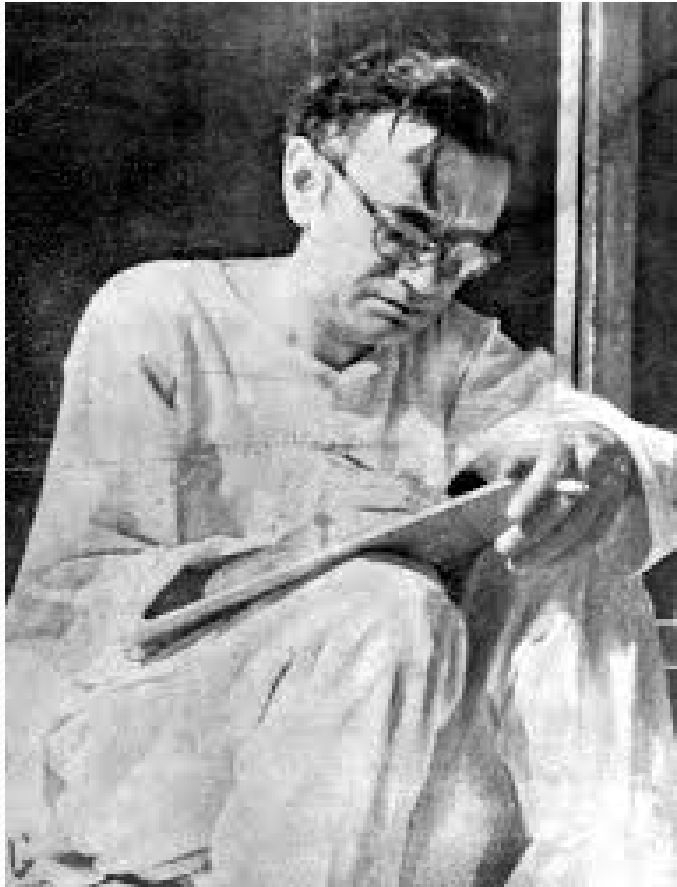


TOBA TEK SINGH

AND THE TRAUMA OF PARTITION

About the Author:-



- Saadat Hasan Manto (11 May 1912-18 Jan 1955) was a Pakistani writer, playwright and author considered among the greatest writers of short stories in South Asian history. He produced Twenty-Two collection of short stories, one novel, five series of radio plays, three collection of essays, two collection of personal sketches and his best short-stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics.

- **Toba Tek Singh is a short story by Manto, and published in 1955. It follows inmates in a Lahore Asylum some of whom are to be transferred to India following the independence of Pakistan in 1947. The story is a powerful satire on the relationship between India and Pakistan.**



- The story describes the chaos created by the decision of governments of India and Pak to exchange the lunatics lodged in Their lunatic asylums. The madmen in Lahore mental asylum do not understand why they are being uprooted without any fault of theirs. It creates communal tension among the inmates.
- **Manto locates his Theory in a lunatic asylum and thus takes the theme of partition to the world of insane highlighting the political absurdity of the partition itself and at the same time lodges a note of protest against the powers that be who take such momentous decision as splitting a country.**
- Manto has written extensively on the theme of partition with stark realism and powerful evocation of the shocking horror of those times.
- **The Irony and Satire** at play become effective devices for exposing the horrible reality of the historical situation.

- **The lunatic assylum is the microcosm of the world outside and Manto focuses on the anguish of one man (ie Bishan Singh)to bring out the trauma and tragedy of dislocation and exile. Every reader at once realize that it's a powerful satire and also a bitter indictment of the political processes that proceed partition.**



ARBITRARINERS OF POLITICAL DECISIONS:

- Manto quotes ; Hindustan had become free , Pakistan had become independent soon after its inception but man was still slave in both these countries , slave of prejudice , slave of religious fanaticism , slave of barbarity and inhumanity.
- The horror , the madness the beastality , the violence , the arson looting and rape that followed in the wake of this political decision was unprecedented.
- Suddenly overnight all those secure walls of a shared tradition, shared culture, shared history came crumbling down. People of different communities who till then lead harmonious 10-existence now turned into enemies.

- All writers including Manto felt inward compulsion to write about partition.
- **What energies from the reading of the story is the realization that geographical divisions are possible but how can one divide a shared history , a shared memory and a shared consciousness?**
- It is obvious that the decision makers never took the ordinary man into account and what the partition would do to him .

