotes a passive victim. Agamben argues that the witness writer should be passive and should let the body of *Muselmann* take the agency: “Passivity, as the form of subjectivity, is thus constitutively fractured into a purely receptive pole (the *Muselmann*) and an actively passive pole (the witness), but in such a way that this fracture never leaves itself, fully separating the two poles” (*Remnants*, 111). In order to give agency to the traumatised Other, the witness writers should refrain from contaminating writings with his/her subjectivity. By adopting the victim's point of view, Manto’s short stories silence the authorial voice and help the author objectively describe the scenes of violence. The vignettes are told in a distant third person narrative voice employing minimalist style of using few words, avoiding character development, concentrating on a short single action, and renouncing authorial intervention. Most vignettes present the point of view of

faceless, nameless characters. Even the longer short stories avoid authorial voice. “Toba Tek Singh,” for instance, presents the trauma of the dislocated millions on both sides of the border through a lunatic Bishan Singh’s point of view; “Cold Meat” presents the point of view of a Sikh young man carried away by the sinister wave of Partition violence; and “Mozel” presents the point of view of a lower class woman of dubious character. In this way, Manto moves away from contaminating his writings with his subjectivity giving agency to the Other; encompassing characters from all wake of life. In other terms, his works are the best examples of “desubjectification.”

The short story form also gives a better opportunity for the writer to make sparing use of characterization devoid of religious, ideological or cultural markers which present true representation of the Partition violence and the trauma of the victims. Manto makes no effort to describe characters in detail nor does he identify them by religion, culture, or any communal group. At the extreme of brevity and concentration, the anecdotal stories in “Black Margins” graphically paint the picture of the eruption of violence in South Asia without any descriptions or explanations. In this collection of vignettes, Manto usually refers to the characters as “a boy,” “a man,” “Kashmir laborer” (“Wages of Labor”); “a man,” “another man,” “the first man” (“Fifty-Fifty”); “two friends,” “the girl,” “the other religious community” (“A Raw Deal”); an unruly crowd of forty or fifty “lathi-wielding men,” “a frail middle-age man,” “four looters” (“Sharing the Loot”), “the passengers,” “those who belonged to the other religion,” (“Humility”) and so on. The nameless characters reflect the fact that Manto was aware about how that state relegate the Other and is indifferent towards the inhumane condition of the stateless refugee. Further, these nameless characters are examples of bare life that are denied both the political and legal representation from the state-side.

Manto successfully depicts the plight of such characters who are denied any representation of any sort from the state-side giving agency to the traumatised Other in his Partition stories. In his story “Open It!,” Manto lets the body of Sakina speak for itself. He remains passive in his testimonies giving agency to the living corpse:

The doctor looked at the body on the stretcher and felt its pulse. Then he pointed to the window and said to him, “Open it.”

The body stirred slightly on the stretcher.

The lifeless hands united the waistband.

And lowered the shalwar.

“She’s alive! My daughter’s alive!” Old Sirajuddin shouted with joy.

The doctor broke into a cold sweat. (Manto, *Black Margins*, 203)

Here, the character Sakina is the *Muselmann* in true sense as she is the victim of the partition violence. It is through Sakina’s bodily gesture of uncording of her shalwar on the command of open it even in the state of living corpse produces shock affect on the readers. She is the limit figure of the human and inhuman. *Muselmann* indicates a more fundamental distinction between human and inhuman, in which it is difficult to separate one from the other. Sakina is sure alive as she responds to the command of opening up. However, she does not respond to the joy of her father. Here the physic state of dissociation is the heavy price paid by the victim whose recovery is by no means certain. The last line shows the urgent need for empathetic care for such victims who are likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, in most cases unavailable in institutional or other forms. The senselessness of her fate is almost impossible to bear. Manto’s effort at translating the inability of his characters to comprehend their situations lends a kind of incomprehensibility to the stories

themselves. Without much narrativization, Manto transmits the trauma through the short story form as if the form were the objective correlative of their situation.

