

**A BARTHESIAN ANALYSIS OF SAADAT HASAN MANTO'S SELECTED
SHORT STORIES**



MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

ENGLISH LITERATURE

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DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES**FACULTY OF ENGLISH****DEDICATION**

To my beloved family, whose unwavering encouragement and support have been my guiding light throughout this journey. To my mentors and friends, for their invaluable inspiration and advice. An to the memory of Saadat Hasan Manto, whose literary genius has profoundly influenced this work.

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It is certified that the research work contained in this thesis titled “A Barthesian Analysis of Saadat Hasan Manto's Selected Short Stories, with a Focus on ‘Toba Tek Singh’ and ‘Khol Do’” is up to the mark for the award of Master of Science or Philosophy in English Literature.

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Abstract:

An in-depth Barthesian analysis of selected short stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, particularly concentrating on 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do' has been performed in this research project. Saadat Hasan Manto, a prominent Urdu writer, is renowned for his candid portrayal of the socio-political landscape of Partition-era India. Employing Roland Barthes' theoretical framework, specifically his five codes—hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural—the analysis delves into the intricate layers of symbolism, meaning, and socio-cultural commentary interwoven within Manto's narratives. Through a meticulous examination of these codes, this study unveils the literary techniques employed by Manto to articulate profound thematic concerns and socio-political critiques. The narratives serve as poignant reflections on the existential dilemmas, identity struggles, and human tragedies that permeated the fabric of society during the tumultuous period of Partition. By dissecting these narratives, the study sheds light on the complexities of the human condition amidst historical upheavals, offering valuable insights into the psychological, emotional, and societal ramifications of such events.

Furthermore, the comparative analysis of common themes, narrative techniques, and socio-cultural commentaries across Manto's stories enriches our understanding of his literary prowess and his astute observations of historical realities. The study not only highlights the thematic continuity and narrative coherence in Manto's works but also underscores his ability to capture the essence of human experiences in diverse contexts. In light of these findings, recommendations for future research endeavors are proposed. These

include further comparative analyses to explore nuanced thematic variations, deeper investigations into gender dynamics within Manto's narratives, leveraging digital humanities methodologies for enhanced textual analysis, and fostering community engagement initiatives to preserve and disseminate Manto's literary legacy. In sum, this study contributes significantly to the ongoing discourse on Saadat Hasan Manto's literary legacy, offering valuable insights into the intersections of literature, history, and society. By unraveling the layers of meaning within Manto's narratives, this research underscores the enduring relevance of his works and their profound implications for understanding human experiences in times of socio-political upheaval.

Keywords: *Saadat Hasan Manto, Barthesian analysis, short stories, Partition, symbolism, socio-cultural commentary, human condition, literary critique, comparative analysis, future research.*

**1. TITLE OF THE THESIS: A BARTHESIAN ANALYSIS OF SAADAT HASAN MANTO'S
SELECTED SHORT STORIES, WITH A FOCUS ON 'TOBA TEK SINGH' AND 'KHOL DO'**

2. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1) Background of Study

Saadat Hasan Manto was a short-story author, established journalist, and Indian film screenwriter born to a Muslim family in the predominately Sikh city of Ludhiana, Punjab, present-day India in 1912 (Jokinen et al., 2022). Manto stands as one of the most controversial and influential writers of the 20th century and his collection of stories mirrors the traumatic condition of people because of the partition violence in 1947 (Chaudhry and Sana, 2023). The literary contributions of Manto to South Asian literature have left an ineradicable mark, especially in the domain of short stories (Kohli, 2021). It was identified that Manto's literature probes the human psyche, identifying the complications of desires, emotions, and motivations (Eskicioglu, 2022). Additionally, the evaluation of his writing style particularly in the selected short story brings to light his capability to use creative similes and personifications (Urooj and Laiba, 2023). Satire and irony also remained one of the

major characteristics of his writing through which he reflects a realistic image of social ills and problems.

Roland Barthes was one of the significant structuralist critics who evaluated signifying systems in mass culture and later on, converted to post-structuralism to assert "The Death of the Author" (IDOGHO, n.d). He authored "From Work to Text", positing the approach of the text which was a significant development in the realm of post-structuralism. Roland Barthes, a prominent personality in literary criticism and theory, pioneered groundbreaking ideas that revolutionized the knowledge of culture and literature (Gu and Ming Dong, 2024). His seminal work, "Methodologies" detailed the intricate world of everyday objects, popular media, and cultural symbols, and unveiled the hidden aspects of meaning behind them. The analytical concept of Barthes gives a lens through which texts can be deconstructed, presenting layers of meaning and interpretation (Khan et al., 2023). The convergence of the literary oeuvre of Manto with the theoretical framework of Barthes demonstrates a fascinating opportunity for evaluation. Short stories of Manto, especially "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do," act as rich reservoirs of narrative complication, existential introspection, and social commentary.

The analysis of selected stories for this study using a Barthesian framework can help explore beyond their surface narratives, unraveling the myths, discourses, and symbols embedded within them. Toba Tek Singh stands as a powerful imputation of the human cost of the partition of India in 1947 (Singh and Jeet, 2021). The story delves deeper into the themes of displacement, identity, and the absurdity of the borders as it is set in a mental asylum against the backdrop of the partition between Pakistan and India. Barthes' concept of myth has the potential to delineate the symbolic importance of the no-man's-land

between the two countries and the ideological constructs that perpetuate division (Sanjel, Shiva Raj, 2023). Similarly, “Khol Do” candidly identifies the outburst of gender-based and sexual violence during the partition of 1947 (Tapal and Zahra Murtaza, 2023). The systematic oppression and societal taboos experienced by women are confronted by Manto through the story of a young girl’s trauma and the protagonist’s quest for justice (Ali et al., 2023). The notion of Barthes of the “third meaning’ has the potential to unmask the aspects of social commentary embedded within the narrative, going beyond the symbolic and the literal.

This research project intends to detail the depths of selected short stories of Manto, dealing with the cultural, ideological, and existential dimensions that lie beneath the surface by using a Barthesian analysis. An in-depth knowledge of the literary genius of Manto and the socio-political contexts in which he authored can be attained through this interdisciplinary concept, facilitating the wider discourse on culture, literature, and human experience.

2) Problem Statement

A research problem is described as the particular issue, gap, or contradiction the researcher intends to address as it gives the study a clear justification and purpose (Mazhar et al., 2021). Despite Manto’s significant contributions to Urdu literature, there remains a lacuna in scholarly discourse concerning a comprehensive analysis of these selected short stories through the lens of Ronald Barthes’ five codes. A systematic identification of the deeper layers of symbolism and meaning within his texts, using Barthesian theory, is lacking while narratives of Manto are celebrated for their raw portrayal of the human condition and

socio-political realities. This gap hampers a holistic knowledge of Manto's literary craftsmanship and the profound socio-cultural critiques embedded within his work.

3) Research Objectives

- 1) To perform a Barthesian analysis of Saadat Hasan Manto's selected short stories, concentrating especially on 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do'.
- 2) To unravel the layers of symbolism, meaning, and socio-cultural commentary within Manto's narratives through the application of Ronald Barthes' five codes.
- 3) To identify the thematic concerns of power dynamics, identity, and the human condition in Manto's stories within the contexts of Partition-era India.

4) Research Questions

- 1) How do Manto's selected short stories, 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do', align with Ronald Barthes' five codes of narrative analysis?
- 2) What are the major thematic concerns and socio-cultural critiques embedded within Manto's narratives, as revealed through a Barthesian lens?
- 3) How do Manto's stories engage with issues of power dynamics, identity, and the human condition within the socio-political context of Partition-era India?

4) Aim of Study

The aim of this study is to deepen the understanding of readers of Saadat Hasan Manto's literary craftsmanship and the profound socio-cultural critiques inherent in his narratives. The proposed study seeks to throw light on the intricacies of Manto's storytelling, providing fresh details into the enduring significance and relevance of his work in shaping the collective consciousness of readers by applying Barthesian theory

5) Significance of Study

To analyse two of the popular selected short stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, particularly, "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" by applying Ronald Barthes' theoretical framework is of key significance for the enrichment of literary scholarship, developing the knowledge of readers regarding Urdu literature and expanding the horizons of literary criticism within the context of Partition-era India. This study seeks to explore the aspects of meaning, symbolism, and socio-cultural commentary within the narratives of Manto through the lens of Ronald Barthes' five codes. It unravels the intricacies of Manto's storytelling, throwing light on the symbolic importance of settings, characters, and narrative structure within the socio-political backdrop of Partition-era India by dissecting the hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural codes embedded in the texts. The outcomes of this research project hold educational value for scholars, students, and educators involved in Urdu literature, comparative literature studies, and literary theory as it gives a useful resource for comprehending the complications of Manto's narratives and prompts critical engagement with cultural discourse and Urdu literature.

The study offers details into the socio-political realities of Partition-era India and their effect on individual lives by exploring thematic concerns including identity, power dynamics, and the human condition in Manto's stories. Additionally, the study enhances a deeper knowledge of human experiences amidst historical upheaval, facilitating a wider discourse on history, literature, and cultural memory through a nuanced identification of these themes within Manto's narratives. Most importantly, the thematic concerns and narrative techniques identified in this study align with contemporary problems globally beyond their historical context. This study encourages reflections on wider socio-political

realities and enhances dialogue on topics including gender, nationalism, and human rights within a global context by assessing the enduring relevance of Manto's works and their reflection of universal human experiences.

6) Thesis Structure

Chapter ONE: Introduction

The first chapter of the thesis details the research objectives, aims, questions, and problems of the study, unveiling the background and significance of the study. This chapter is of key significance as it gives the basis to proceed with the subsequent chapters.

Chapter TWO: Literature Review

In this chapter, the researcher reviews the recent literature on the topic, unveiling the objectives of the research. Additionally, this part of the thesis makes an integrated discussion on the common themes that create linkages, and gives the gaps of the study that arise from the research under investigation while making the Barthesian analysis of Manto's selected short stories, particularly "Toba Tek Singh", and 'Khol Do'.

Chapter THREE: Research Design

This chapter encompasses the discussion regarding the selection of research philosophy, approach, data collection method, and data analysis technique and makes the justification behind the selection of these methodologies to ensure the reliability and credibility of the study.

Chapter FOUR: Findings

This is one of the most important chapters of the thesis as it presents the results or findings extracted making the review of the literature in chapter two, leading to the efficient discussion in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter FIVE: Discussion

In this chapter, the researcher makes a critical discussion of the findings presented in the previous chapter, heading toward the conclusion and making recommendations for future studies.

Chapter SIX: Conclusion and Future Direction

This section of the thesis involves the concluding remarks regarding the research under investigation along with practical and theoretical contributions of the study. Most importantly, this chapter gives the limitations of the study and suggests ideas for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review explains published information in a specific subject domain, and often information in a specific subject domain within a certain period of time. A literature

review can be just a synopsis of the sources, but it typically possesses an organisational pattern and combines both synthesis and summary Ligthart et al., (2021). The purpose of this chapter is to give a comprehensive review of the existing literature relevant to the objectives of the research given in the previous chapter. This chapter intends to build a base for comprehending the contextual and theoretical background of Saadat Hasan Manto's selected short stories, especially 'Khol do' and 'Toba Tek Singh' through the lens of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory by assessing relevant theories, studies, and critical analysis. This review will not only present the contributions and details of prior research but also explore questions and gaps that this study aims to address.

The importance of the literature review in the context of this study cannot be overstated. Firstly, the research is situated within the wider academic discourse, exhibiting how this research builds upon and facilitates existing knowledge. This chapter outlines the current state of scholarship on Barthesian Analysis and Manto's work, by engaging with previous research, offering a critical framework for the study. Second, it contributes to the exploration of recurring methodological concepts, themes, and theoretical perspectives that inform the analysis. This integrative discussion supports clarifying the connections between Barthes's semiotic codes and Manto's narratives, providing a nuanced knowledge of the socio-cultural and symbolic dimensions of the texts. Most significantly, the review underscores the necessity and originality of the current research by pinpointing gaps and unresolved questions in the literature, guiding the direction of the study, and building its academic significance.

