

## Toba Tek Singh

Q) Analyse Toba Tek Singh as a satire on absurdity of partition.

A) The story 'Toba Tek Singh' by Saadat Hasan Manto is certainly a caustic satire on the absurdity of partition. The author, Saadat Hasan Manto, was a muslim living in India at a time. Partition caused untold suffering to millions of Hindus, Sikhs and muslims. The Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan had to abandon their homes, properties and other belongings in Pakistan. The same was the case with the Indian Muslims who had to leave and seek shelter in Pakistan. People who were living in comfort

were made into refugees overnight without food, adequate clothing and shelter. The people of India were falling victims to the dangerous policy of "Divide and Rule" perpetrated by the British Masters. They went away to England but their policy played havoc with millions of Indians who lost everything, even their dignity.

The climax becomes touching when we see ~~the~~ what happens to Bishan Singh. When his turn came for the transfer at the Wagah border he asked the official entering his name in the register: "Where is Toba Tek Singh? In India or Pakistan?" the official said, "In Pakistan." On hearing this, he ran back to the group waiting for their turn. The Pakistanis

Soldiers caught him and forced him back to the checkpoint. He resisted strongly. The authorities then told him it was now in Hindustan. But he refused to move from the spot where he stood. When the guards threatened to use force he stood in a place between the borders as if no power could move him. Because he was a harmless man, they allowed him to stay there while the transfer continued. Before the sun rose, a piercing cry arose from Bisham Singh who had been silent all this time. Several officers and guards ran towards him. They saw the man who had stood on his legs day and night for 15 years now lay prostrate

on the ground. His one side was in Hindustan  
and the other side in Pakistan. In the  
middle, ~~on a stretch of land that had no~~  
~~name, lay Toba Tek Singh, now~~