

Women Victims Of Partition In The Works Of Saadat Hasan Manto

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Abstract

Writers of all generations have explored the role of women towards the family, society and country. Role of women have also expanded with time. Where earlier role of a woman was supposed to make rotis in the kitchen and take care of the children and other family members, now women are taking up job and businesses of any kind which were previously handled by men only. Men always dominated the societies and women had no right to take the big decisions for the families. Even women did not have the rights over their own lives. They had to follow the decisions of the males in their families. For centuries, patriarchal system ruled the societies. As the time progressed and societies evolved, voiced were being raised against this suppression of the other gender. Intellectuals and thinkers, social reformers, and writers have played an important role in bringing social reforms in the society and curbing the evils prevailed. Writers like Saadat Hasan Manto, Ismat Chughtai, Amrita Pritam, and many other writers have wrote explored the female characters in their stories and novels.

Keywords: Social Reforms, Patriarchal Society.

Saadat Hasan Manto has written many stories keeping women characters in the center. Manto has explored the status of women at that time through his stories. Manto was a Pakistani writer who had to shift to Pakistan after the partition of the two countries in 1947 at the time of independence. He opposed the partition on the basis of religion and never wanted to leave India. His family was an orthodox Muslim belief, but he never believed in the religion with

conservative thoughts. He always believed in leading a pleasurable life. He was involved in drinking alcohol, gambling and other habits which were against the conservative religious belief.

His stories revolved around the massacre and oppression of partition when riots broke out. He wrote these stories centering around women who were exploited sexually and murdered with brutality. There was no escape from this cruel and heartless deeds. Manto has felt no shame in exposing these horror deeds of religious haters against other community.

He showed an utmost courage in exploring the inhuman deeds of rape and molestation. The story of inhumanness was explored in Khol Do. In which Sirajuddin and his family moving to Pakistan from India and got trapped among the miscreants and the riot breakers. Her wife was killed brutally and his small daughter is missing. She was found later on half dead on the railway track. It seemed that she was raped many a times and her tortured body was found by some people and take to the hospital. His another short story Kali Shawar also explored the same inhumanity and oppression. Manto also wrote stories on the pitiful life of prostitutes and the women who are forcefully thrown into the skin business.

Manto has shown utmost courage in unveiling the horror of the story, even self-critically, as the scene of action was in Pakistan and the victim was Muslim, as he was unconcerned here as to who are the perpetrators of the crime and who is the victim. Such things happened on both sides of the border. Here the question before him was of humanity, of womanhood. It brings to our mind a famous line from Kaji Nazrul Islam's poetry, "Hindu or Muslim, Who's asking? / Tell them that drowning is man /The son of my mother." (Kandari Hushiar or Helsman be alert)While Manto had shown utmost courage in bringing out the true and immediate result of partition, the hollowness and nakedness of the policy and activities of the coloniser and the governments. The

government in his country brought charges of pornography against him signifying the irony of fate of the nations and governments. (Mukhopadhyay P.3)

Manto was ahead of his other contemporary writers. His style of exploring the characters was amazingly impressive. He had the vision to explore the minute details of the characters, especially females.

CONCLUSION: Women were shown as mostly victim of situation or the riots created by humans. Saadat Hasan Manto impressively explored the characters in his short stories. Some of his stories are even remembered today because of his style. Stories like Toba Tek Singh which was a satirical comment on partition, Thanda Gosht, Atish Paray and others. He was also accused of obscenity in his writings. The way he mentioned the nudity and private female parts he brought defamation to his name. He was tried a few times and cases were registered against him. His stories and detailing of the characters seemed somewhat obsessed with female body parts. Apart from these allegations, some of his created characters remain timeless and interesting. Today's literary researchers refer to his style of writing and the detailing he used explore in his writing.

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