Chapter 3

CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY
BY ALAN PATON

Four novels have been selected for the purpose of the present study: Cry, the Beloved Country (1948) by Alan Paton, Kaffir Boy (1986) by Mark Mathabane, Ways of Dying (1991) by Zakes Mda, and Disgrace (1999) by J.M. Coetzee. Of these four novels, the first novel was written in 1946, i.e. two years before Apartheid was introduced as a policy of the white government in South Africa. Therefore, it may be considered a pre-Apartheid novel whereas the next two novels are Apartheid novels because they were published during the period of Apartheid in South Africa. Finally, the fourth novel, Disgrace, was published in 1999 after the abolition of Apartheid in 1994 when South Africa attained political independence. Thus the fourth novel may be considered to be a post-Apartheid novel.

Accordingly, the present chapter has been devoted to a semiotic analysis of the pre-Apartheid novel, Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton (1903-1988).

This novel which consists of three major parts (Book One, Book Two and Book Three) runs into 236 pages. Book One has 17 chapters (pp.7-111), Book Two has 12 chapters (pp.112-185) and Book Three has 7 chapters (pp.186-236).

3.1 A SYNOPSIS OF CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY

3.1.1 Book One (pp.7-111) (17 Chapters)

Rev. Stephen Kumalo, the black parson of Ndotsheni (Natal), on receiving a letter from Rev. Theophilus Msimangu of Johannesburg regarding his sick sister, Gertrude, travels by train to Johannesburg, pooling his meager resources. After some mishappenings, he meets Msimangu who helps him to trace his sister and her small son whom he takes to the house of Mrs. Lithebe at Sophiatown where he lodges. He is unhappy that his sister was leading a bad life of a liquor seller and prostitute. Then with the help of Msimangu he begins a search for his own son Absalom. After great efforts, they find that Absalom and two of his associates were involved in the murder of a white man, Arthur Jarvis, who had been a sympathizer and supporter of the black

* The text of Cry, the Beloved Country followed in the present study is based upon the edition of the novel published by Vintage Publishers, London, in 2002. All references to page numbers belong to this edition. The novel was first published in 1948.
people. Arthur’s father, James Jarvis, a white landlord lives at Carisbrook, a little away from Ndotsheni. This fact pains Kumalo greatly. During his search for his son, Kumalo also meets a young girl at Pimville who has been made pregnant by his son. Kumalo also brings that girl to the house of Mrs. Lithebe. He thinks of taking them to Ndotsheni along with him where they can live peacefully. He continues his efforts to meet his son who is now in prison. His own brother, John Kumalo, has a carpenter shop in Johannesburg and he is rich and plays political tricks and leads a corrupt life. John Kumalo’s son and another man were also there at the time of murder. Kumalo also accompanies Msimangu to Ezenzeleni where the latter is to conduct church services to blind people. Sitting outside, Kumalo experiences some relief. After lunch, the sermons given by Msimangu in the church also provide him with some solace. Next they go to the prison where Absalom is kept, with the help of the young white man, from the reformatory school where Absalom studied earlier. Father meets son. There is a lot of grief on both sides. On Kumalo’s enquiry, Absalom agrees to marry the young girl whom he made pregnant. Kumalo also tells his son that a very famous lawyer, and supporter of the blacks, Mr. Carmichael, has agreed to plead his case free of charge in the name of God. Father Vincent, a white priest of the Mission House, has arranged for this.