2.2 Theoretical Framework: Roland Barthes' Semiotic Theory

2.2.1 Introduction to Barthes' Semiotic Theory

Barthes initially narrated his semiotic theory as a description of “myth” and, later on, he reserved the term connotation to label the ideological baggage that signs carry wherever they go, and most of the students followed the work of Barthes’ considered connotation as a better choice of word conveys his true concern (Kalalanda and Victor, 2023). Roland Barthes, a seminal personality in the field of literary theory and semiotics, profoundly influenced the way texts are interpreted and evaluated. His semiotic theory, which he described in works like “S/Z” and “Methodologies,” gives a strong framework for comprehending how meaning is constructed and conveyed via symbols and language. Semiotics refers to the study of sign-using behaviour and signs (Lagopoulos, Alexandros, and Karin Boklund-Lagopoulou, 2020). The Barthes made the expansion of this field by dissecting the layers of meaning embedded in cultural texts, demonstrating the ideological underpinnings and mechanisms by which texts communicated complicated values and ideas. The semiotic theory of Barthes broke down the activity of reading signs and concentrated on their interpretation by multiple societies and cultures (Iskanderova and Tatiana, 2024).

As per Barthes, anything in culture can be a sign and convey a particular message and he also gives a way to decipher these messages in his Mythologies by describing some methods (Iskanderova, 2024). Barthes argued that texts are not mere vehicles of transparent communication but are instead multi-layered systems of signs that create meaning via the relationship of different codes. The perspective of a singular, authoritative meaning is deconstructed by this approach, laying stress on the polysemy and plurality inherent in textual interpretation (Avlonitou and Papadaki, 2024). This theoretical notion is

especially useful in the evaluation of literature, where the complication and richness of narrative and symbolism can be systematically uncovered to show deeper socio-cultural and ideological significance. According to Barthes, symbols or signs are both a signifier, being the physical form of the sign as it is perceived via the senses and the signified, or meaning that is elucidated (Jazeri, Mohamad, and Susanto Susanto, 2020).

1. The Hermeneutic Code (Enigma Code):

The hermeneutic code (HER) is described as any part in a story that is not expounded and, therefore, emerges as an enigma for the reader, raising concerns that call for explication. Most of the stories hold back insights to foster the impact of the final revelation of all diegetic truths Ali et al., (2022). It was identified that the hermeneutic code as the elements of a story that create suspense and mystery, fostering the reader to seek answers. It involves all the puzzles, questions, and ambiguities that drive the narrative forward Alam et al., (2020). These enigmas function to engage the curiosity of the reader and maintain interest until the mysteries are sorted out.

2. The Proairetic Code (Action Code):

The proairetic code (ACT) is defined as the other key structuring protocol that creates suspense and interest on the part of a viewer or reader. The proairetic code applies to any action that implies a further action of narration Ali et al., (2021). For instance, a gunslinger draws his gun on an adversary and we wonder about the resolution of the action and wait to see if he has wounded himself or killed his opponent. The proairetic code relates to the narrative actions that propel the plot. It encompasses sequences of behaviours and events that follow a logical progression, leading the reader through the story (Mishaw and Joshua,

2021). This code is concerned with the structure and organisation of narrative events, offering a sense of direction and momentum.

3. The Semantic Code (SEM):

The semantic code is about the connotations within the text. It entails the adoption of symbols and signs that carry particular emotional or cultural meanings, enriching the narrative with layers of importance Hu et al., (2022). These elements function beyond their literal sense, adding resonance and depth to the story through metonymy, metaphor, and other figurative language. The semantic code enables the reader to take connotative meaning out of a certain explanation of a character, objective, and place.

4. The Symbolic Code:

The symbolic code copes with the wider thematic and structural opposition within the text. It concentrates on the binary contrasts and structures, including good/evil, life/death, and imprisonment/freedom, that underpin the narrative Akbar et al., (2021). This code demonstrates the fundamental ideological and philosophical dimensions of the text. This code more resembles the semantics and thence it develops a complication for the readers to make a clear distinction between symbolic and semic codes. As Felluga states "Barthes is not always obvious in the distinction between symbolic and semic codes (Amireh and Haneen, 2022)."

5. The Cultural Code (Referential Code):

The Cultural Code involves references to the wider historical, cultural, and social understanding that informs the text. It encompasses allusions, references to shared beliefs,

and common knowledge that situates the narrative within a particular context (VLASTA and SANDRA, n.d). The text to the broader world is connected with this code, embedding it within the intellectual and cultural milieu of its production. The cultural code is about those elements that exchange a common understanding of the world (Tektigul and Zhanna, 2023). Here, the reader concentrates on the medical, physiological, physical, psychological, historical, and literary properties of the characters of the story to explore common knowledge.

The semiotic theory and five codes theory of Barthes are profoundly appropriate to literary evaluation for multiple reasons. At first, they offer a comprehensive toolkit for interpreting and dissecting the multi-layered meaning inherent within literary texts. Analysts can systematically unfold how narratives function not only as stories but also as complicated systems of signification that mirror and influence cultural ideologies and values by using these codes (Wajdi and Majid, 2024). Barthes's theory is particularly important and pertinent in the context of Saadat Hasan Manto's selected short stories, especially "Toba Tek Singh" and 'Khol Do'. The narratives of Manto are popular for their rich socio-cultural commentary, symbolism, and identification of human experiences during the Partition of India Abid et al., (2020). The application of the five codes of Barthes to these stories allows for a deeper knowledge of how Manto constructs meaning via his narrative techniques and symbolic elements. For example, the hermeneutic code is of key significance for analysing the unresolved and mysterious questions in 'Toba Tek Singh,' where the mental state of the protagonist and the allegorical no-man's-land between Pakistan and India invite various interpretations. Additionally, it would be pertinent to apply the proairetic code to assess the

sequence of events and actions that drive the plot in 'Khol Do,' presenting the tension and urgency of the narrative.

The symbolic and semantic codes are significant for uncovering the layers of connotation and binary oppositions in Manto's stories. These codes have the potential to show how Manto adopts particular contrasts and symbols to comment on the dislocation, brutality, and human suffering during the partition (Parui and Avishek, 2022). Most importantly, the cultural code situates narratives of Manto within the cultural and historical context of the time, connecting the political and personal, and providing details into the wider socio-political environment that informs the stories. This study seeks to unfold the intricate relationship of narrative elements and cultural signifiers that constitute the rich tapestry of Manto's storytelling by applying the semiotic theory of Barthes to Manto's works. This concept not only fosters the knowledge of Manto's literary techniques but also facilitates the wider discourse on the intersection of culture, literature, and history.

2.3 Overview of Saadat Hasan Manto's Works

Saadat Hasan Manto is revered for his unflinching and bold identification of the harsh realities of society, addressing different topics including communalism and partition. Born in 1912 in Ludhiana, British India, the literary career of Manto spanned the tumultuous period of pre- and post-Partition India (Kaur and Saheb, 2022). His work involves plays, short stories, and essays, but it is his short stories that have garnered the most controversy and acclaim. The contribution of Manto to Urdu literature is unparalleled; he pushed the boundaries of narrative content and form, often challenging societal norms and confronting taboo subjects with stark realism (Raza and Salima, n.d). The writing of Manto is

distinguished by its stark realism, profound knowledge of human psychology, and deep empathy for the marginalized. His stories frequently delve into the lives of those on the fringes of society, such as pimps, prostitutes, and mental asylum inmates (Jumani, Shahnaz, and Sourath Seelro, 2023). Manto demonstrated the brutality, hypocrisy, and absurdity of societal structures and human behaviours through his vivid and often provocative narratives. His unvarnished depiction of the human condition, partnered with his masterful storytelling, solidified his place as a literary giant and a voice of conscience in Urdu literature Akmal et al., (2024).

2.3.1 Common Stylistic Features and Themes in Manto's Short Stories

The short stories of Manto are characterized by a number of distinctive stylistic features and themes. It was identified that a number of stories of Manto are set against the backdrop of the Partition of India in 1947, a cataclysmic event that resulted in widespread violence, trauma, and displacement (Dutta and Sudipta, 2023). Stories such as 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do' poignantly capture the human cost of this historical upheaval, identifying themes of madness, identity, and loss. Additionally, Manto frequently addressed problems of sexuality and the exploitation of women, often unapologetic and stark Akram et al., (2023). His stories reflect the harsh realities experienced by women in patriarchal societies, throwing light on their resilience and struggles. 'Kali Shalwar' and 'Thanda Gosht' are notable instances where Manto identifies these themes in a candidness that was both controversial and groundbreaking. Manto used irony and satire to critique societal norms, political hypocrisy, and religious orthodoxy. His sharp, often acerbic tone underscores the injustices and absurdities he perceived in society Kaleem et al., (2023). Stories such as 'License' and 'Saha'e' exemplify his adoption of satire and convey his critical perspective.

Most importantly, the stories of Manto often delve into the darker aspects of human nature, including cruelty, greed, and lust, while also presenting moments of humanity and compassion. His characters are complicated and multifaceted, embodying both virtue and vice. This duality is a hallmark of the narrative style of Manto, as observed in stories such as 'The Dog of Tithwal', and 'Mozail' (Roy and Anupama, 2022).

2.3.2 The Socio-Political Context of Manto's writing

The literary output of Manto must be understood within the socio-political context of his time, especially the age encircling the Partition of India. The Partition in 1947 led to one of the largest mass migrations in human history, accompanied by widespread displacement, horrific communal violence, and deep-seated trauma for millions of people (Mushtaq and Hammad, 2020). This period of intense suffering and turmoil profoundly influenced the writing of Manto. The experiences of Manto during the Partition, such as his own migration from Bombay to Lahore, deeply informed his narrative style and thematic concerns. His stories sometimes mirror the brutality, chaos, and moral ambiguity of this period (Aslam and Nadeem, 2022). The disintegration of social order and the arbitrary violence that characterized the Partition are vividly reflected in his works, providing a stark commentary on the human capacity for both endurance and savagery. Additionally, the writing of Manto was also a response to the socio-cultural milieu of his age, which was marked by stringent moral codes, pervasive gender discrimination, and rigid social hierarchies (Ali and Sara, 2022). His stories challenged these conventions, portraying the lives of those marginalized by mainstream society, including the mentally ill, women, and prostitutes. In doing so, Manto not only critiqued the societal status quo but also supported greater knowledge and empathy of human suffering.

Manto's forthright depiction of social issues often brought him into conflict with the conservative and authority segments of society. He experienced multiple obscenity trials, which he countered with his characteristic defiance and wit, defending his work as a mirror to own ills of society (Anand and Kusha, 2023). Despite, or perhaps because of these controversies, the work of Manto attained immense acknowledgment and remains a powerful voice in Urdu literature.

2.4 Barthesian Analysis of Manto's Selected Stories

The choice to apply the semiotic theory of Roland Barthes to Saadat Hasan Manto's short stories 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do' is founded on the potential of Barthes' framework to uncover the intricate layers of meaning woven within these narratives. The semiotic theory of Barthes, especially his approach to the five narrative codes, provides a powerful device for dissecting the complicated relationship of symbols and signs in literary texts (Jureczek and Paweł, 2021). This analytical approach is well-suited to Manto's short stories, which are popular for their symbolic richness, psychological path, and socio-political commentary. Manto's 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do' are seminal works that encapsulate the chaotic and traumatic condition of the people during the partition of India in 1947. These stories are not merely historical accounts; they are deeply symbolic narratives that mirror the human condition under extreme socio-political upheaval (Kantor and Roanne, 2020). 'Toba Tek Singh' captures the perplexity of the chief protagonist and the identity crisis. This story copes with the tragedy and absurdity of the Partition through the lens of a mental asylum, utilizing the madness of the protagonist as a powerful metaphor for the insanity of the division itself. Ironically, the mad are realized as saner than the sane whose reason drove them to brutally divide a nation into two (Shabir and Junaid Shah, 2021). Contrary to

it, 'Khol Do', starkly reflects the dehumanization and brutal violence faced by women during the partition. The story of 'Khol Do' identifies one of the most significant yet ignored parts of society: The demons and the horrors of war inside humans (Chaudhry and Sana, 2023).

