

## **An Introduction**

'Toba Tek Singh' first published in 1953 in an Urdu magazine *Savera*, was written at a time 'when Manto's energies were at their lowest ebb' in more ways than one. He had migrated to Pakistan in 1948 and since then had been leading an agonized existence. Constantly plagued by memories of the past, Manto could never bring himself to feel that he really belonged to Pakistan. In addition to this, his increasing poverty and failing health drove him to alcoholism and there came a time in his life when he almost got himself admitted to a mental asylum because his circumstances coupled with his attitude to life had pushed him into a deep depression.

Manto locates his story 'Toba Tek Singh' in a lunatic asylum and thus takes the theme of Partition to the world of the 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 decisions as splitting a country into two, without ever thinking of the consequences.

### **The Theme of Partition**

Partition of the subcontinent into two separate geographical entities was that calamitous event in its history that changed not only its physical boundaries forever but also altered the lives of its people in an irrevocable manner. The horror, the madness, the bestiality, the violence, arson, looting and rape that followed in the wake of the 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 had led a harmonious and peaceful co-existence, now turned into enemies. Reason was the first casualty and fear and then rage were its first outcome. Neighbours who till yesterday would have died for each other now thirsted for one another's blood simply because they belonged to different communities. Scenes of senseless carnage were witnessed everywhere. A communal frenzy, a hypnotic obsession with violence overtook the people on both sides of the dividing line. It was ironical that the people of the same country who had set an example of winning a struggle in a non-violent manner, following the ideals of Gandhi and had thrown off the yoke of British subjugation, would now turn against each other. Certainly these were demented times when people had no consideration for either young or old, child or woman and all suffered a horrifying fate. If any managed to escape physical violence or torture, the memory of what they witnessed scarred their minds forever and none emerged unscathed from the holocaust.

For writers who wrote around that time it became almost an inward compulsion to write about the Partition of the country. For most of them the memory of what they had suffered or witnessed was too recent to allow for objectivity in their writings about it. There was an obsessive preoccupation with violence as they had been sufferers, eye-witnesses and tragic participants in the horrendous events. The horrors suffered and witnessed had become a part of their experiential world. They were too near and too much involved in the holocaust. The stories that were written immediately after the Partition therefore, tend to recreate the horror in all its details without many attempts at objectivity or an imaginative rendering of the events being described. These stories could not even offer any historical explanation nor see any political necessity for the suffering. They are marked by a sense of rage and helplessness and also a sense of incomprehensibility of it all due to its utter meaninglessness. Writers like Rajinder Singh Bedi, Krishan Chander, Bhishm Sahni, Ibne Insha, Kamleshwar, Umm-e-Ummara, Kulwant Singh Virk, Sant Singh Sikhon, Khushwant Singh, Ibrahim Jalees, S.K. Vatsayan and many more; all gave expression to their tormented souls through the medium of fiction. History thus entered the realm of Fiction but a rendering of the same event brought into focus the human face of the tragedy. What were merely some figures and statistics in the historical chronicles of the time now assumed human identities through the works of these creative writers. Instead of just numbers --- so many dead, so many wounded, so many raped, so many homeless—these fictional historical narratives tried to show the actual suffering that lay behind each face, each number. For a historian the holocaust of 1947 can perhaps be covered in two volumes of objective recording. For the fiction writer, however, the sad event threw up unlimited possibilities of delineation and treatment as there were innumerable faces of grief and an equally limitless number of questions that erupted from the sudden

barbarism and bestiality of man to man. The writers tried to grapple with their fractured psyches with the basic question 'why'? Why did the shared social, cultural, traditional and historical fabric collapse? Why did we turn killers and violators? Why did we forget the past? Why did we give in to rage rather than reason—the questions are endless. The fictional writings took up these questions in one story after another, in one novel after another, looking for answers but failing to find any.

Fictional historical narratives about the Partition developed basically on two lines. There were those who re-evoked the senseless carnage, the horrifying brutalities and the numbing meaningless violence that the different communities perpetrated on each other. Then there were those narratives that focused on the fear, the agony, the insanity which resulted from the sudden dislocation of people, uprooting them cruelly from places which had been home to them for generations, only to be thrown into a strange alien land and told that henceforth this was their home. The suffering and anguish that resulted from being wrenched away from familiar surroundings forever, is sensitively delivered in these stories.