3.1.2 Book Two (pp.112-185) (12 Chapters)

James Jarvis Esquire is a rich white farmer at Carisbrook. He lives in a house in a small valley called High Place. When James was on the hill of his farm, police officials come to his place and convey him the sad news that his son, Arthur at Parkwood Johannesburg was shot dead. The parents are shocked. As arranged by the police they go to Johannesburg by flight. At Johannesburg they are received by Arthur’s brother-in-law who takes them to his father’s house. Then Jarvis visits his son’s house at Parkwood. When he sees his son’s study, he finds a number of books on different subjects. His brother-in-law, John Harrison tells him that Arthur was like God Almighty. This makes James Jarvis feel a little proud of his son. Arthur had also been President of the Claremont African Boys’ Club which is a service organisation for the blacks. They attend the funeral of Arthur where the bishop speaks very highly of Arthur. Next day, the news of the black servant boy at Arthur’s house, who was beaten unconscious by the housebreakers, has become conscious. Jarvis happens to read an unfinished manuscript by his son in which he expressed his wonder at the
white Christians, who in spite of Christ’s message to love all humans equally, hate, ill-treat and humiliate the black people of South Africa, who are, after all, also Christians. Jarvis tries to understand the broad mind and large heart of his deceased son. He makes his wife, Margaret, also read the manuscript. There are also portraits of Christ, Abraham Lincoln and others. Jarvis also reads the second Inaugural Address by Lincoln at Gettysburg. His perspective also changes slowly.

After an elaborate and long trial in the court, the judge pronounces Absalom guilty and sentences him to death by hanging, even though Absalom confesses that he shot at Arthur out of fear. The other two young men, i.e., Mathew Kumalo and Johannes Pofuri are set free.

New gold is discovered in South Africa at a place called Odendaalsrust, in the province of Orange Free State. This causes a lot of excitement and speculation about a hike in the value of shares. People speculate that a second Johannesburg would develop at the place of the new gold mines.

Jarvis goes to his son’s house again and in the study he finds a number of articles written by his son on different problems related to the life of the native black people of South Africa. From an article, Jarvis learns that his son wanted to know everything about Africa because he did not know much because of his white origins and rich family background. After a few days, when Jarvis and Margaret are on a one-day stay, when Jarvis is alone, Kumalo meets him in a completely exhausted condition and with great remorse informs Jarvis that it is his own son Absalom, who shot dead Arthur, Jarvis’s son. But Jarvis assures him that he has no anger against Kumalo.

John Kumalo makes an exciting public speech in Johnnesburg pleading for higher wages to the black miners in the context of the discovery of new gold. The policemen watch him whether he provokes the people to violence. But John is clever enough to conclude at the right moment. Kumalo, Msimangu, Jarvis, John Harrison are also present during the speech. Kumalo is surprised at his brother’s talent and corrupt intelligence. We also know about the risky position of the police officers, particularly the black ones, in Johannesburg. After the court judgment, Kumalo, Msimangu and Father Vincent go to the prison and the marriage of Absalom and the young girl is solemnized at the prison chapel, by Father Vincent.
There is a final dinner party at Mrs. Lithebe’s house. People speak while Msimangu also makes a speech and at the end, he announces his denunciation that he is returning to a community and will forswear the world and all possessions. When Kumalo is returning, Msimangu gives his Post Office Book to Kumalo; it has thirty-three pounds, four shillings and five pence. The next morning they leave for Ndotsheni without Gertrude who disappears.

3.1.3 Book Three (pp.186-236) (7 Chapters)

Stephen Kumalo, accompanied by the small boy (Gertrude’s son) and the young girl reach Ndotsheni in Natal changing four trains. His wife and a friend receive them. By night they reach home. There is a continued failure of rain and worst drought. Women carry water from the river near the place of Jarvis. On the way, people greet Kumalo and welcome him back with great joy. People assemble at the church in their church dress and sing the hymns of thanks-giving. After the people leave Kumalo shows the money given by Msimangu to his wife. They revive their plan to buy new clothes and a new stove. Kumalo resumes his normal routine duties and makes efforts for the restoration of Ndotsheni. He meets the chief and succeeds in suggesting to him the need for teaching new methods of farming at the local school so that youngsters can be kept at the village instead of going to Johannesburg for employment. He also meets the headmaster of the school and the latter agrees but says that these matters are beyond his authority. When he returns home, the young white boy i.e., the grandson of Jarvis and late Arthur’s son comes there on his horse. There is a friendly conversation between them. The boy appreciates Kumalo’s house for its neatness and expresses his desire to learn Zulu, the local language. Incidentally the boy learns that milk is not available for children in the village. By evening, a cartful of milk vans are sent to be distributed among the villagers. Kumalo is happy for this good gesture on the part of Jarvis.

