
The Outlook: Journal of English Studies

[A Peer-Reviewed, Open Access Journal; Indexed in NepJOL]
ISSN: 2565-4748 (Print); ISSN: 2773-8124 (Online); JPPS Star-Ranked Journal
Published by Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus
Tribhuvan University, Pokhara, Nepal
<http://ejournals.pncampus.edu.np/ejournals/outlook/>

The Prose of Otherness and Humanity: Representing Partition Violence in Sahni’s “The Train Has Reached Amritsar” and Manto’s “Mozel”

Pabitra Raj Baral 

Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara, Nepal

Article History: Submitted 25 Jan. 2023; Reviewed 24 June 2023; Revised 3 July 2023

Corresponding Author: Pabitra Raj Baral, Email: pr.bral321@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/ojes.v14i1.56657>

Abstract

Representation of partition violence of 1947 in the South Asian context has gained a renewed interest of scholars in line of trauma theory in the recent years. As such, partition fiction has contributed to resolving the trauma of the communal cataclysm by capturing the specificity of violence as the fragments of memory. However, writers use different strategies and prose styles to depict the violence. This paper aims to examine the depiction of cultural trauma and the prose of othering in “The Train Has Reached Amritsar” by Bhisam Sahni and, contrastingly, the prose of humanity in “Mozel” by Saadat Hasan Manto. It analyzes the stories in light of the cultural trauma theory of Jeffrey C. Alexander and Ron Eyerman, Avishai Margalit’s concept of memory and Gynendra Pandey’s new historiography of revisionist mode. To interpret the texts, the study uses the method of textual analysis. It also brings in the critics’ evaluation of the texts where necessary. The findings of the study emphasize that Sahani’s prose attempts to resolve the problem of trauma by appealing to identity politics grounded on ethical memory and Manto’s narrative, in contrast, employs a formal technique of metairony to evoke the readers’ moral sense and humanity at large.

Keywords: Trauma, partition violence, otherness, humanity, memory, metairony, historiography

Introduction

Indian partition of 1947, including its aftermath, illustrates the massiveness of communal violence, followed by the trauma in the Indian subcontinent. Remembering of the rupture is necessary for the traumatized people to come out of the burden of their trauma and live in communal harmony, peace and co-existence. While the official historiography fails to remember the violence, literature of partition captures its specificity and intensity in the form of fragmented memory. The fictional works make an honest effort to resolve the trauma of readers including the survivors and their succeeding generations as well as all vicarious witnesses. However, the modality of the

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representation of the cataclysm and the process of resolution of trauma differ from authors to authors. As real witnesses to the violence, the partition authors Bhisam Sahni and Saadat Hasan Manto write from the subaltern perspective depicting objectively the plight of the common people. Born in Rawalpindi, Sahni migrated to India when the formal creation of Pakistan was announced. Manto, on the other hand, moved from India to Pakistan after the partition. Sahni belongs to the Hindu community and Manto to the Muslim. I have chosen two stories—“The Train Has Reached Amritsar” by Sahni and “Mozel” by Manto—to explore their contrasting prose styles in representing violence of 1947 and resolving the trauma. This article examines how Sahni’s story uses the prose of otherness appealing to ethical sense as a strategy for solidifying his Hindu community and how Manto’s work exemplifies the prose of human dimension through a technique of metairony evoking a moral sense and humanity at large. Sahni’s representation, which projects the Hindus as “Us” and the Muslims as “Them,” is likely to beget the motive of revenge and cycle of violence in future whereas Manto’s call for humanity, based on a moral awakening, rises above the politics of identity.