Manto's 'Toba Tek Singh' also falls into this category of stories that deal with the theme of Partition concentrating on the tragedy of dislocation and exile. The madman Bishan Singh who hails from a small village in Punjab, Toba Tek Singh, is unable to take in the fact that the division of the subcontinent requires him to cross the border line and forget his homeland forever. In the story, we shall see shortly, how the man becomes the place and Bishan Singh refuses to comply with the orders, preferring to give up his life instead.

All these writers who wrote about the tragic uprooting of people emphasized the same point over and over again. What emerges from a reading of these stories 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. Thus they could never anticipate the great human tragedy that followed in the wake of their political decision.

Manto has written extensively on the theme of Partition with stark realism and powerful evocation of the shocking horror of those times. As Alok Bhatia observes, these stories 'are written by a man who knows that after such ruination there can neither be forgiveness nor any forgetting.' Stories like 'Thanda Gosht' ('Cold Meat'), 'KhoI Do' (Open It) '1919 Ki Baat' ('It happened in 1919'), 'TobaTek Singh' and 'Titwal Ka Kutta' ('The Dog of Titwal') are just a few of the nerve shattering stories which recreate the horror of the Partition. What is remarkable in these stories is the completely detached tone of the narrator as well as an evocation of the event through suggestiveness rather than details. We are just given a tip of the iceberg, as it were and left to imagine the rest. This mode of working through suggestiveness increases the horror of the stories manifold and at the same time saves them from being merely a perverse indulgence in violence on the one hand and sentimentalization and thereby dilution of the real human tragedy on the other. *Siyah Hashiye* or *Black Margins* was a full length work on the Partition theme, brought out by Manto. This book consists of short fragments, sketches on the events of the Partition. It is notable for its black humour and also for Manto's determination not to name the religion of any of the perpetrators described in these brief sketches. For him all were equally responsible. It was not just a Hindu, Muslim or Sikh who was the question but man who had turned into a beast having lost all his tolerance.

### **Detailed Analysis**

The story begins in the manner of a historical narration and the opening line itself places it in its historical context: 'A couple of years after Partition it strikes the government of Pakistan and Hindustan that even as they had exchanged ordinary prisoners, so they should also have an exchange of madmen as well.' The style is that of newspaper reportage but the tone is mock-serious, dispassionate and somewhere along the line a hint has been placed about the absurdity of it all when Manto takes the theme of Partition to the madhouse. Whether it was right to exchange madmen or not, no one knew, but the decision made by 'those who know best,' after some high level meetings had been held on both sides. No one thought of asking the madmen what they wanted. Probably because lunatics cannot make out what is right for them. Only

madmen who still had their families living in Hindustan were allowed to stay and the rest had their fate sealed. As for Hindus and Sikh madmen, the question of staying did not arise as there were no Hindu families living in Pakistan so all would have to be dispatched.

- **Narrative Style**

Thus in two short paragraphs, Manto sets the tone of the story and displays the scene of action with a strong suggestion that the madhouse we are about to enter is in fact going to be a mirror of the world outside. The omniscient narrator remains distanced from the scene and records objectively the events subsequent to the pronouncement of the decision. Though grounded in a particular historical context and begun in a deceptive style of reportage, we must notice the difference that will gradually emerge between the rendering of history through a chronicling of facts and through a fictionalization of the same. The irony and satire at play become effective devices for exposing the horrible reality of the historical situation.

- **Madness as Metaphor**

In 'Toba Tek Singh' the lunatic asylum becomes a microcosm of the world outside and Manto focuses on the anguish of one man to bring out the trauma and tragedy of dislocation and exile faced by those innumerable others who were forced out of their hearths and homes. Even in the world of these madmen the realization of a division of their country has gradually percolated through. This small world is peopled by men belonging to the various communities of the subcontinent and the narrator gives us short, though vivid, descriptions of the same. Thus, there is a Muslim madman who has been religiously reading the Urdu daily *Zamidar*, there is the Sikh madman who wants to know why they are being sent to Hindustan when they cannot even speak their language and there is again that Muslim madman who is overtaken by a nationalist zeal while bathing and shouts 'Pakistan zindabad' only to slip and fall and pass out. The madman who climbs a tree to deliver a two-hour lecture on 'the most ticklish matter of Pakistan and Hindustan' lends poignancy to the plight of those who were now forced to make a choice. Thus he declares 'I want to live neither in Hindustan nor in Pakistan. I had rather live on this tree.' The fact that he is a Muslim is revealed only when he is persuaded to come down and hugs his Hindu and Sikh friends because they would soon be going away. This implies that he must be a Muslim for he will stay back.