“Toba Tek Singh” is another finest story of Manto. The story focuses on the pains and trauma of a sympathy-inducing figure caused due to Partition. The lunatic Bishan Singh is Manto’s supreme hero: the uprooted man, the man robbed of home, the victim of partition, who wins a strip of land of all his own only in death. The story is about a male character, Bishan Singh who is an inmate in the mental asylum in Pakistan. This story captures the plight of confused human beings due to the forced dislocation from their native land. Singh is known as Toba Tek Singh named after the village Singh belonged to. The name of an individual becomes synonymous after the place he belongs to. He wants to know where Toba Tek Singh lies. But no one can tell for sure where it lies. He rejects the verdict of the politicians to be divided between India and Pakistan. During the exchange program, he refuses to cross the border after he learns that his village Toba Tek Singh is in Pakistan. Instead, he prefers to die on a strip of no man’s land rather than to leave his home town:

Just before sunrise, a deafening cry erupted from the throat of a mute and immovable Bishan Singh. Several officials rushed to the spot and found that the man, who had remained on his legs, day and night for fifteen years, was now lying on his face. Over there, behind the barbed wire, was Hindustan. Over here, behind identical wires, lay Pakistan. In between, on a bit of land that had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh.

(Manto, *Black Margins*, 220)

This heart rendering ending of the death of Singh who is the victim of state policy show the indifference of state towards the stateless refugees. Singh falls into the category of bare life. He is also *Muselmann* in a sense that he is denied any agency by

the state. More importantly, he is not a survivor who could testify. Similarly, the gesture of death of TobaTek Singh on no man's land is "means without an end" as it is the only way of showing resistance against the state policy which is so cold and hostile towards refugees. Both Agamben and Derrida argue that the so called sovereign state is itself the creator and violator of the human rights; and the root of refugee problem lies in the trinity of nation, state and territory (*Means*, 22-3). They are against the notion of sovereignty, nationhood and citizenship as these notions becomes the hindrances on the path of human rights and humanity.

Manto's another story "Cold Meat" depicts the transformation of Ishar Singh from hot-blooded to cold person. The transformation becomes possible as sense of shame develops in Singh. The realisation of his action of stooping low to the level of animal- copulating the corpse makes the transformation possible. The nameless Muslim girl is the victim of Partition. In the frenzy of Partition violence, Singh along with his mob are in a rampant six days spree of looting and murder tries to rape a young Muslim girl. Singh becomes disillusioned when he learns that young Muslim girl is already dead. This realisation and shock leads to his impotency. When he is unable to make love to his hot-blooded mistress Kulwant Kaur, arouses suspicion that he might have relation with another woman. When he is unable to give satisfactory answer to Kaur, in the burst of anger, she stabs him and wounds him. He admits that his former action of trying to copulate the dead girl has rendered him impotent. His confession reveals the depths of evils human can commit on fellow being.

The nameless Muslim girl in the story is *Muselmann*. She is the victim of Partition violence. One cannot think or make sense of the trauma she had to endure at the hands of perpetrators. She was also witness to the murder of her family members and had been passed over so many men and exposed to violence that Singh himself is

at loss on whether she was dead or alive. In this story, Manto has captured the trauma of the perpetrator. In the events like Partition, it is not only victims and survivors that go through traumatic experiences, the witness and perpetrators also suffer. Subba states “People like Ishar Singh, who with impunity and fearless of state’s persecution go on pillaging and killing spree where people from another community have little or no importance to them (*Biopolitical*, 47).

Manto is deeply traumatised by human’s indifferent attitude towards the Other and the human capacity for evils. In Partition prose, one can find *Muselmann* everywhere. Whether it be Sakina or Toba Tek Singh or the nameless Muslim girl, Manto successfully presents the true macbre violence of Partition by investing agency to the traumatised Other. Manto does not let his subjectivity interfere with his writings. For Manto, *Muselmann* is the living dead or the ultimate witness, whose testimony would be valuable but who cannot bear witness.