The Hermeneutic Code, or Enigma Code, is pivotal to Saadat Hasan Manto's 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do,' developing suspense and deepening the thematic effect of the narratives. In 'Toba Tek Singh,' the enigma centers around Bishan Singh's obsession and madness with the location of Toba Tek Singh. His repeated question, "Where is Toba Tek Singh?" is left unanswered, reflecting the dislocation and chaos of the Partition (Malik and Azmeh Waleed, 2022). This unresolved quest signifies the lost homelands of countless displaced individuals and fragmented identities, demonstrating the absurdity of political boundaries imposed on communal and personal lives. In 'Khol Do,' the hermeneutic code is embodied in the desperate search for Sakina. The narrative maintains tension as Sirajuddin, her father, oscillates between despair and hope. The poignant line, "Sirajuddin opened his eyes and saw the faint glimmer of hope", describes the emotional turmoil and uncertainty that drives the story (Younis, Maida, and Tehseen Zahra, 2023). The eventual discovery of Sakina, in a condition of violation, is a tragic resolution to the enigma, underscoring the brutal realities experienced by women during the days of Partition. These painfully resolved and unresolved enigmas not only interact with the reader but also mirror the wider existential traumas and uncertainties of the partition age, fostering the socio-political critique inherent in the Work of Manto (Lotwala and Ms. Kunjal, n.d).

The tragedy and absurdity of the Partition are underscored by the sequence of actions in 'Toba Tek Singh'. The forced migrations and arbitrary delineations of age are symbolized by the bureaucratic decision to exchange patients between Pakistani and Indian

asylums. Manto's depiction of the patients' bewildered exchange between borders captures the human cost and irrationality of such political decisions (Sengupta and Jayita, 2020). The refusal of Bishan Singh, the protagonist to move to either side, culminating in his death in no man's land, epitomizes the ultimate human tragedy and futility of these actions (Singh and Jeet, 2021). This sequence of events, marked by a lack of resolution, accentuates the critique of the narrative of the absurdity of imposed borders and identities. The proairetic code in 'Khol Do,' is led by the desperate search for Sakina. The fanatic activities of Sirajuddin, from scouring refugee camps to seeking assistance, reflect the disjointed and chaotic endeavours of families trying to reunite amidst the violence of Partition. The tragic climax, where Sakina responds to the command 'Khol Do' by mechanically opening her clothes, shows the horrifying extent of the trauma and brutality she encountered (Rahman and Md Feroz Ibne, 2023). This sequence not only presents the immediate repercussions of communal violence but also acts as a grim commentary on the dehumanizing impacts of such atrocities on individuals.

The Manto's adoption of connotative meanings in both stories deepens their thematic resonance. The name of the protagonist and his obsession with his village in 'Toba Tek Singh' depict more than just personal fixation; they represent the collective loss of homeland and identity faced by millions during Partition (Naseer and Saba, 2021). The cry of Bishan Singh "Where is Toba Tek Singh?", carries semantic weight, mirroring the search for a lost sense of the displacement and belonging felt by those uprooted from their ancestral lands (Das and Bijendra Nath, 2024). The recurring motif of "Open it" (Khol Do) functions on various semantic levels. On one hand, it mirrors the physical violation Sakina endures, a brutal reality of violence women experienced during Partition. On the other hand, it holds a

tragic irony when her father utilizes the phrase in a literal sense, only to be confronted with the brutalized compliance of his daughter Bashir et al., (n.d). The metaphor extends to the wider theme of survival amidst devastation. The mechanical response of Sakina shows psychological rupture and the extent of her victimization, laying stress on the dehumanization effect of communal violence. This dual-layer employment of 'Khol do' transforms it from a mere directive into a robust symbol of both the faint hope of life and violation amidst destruction (Manzoor and Nazia, 2021).

Manto uses symbolic oppositions in 'Toba Tek Singh' to reflect the social and political dichotomies of the Partition. The madness versus the dichotomy of sanity is epitomized in the asylum inmates, who, despite their insanity, sometimes seem more rational than the outside world torn by Partition (Jokinen, Tahir, and Shershah Assadullah, 2022). The apparent madness of Bishan Singh, juxtaposed with his clarity on not moving to either Pakistan or India, mirrors the irrationality of political decisions that disrespected human lives. The opposition to imprisonment and freedom is also starkly portrayed (Roy and Mohona, n.d). The asylum, a place of confinement, ironically becomes a space where characters express their true selves, contrasting with the 'free' outside world administered by arbitrary political divisions. The quest of Bishan Singh for Toba Tek Singh encapsulates the ultimate symbol of exile versus home, which he observes as his true home. The deep sense of dislocation and exile felt by those uprooted by Partition is underscored by the refusal of Bishan Singh (Nepal and Kritika, 2020). Additionally, the symbolic opposition of life and death is used by Manto in 'Khol do' to convey the devastation of communal violence. The lifeless compliance of Sakina to the command 'Khol do' tragically blurs the line between death and life, demonstrating how extreme trauma can obliterate the will to live. The

violation versus purity opposition is starkly portrayed via the character of Sakina. Her brutalization signifies the devastation of purity and innocence by communal hatred, showing the wider ethical and moral collapse during the Partition. These symbolic codes not only foster the narrative depth but also act as a potent critique of the socio-political upheavals of the time (Kumar and Kamayani, 2024).

Both stories are deeply embedded in the historical and cultural context of the Partition, which is significant for comprehending their narratives. In 'Toba Tek Singh', the frequent references to geographical locations such as Amritsar, Lahore, and Toba Tek Singh itself ground the story in the particular cultural milieu of pre-partition Punjab (Shaista, Ambreen, and Muhammad Abrar Zahoor, n.d). The cultural reference to the political division between Pakistan and India is not just a backdrop but a core theme that drives the character and plot actions. The social turmoil of the time such as the mass displacements and the resulting identity crises, is vividly portrayed through the microcosm of Asylum (Kaur, 2021). The cultural references to refugee camps and the chaos of migration in 'Khol Do', situate the story within the immediate aftermath of Partition. The cultural and social effect of communal violence is starkly depicted through the experiences of Sakina and her father, mirroring the widespread societal collapse. The command 'Khol do,' which means "open it," carries deep cultural connotations, resonating with the themes of survival and violation within the context of patriarchal control and communal brutality (Mishra and Gauri, 2021). These cultural codes connect the personal tragedies portrayed in the stories to the collective trauma of Partition, underscoring how individual suffering is inextricably connected to wider socio-political realities.

2.5 Symbolism, Meaning, and Socio-cultural Commentary

Symbolism is described as a figure of speech in literature in which a situation, person, object, or word is adopted to represent another thing de Mendoza Ibáñez et al., (2020). For example, the gibberish of 'Toba Tek Singh' is symbolic of the collapse of human communication in the midst of sheer madness, the nonsense of partition, and the failure of language to possess any meaning in such times of turmoil (Asif and Noor, 2024). The objective behind unfolding the layers of symbolism, socio-cultural commentary, and meaning in Manto's narratives via the application of the five codes of Barthes is rooted in the inherent complication and richness of the storytelling of Manto. The works of Manto, especially 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do', are not just narratives but are deeply embedded commentaries on the socio-political environment of their age (Tapal, Zahra Murtaza, 2023). This analysis intends to unravel the intricate semiotic structures that underpin Manto's critique of historical events and societal norms.

The use of layered meanings and symbolism in Manto's work is a hallmark of his narrative style. His stories are dense with symbols and metaphors that act to amplify the themes he identifies Ahsan, Rija, and Sarah Ishfaq Gill, (2021). The semiotic framework of Barthes, with its attention on the multiplicity of meanings, is especially well-suited to dissecting these elements (Fracchia and Joseph, 2021). The unresolved mysteries and questions in the stories of Manto act as a reflection of the larger existential dilemmas and uncertainties experienced by individuals during the Partition. For example, the central enigma encircling madness of Bishan Singh and his search for Toba Tek Singh is symbolic of the wider search for belonging and identity amidst the chaos of Partition (Nepal and Kritika, 2020). The hermeneutic code supports uncovering these narrative enigmas and exploring

deeper philosophical and existential questions. The madness of Bishan Singh, which seems to heighten his clarity regarding his refusal to accept the new borders, becomes a powerful metaphor for the irrationality of political decisions of the time. His death in no man's land, lying between the two new nations, encapsulates the tragic and unresolved quest for a homeland, laying stress on the existential plight of those caught in the crossfire of history (Arora and Prakriti, 2021).

The events and actions in Manto's stories like the forced migrations in 'Toba Tek Singh' and the search for Sakina in 'Khol Do,' are not merely plot devices but carry symbolic weight. In 'Toba Tek Singh', the movement of asylum inmates between Pakistan and India reflects the forced migration during Partition. This action sequence, demonstrated by the line, "They would be transferred to Pakistan, while Muslim lunatics from Pakistan asylums would be sent to India, symbolizes the human cost and absurdity of political boundaries (Dutta, Deboleena, and Nadia Krishnagar, n.d). Similarly, in 'Khol Do,' the desperate actions of Sirajuddin, driven by the hope of finding his daughter, embody the dislocation and chaos faced by many during Partition (Rai, Madhukar, n.d). The proairetic codes support tracing these sequences to comprehend how they facilitate the narrative's thematic code, like the absurdity of political boundaries or the brutal reality of communal violence. The use of imagery and language in Manto's work often carries connotations that extend beyond their literal meanings. For example, the name 'Toba Tek Singh' itself becomes a symbol of lost identity and heritage (Kumar and Ravinder, n.d). One can decode these connotations, unexplored layers of meaning that add depth to the narrative by applying the semantic code. This analysis reveals how Manto adopts particular metaphors and symbols to critique political and social conditions.

The binary oppositions in the stories of Manto, like madness/sanity, purity/violation, and freedom/confinement, underscore the ideological tensions of the time. Bishan Singh, though deemed mad, emerges more rational in his steadfast refusal to accept the new geographical realities, which ironically presents the madness of the political situation (Sharma, Divya, n.d). The line, "Bishan Singh did not move. Where he fell, there he lay" starkly contrasts confinement and freedom, symbolizing his resistance to arbitrary political division. The stories of Manto are embedded with cultural references that situate them within a particular social and historical context (Halim and Tasnim, 2023). The cultural code is significant for underscoring how these references inform the narrative and facilitate its socio-cultural commentary. For example, references to political events, geographical locations, and social customs in 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do' offer a backdrop that is essential for interpreting the stories' messages and themes. The mention of "Sikh lunatics were to be sent to India" shows the religious and cultural identities implicated in the Partition (Hussain, Sajjad, and Jamil Asghar, 2023). In 'Khol Do,' the chaotic backdrop of refugee camps and the widespread dislocation mirrors the immediate aftermath of Partition (Kumar, Kamayani, 2024). Cultural references including political events, and social customs, are significant for understanding the socio-cultural commentary. These references support decoding the thematic messages and offer a rich context for interpreting the wider implications of Manto's work.

The socio-cultural commentary of Manto's work is deeply enshrined in his narratives, providing critiques of political divisions, societal norms, and human behaviours. Manto gives a scathing critique of the Partition in 'Toba Tek Singh' by adopting the asylum as a microcosm of the divided subcontinent (BASU and DEBASRI, 2020). The hermeneutic code is

pivotal to this critique, with the protagonist Bishan Singh's madness symbolizing the insanity of the political division. His repeated query, "Where is Toba Tek Singh", presents the profound disorientation and identity crisis induced by Partition. The wider madness of the geopolitical reconfiguration is reflected by the asylum inmates, regardless of their religion, underscoring the absurdity of the forced migrations. The symbolic code of madness versus sanity is poignantly depicted through the steadfast refusal of Bishan Singh to accept the new boundaries, symbolizing the irrationality of the political decisions that disrespected human histories and connections. The proairetic code, laying stress on the movements and actions of patients between newly formed nations, reinforces the absurdity of these actions. The line "They would be moved to Pakistan, while Muslim lunatics from Pakistan asylums would be sent to India encapsulates the inhuman and mechanical nature of the process of partition (Saroj, n.d).