- **Insane or Sane?**

Two things are happening here simultaneously. On the one hand there is a note of protest in this madman's declaration that he would rather live on a tree than be forced to make a choice between two parts of the same country. This protest simmered in the breasts of most common people who were driven out from their homes when sudden political decisions were thrust on them. Thus gradually we see the madhouse becoming a microcosm of the outside world. We have a similar situation here as that in the world outside. A political decision has been made without consulting the people concerned and it has been thrust upon them leaving them with no choice but to comply. This note of protest appears again when the young Hindu lawyer from Lahore 'heartily abused all the Hindu and Muslim leaders who had got together to have Hindustan divided'

The second noteworthy fact which emerges from the protest of the madman who prefers to live on the tree, is located in the manner in which he embraces his Hindu and Sikh friends and begins to cry. At this point Manto writes: 'his heart grew heavy at the very thought that they would leave him and go away to Hindustan.' For him they are still his friends and it does not matter that they are not Muslims. We might well ask ourselves who in fact is mad here -- the madmen in the asylum or the sane men outside the madhouse? Humanity seems to be still intact in this madhouse, in these madmen. Ironically the mad seem to be saner than the so called sane predators prowling the streets in the world beyond the confines of the asylum. The 'madmen' in the madhouse still value friendship despite differences of religion or

community. It is the apparently sane people who have gone berserk and are killing their friends and neighbours. It is they who are saying that the place that has been your home since birth is no longer your home.

Confusion about their status is now rampant in the madhouse. The suddenness of the change is underlined because even those madmen who were not completely mad were perplexed as to where they actually were at that moment. They knew that a person called Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who was known as Qaid e Azam, the great leader, had created a separate nation for Muslims and had named it Pakistan. But where it was and what its geographical dimensions, no one had any idea. Manto is highlighting here a very important aspect about the gap between decision makers and the affected people. For the political leaders it was easy to run a dividing line through the country and have clear cut physical boundaries drawn between Hindustan and Pakistan. But for the common people the words remained mere territorial abstractions. For them home was where they had been born, lived and would have died had history not played such a cruel trick. For them it did not matter whether that home was in Pakistan or Hindustan but if in the name of division of the country they were driven out of that home then they would rather they did not belong to any of those countries as long as they were allowed to live there. This hopelessness and this despair is evoked in the mild protest of the madman who would prefer to live in the tree rather than in Hindustan or Pakistan and be separated from family and friends in the process.

- **A Parody of the World Outside**

A travesty of the political struggle in the outside world occurs when a Muslim madman from Chiniot declares himself to be the Qaid e Azam only to have a Sikh madman promptly turn into Master Tara Singh and challenge him. Both, writes the narrator, are removed to solitary cells as bloodshed seemed imminent. If only it were possible to have done the same in the real world, a lot of bloodshed could have been avoided which resulted from real life political confrontation. This seems to be the implied comment.

- **Breakdown of Language**

Having set the scene of his story, the narrator then shifts his focus to the central character Bishan Singh, who has been in the asylum for fifteen years. We are told that in those fifteen years he has never laid down to rest and had never slept a wink. He stood on his feet all the time because of which his calves were distended and his feet swollen. The first noticeable thing about him, however, is the gibberish he speaks all the time: 'Opar di rumble tumble di annexe of the thoughtless of the green lentils of the lantern.' As the story progresses, you will notice that new words are added to this gibberish which seems to be a curious mixture of sense and nonsense. What could be Manto's intention here apart from the obvious fact that this gibberish is coming out of a madman's mouth? In the utter nonsense that Bishan Singh speaks, Manto seems to be commenting on the breakdown of all communication in these times of sheer devastation. Language which should enable people to connect, often betrayed. Those who migrated and came to their new home felt that they could neither understand the language there nor make themselves understood. (This point is effectively brought out in Umme-Ummara's story 'More Sinned against than Sinning' and Ibrahim Jaleez's 'Grave Turned Inside Out'). Thus the language was reduced to gibberish as it failed to communicate. In addition to this Manto seems to be implying that division of the country had led to a fracturing of the language too. Till the Partition happened, the various languages of the subcontinent had a common repository of tradition and culture to draw upon from. What would happen to language now when such a shared repository was also divided? Would it not lead to language being reduced to unintelligible gibberish? Bishan Singh voices this apprehension in his constant, apparently meaningless speech.