There are four letters to Kumalo. Two are from his son in Pretoria jail, one is from the jail authorities stating the date of Absalom’s hanging and the fourth is from the lawyer Mr. Carmichael that mercy has been denied to Absalom. Suddenly the sky becomes cloudy indicating a storm. Kumalo observes from distance that some white men come in a car with the magistrate and Jarvis coming on his horse. They stop at a spot and are joined by the chief. These people plant sharpened branches of trees and flags with measured gaps. Kumalo comes to know later that they are planning to build
a dam there. Now the storm breaks out. People hurry home. Jarvis comes to Kumalo’s place and takes shelter in the church; but there are holes in the ceiling and rain water spreads on the church floor.

Kuluse’s child recovers while Gertrude’s son and the young girl are happy. The white boy comes again and tries to improve his Zulu with the help of Kumalo. After the boy goes, a young demonstrator Napoleon Letsitsi meets Kumalo with his papers. He is sent by Jarvis to teach the local people the improved farming methods. It is arranged that Napoleon is lodged in Kumalo’s house. The demonstrator tells Kumalo that water will be brought into the dam from the river through a pipe. He wants to see the chief. A few days afterwards, the small white boy comes and tells that he is leaving for Johnnesburg as his grandfather has returned early from Pretoria.

Now there is confirmation ceremony at the church. The Bishop arrives and conducts confirmation. Then all of them have simple food at Kumalo’s house. The Bishop suggests to Kumalo that he should leave Ndotsheni and move to some other place for peace of mind and better income. But Kumalo gently rejects the offer. Jarvis sends a reply to the condolences letter sent by Kumalo and the people over the death of his wife, stating that she was ill long before they went to Johannesburg. This relieves Kumalo. He explains to the Bishop, Jarvis’s compassionate deeds to help the people of Ndotsheni. The Bishop does not further force Kumalo to go to another place. The people of the village under the guidance of Kumalo send a condolences wreath to Jarvis for his deceased wife.

Land ploughing starts but it is slow. The dung for manure is collected by the people. The chief orders that a Kraal be built where all cattle will stay so that collection of dung will be easier. Some of the villagers like Kuluse’s brother are unhappy that they are to lose their lands for the dam construction. Others console him. A tractor has been brought for ploughing and the farming work gains momentum. The credit again goes to Jarvis and the demonstrator for this. Hence Kumalo calls the young demonstrator a second Napoleon after Napoleon Bonaparte. Kumalo is happy to note that the young man works sincerely for his love for South Africa and not for money or favours. Kumalo feels grateful to Jarvis unmindful of those people who call him a white man’s dog.

On the fourteenth day i.e., on the eve of Absalom’s hanging, Kumalo goes into the mountain carrying some black tea and heavy cakes with him. It was his practice in
the past to go to the mountain and pray to God in difficult times. He did so three times in the past to confess his sins to God and seek forgiveness. Now he goes to the mountain in the evening. On the way he meets Jarvis on horseback. Jarvis is ready to help Kumalo if the latter wants to build a new church building. Kumalo is gratefully happy for this and Jarvis wants the work to be done quickly as he is planning to leave the place permanently and settle in Johannesburg in his daughter’s house. When Kumalo thanks Jarvis, the latter shows humility by saying that, he is not a saintly man. Kumalo praises Jarvis’s grandson as a bright boy like his father. Jarvis agrees to this and bids farewell to Kumalo.

Now Kumalo starts climbing. He thinks of his son. He confesses his irregularities and thanks God for His unending mercy and blessings. He prays for Msimangu, the young white man, Mrs. Lithebe, Father Vincent and Mr. Carmicheal the lawyer – all those people who helped him at Johannesburg. He recollects how people were happy about his return. Then he thinks of the restoration of Ndotsheni and the valley and wonders why his own son killed Jarvis’s son. This appears to be a mystery of God. Then tired, he rests a while and wakes up suddenly. His heart is filled with pity for all suffering people like Gertrude, the black people at Shantytown and Alexandra and, above all his own son Absalom. He prays to God to save South Africa. Again he falls asleep. By the time he wakes up it is four o’ clock in the morning. Again he grieves for his son, eats some cakes and drinks coffee. By now it is dawn symbolizing hope, a new life and emancipation of the people of South Africa.