In analyzing the modes of representation of the violence in the selected texts, this study brings in Jeffrey C. Alexander and Ron Eyerman’s theory of cultural trauma, Margalit’s concept of memory and Gyanendra Pandey’s revisionist history. The theory of cultural trauma is drawn upon to understand how the stories embody a cultural trauma of communal rampage of 1947 in India and how they work through it. Defining the cultural trauma, Jeffrey C. Alexander states: “Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways” (1). In the context of partition, the cultural trauma is located in the psyche of the rival communities — the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim, whose engagement in the communal violence constitutes the trauma. Ron Eyerman distinguishes the cultural trauma from the psychological or physical one:

As opposed to psychological or physical trauma, which involves a wound and the experience of great emotional anguish by an individual, cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion. (61)

While a psychological trauma embodies a wound in an individual’s psychic, a cultural trauma threatens collective identity of a cultural group. Thus, there is a tendency of repairing the cultural trauma by patching up the tear in the collective fabric by “naming [blaming] and punishing those who caused the damaged” (Eyerman 41). Both the stories attempt to solve the survivor-readers’ cultural trauma of the partition violence, but the manner of repairing the trauma differs. Sahni’s story repairs the trauma of Hindus, as represented by Babu, by blaming the Muslims for the violence and punishing with revenge. But, Manto’s modality differs from that of Sahni. Rather than blaming a certain cultural group, his story appeals to humanity on the whole by transmitting the trauma of the characters to the readers.

Avishai Margalit’s theory of memory is incorporated to analyze the mode of remembering the horrendous partition in the stories. Since the trauma cannot be totally forgotten, its memory can help solve the problem of trauma and recover the peace of mind. He argues that “making the traumatic, repressed communal memories open, explicit, and conscious is said to have healing power . . . [and] gain peace of mind” (5). Distinguishing between two kinds of memory, ethical and moral, he argues that most memory is ethical based on “thick relations” and moral memory, on the other hand, is guided by “thin relations.” In connection to identity politics “ethical relations involve

partiality—that is, favoring a person or a group over others with equal moral claim” (87). Ethical memory serves the interest of a group. The prose of “The Train Has Reached Amritsar” evokes an ethical memory based on thick relations favoring the Hindus over Muslims. Margalit further states: “Thin relations, on the other hand, are backed by the attribute of being human” (7). He postulates that “when those crimes [against humanity] are an attack on the very notion of shared humanity” moral sense of memory should be aroused (9). The prose of “Mozel” evokes a moral memory rooted on “thin relations” and the shared humanity in portraying the ferocity of violence.

The study draws on Gyanendra Pandey’s revisionist history to analyze how the selected stories capture the specificity of violence from the subaltern perspective against the line of official historiography. Official history, to quote Pandey, “tends to exclude the dimensions of force [of violence], uncertainty, domination and disdain, loss and confusion, by normalizing the struggle, evacuating it of its messiness . . . [as] a new constitutional political arrangement” (*Remembering Partition* 4-5, 7). Failing to record the intensity of violence, it normalizes the cataclysm as a political settlement. The old history only provides the political context and causes of violence. Critiquing the historians’ history that fails to “examine the massive violence that accompanied (constituted) Partition, and the experiences and emotions of the people involved in or affected by it,” he emphasizes on the role of fictional writing in “constructing the memory of Partition and other themes that have been suppressed and (at least, publicly) forgotten” (“Prose of Otherness” 205, 215). Partition fiction, as a form of revisionist history, can represent objectively the intensity of the cataclysm of 1947. Revisionist subaltern historians such as Reetu Menon and Kamala Bhasin also admit: “The importance of literary . . . material for an understanding of Partition has now been acknowledged” (8). Pandey admits that despite capturing the intensity of violence from the perspective of revisionist history, majority of partition works use the prose of otherness in the line of “historians’ history [that] tends to produce a prose of Otherness in its account of ‘mass,’ and more especially, mass sectarian Violence” (“Prose of Otherness” 213). In this connection, Sahni’s story reflects the instances of violence attributing the violence to the Muslims other through the prose of otherness in the line of nationalist history of India. Challenging this tendency of herorizing one cultural group and villainizing the other, Manto’s “Mozel,” on the other hand, evidences extremities wrecked upon the marginalized women during the Bombay riot of 1947 through a prose of moral appeal.