Agamben calls the survivor-witness as ultimately bearing witness to the *Muselmann*. In “Cold Meat”, it is through the witness and perpetrator Ishan Singh that brings the story of the nameless victim and the effects of such bestiality to the fore. In “Open It!”, the doctor bears witness to the predatoriness of the volunteers and the trauma of Sakina. Due to Partition, many people have become the limit figure between life and death, between human and nonhuman, and it is people who without the fear of persecution reduce them to *Muselmann*. Thus making Manto’s Partition stories true and authentic representation of the macbre violence which invests the victims with the agency of their trauma.

The erasure of geographical, political and national boundaries contributes to the unprecedented neutrality of Manto’s writing in the history of Partition literature. He takes no sides: he writes neither as a Pakistani nor as a Hindustani. Manto does not

recognize the imposition of any political boundary. His characters “travel across blank geographical space” (Bhalla, *Politics*, 33). Hence we find his rapists to be Indians and Pakistanis, Hindus/Sikhs and Muslims, and his victims too come from both communities and countries. A Sikh, Ishar Singh, in “Cold Meat” rapes a Muslim girl, but in “Khol Do,” Muslim volunteers themselves rape a helpless Muslim girl. Even the trains raided in his stories could belong to either India or Pakistan. A few lines from “Humility” defy not only the sense of place but also erase national and religious-cultural markers: “The moving train was forcibly brought to a halt. Those who belonged to the other religion were dragged out and killed with swords and bullets. The rest of the passengers were treated to 'halva', fruits and milk”. (Manto, *Black Margin*, 186). Without pinpointing whether the passengers were Hindus or Muslims, Manto simply refers to them as “those who belonged to the other religion.” The following lines from “Sorry,” quoted earlier, provide an instance of Manto’s objectivity at his neutral best: “The knife slashed his stomach all the way to his naval. His pajama cord was severed. Words of regret escaped from the knife-wielder's tongue: ‘Tsch, tsch, tsch, tsch...I have made a mistake!’” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 186). The victim here has no identity. He is left unacknowledged and “merely strays into a lethal historical time” (Bhalla, *Dance*, 22) transcending all communities, beliefs, nationalities, and culture.

Manto is “neither a moralist nor an ideologue, neither a sermonizer nor a nationalist” (Bhalla, *Politics*, 37). He writes neither to teach nor to preach, and so he prescribes nothing and proscribes nothing (Joshi, *World*, 157). Manto “blames no one, but he also forgives no one.” (Bhalla, *Dance*, 22). Without sparing either side—India or Pakistan—he represents the breakdown of trust, the atmosphere of suspicion and paranoia, the hostility and rigidity of thought that percolates down even to the

common man. He only portrays what his observant eyes see around him, and what he sees is a civilization gone mad. He presents the picture of humanity gone wild with unprecedented candour, courage and objectivity, particularly in his very short stories.

Manto retained a strong attachment to the land of his birth. Often he had the feeling that he was trapped in between India and Pakistan. However, he shows no nationalist bias in his writing, perhaps because of his love-hate relationship with the countries, his diasporic life, and his existence in Pakistan with “double-consciousness.” In fact, Manto’s plight was no different from that of the dog of Titwal or of Bishan Singh. He lived in Pakistan as an exile. Partition of the country deeply pained him.

Manto was much pained by the killings in the name of religion. Organized religions such as Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam did not interest him much, although he knew that they were deeply ingrained in human heart and could not be wiped out by guns and bullets. After killing hundreds of thousands of Hindus and Muslims, people can still see both religions “alive and well.” No one, in Manto’s opinion, can destroy or kill anybody’s religion even by killing the person physically: as Mumtaz says, “assuming that he was a Muslim, you wouldn’t have killed his Muslimness, but him” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 171). Therefore, in Manto’s view, killing millions in the name of religion is meaningless.

Manto stands apart from his contemporaries in his belief in and his deep love for humanity. Despite the portrayal of human violence at its worst, Manto never lost hope in humanity, and always found a space to include the fact in his stories. In his writings, he refuses to look at people as Hindus, Muslims, Christian or Sikhs, or as Hindustanis or Pakistanis. To Manto, “they were all human beings” (Hassan, *Selected Stories*, xii-xiii).