3.2 A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY

It may be noted that the novel Cry, the Beloved Country can be analysed semiotically employing the scheme of the five ‘codes’ proposed by Roland Barthes.

According to this conceptual framework for narrative or fictional analysis, it is postulated here that a novel is made up several codes functioning either in isolation or in combination. It is also proposed that a code consists of several archetypes, an archetype being a narrative situation which is pre-established and which occurs repeatedly creating a feeling of familiarity (in the reader).

Thus the analysis of the novel is as under:
Chapter 1: Two Semic Codes (pp.7-8)

It is a geographical description of the valleys in South Africa which are green and rich. But the description slowly changes into that of dry and barren areas of the valley where rich green hills break down. Thus the entire chapter is an illustration of two Semic codes occurring one after the other.

**The Semic Code 1:** The account of a lovely road from Ixopo into the hills etc. These hills and Carisbrooke after seven miles, the fairest valley; the valley of Umzimkulu, the river, the mountains of Ingeli and East Griqualand and the rich matted grass, the singing bird titinaya – all are the archetypes which recurrently prove that these valleys are rich and fertile.

**The Semic Code 2:** Now the code changes and presents a dry and barren area. There is no rain, women scratch the soil and the maize hardly reaches the height of a man. This second Semic code is made up of archetypes which symbolize the dryness of the land and the poverty of the local people. The archetypes as illustrated above hold mirror to the miserable condition of the people of Africa, who are basically land-bound, surviving on agricultural yield and cattle.

Thus the very first chapter presents two opposite Semic codes, the richness of one geographical area followed by another area which is dry, barren and drought-struck. Therefore this chapter serves as a very appropriate introduction to the tale narrated in the novel. Symbolically, the two Semic codes respectively represent the prosperity of the white rulers and the starving black masses of South Africa.

Chapter 2: Hermeneutic, Cultural and Narrative Codes (pp.8-12)

In this chapter, a sequence of different codes is as follows:

i) **The Hermeneutic Code:** Rev. Stephen Kumalo the black parson of the village of Ndotsheni receives a letter. The characters as well the reader are intrigued to know the content of the letter sent to him by an unknown man, named Theophilus Msimangu from Johnnesburg, the capital city, which Kumalo or his wife has never visited. Gradually the puzzle is resolved. Here the letter is the chief archetype.
ii) **The Cultural Code:** The poor living conditions of the people of Ndotsheni are introduced through several archetypes. The rudimentary communication system, as the letter is brought by a small black girl from the store at the behest of a white man; the girl being hungry, Kumalo’s wife giving her some food, the girl’s thanks, the dirty condition of the letter, Kumalo’s sister Gertrude’s, son, Absalom in Johannesburg, the coming of the letter a long time after their departure, Kumalo’s preparation to go the Johannesburg and their meager resources – all are archetypes which indicate the poverty and humble behaviour of the blacks at Ndotsheni. There are also the following codes in this chapter playing less prominent roles.

iii) **The Narrative Code:** Kumalo’s recollections of his younger sister Gertrude and his only son Absalom Kumalo who are supposed to be in Johannesburg. The archetypes are the characters and their background.

**Chapter 3: Semic and Cultural Codes (pp.13-16)**

The journey of Kumalo from Carisbrooke to Johannesburg is narrated in this chapter.

The codes are as follows:

**The Semic and Cultural Codes:** The toy train, Umzimkulu valley, the familiar people, the village folk’s experiences in Johannesburg, some of them asking Kumalo for a favour, people’s respect for their parson because of his dress – Kumalo’s confusion and excitement, his settling to read the sacred book – are archetypes of the Semic and Cultural codes in this chapter.