By incorporating the analytical and interpretative approaches and the technique of close reading of the selected texts, the study achieves its objective. Its major finding covers the proposition that in representing the partition violence and its trauma, the authors use different prose styles—Sahni’s narrative of otherness and Manto’s prose of human perspective—in their stories. The following discussion of Sahni’s story explores his tilt toward the Hindu community as implied in his prose of othering in depicting the violence.

Otherness in “The Train Has Reached Amritsar”

In “The Train Has Reached Amritsar,” Sahni depicts an instance of communal violence on a train and its subsequent counter-violence using the prose of otherness. He favors the Hindu and criticizes the Muslims. The real violence is mediated through a prose that projects “the fundamental opposition between [Hindus] Us and [Muslims] Them” (G. Pandey “The Prose of Otherness” 197). In the story, the train—going from Peshawar to Delhi at a time when the formal announcement of the creation of Pakistan has just been made—carries mostly refugee passengers, especially the Hindus and Sikhs

who have been displaced during the communal violence that breaks out in Muslim dominated areas of undivided Punjab. The narrator, the three Muslim Pathans: a Hindu Babu, a Sikh Sardarji and an old woman are the major characters in the story. Sahni's story "illuminates a moment of horror" in which a Pathan kicks down a Hindu woman and throws out the luggage of the Hindu refugees in Wazirabad station, a Muslim-dominated part, and its retaliatory violence by a Hindu Babu on a Muslim in Amritsar station, a Hindu-populated area before the partition (Gnanamony 123). He narrates the events of violence that occur suddenly during the journey as a revisionist historian. However, conforming to the line of nationalist history, his prose portrays the Pathans as the other and object of fear, but sanitizes the revengeful attack of the Babu as an outcome of necessity. Sahni was a Hindu displaced from Rawalpindi to India. Thus, his narrative denounces the Muslims as the violence-mongers who have originated the riot first. "The Train Has Reached Amritsar," as a work of the partition violence, "functions as a memory to settle old scores rather than a way to escape from the cycle of communal violence" (B. Pandey 126). The author's ethical tilt toward his Hindu community justifies the retaliatory move of the Babu who patches the tear in the cultural identity of Hindus. From the perspective of the aesthetics of violence and trauma, this kind of prose instigates a wrong way of repairing trauma through the motive of revenge: the retribution that panders the never-lasting cycle of violence.

As an attempt to solidify his Hindu identity, Sahni's prose attributes violence and wrongdoing to the Muslims as the enemy other. From the very beginning of the story, the author presents the Pathans as irrational and provoking. Insulting the Hindu identity of the Babu and teasing his physical weakness, one of the Pathans forces him to eat meat against his will: "Here, Babu eat. You will become strong like us. Your wife will be pleased. Eat it, dalkhor. You are weak because you only eat dal. . . . Oh, son of swine, no one will know. We won't tell your wife. If you share meat with us, we'll drink dal with you" (2). They taunt Babu about his thin body. Babu, who is already traumatized by his displacement from his homeland, cannot resist and simply refuses to eat by shaking his head and smiling. Sahni presents him to be calm, innocent and tolerating unless he feels a complete shock to his cultural identity. However, the Pathans are stereotypically portrayed to be aggressive and irrational throughout the story.

The author attributes violence to the Muslims other in the story. In line of the official historiography, the discourse of othering is ascribed to the other as Gyanendra Pandey opines, "Violence is, in this discourse, always 'out there' . . . assigning such violence to the realm of the Other" ("Prose of Otherness" 205). The Pathans are shown to be stirring up the trouble by kicking a Hindu woman and abusing her husband in the compartment and throwing their luggage. The incident occurs at the Wazirabad station, when a poor looking Hindu refugee, in dirty and tattered clothes, enters the compartment with his thin frayed wife and a young daughter. The following narrative depicts the scene of violence inside the compartment being ascribed to the Pathans:

But the Pathan sitting on the lower berth yelled, "Get out of here! Can't you see there is no room" Blind with rage, he suddenly got up and tried to kick the man. Unfortunately, he missed him, and the kick landed on the wife's stomach. She screamed with pain and collapsed on the floor . . . [T]he Pathan sitting on the upper berth lost his patience and yelled, "Throw him out! Who does he think he is?! The Pathan sitting on the lower berth got up and threw the man's trunk out of the door of the compartment. It fell at the feet of a coolie in a red uniform. (3-4)

In this incidence of violence, in which the Pathans mercilessly abuse and attack a Hindu family, showing even no sensitivity to women, the Muslims are tagged as barbaric,

quarrelsome, inhuman, cruel and pitiless other. Instead of realizing their wrongdoing, they force the family to go out of the train, even if the man shows his ticket. The old woman, who shows her sympathy for the victims, blames for the ruthlessness of the Pathans, for instance: “You are cruel people—that was an awful thing to have done. . . . There is no pity left in your hearts. He had a young daughter. You are cruel, pitiless people. You pushed them out” (4). The Hindu victims are pathetically and innocently portrayed that would gain sympathy from the readers. Sahni’s representation, thus, imputes that violence completely to the part of Muslims demonizing them.

The moment of rupture, then, is given political color changing instantly the environment inside the compartment. The Pathans are feared by all passengers. Gynendra Pandey posits that the “tension and conflict between Hindus and Muslims, or groups [is] quickly identified as ‘Hindus’ and ‘Muslims’” (206). After the violent incident, the whole atmosphere changes suddenly since the passengers take it as a communal assault. The narrative unfolds the fear of all passengers, especially the non-Muslims:

Babu’s face was pale and his forehead was covered with sweat. He looked deathly pale. I realized that each passenger was nervous and suspicious of his neighbor. The Sardarji got up from his seat and sat down next to me. The Pathan on the lower berth climbed up to join his two companions on the upper berth. . . . The Pathans became less tense while the silence amongst the Hindus and Sikhs became ominous. (4-5)

Especially, the Hindu and Sikhs get scared of the Pathans because they feel that the latter may attack them anytime. Sunhaib Izhar observes: “[H]ow a journey . . . changed its perspective so swiftly as when religion was added to it. The change of perspective in this journey happens with the Muslim throwing out a poor Hindu man out of the train and later in Amritsar the Babu does the same” (8). The fun of the journey turns to hatred and revenge when the politics of religion enters. All passengers’ psyche is filled with communal consciousness and contempt for the other. The sentiment of communal groupism can easily be seen as the Pathans sit together and others look quite suspicious of them.

Outside situation, which is also tense and riotous, affects the ambience inside the train. The horrifying scenes of the “flames leaping out of the clouds of smoke that rose above the city,” and scared people at the platforms also change the setting in the compartment into something tense (4). A mushqee’s information at the next station that “there has been a communal riot and many people have been killed” makes the Babu “so terrified that he jumped from his seat and lay down flat on the floor” even if the train moves” (5). Seeing his tensed face, dry lips and helpless condition, the Pathans again start insulting him with the words of abuse. Now, there occurs a complete sense of communal hatred and motive of revenge. Pondering upon how the external communal riots shape and reinforce the individual’s communal consciousness and sense of revenge, Harris Khalique argues: “The story encapsulates how larger events impact individual consciousness. The possibility of using violence as a tool to exact revenge for some real or perceived event or idea is entirely dependent on external circumstances.” As the violence inside and outside is now politicized, the passengers look frenzy, distrustful and suspicious in no time. Every unusual behavior is now labeled as the communal disposition.