'Khol Do' starkly reflects the brutality experienced by women during the Partition. The symbolic and semantic codes are important in evaluating how Manto portrays this suffering. The phrase 'khol do' (open it) becomes a haunting symbol of survival and violation, as Sakina mechanically responds to the plea of her father, revealing the extent of her trauma Langdah, Nukhbah Taj, and Sobia Kiran, (2024). The closed and open doors symbolize both psychological and physical violations. This suffering within the wider context of patriarchal oppression and communal violence is situated by the cultural code, showing the systematic nature of the brutality. The narrative of Manto, through its raw depiction of the plight of Sakina, underscores the pervasive violence against women, making a powerful statement regarding the human cost of communal hatred (Alam and Mohit, n.d). The line

“Sirajuddin opened his eyes and saw the faint glimmer of home before observing the extent of violation of Sakina poignantly captures the dual themes of despair and hope.

Both stories deeply identify themes of belonging and identity. In ‘Toba Tek Singh’, the search for a homeland and the confusion of identities are major themes. The fixation of Bishan Singh on Toba Tek Singh symbolizes the longing for a lost homeland. The semantic and cultural codes identify Manto’s commentary on the loss of identity and the quest for belonging in a divided land. The repeated queries about the location of Toba Tek Singh show the existential crisis experienced by individuals uprooted from their ancestral homes. The application of Barthes’ codes to the narratives of Manto offers a thorough and systematic method for unfolding the layers of meaning in his stories. The concept not only shows the thematic and symbolic richness of Manto’s work but also gives detail into his narrative techniques and socio-cultural critiques. The framework of Barthes allows for a detailed evaluation of how Manto constructs his narrative to interact with and critique the socio-political situations of his age. The analysis reveals the profound ways in which Manto addresses the human condition, societal norms, and identity amid the turmoil of Partition by dissecting the texts through Barthes’ codes.

2.6 Power Dynamics, Identity, and the Human Condition

2.6.1 Power Dynamics

Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto, especially those set against the backdrop of Partition-age India, are deeply enshrined with themes that identify the intricacies of identity, power dynamics, and the human condition. It is of key significance to explore these thematic concerns for comprehending the socio-political and psychological depth of his narratives

(Kazim and Syed Musa, 2023). Power dynamics is described as the lack of balance or balance between two or more individuals. Stories of Manto often delve into the intricate power dynamics that illustrated the Partition time. He depicts how political decisions and social upheavals result in profound shifts in power relations among different individuals or groups. For example, power dynamics can be observed in 'Toba Tek Singh' in the treatment of asylum inmates, who are subjected to the whims of political bodies deciding their fate without their consent (Siddiqui and Mohammad Asim, 2012). This mirrors the larger, often arbitrary, exercise of power during the Partition, where borders were drawn with little regard for the people impacted.

Manto identifies the brutal realities of power dynamics in 'Khol Do' via the lens of gender. The story starkly reflects the victimization of women and the exploitation of their bodies in the chaotic aftermath of the Partition. The control exerted over the body of Sakina by multiple male figures, including the futile efforts of her father to save her and the horrific assault of soldiers is a grim portrayal of patriarchal power structures (Shukla and Ayushi, n.d). Manto writes, " Her body had been identified laying by the tracks of railway, abandoned and brutalized", a chilling testament to the pervasive violence against women. The ultimate horror is encapsulated when Sakina gives a response mechanically to the command 'khol do,' showing her trauma. This narrative not only shows the immediate horrors of partition but also criticizes the systemic, deeper gender inequalities. The portrayal of Manto of Sakina's anguish behaves as a power indictment of the societal norms that exacerbate and perpetuate such violence (Subba, 2013).

2.6.2 Identity

The theme of identity is pivotal to Saadat Hasan Manto's partition stories, capturing the profound dislocation and confusion faced by people during this hard time. The inability of the protagonist Bishan Singh in 'Toba Tek Singh' to understand the division of his homeland and subsequent quest for Toba Tek Singh reflects the loss of identity and the desperate search for belonging in a newly fragmented globe (Flemming and Leslie, 1977). The repeated questioning of Bishan Singh, "Where is Toba Tek Singh?" shows his bewilderment and symbolizes the wider existential crisis experienced by millions who were suddenly assigned new national identities. The brutal and arbitrary nature of the Partition exacerbated the identity crisis, which disrespected deep-rooted personal and cultural affiliations. The madness and ultimate death of Bishan Singh in No Man's Land poignantly capture the rootlessness and alienation realized by many. His refusal to move to either Pakistan or India highlights a silent protest against the absurdity of the imposed divisions Akram et al., (2023). The narrative explains how the forced redrawing of borders led to a loss of a sense of self and belonging, plunging individuals into a state of existential limbo. As Manto writes, "Bishan Singh did not move. Where he fell, there he lay", his immobility in death becomes a powerful metaphor for his resistance to the fragmentation of his identity.

The fragmentation of identity in 'Khol Do' is depicted through the character of Sakina, who becomes a victim of chaos and violence accompanying the partition. The disintegration of social and personal identities amidst the communal frenzy is reflected by her harrowing experience. The body of Sakina, subjected to brutal attacks, shows the psychological and physical fragmentation inflicted by the socio-political upheavals. Her mechanical response to 'khol do' (open it), a command to open her clothes after being

repeatedly abandoned, starkly shows her loss of identity and agency (Guha and Madhurima, n.d). Manto writes, “Sirajuddin opened his eyes and saw the faint glimmer of home. Sakina had opened her shalwar”, this tragic compliance underscores the stripping away of her personal identity and dehumanization. The story of Sakina is presented by Manto to reveal the helplessness and vulnerability of people whose identities were shattered by the Partition. The communal violence drove individuals into situations and roles beyond their control, as observed in the transformation of Sakina from a hopeful refugee to a violated body (Tiwari and Sudha, 2013). The desperate search for Sakina’s father and ultimate horror upon finding her situation mirror the collective trauma and the fragmentation of social and familial bonds.

2.6.3. The Human Condition

Stories of Manto vividly reflect the psychological trauma faced by people during the partition, utilizing characters and settings to mirror the wider collective psyche. The mental disarray of asylum inmates in ‘Toba Tek Singh acts as a metaphor for the collective insanity of the political decisions that resulted in the partition. This trauma is epitomized by the protagonist, Bishan Singh. Her obsession and confusion with the whereabouts of Toba Tek Singh mirror the identity crisis and disorientation caused by the arbitrary division of the subcontinent (Wratch and Manjinder Kaur, 2023). Manto states, “ A few days before the exchange was due to take place, a Muslim lunatic asked another Muslim lunatic; ‘Brother, why are we being sent to India? We don’t even know where it is!’. The psychological torment and bewilderment are encapsulated by this exchange faced by those impacted by the Partition. The final act of Bishan Singh of laying down in no man’s land shows the ultimate human cost of such arbitrary divisions – a loss of home sanity, and identity. His

death in this liminal space represents the irreparable harm to the human psyche caused by traumatic events (Mukhopadhyay, Raj Raj, n.d).

Manto's identification of the human condition encompasses a deep engagement with ethical dilemmas and moral ambiguity. His characters often find themselves in situations where traditional moral frameworks are upended, mirroring the morally chaotic and ambiguous nature of the Partition. The ethical decay in 'Khol Do' is evident in the brutal treatment of Sakina by those who are supposed to protect her (Mahmood and Khalid, 2021). The soldiers, who are ostensibly safeguarding refugees, become perpetrators of violence. The horror is encapsulated when Sakina, upon hearing the command 'khol do,' automatically responds by opening the shalwar, suggesting the repeated assaults she endured. Manto writes, "Sirajuddin opened his eyes and saw the faint glimmer of hope. Sakina had opened her shalwar'. This scene urges readers to confront uncomfortable truths regarding the capacity of cruelty under extreme conditions and human nature (Itakura and Gen'ichiro, 2019). Manto's portrayal of such ethical dilemmas challenges the reader to question the moral integrity of those in the societal structures and power that allow such brutality.

Manto also captures moments of resilience and the enduring human spirit despite the bleakness of his narratives. The persistent search of Bishan Singh for his home in Toba Tek Singh, even amidst his madness, is a testament to human resilience in the face of insurmountable odds. His refusal to acknowledge the new boundaries and his ultimate death as no man's land presents a tragic yet poignant assertion of his humanity and identity (Williams, Delice, 2013). Similarly, the eventual acknowledgment of Sakina in 'Khol Do' by her father underscores the fleeting yet powerful moment of the human condition and hope amidst the encircling despair. The scene where Sirajuddin accepts the automatic response of

Sakina, 'khol do,' is a moment of heartbreaking connection and clarity. The narrative of Manto concludes on a note of profound sorrow yet human connection, as the hope of Sirajuddin is both shattered and realized. Manto writes, "Sirajuddin ran to her and covered her exposed body with his shawl. She was alive. She had opened her shalwar. But she was dead inside". The resilience of the human spirit is encapsulated by this moment, even as it recognizes the deep scars left by trauma (Sa'adat Hasan, 2003).

2.6.4 Contextual Analysis

It is of key significance to comprehend the themes in the stories of Manto within the particular context of partition-age India to fully grasp their importance and depth. The partition of India in 1947 was not merely a political event; it was a traumatic and profound upheaval that reshaped identities, lives, and communities (Yusin, 2009). The narratives of Manto act as a power commentary on this epoch, capturing the suffering, chaos, and indomitable human spirit that defined this period. The partition of India resulted in one of the largest mass migrations in human history with almost 14 million people dislocated and an estimated one to two million lives lost because of the communal violence. This time was marked by unprecedented turmoil, as individuals were uprooted from their homes and forced to cross newly drawn borders to find safety among their religious communities (Pandey, 2001). The socio-political context of Partition, characterized by mass migration, the creation of new national identities, and communal violence, is significant for interpreting the thematic concerns in the stories of Manto.

Narratives of Manto, though often concentrated on personal stories, mirror wider socio-political disruptions of the time. The madness of protagonist Bishan Singh and other

inmates in 'Toba Tek Singh' acts as a microcosm for the insanity of the political decisions that resulted in partition. The asylum, a space meant for those deemed insane, ironically becomes a sign of sanity compared to the outside globe torn apart by political strife (GHOSH ROY, 2019). Manto writes, "In the lunatic asylum, there were two Muslims, who had gone mad due to troubles. One would always shout: 'Pakistan Zindabad!' The other would shout: 'Hindustan Zindabad!'. This scene encapsulates the tragedy and absurdity of the communal divisions that accompanied the Partition. Manto portrays the personal tragedy of Sakina in 'Khol Do,' against the backdrop of the wider communal violence. Her violation by those who were supposed to protect her mirrors the moral and ethical decay of society during this era (Nawazi, n.d). The narrative captures the devastating effect of the Partition on individual lives, particularly presenting the vulnerability of women. Stories of Manto are a poignant reminder that the impact of Partition was not just political but deeply personal, impacting the very fabric of society.

2.8 Research Gaps

A research gap is, simply, a topic or area for which insufficient or missing information limits the ability to reach a conclusion for a question (Miles, 2017). While existing literature extensively explores Saadat Hasan Manto's work and its reflections on the Partition, several research gaps remain that warrant further investigation. There is limited scholarship applying Roland Barthes' five codes comprehensively to Manto's stories. Most studies focus on thematic or symbolic analyses without integrating Barthes' semiotic theory to decode the multiple layers of meaning in Manto's narratives. While Manto's critique of Partition-era politics is acknowledged, a detailed examination of how his stories specifically critique the socio-political structures and power dynamics through Barthesian analysis is less explored.