Significantly, despite being cynical, Manto has full faith in humanity (Jalal 24). As a humanist of highest order, he seems to say that humanity is still beautiful despite its ugliness. Leslie Flemming quotes Aksari who says, “Man, even in his real shape, is acceptable to Manto, however he may be. He has already seen that man’s humanity is tenacious enough so that even his becoming a wild animal cannot extinguish this humanity. Manto has confidence in humanity (“Riots” 101). “Cold Meat” foregrounds the trauma of Ishar Singh, the perpetrator of violence. At the end of the story, Ishar Singh has become an ice-cold lump of flesh--having sexual intercourse with the dead body of a Muslim girl. “She . . . she was dead...a corpse . . . a lump of cold flesh. *Jaani*, give me your hand. Kalwant Kaur placed her hand on his. It was colder than ice.” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 211) The ending suggests that Ishar Singh is transformed into the state of a human being from the state of a vampire. He is shaken to the core at his own bestiality and impotency. The shock not only awakens the humane quality in the perpetrator but also helps him in “working through” the trauma. This is evidenced in Ishar Singh’s request to Kalwant in a “heartrending tone” not to swear at the other woman: “Don’t call her a bitch” (209). He is repentant of his earlier misdeeds.

A further proof of the realization of his mistake is that Ishar Singh twice utters the following words: “Man is a damned mother fucking creature” (209). Ishar Singh is shown not totally depraved of moral qualities and the sense of right and wrong. Manto thus shows the redeeming qualities at least in the recognition of human values in Ishar Singh.

Through the following passage in “Toba Tek Singh,” Manto more clearly shows the essential goodness of humanity. The speaker here is Fazal Deen, Bishan Singh’s old Muslim friend from Toba Tek Singh. He has come to see his friend

Bishan Singh in jail after Partition and the expulsion of the latter's family to India.

Fazal Deen says:

Give my salaams to brother Balbeer Singh and brother Vadwa Singh and to sister Amrit Kaur, too. Tell brother Balbeer Singh that Fazal Deen is happy. The two brown buffaloes he left here have both calved, one male calf and the other a female that died six days after birth. And tell me if there is anything that I can do for you. I'm always at your service. And here I've brought some home-made sweets for you.

(Manto, *Black Margins*, 218)

Here, Manto conveys the sense of human love, warmth and the intimate sense of fellow-feeling. Fazal Deen's concern for his Sikh friend goes beyond the narrow confines of religious and national boundaries. With all his powerful depictions of violence, he does not forget to awaken the slumbering humanity or the humanity gone mad at the time of crisis.

Humanity itself was Manto's religion and faith. He did not believe in any religion except humanity. The organized religions such as Hinduism, Islam, or Christianity were "infections" for him. In "Saha'e," Mumtaz remarks: "By Religion, I don't mean this religion, nor this dharma, which afflicts ninety nine per cent of us. I rather mean that very special thing which sets one individual apart from all others, the special thing which shows that someone is truly a human being" (Manto, *Black Margins*, 172). This belief of Mumtaz well sums up the idea of Manto's religion of humanity.

Manto exhibits his subalternist politics by making the marginal characters his centre of attention. These characters "are impoverished, dispossessed and

disenfranchised members of society—prostitutes, beggars, coolies and tonga drivers.”(Alter, *Madness*, 95) Ishar Singh, Mozel, Sirajuddin, Sakina, Juggal, Saha’e—all belong to the lower strata of society. Saha’e is a pimp and Mozel engages in sexually promiscuous activities. Even though Bishan Singh is a landlord, he is mad and living in an asylum. Clearly, Manto invests moral strength in these poor and dispossessed characters. Actually, their moral character outshines that of the so called upper class people in the society. Ishar Singh feels great compunction after he realizes that he has copulated with the body of a dead woman. Although a free-style girl of dubious virtue, Mozel demonstrates her real love for her Sikh lover Trilochan. At the end of the story, she sacrifices her life for him and his fiancée, Kirpal Kaur. She disarms a policeman and a potential murderer, and when she lies dying, she urges Trilochan to take his turban with him so that the chaste Kirpal Kaur will not discover the shortness of his hair. Through Mozel’s courage and sacrifice, Manto asserts his hopeful idea that amidst the scenes of violence of loot and murder, individuals are capable of great sacrifice for others.