- **The Sense of Place in One's Identity**

Manto next gives us some information from Bishan Singh's past and informs us how he came to be there in the mental asylum. This ferocious looking though mild mannered and harmless Sikh had been a wealthy landlord in Toba Tek Singh, a small town in Pakistan about 150 kilometers South-West of Lahore. We are told that his brain had tripped suddenly and his family had brought him to the asylum, all tied up in chains and had him locked up in the madhouse. Now he listens attentively whenever there is a discussion about the formation of Hindustan and Pakistan and about 'their imminent transfer from one to the other.' When asked for his opinion he replies in the same meaningless gibberish but gradually 'the green lentils of the lantern' get replaced at first by 'the green lentils of the government of Pakistan and subsequently by 'of the government of Toba Tek Singh.' It is at that moment that the other madmen start asking him where this Toba Tek Singh was. How could one be certain where it was now for such were the times that one moment Sialkot was in Pakistan and the next instant it was in Hindustan? How could anyone tell where a place was when the next instant it could be transferred like a plastic block. The chaos and confusion evident in the actions of these madmen is merely a reflection of what was actually happening in the larger world outside.

Manto takes the credit for recreating the chaos, the bewilderment and the pathos of the situation outside through his short and deep strokes of the events in the madhouse subsequent to the news of the Partition. Narrating the reaction of the madmen, in a tone laced with black humour, brings out the absurdity of the state highlighting the underlying irony.

- **The Trauma of Dislocation**

The omniscient narrator then proceeds to give us a short glimpse into the past telling us about the only times when Bishan Singh would almost as if wake up from his general stupor to prepare for his 'visitors' i.e. his family members and friends who would come once a month to inquire about his well being, bringing him sweets and fruits from home. This was the only time when this 'frightful looking' Sikh would clean and scrub himself, oil and comb his hair nicely and would wait for his visitors all dressed up. If at any time of the year he was asked what day it was he would have been unable to tell. But 'he always knew unprompted and exactly when it was time for his family to come and visit.' With the Partition of the country, however, their visits had come to an end and the narrator tells us that 'now it was as if the voice of his heart which had earlier signalled their visits to him had fallen silent.' From the general, the focus has now shifted to the particular and individual. Manto is now going to work towards highlighting the trauma of dislocation and exile through the anguish of this one man and he moves towards it step by step. He begins by first creating a basic desire to know which side of the dividing line one's place of origin now existed. So the need to know where Toba Tek Singh was intensifies in the heart and mind of the mad Bishan Singh. He now waits for his visitors especially because he is certain that they would be able to tell him where Toba Tek Singh was for he was sure they themselves hailed from that place.

Gradually this need to know drives Bishan Singh to a madman in the madhouse who calls himself 'Khuda' or 'God.' Bishan Singh's question only makes the 'Khuda' laugh with a loud guffaw and say that Toba Tek Singh is neither in Pakistan nor in Hindustan, 'for we haven't passed our orders yet!'

- **Arbitrariness of Political Decisions**

Notice how in this short exchange Manto has highlighted the unpredictability of political decisions which affect millions of lives. For the decision makers who remain unaffected, it is simply a matter of saying a few words. But these few words can turn the lives of some people completely upside down making them vagabonds and aliens in the land which till then had been their home. Manto is being intensely ironical when he makes this madman call himself 'khuda'. There is a similar appropriation by the political decision makers, the self styled godmen, who hold the strings of millions of lives in their hands -- those lives whose fate hinges so precariously on one word from the lips of these arbitrary Gods of the strife torn world.

When Bishan Singh is not answered by this 'khuda' about where Toba Tek Singh was he immediately launches into his gibberish which interestingly includes few new words in it. This time he says 'Opar di rumble tumble di annexe of the thoughtless of the green lentils of Wahe Guruji da khalsa and Wahe Guruji di Fateh and God Bless him who says Sat Sri Akal!' The narrator tells us that what he probably meant to say was that 'this God was the God of the Musalmans and would surely have heeded him had he been the God of the Sikhs instead.' The significance of this apparent nonsense lies in the fact that even in the madman's consciousness the realization of new boundaries is filtering in. The God who refuses to answer must be from the enemy camp of the Musalmans according to Bishan Singh.