This includes the nuanced interplay of power, identity, and resistance within his works. Although Manto's portrayal of gender-based violence is widely recognized, there is a need for deeper analysis of how these narratives intersect with broader cultural codes and reflect systemic patriarchal structures. This gap highlights the necessity to apply Barthes' codes to understand the symbolic and cultural representations of gender in Manto's work. Comparative studies that juxtapose Manto's work with other contemporary writers using Barthesian frameworks are scarce. Such comparative analyses could provide richer insights into the unique and shared narrative strategies employed during the Partition. There is a gap in exploring how Manto's stories have been received over time and their influence on contemporary literature and socio-political discourse. Understanding the evolving interpretation of his works can provide a dynamic perspective on their significance.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive literature review, contextualizing Saadat Hasan Manto's narratives within the theoretical framework of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. The review has outlined the significance of Barthesian analysis in unpacking the complex layers of meaning, symbolism, and socio-cultural commentary in Manto's selected stories, particularly "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do." Through the application of Barthes' five codes—hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural—this study aims to reveal the intricate narrative structures and the deep socio-political critiques embedded in Manto's works. The review has identified critical themes such as identity, power dynamics, psychological trauma, moral ambiguity, and resilience, demonstrating how Manto's narratives serve as a microcosm for the larger historical and socio-political upheavals of the Partition era. Despite the rich body of existing literature, significant research gaps have been

identified. These include the need for a more integrated Barthesian analysis, a deeper examination of socio-political and gender dynamics, and a comparative and longitudinal study of Manto's influence. Addressing these gaps can provide a more nuanced and holistic understanding of Manto's contribution to literature and his enduring relevance. The literature review underscores the importance of Manto's work as a critical lens through which the human condition during the Partition can be examined. By applying Barthes' semiotic theory, this thesis endeavors to offer new insights into the narrative strategies and thematic depth of Manto's stories, contributing to the broader discourse on Partition literature and semiotic analysis.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methodology: Secondary Qualitative

Research methodology encompasses the systematic techniques and procedures utilized to explore, select, process, and evaluate data pertinent to a specific research inquiry.

It plays a pivotal role in enabling critical analysis of a study's overall credibility and validity (Mishra and Alok, 2022). The choice of research methodology hinges upon the overarching objectives and nature of the study. When the research aims to explore or understand phenomena in depth, a qualitative design is typically preferred, which guides the selection of appropriate data collection methods. Conversely, if the research objectives entail testing or measuring specific variables, a quantitative approach is often adopted.

In this dissertation, a secondary qualitative approach is employed to investigate the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase retention. Secondary research involves the analysis of existing data collected by others, offering insights into various aspects of the research topic (Swain and King, 2022). While secondary research relies on pre-existing data, it remains a valid and valuable method as it facilitates comprehensive analysis, synthesis of findings from diverse sources, and comparative examination. By employing a secondary qualitative methodology, this dissertation aims to leverage existing literature and data to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between social media marketing efforts and consumer purchase retention. This approach allows for a thorough exploration of available information, enabling the synthesis of insights from multiple sources to inform the research inquiry effectively.

3.2 Philosophy: Interpretivism

Interpretivism, also known as the qualitative research paradigm or phenomenology, is a philosophical perspective that emphasizes the significance of understanding the

subjective meanings and interpretations individuals assign to their experiences. Widely utilized in social science research, interpretivism asserts that comprehending the rationale, beliefs, and motivations of individuals within a social context is essential for deciphering the meaning of data related to a phenomenon (Sanchez et al., 2023). It stands in contrast to positivism, which seeks to uncover objective truths through statistical analysis and quantitative data. Interpretivism acknowledges the complexity of social phenomena and human behavior, which are influenced by culture, context, and personal perspectives. At its core, this approach recognizes that individuals construct their own meanings and realities through their interactions with the world (Cypress, 2021). Researchers embracing interpretivism aim to identify these subjective meanings to grasp the deeper significance of social phenomena.

Interpretivists argue that individuals construct their realities based on their unique experiences, beliefs, and values. Therefore, researchers focus on understanding these subjective viewpoints. This philosophy emphasizes that social phenomena cannot be fully understood without considering the context in which they arise (Pervin and Mokhtar, N.d). Researchers delve into the contextual nuances that shape perceptions and behavior. Interpretivism underscores the importance of studying human interaction and how individuals interpret these interactions. It explores the meanings attributed to various situations and actions. Interpretive research often involves collecting rich qualitative data, such as observations, interviews, and textual analysis, to gain insights into the complexities of human perceptions and experiences (Mezmir, 2020). In the context of our thesis, interpretivism guides the researcher by encouraging exploration of the subjective meanings.

3.3 Approach: Inductive

The inductive approach is a significant research strategy that involves progressing from specific observations and data to broader generalizations and theories. It holds key importance as it allows researchers to adjust their methods and topics based on the data they gather (Clark et al., 2021). This approach provides researchers with the flexibility to explore new phenomena and concepts that they may not have initially anticipated. In contrast to the deductive approach, which starts with a general theory or hypothesis tested against specific observations, inductive reasoning is often associated with qualitative research methodologies and is particularly useful for identifying new domains or developing new theories from collected data (Dyar, 2022). Using an inductive approach, researchers immerse themselves in the data to uncover themes, patterns, and relationships. These identified themes serve as the foundation for generating explanations and theories. Since the primary objective of the inductive approach is to generate new theories, it is particularly beneficial for exploring under-researched areas where existing theories may not fully apply.

In the context of this research, the inductive approach is suitable due to the qualitative nature of the study. The aim is to make a Barthesian analysis of Manto's selected stories, especially 'Toba Tek Singh', and 'Khol Do', and this approach allows the researcher to thoroughly examine extracted data. By employing the inductive approach, the researcher avoids imposing preconceived hypotheses onto the data, enabling the data itself to guide the development of theories and themes (Gilgun, 2019). In summary, the inductive approach is characterized by its data-driven, bottom-up process of moving from specific observations to broader generalizations. In this study, the inductive approach facilitates the

identification of intricate relationships, aiming to generate theories based on observed themes and patterns within the collected data.

3.4 Design: Qualitative

The qualitative research design is a methodological framework aimed at identifying, understanding, and interpreting complex phenomena within their natural settings. It is particularly suitable for examining individuals' perceptions, behaviors, and subjective experiences (Dawadi et al., 2021). Unlike quantitative research, which relies on statistical analysis, qualitative research seeks to capture the depth and richness of human experiences through detailed interpretations and descriptions. Data collection methods in qualitative research include content analysis, observations, and focus groups, offering insights into participants' perspectives for a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Researchers immerse themselves in the data to explore underlying motivations and interpretations, making the design iterative and flexible, allowing researchers to adapt their questions and methods based on emerging details (Roller, 2019). This flexibility is beneficial for identifying complex and evolving phenomena, emphasizing the importance of understanding phenomena within their real-life contexts and capturing the relationship between various factors that influence perceptions and behavior.

In the context of this research, the qualitative research design is chosen as the study aims to understand the hidden themes and meaning within Manto's work through the lens of Barterian semiotry theory. By employing qualitative methodology, including content analysis of quotes, the researcher can uncover insights into the patterns, themes, and sentiments expressed by Manto(Lanneskog, 2023). Moreover, the qualitative approach

allows the researcher to capture the dynamic nature of the research topic, accommodating evolving trends, cultural shifts, and platform changes that influence consumer perceptions and behaviors in social media marketing. The flexibility of the qualitative design enables the research to adapt and capture emerging themes.

3.5 Data Collection Method: Secondary

The data collection method refers to a systematic process of gathering information and data to address research objectives and questions. Secondary research involves the evaluation of data that has already been collected, processed, and made available. This data can be sourced from various outlets, including industry reports, academic databases, published documents, commercial analyses, and governmental surveys (Alam, 2021). Utilizing secondary data can offer time and cost efficiencies compared to collecting primary data, as researchers can access a wealth of information without the need to design and manage data collection processes. Secondary data often provides a broader contextual perspective, covering a wider geographic area, larger samples, and longer time periods than would be feasible for a single research project (Peloquin et al., 2020). Researchers can conduct comparative analyses by identifying patterns, trends, and changes over time across different sources of secondary data, which may include reports, scholarly articles, industry publications, and historical records.

In this study, the data collection method employed is secondary, involving the analysis of pre-existing data related to Barthes' theory and Manto's selected stories. The researcher gathers data from various sources, such as industry reports, academic journals, and social media platforms. The use of secondary data collection is deemed appropriate for

several reasons. Existing literature and reports offer a wealth of insights and information on the research topic, which may be resource-intensive and time-consuming to collect through primary methods (Bush and Amechi, 2019). By evaluating data from multiple sources, the research can incorporate diverse perspectives, enriching the overall understanding of the topic. However, it is essential to ensure the credibility and relevance of the selected sources. Thorough scrutiny and critical analysis of the sources are vital for maintaining the validity and reliability of the study.

3.6 Data Analysis Technique: Content Analysis

Content analysis is a structured and systematic method used to evaluate qualitative data, with the aim of identifying themes, patterns, and meanings within various forms of content, including visual, textual, or audio materials. Widely employed in qualitative research, content analysis enables researchers to extract meaningful insights from diverse data sources, such as documents and more (Kleinheksel et al., 2020). This approach provides a framework for transforming qualitative data into quantitative or qualitative patterns, thereby enhancing the understanding of complex phenomena. Through content analysis, researchers can quantify and assess the presence, meanings, and relationships of specific themes, words, or concepts. Central to content analysis is the process of coding, wherein researchers categorize segments of the data into codes representing themes, ideas, or concepts, facilitating data organization and classification (Vears and Gillam, 2022). Content analysis not only focuses on surface-level patterns but also seeks to interpret the data within its broader context, understanding the implications of the identified patterns.

In this research, content analysis is employed as the chosen data analysis technique. The collected secondary data, including texts, and quotes, undergo systematic content analysis to uncover recurring sentiments, patterns, and themes related to Manto's selected stories. The researcher immerses themselves in the data to gain a comprehensive understanding of its content, evaluating categories to reveal connections and patterns among different themes. These identified patterns contribute to the study's findings and are interpreted within the wider context of the research topic, enabling researchers to derive deeper implications and meanings. Content analysis ensures that the study's findings are grounded in the data and reflect the ideas expressed within the content. By transforming qualitative data into actionable insights, content analysis enables the research to comprehensively address the research questions. In summary, content analysis aids in extracting themes and patterns from the collected information, providing a deeper understanding of how social media marketing influences consumer purchase retention.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are paramount in research, ensuring that studies are conducted with integrity, respect for participants' rights, and adherence to ethical standards. Even in the case of secondary data analysis, critical ethical considerations remain essential to maintain the research's integrity and reliability. Proper citation and attribution of sources are crucial to respect the intellectual property rights of organizations and authors whose work is included in the study (Olaniran and Baruwa, 2020). Plagiarism is strictly avoided, and credit is given where it is due. When working with secondary data, researchers must ensure that any confidential or personal information is handled with care. Identifiable information should be appropriately anonymized to protect individuals' privacy. Secondary data may

include opinions, posts, or comments from participants on social media platforms (Di et al., 2021). Researchers should approach this data with respect and sensitivity, acknowledging that it reflects individuals' perspectives and should not be taken out of context. Ethical considerations also involve recognizing and addressing any potential biases that researchers might bring to the analysis. Researchers strive to maintain objectivity and avoid misrepresenting the original intent of the data.

In this study, the researcher ensures adherence to all ethical principles relevant to the research context. While there is no direct interaction with participants in secondary data analysis, the researcher properly cites and attributes all data sources, whether social media posts, academic articles, or industry reports. This ensures that the original authors' contributions are duly recognized. The researcher paraphrases and anonymizes individuals' personal information to prevent their identification. Researchers ensure that their interpretation of information respects the original intent of the sources and avoids manipulating data or taking it out of context to fit a predetermined narrative. The research process, including the selection of data sources and interpretation methods, is transparently documented to provide a clear understanding of the research process. The researcher avoids misrepresenting the sentiments or opinions expressed in the data, ensuring that interpretations are grounded in the nuance and context of the original content. In summary, ethical considerations play a crucial role in maintaining the reliability, integrity, and validity of the research. Researchers uphold ethical protocols by ensuring proper attribution, protecting data privacy, maintaining objectivity, avoiding biases in interpretations, and respecting participants' perspectives. This ensures that the study is conducted ethically and responsibly, even in the absence of direct participant interaction.

3.8 Limitations of Research

Research limitations refer to the shortcomings, constraints, or potential weaknesses of a study that may impact the generalizability, validity, or scope of its findings. Recognizing these limitations is crucial as it demonstrates the researcher's awareness of potential weaknesses and helps readers interpret the study's outcomes in a balanced manner (Akanle et al., 2020). Limitations often arise due to the study's scope, which may narrow its applicability to specific contexts or populations, thereby restricting the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the availability and quality of data can impact the study's outcomes. If the secondary data sources used have limitations or biases, it can affect the credibility of the findings. When relying on secondary data, researchers are dependent on the data collection methodologies of previous researchers, which may have had sampling limitations or biases that carry over into the current study (Crick, 2021). Moreover, differences in the context in which the original data was collected compared to the current research context can limit the transferability of findings to different settings or time periods. Ensuring the credibility and validity of secondary data can be challenging, as the accuracy and reliability of data sources can affect the trustworthiness of the research.