**Chapter 4: Cultural and Narrative Codes (pp.16-21)**

Kumalo’s journey by train continues, he reaches Johannesburg and he is cheated by a cleanly dressed stranger of his money to the tune of one pound. He meets another man going to Sophiatown who helps him to meet Mr. Msimangu at Sophiatown, who wrote him the letter, these are all the archetypes that present the Cultural and Narrative codes in this chapter.

**Chapter 5: Cultural, Narrative and Symbolic Codes (pp.21-26)**

Rev. Msimangu takes Kumalo to the house of Mrs. Lithebe a good woman of their church who speaks Zulu, and Kumalo takes lodgings there for three shillings a
week. At the Mission House where he eats his meals, Kumalo is also introduced to a young rosy cheeked priest from England (Father Vincent). Kumalo is surprised at the water tap and the many plates, knives and forks. The fate of young blacks who migrate to Johannesburg for employment and then become criminals, a news item that four natives robbed and beat an old white couple in a lonely house – the life led by his sister Gertrude in Claremont, her illegal child, his brother, John’s position as an atheist and corrupt man of politics – Msimangu’s opinion about blacks’ life in Johannesburg – all are archetypes in this chapter which constitute different codes like the Cultural, the Narrative and the Symbolic codes. Kumalo asks Msimangu whether these evil things should go forever in Johannesburg. The reply given by Msimangu is worth quoting:

They must go on, said Msimangu gravely, you cannot stop the world from going on. My friend, I am a Christian. It is not in my heart to hate a white man. It was a white man who brought my father out of darkness. But you will pardon me if I talk frankly to you. The tragedy is that they are not mended again. The white man has broken the tribe. And it is my belief – again I ask your pardon – that it cannot be mended again. But the house that is broken, and the man that falls apart when the house is broken, these are the tragic things. That is why children break the law, and old white people are robbed and beaten. (25)

However, he adds

“There are some white men who give their lives to build up what is broken.” (Ibid)

Chapter 6: Cultural and Symbolic Codes (pp.27-31)

Sophiatown, Claremont are dirty places – the latter place is a garbage heap of the proud city. There are several such poor suburbs of the city inhabited by blacks; the Bantia Press, newspaper, the dirty and shabby Claremont – John Kumalo’s indifference – a rich black woman liquor-seller the permissive and drunken atmosphere in Gertrude’s dwelling place, her small son, her willingness to accompany her brother leaving this place her apologetic remorse and his kneeling down – Kumalo’s bringing her and her things in a lorry – Mrs. Lithebe’s kind accommodation – all these are archetypes which make up the Cultural and the Symbolic codes that give life to this chapter, in semiotic terms.
Gertrude’s return, her rich but dirty dress – Kumalo’s buying new and sober dress for her from his Post Office Book money – Gertrude’s penury, her helping Mrs. Lithebe, her happy life with her son – search for Absalom by Kumalo helped by Msimangu– Kumalo’s meeting his brother John, at his carpenter shop in the city – John’s quality of life being corrupt and he is not going to church, John left his first wife and now lives with another woman without marriage – all these are archetypes of the Narrative and the Cultural codes. John’s attitude to life is noteworthy to quote in his own words when he talks to Kumalo and Msimangu:

I do not say we are free here. I do not say we are free as men should be. But at least I am free of the chief. At least I am free of an old and ignorant man who is nothing but a white man’s dog. He is a trick, a trick to hold something that the white man desires to hold together.

He smiled his cunning and knowing smile, and for a moment addressed himself to his visitors.

But is not being held together, he said. It is breaking apart, your tribal society. It is here in Johannesburg that the new society is being built. Something is happening here, my brother.

He paused for a moment, then he said, I do not wish to offend you gentlemen, but the church too is like the chief. You must do so and so and so. You are not free to have an experience. A man must be faithful and meek and obedient, and he must obey the laws, whatever the laws may be. It is true that the Church speaks with a fine voice and the Bishops speak against the laws. But this they have been doing for fifty years, and things get worse, not better.