Lest we may think that Manto is beginning to get judgemental and critical of particular communities here we are immediately told in the paragraph that follows, about a Musalman friend of Bishan Singh, who now comes to meet him and bring him favourable news of his family having safely, crossed the border. This man is Fazaldin, who also lives in Toba Tek Singh and had been Bishan Singh's friend for years. He now tells the latter how he had done whatever he could to help his family to escape. All had crossed over but the slight hesitation before taking the name of Roop Kaur, Bishan Singh's daughter, speaks volumes for what the girl might have endured. It is in suggestive strokes like these that Manto avoids definitiveness and limitation and also the perverse indulgence in violence so evident in writings about the Partition. Here it is all left to the imagination of the readers. The writer merely leaves it at the level of suggestion rather than imposing a limitation on feelings and response. This device opens the floodgates as it were for the readers to imagine the horrors that the innocent girl might have faced. When Fazaldin haltingly adds '... she too... is very well' the words ring hollow for they are immediately followed by the information that 'she too had gone with them.' Speaking of her in past tense can only mean one thing that the girl is probably lost to her family now either through abduction or death or both combined.

The manner in which Fazaldin refers to Bishan Singh's brothers and wife, calling them 'bretherens' ('Bhai' in the original) and 'sister' ('Behan' in the original) respectively, points to a crucial fact of shared community life and kinship amongst people of various communities. This fact was overlooked conveniently by a handful of political decision makers. Fazaldin feels a closeness towards his Hindu friends. This voice from the outside world which had intruded into the world of the madhouse only reinforces the same closeness we had witnessed earlier in an apparently ridiculous but actually poignant scenes when a Muslim madman had embraced his Hindu friend and had cried because of the knowledge that they will be separated from him soon. The same peaceful co-existence is shared in the world of the mad and the world of the sane as well. Fazaldin too, however, is thrown into confusion when Bishan Singh asks him the same question 'where is Toba Tek Singh?' This time Manto points out the similarity of confusion shared by the mad as well as the sane for Fazaldin too is unable to answer his friend. At first he says with some surprise that Toba Tek Singh is 'right where it always was.' But when asked whether it was in-Pakistan or Hindustan, he can only stammer. 'In Hindustan—no, no, I mean in Pakistan,' - as if out of his wits.

What we see emerging from this short exchange is different perceptions about the same place. For Fazaldin, Toba Tek Singh is right where it always was because being a Muslim he will not be thrown out of his home. He will continue to live in Toba Tek Singh where he always has. Thus the question whether it is in Pakistan or Hindustan has probably not occurred to him. The situation however, changes drastically for the person who will be driven out of his home on the basis of his different faith, different religion. Therefore it is crucial for Bishan Singh to know which side of the dividing line is Toba Tek Singh now, for if it is in Pakistan then he will lose his home for ever, to be thrown into the oblivion of uncertain and unfamiliar surroundings

Fazaldin is unable to answer his friend and calls upon him the latter's wrath who leaves muttering, 'Opar di rumble-tumble di annexe of the thoughtless of the green lentils of Pakistan and Hindustan and shame on the lot of you.' Bishan Singh's apparent gibberish seems to be getting increasingly politically conscious. Not only have the two difficult boundaries of Hindustan and Pakistan interjected into his perception but he is holding both equally responsible for the fate of people like him. Thus his angry mutterings about 'shame

on the lot of you' are almost akin to an authorial intervention where Manto seems to be speaking through this mad character that is much wiser than the sane.