As a victim of the abused Hindu community, the Babu is determined to take revenge upon the perpetrators blaming them as being responsible for the abuse of and violence upon the Hindus. He wants to repair the damage by punishing the Pathans by a retaliatory violence. In the Hindu-dominated Amritsar area, Babu looks stronger and

more aggressive. As the train approaches Amritsar, suddenly, Babu shouts that they have arrived Amritsar. He looks now so excited that he starts rebuking the Pathan: "Come down, you bastard! You son of a bitch! . . . You dared to kick a Hindu woman, you bastard! . . . You dare to abuse me! . . . I'll break your legs! You think the train belongs to you?! . . . You pretend to be brave like a lion in your backyard!" (8). At this moment, he looks totally revengeful because his experience of humiliation, unjust hurt, insult and violence on the Hindu woman and her family impel him to attack upon the Pathans in the reprisal. Ankur Barua views the "Hindus as inherently peace-loving individuals who were, however, compelled to engage in violent conflict to guard themselves against the depredations of the foreigners, whether they were Muslims" (49-50). Babu is also compelled to adopt the notion of tooth for tooth, blood for blood and tit for tat. His traumatized mind desperately wishes for vengeance.

By assigning violence to the Pathans other, Sahni justifies and sweet-coats Babu's retaliatory violence on a Muslim as an act committed out of necessity. He sanitizes Babu's brutality from the perspective of Hinduness that justifies counter-violence for good end. The prose of otherness creates "a very different set of heroes and villains" (G. Pandey "Prose of Otherness" 208-9). Villianizing the Pathans as riotous, Sahni's narrative herorizes Babu and legitimizes his retribution to a Muslim as a defense against the aggressor. At the station, by the time Babu returns with an iron rod to counterattack, the Pathans have already moved to another compartment with the other Pathans. As he cannot find them in the compartment, he shouts angrily: "The bastards have run away. The sons of bitches . . . they have all escaped. . . . Why did you let them escape?! You all are impotent and cowardly!" (9). His motive of revenge does not come down even if the crowded train moves. At a new station, when it is nearly dawn, the train slows down its speed to let some passengers in. Describing the scene of retaliatory violence of the Babu upon a Muslim, the narrative forwards:

The man banged on the door with his lathi and called out, "Open the door! In the name of Allah, open the door! . . . At that very instant, I saw the iron rod flash in Babu's hand. He gave the man a sharp blow on his head. . . . Two or three thin streams of blood began to flow down the man's face. . . . I saw the man grimace with pain. (10).

Babu's rage turns into a tit for tat attacking a poor Muslim. In Margalit's words, "Thick relations are grounded in attributes such as parent, friend, lover, fellow-countryman. Thick relations . . . anchored in a shared past or moored in shared memory, . . . are in general our relations to the near and dear" (7). Babu's motive of vengeance is aroused by his thick relation with the Hindu community. Thus, he patches up the tear in the cultural identity of Hindus by taking revenge upon a Muslim in the same manner which the Pathan has done to a Hindu family in the Muslim-dominated area. Sahni cleanses the violence of the Babu as justifiable protest against the Muslims' injustice in their area.

Sahni's strategy of othering the Muslims is projected through this counter-violence against the Muslim as having arisen out of the helplessness and the need for self-defense of the Hindus. At the end of the story, the Sardarji praises the Babu's heroism: "You look frail, Babu, but you are brave. "You showed real courage back there. The Pathans got scared of you and ran away. If they had stayed here, you would have smashed the heads of all of them" (11). The Gandhian ideal of non-violence and forgiveness is challenged in the line of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar who criticizes Gandhi that "Hindus had become weakened by adopting his teaching of non-violence, precisely at a historical conjuncture when Hindu militarization in the face of the Muslim threat was imperative" (Barua 18). The Hindus have a religious and moral duty to resist and overpower the Muslims other by using counter force when necessary. The counter-

violence is justifiable for the good end. Sahni, on the one hand, breaks away from the official historiography depicting common people's plight during partition and yet he writes from the Hindu perspective solidifying his community using the prose of otherness in the line of official history, on the other. Through the overplay of the discourse of otherness, Sahni's story appeals to ethical sense and identity politics in the process of evacuation of the trauma of the readers. Alexander reveals the defect of cultural trauma when he states: "By denying the reality of others' suffering, people not only diffuse their own responsibility for the suffering but often project the responsibility for their own suffering on these others" (1). Sahni blames the Muslims for the cause of the violence and the trauma.