His voice grew louder, and was again addressing people who were not there. Here in Johannesburg, it is the mines, he said, everything is the mines. These high buildings, this wonderful City Hall, this beautiful Parktown with its beautiful houses, all this is built with the gold from the mines. This wonderful hospital for Europeans, the biggest hospital south of the Equator, it is built with the gold from the mines.
There was a change in his voice, it became louder like the voice of a bull or a lion. Go to our hospital, he said, and see our people lying on the floors. They lie so close you cannot step over them. But it is they who dig the gold. For three shillings a day. We come from the Transkie, and from Basutoland, and from Bechuanaland, and from Swaziland, and from Zululand. And from Ndotsheni also. We live in the compounds, we must leave our wives and families behind. And when the new gold is found, it is not we who will get more for our labour. It is the white man’s shares that will rise, you will read it in all the papers. They go mad when new gold is found. They bring more of us to live in the compounds, to dig under the ground for three shillings a day. They do not think, here is a chance to pay more for our labour. They think only, here is a chance to build a bigger house and buy a bigger car. It is important to find gold, they say, for all South Africa is built on the mines.

He growled, and his voice grew deep, it was like thunder that was rolling. But it is not built on the mines, he said, it is built on our backs, on our sweat, on our labour. Every factory, every theatre, every beautiful house, they are all built by us. And what does the chief know about that? But here in Johannesburg they know.

He stopped, and was silent. And his visitors were silent also, for there was something in this voice that compelled one to be silent. And Stephen Kumalo sat silent, for this was a new brother that he saw.

John Kumalo looked at him. The Bishop says it is wrong, he said, but he lives in a big house, and his white priests get four, five, six times what you get, my brother.

He sat down, and took out a large red handkerchief to wipe his face.

That is my experience, he said, that is why I no longer go to the church.

And that is why you did not write any more? Well, well it could be the reason. (34-35)
The conversation continues, but the passage quoted above projects not only the personality and character of John Kumalo, but it also exposes the injustice perpetrated on the black labourers not only in the tribal areas but also in the city of Johannesburg.

On enquiry John Kumalo gives the address of a textile factory where Absalom went along with his own son seeking employment. His own son also leaves him, unable to adjust with his step mother. Msimangu offers his help to Kumalo in the latter’s search for his son. The words of Msimangu in this context are noteworthy:

He is a big man, in this place, your brother. His shop is full of men, talking as you have heard. But they say you must hear him at a meeting, he and Dubula and a brown man named Tomilson. They say he speaks like a bull, and growls in his throat like a lion, and could make men mad if he would. But for that they say he has not enough courage, for he would surely be sent to prison.

I shall tell you one thing, Msimangu continued. Many of the things that he said are true.

He stopped in the street and spoke quietly and earnestly to his companion. Because the white man has power, we too want power, he said. But when a black man gets power, when he gets money, he is a great man if he is not corrupted. I have seen it often. He seeks power and money to put right what is wrong, and when he gets them, why, he enjoys the power and the money. Now he can gratify his lusts, now he can arrange ways to get white man’s liquor, he can speak to thousands and hear them clap their hands. Some of us think when we have power, we shall revenge ourselves on the white man who has had power, and because our desire is corrupt, we are corrupted, and the power has no heart in it. But most white men do not know this truth about power, and they are afraid lest we get it.

He stood as though he was testing his exposition. Yes, that is right about power, he said. But there is only one thing that has power completely, and that is love. Because when a man loves, he seeks no power, and therefore he has power. I see only one hope for our
country, and that is when white men and black men desiring neither power nor money, but desiring only the good of their country, come together to work for it.

He was grave and silent, and then he said somberly, I have one great fear in my heart, that one day when they are turned to loving, they will find we are turned to hating. (37-38)

Then, both of them proceed to Doornfontein Textile Company. This chapter is very important because the nature of two main characters, viz. John Kumalo and the priest Msimangu is revealed vividly under the Semic code. If John is full of hatred against the white man, Msimangu loves both the white man and the black man equally and desires that they should love each other and work for the nation.