- **Identity of a Person Linked to Place**

The last section of the story is a logical progression of the plot. Having familiarised us with the situation Manto is now going to work towards a climax and then a resolution. In the preceding sections Manto has been able to bring out the intensity of feelings that a man can have towards the place where he belongs and comes from. Even though Bishan Singh has been locked up in the asylum for the past fifteen years, yet it is crucial for him to know where Toba Tek Singh lies now; here or there, in Pakistan or Hindustan and he asks the same question to the concerned official when the Hindu and Sikh madmen are taken to Wagah, the border between the two countries for an exchange with those Muslim madmen who wait on the other side to be transferred to Pakistan. This time, however, Bishan Singh gets a definite answer and the official laughs and says that Toba Tek Singh is in Pakistan. The description that follows is almost heart rending even though the narrative tone remains dispassionate and detached. Like a trapped animal Bishan Singh refuses to go to the other side and runs back to where his friends were. When the Pakistani policeman catches hold of him and tries to lead him back to the other side he starts shouting at the top of his voice, 'Opar di rumble-tumble di annexe of the thoughtless of the green lentils of Toba Tek Singh and Pakistan.' As Alok Bhalla rightly observes: 'in this last incantation are encoded all the slogans which were used to beguile and befool a people into believing that they had religious identities which were also national identities.' The two however are divided here because though Toba Tek Singh is in Pakistan yet Bishan Singh cannot be a Pakistani since he is a Sikh, notwithstanding the fact that all his life he has lived in Toba Tek Singh. For some Muslims their religious identities did become their national identities but what about those countless millions like Bishan Singh for whom the same didn't happen? This is the very crucial question being implicitly asked in the apparent gibberish of the mad Bishan Singh.

- **The Person Becomes the Place**

Notice also the very skillful and inobtrusive manner in which Manto has succeeded in investing the identity of a person with the identity of a place. Bishan Singh and Toba Tek Singh have almost become synonymous and interchangeable by the time we come to the last two paragraphs of the story. The plot is gradually moving towards its climax whereinafter should also lie a resolution. The climax does take place but the resolution which should have followed inevitably in its footsteps evades the dialectic of the story. Bishan Singh refuses to be coaxed into believing that Toba Tek Singh will be moved where he wants it to be moved. He runs and stands firmly at a spot in the middle of the two countries refusing to be stirred. The narrator observes that since he was a harmless enough fellow, the officials let him remain where he was and carry on with the rest of the proceedings. It is just before dawn that everyone hears a piercing cry coming out of Bishan Singh. The man, who had stood on his legs day and night for all of fifteen years spent in the asylum, now lies face down on the ground. On one side of him lay Hindustan and on the other lay Pakistan. 'In the middle on a strip of no man's land lay Toba Tek Singh.'

In his death Bishan Singh succeeds in avoiding the exile that stares him in the face. In his death too he is able to determine where Toba Tek Singh lay for him. The person and the place merge into one.

- **The Unresolved Questions**

The person ultimately becomes the place! But does anything get resolved in the larger context of things? Can everyone have the freedom of making a choice and a decision as that available to Bishan Singh? Is he the one who is mad in choosing death over uprootment and humiliation and a severance from all that was familiar or are those mad who choose to flee to a strange land to turn into refugees just to escape the

slaughter. As Sukrita Paul Kumar observes, '*Toba Tek Singh* offers a fine perception of the thin line between what's regarded as lunacy and sanity. Is the ultimate resolution only death? If that is so then what kind of a resolution is it for people who are anyway leading a death like existence or for those who choose life but are forced into a terrorised and death like existence in a strange land which remains theirs only in name.' These are the questions that the ending of the story leaves unanswered. Partition itself is rejected completely in the protest lodged in the physical death of Bishan Singh. Madness thus becomes a metaphor for sanity in one sense and for Partition itself in the other because the incomprehensibility that attends dementia is the same as the one that was ubiquitous in the division of the two countries. The whole Partition was an act of insanity which undoubtedly undoubtedly damaged the psyche of the people driving some to despair while others to rage which blinded them to all feelings of compassion and kinship. A severance from ones roots, a sudden displacement from familiar surroundings was enough to drive a man insane because a place was not just physical surroundings of the four walls of one's house or the lanes and bylanes of ones' neighbourhood. It was much more than that. It was the security of the known and the familiar, it was the deep roots of tradition and culture that one carried wherever one might go. It was impossible to sever these ties overnight. Such a severance can only lead to madness. Manto himself went through this experience when he migrated to Pakistan against his will. Recounting his experience in a memoir he writes: 'I lived in Bombay for twelve years. And what I am, I am because of those years. Today I find myself living in Pakistan. It is possible that tomorrow I may go to live elsewhere. But wherever I go I will remain what Bombay made me. Wherever I live, I will carry Bombay with me.'