In this study, several limitations need to be acknowledged. The secondary data gathered from various sources may vary in terms of sample sizes, methodologies, and data quality, potentially impacting the comparability of findings. Subjectivity during the interpretation of content analysis could affect the identification of patterns and themes. Additionally, the researcher has limited control over the data collection process, as the data is pre-existing, which may introduce potential biases or inconsistencies in the analysis. To

mitigate these limitations, the researcher engages in activities such as transparent reporting, meticulous planning, and clear communication of the study's boundaries.

3.9 Pros and Cons of Secondary Research

Secondary research, also known as desk research, involves evaluating existing data gathered by others for purposes other than the current study. While secondary research offers several benefits, it also presents some challenges that researchers need to consider. Utilizing secondary research allows researchers to save time and costs compared to primary research methods. Researchers have access to a variety of data sources such as reports, journals, and online platforms, enabling a comprehensive evaluation of different viewpoints and perspectives (Muñoz et al., 2022). Secondary research is significant as it enables researchers to identify historical perspectives and data regarding Manto's work, providing a broader perspective on how phenomena have evolved over time. One major benefit of secondary research is the ability to compare findings from various data sources or studies, enhancing the depth of analysis and offering a more comprehensive understanding. Researchers in this study analyze large datasets that may be difficult or resource-intensive to gather through primary methodology.

However, the credibility and quality of secondary data sources can vary. Researchers need to critically assess the reliability of data sources to ensure the accuracy of findings. One of the primary challenges of secondary research is the limited control over the data collection process (Antoniadis et al., 2022). Data may not align perfectly with the research objectives, and some data may be unavailable or inaccessible due to privacy concerns, copyright issues, or restrictions. The original context in which the data was collected may

differ from the current research context, affecting the applicability of the findings. Secondary data may also carry biases or inconsistencies from the original data collection processes, impacting the validity of findings. Researchers strive to balance the benefits and challenges of secondary research by thoroughly analyzing data sources, transparently discussing limitations, and ensuring data quality. Additionally, combining secondary research with primary research methods can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

Conclusion:

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the research methodology employed to analyse Manto's selected stories, particularly 'Toba Tek Singh' and 'Khol Do' through the lens of Barthes' theory. The chosen approach is aligned with interpretivism, emphasizing the importance of understanding the subjective meanings individuals attribute to their experiences. By adopting an inductive research approach, new insights can be explored from the gathered data, while the qualitative design enables a contextual exploration of the research topic. Secondary data collection has been selected as the method, utilizing existing sources to investigate the relationship between consumer purchase retention and social media marketing. Content analysis serves as the data analysis technique, providing a systematic way to extract themes and patterns from textual content. Ethical considerations demonstrate a commitment to responsible research practices, even in the context of secondary data analysis. Acknowledging research limitations ensures a balanced interpretation of findings and enhances the reliability of the study. The benefits and challenges of secondary research have been discussed, underscoring the importance of meticulous consideration of data relevance and quality. Finally, future research directions

have been proposed, indicating potential avenues for expanding knowledge in the field and addressing existing gaps.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION

This chapter outlines a comprehensive analysis of Saadat Hasan Manto's selected short stories, particularly "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do," through the lens of Roland Barthes'

semiotic theory. This chapter intends to uncover the intricate aspects of symbolism, meaning, and socio-cultural commentary enshrined within these narratives. This analysis ventures to offer an in-depth knowledge of Manto's literary techniques and thematic considerations by implementing five codes of Barthes such as hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural. The findings from the evaluation are explained in detail, presenting how these stories mirror the complicated realities of Partition-era India and the deeper human condition. The primary objectives of this study are threefold:

1. To perform a Barthesian analysis of Saadat Hasan Manto's selected short stories, with a focus on "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do."
2. To unearth the layers of symbolism, meaning, and socio-cultural commentary within Manto's narratives through the application of Roland Barthes' five codes.
3. To identify the thematic concerns of power dynamics, identity, and the human condition in Manto's stories within the contexts of Partition-era India.

In order to address these objectives, the research adopted a secondary qualitative research design. This methodology encompasses an interpretive philosophy and an inductive approach, enabling a nuanced and detailed assessment of the texts. The researcher used secondary data collection methods, drawing upon existing literary investigations and critical essays on the work of essays. The primary data analysis technique deployed in this research is content analysis, which contributes to the systematic assessment of textual data to explore themes, patterns, and meanings. This chapter seeks to provide a critical and comprehensive interpretation of Manto's narratives by blending Barthes' semiotic theory with a qualitative content analysis concept. This methodological framework not only shows the thematic richness and symbolism of Manto's work but also explores details of the

socio-political critiques found within his stories. The chapter intends to facilitate a wider range of literary studies and deeper knowledge of Manto's enduring literary legacy through this evaluation.

4.1 Barthesian Analysis of "Toba Tek Singh"

In 'Toba Tek Singh', the core enigma centers around the madness and obsession of Bishan Singh with the location of Toba Tek Singh. The wider uncertainties caused by the Partition are symbolized by this unexplored question (Neupane, 2009). The open-ended conclusion leaves readers with the unexplored question of Bishan Singh's homeland's location, mirroring the perpetual identity and confusion crisis faced by those uprooted by Partition. The hermeneutic code in 'Toba Tek Singh' acts as a significant tool for comprehending the existential dilemmas experienced by individuals during the Partition. The search of Bishan Singh for his homeland is not just a personal quest but a metaphor for the identity and disorientation crises faced by millions (Das, 2005). The collective psychological trauma of individuals urged to question their homelands and identities overnight is reflected by his obsession and madness with Toba Tek Singh. The continuous state of loss and confusion of identity, reflecting the perpetual fragmentation and uncertainty of post-Partition lives is emphasized by the unexplored nature of the story. This code unravels the deeper psychological effect of the Partition, presenting the capability of Manto to encapsulate wide socio-political upheavals in individual narratives.

The actions in 'Toba Tek Singh,' like the movement of patients between asylums, present the absurdity of forced migrations during the Partition. These sequences are not mere plot devices but have significant weight, representing the arbitrary and chaotic nature of political decisions at the time (Malik, 2022). The chaotic and arbitrary nature of political

decisions during the partition is emphasized by the Proarietic code in 'Toba Tek Singh'. The movement of asylum patients reflects the mass migrations that take place, showing the disorientation and displacement of countless people. This code allows readers to trace these actions and understand how they contribute to the narrative's themes, particularly the absurdity and cruelty of human actions in the face of historical events. The seemingly nonsensical exchanges between patients and the ultimate standstill of Bishan Singh at the border epitomize the futile and tragic outcomes of such political turmoil, critiquing the irrationality of the Partition's execution and its devastating human cost.

The name "Toba Tek Singh" and Bishan Singh's fixation on it carry connotations of lost identity and heritage. The semantic code helps to uncover the layers of meaning in Manto's use of language and imagery. Through the semantic code, the analysis reveals the depth of meaning in Manto's language and imagery. The name "Toba Tek Singh" itself becomes a powerful symbol of lost identity and heritage, encapsulating the protagonist's relentless search for his homeland. This fixation symbolizes the broader theme of displacement and loss experienced by millions during the Partition. The semantic nuances in the narrative highlight how language can carry multiple connotations, adding depth to the characters' experiences and the overall story. This code expounds the interpretation of Manto's text, revealing the complex interplay between personal and collective identity, and the profound sense of loss and alienation that accompanies dislocation.

The story features binary oppositions such as sanity/madness and freedom/imprisonment. These oppositions are not merely thematic but serve as structural elements that underscore the narrative's ideological tensions (Singh, 2021). The symbolic code in "Toba Tek Singh" highlights the ideological tensions and contradictions of the time. The binary oppositions, such as sanity versus madness and freedom versus imprisonment,

reflect the socio-political realities of the Partition. Bishan Singh's madness juxtaposed with the so-called sanity of political leaders critiques the irrationality of the Partition itself. The asylum serves as a microcosm of the subcontinent, where the line between freedom and imprisonment blurs, reflecting the absurdity of the division of nations. This symbolic dichotomy illustrates the story's critique of political and social structures, illustrating how these arbitrary divisions impact human lives. The symbolic code thus enables readers to have a deeper understanding of the narrative's critique of the socio-political context of the Partition.

Cultural references to geographic locations and political divisions provide a crucial backdrop for the story. These references are essential for understanding the socio-cultural commentary embedded in the narrative. The cultural code situates "Toba Tek Singh" within the historical and socio-political context of the Partition (Ali and Akhtar, 2021). References to geographic locations, such as Toba Tek Singh, and the political divisions of India and Pakistan are essential to understanding the narrative. These cultural references connect the personal tragedy of Bishan Singh to the collective trauma of Partition. The cultural code reveals how Manto uses these references to critique the socio-political conditions, highlighting the arbitrary nature of the divisions and their devastating impact on individuals and communities. This code provides a framework for interpreting the socio-cultural commentary in the story, linking individual experiences to broader historical prospects and making the narrative a powerful critique of the Partition. By examining "Toba Tek Singh" through Barthes' five codes, the analysis uncovers the rich symbolic and thematic layers in Manto's work. This method highlights how Manto's narrative techniques serve to critique the socio-political realities of his time, making his stories timeless and profoundly relevant.

4.2 Barthesian Analysis of "Khol Do"

In "Khol Do," the search for Sakina creates a central enigma that drives the narrative. The entire story revolves around this quest, which remains unresolved until the devastating climax (Mumtaz and Raza, 2022). The hermeneutic code in "Khol Do" is crucial for engaging the reader with the unfolding mystery of Sakina's whereabouts. This search is not just a plot device but a symbolic representation of the broader themes of hope and despair that permeated the Partition era. The relentless search by her father symbolizes the desperate hope of countless families trying to reunite amidst the chaos. However, the narrative's tragic conclusion, where Sakina's father finds her in a deeply traumatized state, underscores the devastating reality of these searches. This unresolved enigma mirrors the chaotic and uncertain nature of the Partition, where many searches ended in tragedy. By maintaining the mystery, Manto effectively keeps the reader immersed in the emotional turmoil of the time, highlighting the psychological impact of such relentless and often futile searches.

The frantic search for Sakina and the tragic recognition highlights the brutal consequences of communal violence. The narrative is propelled by the actions taken by Sakina's father and others in their desperate attempts to find her (Guha, n.d). The proairetic code in "Khol Do" emphasizes the sequence of actions that lead to the story's tragic conclusion. These actions are not merely the proceeding of the plot but serve to underscore the harsh realities of the Partition. The father's desperate search and the eventual tragic recognition of Sakina in a state of trauma vividly portray the human cost of communal violence. The actions and reactions within the story reflect the pervasive chaos and brutality, illustrating how the fabric of society was torn apart by hatred and violence. Manto's depiction of these actions serves as a stark reminder of the consequences of such historical upheavals, emphasizing the themes of loss and violence that are central to the story. This code thus

allows the narrative to unfold in a manner that continuously engages the reader with the harsh and unrelenting reality of the Partition.

The metaphor of "opening and closing" doors signifies both violation and survival. The phrase "Khol Do" (open it) is repeated throughout the narrative, adding layers of meaning. The semantic code in "Khol Do" decodes the connotative meanings in Manto's language. The repeated phrase "Khol Do" becomes a powerful metaphor for Sakina's experiences, symbolizing both her violation and the slim hope of survival (Langdah and Kiran, 2024). When Sakina, in her traumatized state, responds to the command "Khol Do" by opening her shalwar, it signifies the deep impact of her violation, reducing her response to a mechanical act. This moment is loaded with semantic meaning, illustrating the brutality she has endured and her habitual response to violence. The semantic code helps to unfold these deeper layers of meaning, showing how Manto uses language to convey the profound psychological and physical trauma experienced by Sakina. This analysis highlights the story's critique of the pervasive violence against women during the Partition, using language as a tool to reveal the inner workings of trauma and survival.