The two men go to the Doorfontein and find that Absalom is no longer working there. Informed by a fellow workman, Dhalimi, they go to Alexandra and meet Mrs. Nadlala at Sophiatown who tells them Absalom had left for Alexandra. They return home.

Chapter 8: Hermeneutic and Cultural Codes (pp.39-47)

The next morning they proceed to Alexandra. There is a boycott of buses where Dubula addresses the people in support of the picketing. They walk eleven miles. Msimangu informs Kumalo of an incident of violence of the blacks who broke into the house of an old white woman and killed her. He also narrates an incident in which a black couple was kind to a white woman outraged by a white man. This shows the Hermeneutic code. He also informs Kumalo of how late Professor Hoernle a white man fought for the cause of the black people. They meet a woman called Mrs. Mkize. She suspects that they are police. She tells Kumalo in private that Absalom and his friends lived in her house and they used to steal things and bring them home. But they had left one year before. Kumalo and Msimangu engage a taxi and the taxi driver tells them that Absalom had gone to Orlando. On the way they watch black workers walking on the street because the buses have been boycotted. Some white men going in cars have stopped and taken the black people in their cars on their way to Alexandra in spite of the threats from the traffic officer. One white man said, take me to a court. This made Kumalo smile with joy. Msimangu also shares his happiness.
Chapter 9: Cultural Code (pp.48-55)

All roads lead to Johannesburg and all people white or black go to Johannesburg seeking solution to their problems. The blacks go to slum areas like Alexandra, Sophiatown or Orlando. This chapter narrates four episodes of poor black migrants bargaining to hire accommodation in the overcrowded slums. Many of them fail to get rented accommodation either because the shanties are overcrowded or because the rent is beyond their resources. Thus has emerged the Shanty Town. A fifth episode describes how a mother tries to pacify her sick child. Mr. Dubula helps them to get a doctor. But the child dies. White people come to Shantytown and take photographs. Blacks from other slums like Pimville, Alexandra, Sophiatown and Orlando come to Shanty Town and put up their temporary and flimsy shelters. The police come and drive away those from Orlando as they are the last to join. A newspaper man comes from Durban to report about the situation of blacks in the Shanty Town. This chapter attests to the photographic or realistic narrative abilities of Alan Paton.

Chapter 10: Hermeneutic and Cultural Codes (pp.55-64)

Kumalo spends time with Gertrude’s son, while waiting for Msimangu to go to Shanty Town along with him. He wants to take Gertrude and her son to Ndotsheni and teach the boy their native culture. He remembers his son Absalom, his wife and others at this native place amidst his thoughts about future. He is happy that he is able to play with a child and derive some joy. His thoughts in this context are as follows:

Who indeed knows the secret of the earthly pilgrimage? Who knows for what we live, and struggle and die? Who knows what keeps us living and struggling, while all things break about us? Who knows why the warm flesh of a child is such comfort, when one’s own child is lost and cannot be recovered? Wiseman write many books, in words too hard to understand. But this, the purpose of our lives, the end of all our struggle, is beyond all human wisdom. Oh God, my God, do not Thou forsake me. Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, if Thou art with me … (57)

This entire passage can be taken as an archetype because such a situation as described in this passage recurs several times in the narrative text of the novel, in
relation to the devotion of Kumalo to God, and proves him to be a true devotee of Christ. This archetype is part of the cultural code of the novel.