“Saha’e” recounts the story of Saha’e, a “die hard” Hindu pimp, who is “a wonderful man” because of his humanity. Though professionally he is a procurer of girls, he takes care of all their day-to-day requirements, arranges holidays for them on their respective religious days, helps them save money for future, and sacrifices his life to help Sultana, a poor Muslim prostitute. He dies helping her at the hands of Muslim mob but without blaming anybody but the “bad times.” Manto makes the humanity of this subaltern character shine when Juggal, a Hindu friend of the narrator says, “How I wish I were Saha’e’s spirit” (Manto, *Black Margins*, 176). Juggal says this with a desire to give company to his Muslim friend Mumtaz who was leaving India for Pakistan. In a sense, Partition violence made it possible for some individuals,

even in the lower levels of society to act in ways that showed great courage and sacrifice.

Actually, the morality and humanity of these people very often exceed that of the people from the so-called respectable world. Clearly Manto's sympathies lie with subaltern characters like Saha'e and Mozel. However, since he is neither a didactic nor a sentimental writer, Manto writes not with the aim of appealing to the emotion of his readers, but in order to arouse their intellect. Manto may be seen to write "with a view towards not only questioning the majority discourse about them [the subalterns] but also subverting it." (Assduddin, *Black Margins*, 25) The sacrifice of a character such as Mozel, and the camaraderie of Bishan Singh with Fazal Dee can provide instances of cross-faith human solidarity and point to the enlightened ethical vision that Manto possessed. Together with these instances, the tragic death of Bishan Singh in no-man's land, Sakina's reflexive action of untying the waistband at the command of male voice, the positive transformation in Isher Singh from the state of a "hot iron" to that of an "ice-cold substance," have the power to prompt readers, witness, and survivors to question not only the establishment history and historians but to change their own attitude toward the violence of 1947. Manto brings a moral vision to this project; he does not try to "perpetuate the cycle of revenge and recrimination through general accusations;" (Alter, *Madness*, 93) he rather shows the horrible sight of violence so that people understand its nature and consequence.

In the tradition of Partition literature, we generally observe that writers try to blame either one community or another for the eruption of violence. Most writers in India blame the Pakistani side and the Pakistanis blame their Indian counterparts. Often those who find it wiser to blame neither the Hindus nor Muslims, neither India nor Pakistan, put the entire blame on the British administration. Manto does not do so.

He does not specify any one group to castigate (Bhalla, *Dance*, 28). He blames all, sparing none. All are objects of his ironic indignation: Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Indians, Pakistanis, and British.

Thus, Manto's stories present his thrust on humanism as his writings are free of blame. He does not blame any specific group but all which reflects his responsibility. His sympathy lies with the subaltern. His characters belong to the poor, downtrodden, low section of the society. Further, he invests moral strength on poor and marginalised characters; they are the centre of attention. Humanity is a new religion for Manto as he did not like institutionalised religion. Despite the fact that Partion violence showed the Other side of humanity, personally he never gave hope and found a way to voice his humanity in his writings.

Chapter Five

Conclusion: Manto: True Humanist and Responsible Writer

The Partition of India in 1947 entailed violent uprooting and indiscriminate killings of many innocent people. It was a turning point in the history of the subcontinent which gave rise to sectarianism and large-scale disbelief in the Other in both countries. This dissertation has focused on Saadat Hasan Manto's partition stories set during and after the partition. Manto's stories depict and voice the agonies of the marginalised sections of the society who suffered the most during partition: poor, women, children, outcast, prostitutes, pimps, etc. In addition, Manto successfully depicts human being's inhumanity and irrationality to his fellow human being.