The story portrays stark contrasts between life/death and purity/violation (Younis and Zahra, 2023). These binary oppositions are central to understanding the narrative's thematic approaches. The symbolic code in "Khol Do" reveals the deep ideological conflicts present in the narrative. The binary oppositions, such as life versus death and purity versus violation, are starkly portrayed. Sakina's journey from a hopeful search to a tragic discovery highlights the contrast between the innocence of life and the corruption of violence. The moment when Sakina responds to "Khol Do" symbolizes the ultimate violation of purity, turning an act of survival into a haunting reminder of her trauma. These symbolic oppositions serve to critique the socio-political conditions of the time, particularly the societal hatred that led to such

prevalent violence against women. By highlighting these contrasts, Manto underscores the tragedy of Partition, where human lives were caught in an unyielding struggle between survival and violation. The symbolic code thus enriches the narrative, offering a profound critique of the societal and ideological forces at play.

Cultural and historical references provide a context for Sakina's story, placing it within the broader socio-political upheaval of the Partition. The cultural code in "Khol Do" situates the narrative within the historical context of Partition-era violence and patriarchal oppression (Ali, 2021). The references to the mass migrations, communal riots, and societal chaos are essential for understanding the socio-cultural criticism engulfed in the story. These cultural elements connect Sakina's personal tragedy to the collective experience of violence and displacement. The cultural code reveals how Manto uses these references to criticize the broader socio-political issues, showing how individual suffering is intertwined with larger historical processes. By establishing the story within this context, Manto highlights the systemic nature of the violence and the deep-rooted patriarchal structures that exacerbated the suffering of women during the Partition. This analysis accentuates the importance of cultural and historical context in interpreting the narrative, providing a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural commentary in "Khol Do."

In summary, the Barthesian analysis of "Khol Do" through the application of the hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural codes reveal the rich thematic and symbolic layers in Manto's narrative. This approach highlights how Manto uses these codes to critique the socio-political conditions of his time, offering a profound commentary on the human condition during the Partition. By examining these elements, the analysis provides a deeper understanding of Manto's storytelling techniques and the enduring relevance of his work.

4.3 Comparative Analysis of Selected Stories

4.3.1 *Common Themes and Symbolisms*

Both "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" delve deeply into themes of identity, loss, and displacement. In "Toba Tek Singh," the central character Bishan Singh's search for his homeland symbolizes the broader quest for identity and belonging in a fragmented world. Similarly, "Khol Do" presents the disintegration of personal identity through Sakina's traumatic experiences, reflecting the societal breakdown during the Partition. Both stories are rich in symbolism, such as the asylum in "Toba Tek Singh" representing the madness of political divisions, and the repeated phrase "Khol Do" in Sakina's story symbolizing violation and the faint hope of survival.

The common themes of identity, loss, and displacement highlight Manto's profound criticism of Partition for human suffering. By focusing on these universal themes, Manto is able to convey the deep emotional and psychological impact of the Partition on individuals and communities. The symbolism in both stories heightens the depth and complexity of these themes. In "Toba Tek Singh," the asylum becomes a microcosm of the subcontinent's chaos, reflecting the absurdity and tragedy of the political decisions that led to the Partition (Dodiya and Shaikh, n.d). Bishan Singh's quest for Toba Tek Singh symbolizes the search for identity and belonging that many experienced during this time. In "Khol Do," the metaphor of opening and closing doors highlights the violation and survival experienced by women, pointing to the expansive violence and societal breakdown. These symbols not only provide a detailed reflection on the socio-political dislocations of the time but also serve to analyze the human cost of these events. By using rich symbolism and exploring common themes, Manto's stories offer a powerful commentary on the impact of the Partition, making his narratives echo universal human experiences.

4.3.2 Differences in Narrative Techniques

"Toba Tek Singh" employs a satirical and allegorical approach, using the setting of an asylum to comment on the absurdity of the Partition and its impact on individuals. On the other hand, "Khol Do" utilizes stark realism to portray the immediate and brutal human suffering caused by the communal violence of the Partition (Arora, 2020). The contrasting narrative techniques in "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" highlight Manto's versatility as a writer and his ability to adapt his storytelling style to suit the thematic needs of his narratives. In "Toba Tek Singh," the satirical and allegorical approach allows Manto to critique the absurdity of the political decisions to divide the Indian subcontinent in a manner that is both poignant and darkly humorous. The asylum setting serves as a powerful metaphor for the madness and irrationality of the political divisions, with Bishan Singh's plight symbolizing the broader existential crisis faced by millions. This technique enables Manto to explore the absurdity and tragedy of the Partition from a unique and thought-provoking perspective. Conversely, "Khol Do" employs stark realism to focus on the immediate and brutal human suffering caused by communal violence (Shabir, 2021). The realism in this story emphasizes the visceral and tangible impact of violence on individuals, particularly women. By portraying Sakina's trauma in a raw and unflinching manner, Manto forces the reader to confront the harsh realities of the Partition, highlighting the human cost of these events. These contrasting techniques reflect Manto's ability to engage with the socio-political landscape of his time through varied and effective narrative strategies.

4.3.3 Socio-Cultural Commentary

Both "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" provide a profound socio-cultural commentary on the Partition, critiquing the arbitrary political divisions and the pervasive violence that characterized this period. Manto's narratives offer keen observations on the human condition

and the socio-political landscape of his time. Manto's socio-cultural commentary in "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" is deeply rooted in his power of imagination and observation of the man's role in a social setup and the socio-political upheavals of the Partition (Akram, Abbas, and Tabbasum, 2023). In "Toba Tek Singh," the socio-cultural commentary is conveyed through the satirical depiction of the asylum and the absurdity of the political decisions that led to the Partition. The narrative critiques the arbitrary nature of the political boundaries and the devastating impact they had on individuals, using the metaphor of the asylum to highlight the madness of these divisions. Bishan Singh's confusion and ultimate death in no man's land serve as powerful symbols of dislocation and loss of identity experienced by millions. In "Khol Do," the socio-cultural commentary is conveyed through the stark realism and the portrayal of the brutal violence against women. The story highlights the existing violence and the patriarchal oppression that was aggravated during the Partition, using Sakina's traumatic experiences to critique the societal breakdown and the failure to protect the vulnerable (Khan, Bibi, and Aziz, n.d). By situating these narratives within the broader historical and cultural context, Manto's stories offer a profound commentary on the impact of the Partition, connecting personal suffering to larger societal issues. This analysis highlights Manto's ability to use his narratives to critique the socio-political conditions of his time, providing a powerful reflection on the human suffering during Partition.

4.4 Integration with Other Short Stories

4.4.1 Barthes' Codes in Other Stories

Barthes' narrative codes—hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural—can be effectively applied to other stories by Saadat Hasan Manto, such as "Thanda Gosht" and "The Return." These stories reveal similar thematic concerns and narrative complexities. Applying Barthes' codes to Manto's other stories further elucidates his critique

of the socio-political realities of Partition-era India. In "Thanda Gosht," the hermeneutic code is evident in the mystery surrounding Ishar Singh's impotence and the cause behind it, which is gradually unveiled to the reader, creating suspense and highlighting the psychological trauma of the protagonist. The proairetic code in "Thanda Gosht" is seen in the sequence of events leading to the discovery of the horrific truth about the woman's death, emphasizing the brutal consequences of communal violence. The semantic code, through the cold body, symbolizes the lifelessness and moral decay resulting from the violence. The symbolic code is also strong, with the coldness of the body representing the death of humanity and compassion during the Partition. The moral decadence and decay are portrayed through the death of the lady highlighting the immorality and inequality exercised during arbitrary Partition. The cultural code situates the story within the broader context of Partition, making the narrative's critique more poignant. Ishar Singh's moral weakness and sensual urge are juxtaposed with the cultural and moral aspects of his life.

Similarly, in "The Return," the hermeneutic code is present in the enigma of the child's behavior and his father's quest to understand what happened to him. The proairetic code unfolds through the actions leading to the father's realization of the child's trauma. The semantic code can be observed in the use of language and imagery, such as the symbolism of the return journey as a quest for normalcy and lost innocence. The symbolic code in "The Return" highlights the contrasts between past and present, innocence and trauma. The cultural code grounds the story in the specific historical and social realities of the Partition, making the personal tragedy a reflection of the collective experience. By applying Barthes' codes to these stories, it becomes evident that Manto consistently critiques the socio-political conditions of his time, using varied narrative techniques to explore the profound impact of the Partition on individual lives and identities. This approach enriches the analysis, providing deeper insights into Manto's literary strategies and thematic concerns.

4.4.2 Comparative Themes and Symbolisms

Common themes and symbolism across Manto's stories include identity, violence, and loss. These themes are pervasive and consistently explored through rich and varied symbolism. The comparative analysis of Manto's stories reveals recurring themes of identity, violence, and loss, reflecting the pervasive trauma of the Partition. In "Toba Tek Singh," the asylum and Bishan Singh's confusion symbolize the loss of identity and displacement, themes echoed in "Khol Do" through Sakina's violated and fragmented identity (Kaur, 2014). "Thanda Gosht" and "The Return" similarly explore these themes. The cold body in "Thanda Gosht" symbolizes the loss of humanity and the pervasive violence, while the child's trauma in "The Return" underscores the lasting impact of violence and the struggle for identity in a fractured world. These thematic and symbolic analyses highlight Manto's ability to use his narratives to reflect on the human condition during times of historical upheaval. The recurring symbols—such as the asylum, the cold body, and the journey—serve as powerful tools to convey the deep psychological and emotional scars left by the Partition. This consistency across his work demonstrates Manto's enduring relevance in exploring the complexities of identity, trauma, and resilience.

4.4.3 Broader Socio-Cultural Commentary

Manto's stories offer a profound socio-cultural commentary on the Partition, critiquing the arbitrary political divisions and the pervasive violence that characterized this period. Manto's broader socio-cultural commentary is deeply rooted in his narratives, providing a critical reflection on the socio-political landscape of Partition-era India. His stories analyze the arbitrary nature of political boundaries and the devastating human suffering of these divisions. The cultural references in "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" provide a historical backdrop that is crucial for understanding the socio-cultural viewpoint

through these stories. The same is true for "Thanda Gosht" and "The Return," where the historical and cultural contexts enhance the narratives' critical perspectives on violence, identity, and loss (Gatica, 2014). Manto's narratives are not just personal stories but collective histories that reflect the broader societal disruptions of the time. His keen observation of human behavior and his ability to convey the psychological and emotional impact of the Partition make his stories powerful socio-cultural commentaries. By reflecting on the human cost of the Partition, Manto's work offers valuable insights into the enduring impact of this historical event, making his narratives timeless and universally relevant.

In analyzing Manto's stories, common themes of identity, loss, displacement, violence, and resilience emerge. In "Toba Tek Singh," the central theme revolves around the loss and search for identity amidst the chaos of the Partition. Bishan Singh's obsessive quest for Toba Tek Singh symbolizes the profound disorientation and identity crisis experienced by those affected by the Partition (Saroj, n.d). Similarly, in "Khol Do," the theme of identity is explored through the tragic tale of Sakina, whose personal identity is shattered by the violence inflicted upon her. The stories also share the thematic concern of violence and its dehumanizing effects, vividly depicted through the brutal experiences of the characters. These thematic insights reveal Manto's acute sensitivity to the human condition during the Partition. His narratives are not just reflections of personal tragedies but are emblematic of the collective trauma experienced by millions. The thematic analysis underscores Manto's critique of the socio-political upheavals and their devastating impact on individuals' lives. By integrating these themes, Manto exposes the arbitrary nature of political decisions and their far-reaching consequences (Durham, 2018). The persistence of identity crises, the omnipresence of violence, and the glimmers of human resilience in his stories collectively highlight the complex interplay of personal and collective experiences during historical upheavals. This thematic synthesis enhances our understanding of Manto's work as a

profound commentary on the Partition, reflecting both the specific historical context and the universal human experiences of suffering and survival.