The story fails to maintain a position of a good work of art from the perspective of the aesthetic of trauma because the overplay of identarian politics only encourages the cycle of violence. Traun K. Saint argues that "the transition from victim to perpetrator with the shift from one region to another may have complicated the possibility of recuperation" (46). When a victim, with an aim of revenge, turns a perpetrator in an area where he/or she is stronger, then the cycle of violence never comes to an end. Thus, the prose of "The Train Has Reached Amritsar" appeals to ethical memory of the Hindu community and panders a cycle of violence and thereby never resolving the trauma permanently. The prose of "Mozel," as opposed to the prose of otherness, epitomizes humanitarian perspective evoking the moral sense of memory. Manto's strategy of moral representation is marked by using a special form of language as discussed below.

Humanity in "Mozel"

Unlike politically inclined prose of Sahni's "The Train Has Reached Amritsar," the metaironic language of Manto's "Mozel" represents impartially the sufferings poor people, especially women. In the story, Manto depicts the specificity of violence on women—particularly Mozel, whose plight is shared by women victims of the time—during the partition riot without any biasness or tilt to a community as a revisionist historian. His portrayal of violence is impartial and objective that rises above his cultural background. Since his subaltern approach "voice[s] the agonies of the marginalized sections of the society who suffered the most during Partition," his textualization of heartbreaking woes of women is exceptional (Tiwari 56). Women are the most victimized people of the partition violence. The violent acts "treat women's bodies as the territory to be conquered, claimed or marked by the assailant" (Menon and Bhasin 43). Women's suffering was the center of partition violence. Despite being incessantly attacked, women of partition era are shown to be "surviving the horrors of crimes against humanity, rescuing and salvaging the life when men turn into communal butchers" (Rumi 75). Women of each community are the target of the other community. Mozel, Manto's protagonist, attempts to fight for humanity till the last moment of her life even in such atrocity of violence.

The author vividly captures the suffering and the dying moment of Mozel as a victim of communal violence without using the prose of othering to blame any particular community. She not only confronts a sexual assault by a Muslim who "poked her in her breasts with his elbow," but finally dies most pitifully at the hands of Muslim rioters for the cause of humanism (124). The vivid images such as "her body hitting every stone stair and the still banister and landing on the cement floor," her bleeding nose, mouth and ear, her naked body "covered with bruises," and her "arm . . . [falling] lifelessly over her robust body" depicts her agony and heart-rending doom (127). Her pain not only indicates violence on women but also depicts the deteriorating humanity at large. Kripal Kaur—a sheltered Sikh girl and the fiancée of Trilochen being caught in a dreadful event

of Muslims' attack—is saved by Mozel at the cost of her life. The most pitiful “result of her courageous action, however, is her own death at the hands of the looters” (Flemming 103). As a witness to the communal-Bombay riot of 1947, Manto brings back the scene of extremities against women which, on the one hand, exemplifies the protagonist's sacrifice for humanity and evokes deep empathy of the readers for the victimized, on the other.

Mozel represents Manto's philosophy of humanism condemning all kinds of religious and cultural extremities. A champion of humanity, Manto does not “suggest religious, political and ethical solutions to misery” but advocates “the humanity of those caught in the violence of partition” in his stories (Bhalla xi; Flemming 103). He believes that humanity can solve the crises like partition. His writings “give a better sense of the human dimension of the partition” (Saint 12). Mozel, as his mouthpiece, typifies humanism at the critical time of horrible genocide challenging all parochial doctrines of religion and culture that defunct it. She criticizes her former lover, Trilochen as a narrow-minded Sikh who values religion above all other things. She opposes his attachment with the turban, long hair and beard, the underwear as the cultural identity of Sikhs and markers of civilized manners. Attacking his mindset that seeks her modesty in wearing underwear, Mozel bluntly speaks to him:

Modesty—what nonsense is that? . . . Is there any kind of dress in which one may not become immodest, or through which your gaze can't travel? Don't talk non-sense with me. You're a Sikh. I know you wear silly underwear resembling shorts under your pants; this too is part of your religion, like your beard and your hair. You should be ashamed—you're an adult and you still believe that your religion is in your underwear! (118)

She excoriates his view of human modesty determined by the dress symbols conforming to religion. She defies religious parameters of defining her manners exhibiting “sheer humanity” driven by life force (Rumi 25). She attacks upon all religious outlooks—standpoints that restrain humanitarian world view.

Mozel values life with human dimension above all religious and cultural values. She urges Trilochen to go with her to rescue his fiancée Kripal—who is under the threat of Muslims' attacks—without wearing the turban so that Muslim rioters will refrain from attacking him seeing his short hair. Nevertheless, refusing to go there bareheaded he admits: “She is very religious girl. If she sees me without a turban, she'll begin to hate me” (121). He considers religion above love and life. Mozel counters him that the question of his beloved's life is more worthwhile than his worry about being bareheaded. She furiously attacks his crammed religiosity as she says, “You stupid ass, it's the question of her life, what is her name, that Kaur of yours with whom you're in love. . . . Oh your love be damned! I ask you: are all Sikhs stupid like you? It's the question of her life and you insist on wearing your turban—” (121). Thinking that his turban is worthless without Kripal's life, she is bound to save her life even if she does not know her. In rescuing Kripal, she becomes stark naked by giving her Jewish dress to the girl to wear. It is humanity that drives her to present herself mad and take any risk rising above religion in saving Kripal's life.

Her faith in humanity and life in an inhuman world is justified at the end of the story when the dying Mozel gives an ironical blow to the religious parochialism and communalism. At the surface level, her sacrifice saves Trilochen and his fiancée, but at the underlying level, it champions humanity at large. In the following narrative—which describes pathetic death of Mozel—she articulates her faith in humanism and attacks upon religious extremism through a bitter irony:

Trilochen returned. He indicated by a look that Kripal Kaur was safe. Mozel breathed a sigh of relief. With that, blood gushed out of her mouth.

‘Oh, damn it. . . ,’ she whispered and wiped her lips with her down-covered wrist. Then she addressed Tirlochen. “All right, darling, bye-bye.”

Tirlochen wanted to speak, but the words were caught in his throat. Mozel pushed Tirlochen’s turban away from her body. “Take away . . . this religion of yours.” And then her arm fell lifelessly over her robust breasts. (127)

In spite of vomiting blood and enormous pain, the dying Mozel feels relived and satisfied as she ascertains that Kripal is safe. The moment before she dies, pointing toward Tirlochen's turban, which he has covered her naked body with, Mozel urges him to take his turban back with him so that he will not be hated by his fiancée seeing him bareheaded. This is a powerful irony that attacks upon silliness of religiously and communally blindfolded people.

In his representation of violence and women’s plight, Manto uses a formal technique of metairony, which transmits the protagonist’s pain directly to the readers evoking their moral sense. The ironic ending of story becomes metairony as it powerfully shocks the traumatized readers— especially women survivors and witnesses of the partition violence— transmitting the intensity of violence and Mozel’s affliction to them. Vaheed Ramazani defines metairony as “the shock of irony and the sublime” “— the recognition of linguistic violence . . . [that] hurries the mind into fear and the counterviolence of transcendence” (qtd. in B. Pandey 137, 125). He states that metairony “bracket[s] the role of authorial intent and to stress the reader's reception or creation of the effects” known as shock. (122). Avoiding authorial narrativization, it allows the victim to speak of her pain and re-traumatizes the readers through the production of shock upon their already traumatized psyche. Beerendra Pandey posits that metaironic language recaptures objective intensity of the violent event which ordinary language fails to capture. In his view, the metaironic representation “is more than narrativization: a transmission of violence packed with the same intensity as that which underwrites violence, bringing about a metaironic rupture that tears a hole in the heart of the readers, making them feel a presence of the holocaust of the partition in their soul” (130-31). Metairony is an effective strategy of Manto to re-traumatize the readers with the same intensity of the original shock.