Any attempt to fathom the murderous hatred that erupted with such devastating effect at the time of the British retreat from the subcontinent, Manto remarked, had to begin with an exploration of human nature itself (Jalal). This was not a value judgement. It was a statement of what he had come to believe after keen observation and extended introspection. Shaken by the repercussions of the political decision to break up the unity of the subcontinent, Manto wondered if people who only recently were friends, neighbours and compatriots had lost all sense of their humanity. He too was a human being, "the same human being who raped mankind, who indulged in killing" and had "all those weaknesses and qualities that other human beings have" (Jalal 23). Yet human depravity, however pervasive and deplorable, could not kill all sense of humanity. With faith in that kind of humanity, Manto wrote riveting short stories about the human tragedy of 1947 that are internationally acknowledged for representing the plight of displaced and terrorised humanity with exemplary impartiality and empathy. Manto's characters embody his humanism. It is

through his characters like Saha'e, Bishan Singh, Ishar Singh and Mozel, Manto's humanism is reflected. His sympathy lies with the marginalised section who suffered the most during partition.

Manto's Partition stories are a must read for anyone interested in the personal dimensions of India's division and the creation of Pakistan. Pieced together from close observations of the experiences of ordinary people at the moment of a traumatic rupture, his stories are not only unsurpassable in literary quality but records of rare historical significance. There is more to Manto than his Partition stories to be sure, but there is no denying his remarkable feat in plumbing the psychological depths of an epic dislocation with telling insight, sensitivity and even-handedness. He did not create demons out of other communities to try and absolve himself of responsibility for the moral crisis posed by the violence of Partition. As a humanist, he rejected narrow-minded bigotry and refused to let distinctions of religion or culture interfere with his writings and understanding of inhumane macbre violence of the Partition. Further, Manto does not blame any particular group which reflects his humanism.

This dissertation has drawn on Giorgio Agamben's concepts of bare life, *Muselmann* and agency to present Manto's impartial representation and treatment of the communal violence. Manto anticipates Sakina, the nameless Muslim girl, and Toba Tek Singh as the representatives of what Agamben terms as *Muselmann* as they are the victims of the partition violence which has rendered them as a living corpse and relegated them to the status of bare life. Manto allows the body of *Muselmann* take the agency and remains passive in his writings by appealing to the universal morality. Manto's minimal narrativization allows him to remain passive in his writing, thus giving the agency to the traumatised victims. It is through the gesture of

Muselmann in his stories that brings forth the true and authentic representation of the horrific events of Partition violence. Partition caused mass migration creating a flow of refugees on both sides. The characters represented as refugees are the examples of bare life, and the body of *Muselmann* becomes the contested site where state plays politics rendering them non-human and even stripping them of the fundamental human right.

This dissertation has also borrowed Derridean concepts such as forgiveness, cosmopolitanism, and rogue to show the nature of banality and human ability to act inhumanely to the Other with whom they live hinting that hospitality, democracy and responsibility to the Other is yet to come in a true sense. Like Agamben, Derrida opines that the state is the greatest violator of human rights. The concepts of sovereignty, nationhood, citizenship are presented as hindrances for humanity and promotion of human rights. Further, the “autoletic” nature of democracy creates an identitarian self which is destructive for humanity. The stories “Cold Meat,” “Toba Tek Singh” and “The Dog of Tetwal” show the destructive side of state and capture the arbitrariness of borders and boundaries that divide people, history and cultures. Manto has successfully articulated the Other side of humanity.

This dissertation has also presented the writer’s need to be responsible to the Other for true representation of the senseless communal violence and capture the trauma of the victims which aids to the promotion of human right and for the sake of humanity. Manto assumes the political responsibility for the crimes and evils committed by humans on fellow beings. In this sense, Manto embodies the true spirit of Levinasian-Derridean humanism which shows his responsibility and concern to-and-for the Other. Manto is all too aware of double face of humanity and the ability of

human for evils. His stories capture the essence of Arendtean theory of responsibility which argues that the predicament of common responsibility lies in the double face of humanity which calls for common responsibility on part of human beings through the sense of shame. Through the evocation of sense of shame in Ishar Singh, Manto is breeding optimism that there is hope in the future.

Thus, through the above analysis of Manto's Partition stories, this dissertation proves Manto's stories are true and authentic representation of the macbre violence which invests the victims with the agency of their trauma. This leads to conclusion that Manto is a true humanist and responsible writer who does not turn blind to the macbre violence but assumes a political responsibility for the crimes and evils committed against human beings.

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