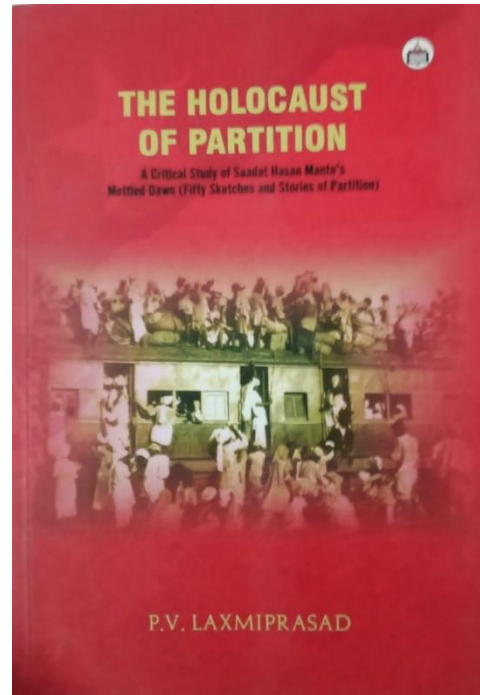


The Holocaust of Partition: A Critical Study of Saadat Hasan Manto's Mottled Dawn (Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition by P.V.Laxmiprasad, New Delhi: Authorspress, 2021, ISBN: 978-93-90891-45-0 Pp. 94, Price 600/-

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The book under the review is indeed a book on Indian Partition. This collection is authored by an eminent critic P. V. Laxmiprasad on Saadat Hasan Manto's *Mottled Dawn*. As everyone in the Indian Sub-continent knows the partition wounds of 1947, the horrors are still written in literature. Saadat Hasan Manto is one such Urdu writer whose first hand experiences are still relevant for readers interested in Indian partition. Laxmiprasad's brilliant critical analysis is a contribution on Partition in translation. It is dedicated to the millions of Partition riots of 1947. He has written a brilliant bio note of Saadat Hasan Manto and his literary journey. The Preface by P.V.Laxmiprasad reminds the



readers about the importance of Partition stories by Saadat Hasan Manto. The contents include Two-Nation Theory, Partition Literature, Critical appreciation of Manto's Stories and Conclusion.

Manto's *Mottled Dawn* is a collection of 50 sketches and stories of partition. Originally written in Urdu by Manto, it serves as a good example of a classic in translation. Khalid Hasan translated these stories into English. Further, Laxmiprasad undertakes a critical study of these stories on the horrors and brutalities of partition. The critic observes that the two nation theory was fundamentally the basic contention of Indian partition into two states on communal lines. The outcome became all of a sudden unexpected mayhem that continued unabated. Lootings, abductions, rapes, killings, and forcible kidnaps became the order of the day. The critic, Laxmiprasad has explored these dimensions from the reading of this highly classic. Saadat Hasan Manti is highly objective inn his presentation of developments in 1947. Against this historical backdrop, Manto penned these stories in a lively fashion as a writer. Laxmiprasad

observes that Manto remains faithful in his presentation of facts. The sectarian and religious bloodletting that preceded and followed it remains a painful saga depicted in different genres of literature. Episodes abound the stories. These stories are remarkably interwoven around the partition blues. It is according to Laxmiprasad a worthy collection still preserved in literature for future generations. Translation makes it possible and he owes a lot to the translators. The pain, the agony, the distress and the chaos become at once the symbols of human tragedy. It is a man –made tragedy. Yet they portray a wide range of voices which represent the quality of collection. Laxmiprasad writes that Manto gives life to the lifeless to the voices of innocent victims killed during riots. Describing a tragic historic event of 1947 is really a magnum opus. Remembering them is yet another glass through the windows. Laxmiprasad used his microscopic lens as a critic to embark on a study of Indian Partition. He chooses Saadat Hasan Manto, a formidable Urdu writer for making a critical appreciation. If Manto recreated the history through this collection Mottled Dawn, Laxmiprasad explored them through the critical perspective. Horrors and terrors are caught up in a lively depiction. This is the beauty of the critical book. He cites secondary sources to substantiate his arguments. Creativity and criticism go hand in hand. They are finely tuned in the book. The relevance of the book still holds the readers and the research scholars. One must read this critical book.