The story epitomizes how Manto attempts to resolve the trauma through the metaironic prose by adopting the victim's point of view that allows Mozel to transmit her pain to the tormented readers. The ironical expression such as “Take away . . . this religion of yours” becomes metairony as it shocks the readers directly communicating her pain to them and making them feel empathy for her (127). The scene of real violence is reenacted in the mind of the traumatized readers with a shocking effect—the metaironic rupture. The acting out of the trauma forces them to realize that the entire genocide of 1947 has emanated from the religious extremism and fanaticism posing a great threat to being human. Acknowledging the role of language in transmitting of pain, Veena Das states: “[T]he transactions between body and language lead to an articulation of the world in which the strangeness of the world revealed by death, by its non-inhabitability, can be transformed into a world in which one can dwell again, in full awareness of a life that has to be lived in loss. This is one path towards healing—” (68-69). She stresses that one’s pain may reside in another’s body through the process of transmission (69). The language of “I’m in Pain” of Mozel makes the readers also feel “I’m in Pain” by giving agency to her trauma (70). While dying Mozel exclaims: “Take away . . . this religion [turban] of yours” readers can also feel a powerful shock and

thereby get her pain transmitted to them (127). Now, they feel empathetic to her suffering and get relieved from their pain having some moral awareness.

The readers' empathetic identification with Mozel forces them to think rationally for humanity. They are moved into "a responsive awareness" through self-introspection that violence is universally condemned (B. Pandey 131). Thinking morally and beyond the thick relations of communal groups, they acknowledge that religious and communal extremism is the real cause of violence—an antipathy to humanity. Connecting morality to "thin relations" of humanity, Margalit states: "Morality . . . ought to guide our behavior toward those to whom we are related just by virtue of their being fellow human beings, and by virtue of no other attribute" (37). Humans should have moral considerations for other fellow humans. The tragic event that Mozel undergoes appeals to a sense of universal humanism and morality: a perspective that avoids identarian politics of communities. Hence, instead of repairing the trauma in the line of cultural trauma—by naming and punishing the perpetrators—it appeals to readers' humanistic sense through the transmission of Mozel's pain to them.

Conclusion

True aesthetics of trauma and the literature of violence reflects the reality of violence with a focus on humanitarian perspective and moral responsiveness. Manto's "Mozel" represents violence through the language of metairony that transmits the pain of the protagonist to the readers arousing their human sense. Manto's intention is not to pander the cycle of violence through the prose of otherness but to unburden the trauma of the readers. Re-traumatized by metaironic shock, their empathetic identification to Mozel resolves their trauma on a broader humanistic ground. Mozel sacrifices her life to save Kripal Kaur, who is caught in the violence of the riots, upholding humanity against religious extremism and communal barriers. In representing violence, the prose of the story does not evoke ethical memory appealing to identity politics of conflicting cultures but it arouses a moral memory with a humanistic appeal. Thus, the story is a good work of trauma literature because it brings about the resolution of the trauma appealing to humanity at large without inciting the cycle of violence and revenge. He does not use the prose of otherness to evoke ethical memory and identity politics of any community. But Sahni's representation of violence in his "The Train Has Reached Amritsar" evokes the politics of affect which panders the cycle of violence through the prose of otherness and blaming game of identity politics. His protagonist Babu's counter-revenge is justified whereas the Pathans are portrayed as violence-mongers and brutal people. Their attack upon a Hindu woman is condemned but Babu's retaliation against an innocent Muslim is justified as an outcome of the violence initiated by them. Thus, by villainizing the Muslims, Sahni herorizes Babu's revengeful act. Although both the writers represent partition violence objectively, their representation is polarized—while Sahni's representation is more cultural, Manto's representation is more humanistic.

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