The application of Barthes' five narrative codes across Manto's stories reveals both consistency and variation in his narrative techniques. In "Toba Tek Singh," the hermeneutic code centers on the enigma of Bishan Singh's madness and the elusive location of Toba Tek Singh, symbolizing broader existential questions. The proairetic code captures the absurdity of the forced migrations, while the semantic code highlights the connotations of loss and identity through the protagonist's fixation on his homeland. The symbolic code underscores binary oppositions like sanity/madness and freedom/imprisonment, reflecting the ideological tensions of the time. The cultural code situates the narrative within the specific historical and socio-political context of the Partition. In "Khol Do," the hermeneutic code revolves around the search for Sakina, symbolizing hope and despair. The proairetic code emphasizes the frantic actions leading to the tragic recognition, highlighting the brutal reality of communal violence. The semantic code uses the metaphor of opening and closing doors to signify violation and survival. The symbolic code contrasts life/death and purity/violation, reflecting the tragic consequences of communal hatred. The cultural code provides a backdrop of Partition-era violence and patriarchal oppression.

Comparative analysis of Barthes' codes across Manto's stories elucidates how he utilizes different narrative techniques to convey similar thematic concerns. The hermeneutic code in both stories keeps the reader engaged through central enigmas, reflecting broader existential and socio-political uncertainties. The proairetic code highlights the sequences of actions that drive the narratives, underscoring the absurdity and brutality of historical events. The semantic code decodes the connotative meanings embedded in Manto's language, revealing deeper layers of symbolism related to identity and survival. The symbolic code

unveils the binary oppositions that structure the narratives, critiquing the ideological conflicts of the time. The cultural code situates the stories within their specific historical contexts, providing essential socio-cultural commentary. This comparative analysis demonstrates Manto's versatility in using narrative codes to critique the socio-political realities of the Partition. While his stories differ in narrative techniques—ranging from satirical and allegorical to starkly realistic—they consistently expose the human cost of political divisions and communal violence. By employing Barthes' codes, the analysis highlights how Manto's stories function as both personal narratives and collective histories, offering profound insights into the human condition during one of the most tumultuous periods in South Asian history.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the application of Barthes' codes to Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" provides a detailed and insightful analysis of his narratives, revealing the deep thematic concerns and socio-cultural commentary embedded within his work. This study highlights the complexity and richness of Manto's literary techniques, underscoring his critique of the Partition and its impact on human lives. The findings and discussions presented in this chapter offer valuable contributions to the field of literary studies, demonstrating the enduring relevance and applicability of Barthesian semiotic analysis to understanding Manto's work. Future research can build on these insights to further explore the multifaceted nature of Manto's narratives, offering a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of his literary legacy.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

5.1 Key Findings

The application of Barthes' codes to Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" reveals the underlying meaning and socio-cultural commentary throughout his narratives. The hermeneutic code highlights the central enigmas in both stories, reflecting the broader uncertainties and existential dilemmas of the Partition. The proairetic code uncovers the sequences of actions that symbolize the chaotic and arbitrary nature of political decisions during this period. The semantic code decodes the connotative meanings in Manto's language, revealing themes of lost identity and survival. The symbolic code exposes the binary oppositions that underscore the ideological tensions of the time, while the cultural code situates the narratives within the broader historical and social context of the Partition.

The findings demonstrate how Barthes' codes can be effectively applied to analyze Manto's work, providing a systematic framework for unfolding the complexity of interpretations in his works. The hermeneutic and proairetic codes in "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do" reveal Manto's critique of the absurdity and brutality of the Partition. The semantic and symbolic codes highlight the deep thematic concerns of identity, loss, and violence, while the cultural code situates these personal tragedies within the collective history of the Partition. This analysis not only enriches our understanding of Manto's literary techniques but also underscores the enduring relevance of his socio-political commentary.

5.2 Implications for Future Research

The study's findings suggest several lacunas for future research. The application of Barthes' codes to a wider selection of Manto's stories could provide a more comprehensive understanding of his literary contributions. Additionally, employing a mixed-methods

approach or triangulation could enhance the reliability and depth of the analysis. Further exploration of secondary literature and critical perspectives could also offer new insights into Manto's work. Future research could build on the current study by expanding the scope to include a broader range of Manto's stories, ensuring a more comprehensive analysis of his oeuvre. By exploring manifold theoretical frameworks and engaging with a wider array of critical perspectives, researchers can provide a more nuanced and multifaceted assessment of Manto's narratives. Additionally, exploring the socio-political and historical context of Manto's work in greater detail could further illuminate the broader implications of his literary critique. Finally, integrating primary data and conducting comparative studies with other contemporary writers could offer valuable insights into the unique and universal aspects of Manto's commentary on Partition-era India.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

5.3.1 Methodological Constraints

The study's reliance on secondary qualitative research, an inductive approach, and the interpretivism philosophy present certain methodological constraints. These include potential biases in the interpretation of texts, the limited availability of primary data, and the challenge of ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings. Additionally, the content analysis technique used may not capture the full complexity of Manto's narratives, as it relies heavily on the researcher's subjective interpretation. The methodological constraints of this study highlight the inherent limitations of qualitative research in literary analysis. The interpretive approach, while valuable for providing in-depth insights, is inherently subjective. This means that the findings may be influenced by the researcher's own biases and perspectives, potentially limiting the objectivity of the analysis. Moreover, the use of secondary data

restricts the scope of the study to existing interpretations and critiques of Manto's work, potentially overlooking new or divergent perspectives that primary data might reveal.

The content analysis technique, although systematic, is also limited by its reliance on the researcher's ability to accurately interpret and categorize the data (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). This could lead to an incomplete or skewed understanding of the narratives. To mitigate these issues, future research could incorporate a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques, or employ triangulation to cross-verify findings from multiple sources. Additionally, involving multiple researchers in the analysis could help balance individual biases and provide a more comprehensive understanding of Manto's work.

5.3.2 Scope and Depth of Analysis

The scope of the study is limited to a select number of Manto's short stories, primarily focusing on "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do," with occasional references to other stories like "Thanda Gosht" and "The Return." This limited scope means that the analysis may not fully capture the breadth of Manto's literary oeuvre or the diverse range of themes and narrative techniques he employs across his literary works. The depth of analysis in this study, while comprehensive for the selected stories, is constrained by the limited number of texts examined. Manto's extensive collection of short stories encompasses a wide array of themes, characters, and socio-political commentaries that are not fully explored in this study. By focusing primarily on "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do," the study provides a detailed examination of these specific narratives but may overlook other significant works that could offer additional insights into Manto's critique of Partition-era India.

To address these limitations, future research could expand the scope to include a broader selection of Manto's stories, ensuring a more representative analysis of his literary contributions. Additionally, a deeper exploration of secondary literature and critical analyses could provide a more nuanced understanding of Manto's work. Engaging with a wider range of critical perspectives and theoretical frameworks would also enhance the depth and comprehensiveness of the analysis. In conclusion, while this study provides valuable insights into Manto's narratives through the application of Barthes' codes, it is important to acknowledge and address its methodological and analytical limitations. By doing so, future research can build on these findings to offer a more holistic and robust examination of Manto's literary legacy.

5.4 Contributions:

1. **Enhanced Understanding of Manto's Work:** The analysis elucidates the detailed literary artistic genius of Manto, unveiling the complexity and richness of his narratives. By examining the stories through Barthes' framework, this study offers a deeper understanding of Manto's exploration of identity, loss, violence, and human resilience in the context of Partition-era India.
2. **Insight into Socio-Political Commentary:** Through the application of Barthes' codes, this study uncovers Manto's socio-political commentary embedded within his narratives. By situating the stories within the broader historical and cultural context of the Partition, the analysis highlights Manto's critique of the absurdity, brutality, and human cost of political decisions during this tumultuous period.
3. **Methodological Contribution:** The methodological approach employed in this study—secondary qualitative research design, inductive approach, interpretivism philosophy, secondary data collection method, and content analysis—demonstrates

the efficacy of Barthesian semiotic analysis in literary research. This study serves as a model for future scholars seeking to apply similar analytical frameworks to other literary works.

4. **The bridge between Literature and History:** By examining Manto's narratives through a socio-historical lens, this study bridges the gap between literature and history. It illustrates how literature can serve as a powerful medium for understanding and interpreting historical events, offering unique insights into the lived experiences and human dimensions of historical phenomena.
5. **Educational and Pedagogical Value:** The findings of this study have educational and pedagogical value, providing scholars, students, and educators with a deeper appreciation and understanding of Manto's literary legacy. By critically engaging with Manto's work, readers can gain valuable insights into the complexities of Partition-era India and its enduring impact on society and individuals.

Overall, the contributions of this study extend beyond the realm of literary analysis, enriching our understanding of Manto's narratives and their socio-cultural significance, while also demonstrating the broader applicability of Barthesian semiotic analysis in literary studies.

5.5 Recommendations

1. *Further Comparative Analysis:*

Future research could expand the comparative analysis to include a broader range of Manto's short stories or other literary works from the Partition era. Comparing Manto's narratives with those of contemporaneous writers or with works from different cultural contexts could offer deeper insights into the diverse perspectives on Partition and its aftermath.

2. *Exploration of Gender Dynamics:*

A more focused examination of gender dynamics in Manto's stories, particularly the portrayal of women's experiences during the Partition, could enrich our understanding of the intersectionality of gender, violence, and identity. This could involve analyzing additional stories that center on female protagonists or exploring the representation of masculinity and femininity in Manto's narratives.

3. *Societal Impact Analysis:*

Future studies could delve into the societal impact of Manto's narratives, examining how his stories influenced public discourse, shaped cultural memory, and contributed to collective understandings of the Partition. This could involve interdisciplinary approaches, including sociological and historical perspectives, to trace the reception and interpretation of Manto's work over time.

4. *Digital Humanities Initiatives:*

Utilizing digital humanities methodologies, such as text mining, network analysis, or computational linguistics, could offer innovative ways to explore Manto's narratives and their socio-cultural significance. Digital tools could facilitate large-scale analysis of Manto's corpus, uncovering patterns, themes, and connections that may not be immediately apparent through traditional close reading methods.

5. *Pedagogical Applications:*

Exploring the pedagogical applications of Manto's stories in educational settings could provide valuable insights into how his narratives can be used to teach critical thinking, empathy, and historical understanding. Developing educational resources, such as lesson plans or multimedia presentations, could facilitate the integration of Manto's work into curricula at various educational levels.

6. *Translation and Accessibility:*

Efforts to translate Manto's stories into different languages and make them accessible to wider audiences could promote cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. Translation projects could prioritize linguistic diversity and cultural sensitivity, ensuring that Manto's nuanced narratives resonate with readers across diverse contexts.

7. *Community Engagement:*

Engaging with communities affected by Partition, including survivors, descendants, and diasporic populations, could provide valuable perspectives on Manto's narratives and their enduring relevance. Collaborative projects that involve community members in the interpretation and dissemination of Manto's work could foster dialogue, healing, and reconciliation.

5.6 Ethical Considerations:

Finally, future research should prioritize ethical considerations, particularly when dealing with sensitive topics such as violence, trauma, and identity. Researchers should ensure that their methodologies and interpretations are respectful, responsible, and culturally informed, prioritizing the voices and experiences of those directly impacted by Partition. By pursuing

these recommendations, scholars can continue to explore the multifaceted dimensions of Manto's literary legacy and its broader implications for understanding history, society, and human experience.

Final Remarks

In conclusion, the Barthesian analysis of Saadat Hasan Manto's selected short stories, particularly "Toba Tek Singh" and "Khol Do," has provided valuable insights into the complexities of Partition-era India and Manto's profound engagement with its socio-political realities. Through the application of Roland Barthes' five codes—hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural—we have uncovered the layers of symbolism, meaning, and socio-cultural commentary embedded within Manto's narratives. These analyses have illuminated the existential dilemmas, identity struggles, and human tragedies experienced by individuals during the Partition, offering a poignant reflection on the human condition in times of upheaval. Manto's stories serve as powerful critiques of political divisions, communal violence, and gender inequalities, resonating with audiences across generations and borders.

Moving forward, it is imperative that we continue to explore Manto's literary legacy, not only to honor his memory and artistic contributions but also to gain deeper insights into the complexities of history, society, and human experience. By expanding our comparative analyses, exploring gender dynamics, leveraging digital humanities methodologies, and engaging with communities affected by Partition, we can further enrich our understanding of Manto's narratives and their enduring relevance in today's world. As we navigate the complexities of our shared past and present, let us draw inspiration from Manto's courage, compassion, and commitment to truth-telling. May his stories continue to challenge,

provoke, and inspire us to confront injustice, cultivate empathy, and strive for a more just and compassionate world.

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