The remaining part of this chapter narrates Kumalo’s journey to Shanty Town along with Msimangu, in search of Absalom. Thus, this part also juxtaposes the Hermeneutic and Cultural codes. The temporary shelters and the residents of Shanty Town are described. They meet a nurse and ask her if she knows anything about Absalom. She says yes, but he is not here. She directs them where Absalom was put up. A good woman in that house informs them that Absalom was taken to the reformatory. Walking for about an hour from Shanty Town and Orlando, they reach the reformatory. Boys are marching on the grounds, while a black man takes them to a young white man in the office. He tells them that a month ago, they released Absalom because of his good behaviour and because he wanted to meet a girl who was pregnant by him. They wait for some time and the young white man takes them to Pimville. This man had helped Absalom to get a job in the town and persuaded him to open a Post Office (Savings) Book in which Absalom has three or four pounds. Kumalo thanks him. He takes them in his car to Pimville. Kumalo alone goes to the place of the girl. Absalom is not there as he went to Springs. Kumalo talks a little harshly to the girl. On Msimangu’s advice, they return to the reformatory. The white man goes in and comes out to tell them that Absalom is no longer working in the factory. But he promises to help Kumalo in his search for his son. Then they leave for Sophiatown.

Chapter 11: Hermeneutic and Cultural Codes (pp.64-67)

Next evening at the Mission House when Father Vincent, a young white priest is talking to Kumalo about the latter’s native place, another white priest brings a copy of the *Evening Star* in which there appears a news item: “Murder in Parkworld. Well-known City Engineer Shot Dead. Assailants Thought to be Native.” (65) They say the engineer was Jarvis Arthur, a great fighter for justice and supporter of the cause of the blacks. Kumalo says that he knows his father James Jarvis of High Place, Carisbrooke, a landlord in the hills above Ndotsheni. The details of the news item are read. At 1.30 p.m. a native followed by two accomplices entered Arthur’s house by the kitchen. At that time Arthur was alone, as his wife and two children were away on a short holiday. The house breakers thought that there was no one in the house, knocked down the native servant in the kitchen and when Arthur came down hearing
the noise, he was shot dead in the pass way from the stairs into the kitchen. Exhaustive investigation is going on and the plantations on Parkworld Ridge are being combed. There is a general shock. Consider the following passage:

There is not much talking now. A silence falls upon them all. This is no time to talk of hedges and fields, or the beauties of any country. Sadness, fear and hate, how they well up in the heart and mind, whenever one opens the pages of these messengers of doom. Cry for the broken tribe, for the law and the custom that is gone. Aye, and cry aloud for the man who is dead, for the woman and children behaved. Cry, the beloved country, these things are not yet at an end. The sun pours down on the earth, on the lovely land that man cannot enjoy. He knows only the fear of his heart. (66-67)

Kumalo is disturbed. Msimangu promises to take him to Ezenzelini where he is going to conduct a service for the blind. There Kumalo may find some peace of mind.

Chapter 12: Semic and Cultural Codes (pp.67-77)

In this chapter, the reaction to Arthur’s murder by a black, from different quarters is described. The whites demand more protective measures; officials discuss whether increasing schooling will decrease juvenile delinquency among native children and the consequent additional expenditure. Other officer groups consider the introduction of pass-laws. There are also opinions contradicting these propositions. Some whites are uneasy about free entry to the blacks in places like the Zoo Lake, Hillside Golf Course etc. Some want that South Africa should be divided into several areas where the white can live without the blacks. “There are a hundred and a thousand voices crying” (71). People are thrown into confusion about what to do. Meetings are planned at Turffontein, at Parkworld and at Mayfair. There is a general cry from the white people for more police and more protection. The following passage is significant in this context:

Cry, the beloved country, for the unborn child that is the inheritor of our fear. Let him not love the earth too deeply. Let him not laugh too gladly when the water runs through his fingers, nor stand too silent when the setting sun makes red the veld with fire. Let him not be too moved when the birds of his land are singing, nor give him too much
of his heart to a mountain or a valley. For fear will rob him of all if he gives too much. (72)

Considering the historical fact that Apartheid and Pass Laws became the government policy in South Africa in 1948, Alan Paton’s words above, in his novel written in 1946, sound highly prophetic. Such is the power of literature!

The rest of the chapter describes the search of Kumalo and Msimangu for Absalom at different places beginning with Mrs. Ndlela of End Street, Mrs. Mkize at Alexandra, Mrs. Hdatshways, the reformatory school and finally ending with the place of the girl-friend of Absalom at Pimville. At all these places, they are informed, and the police had visited investigating about Absalom. This makes Kumalo very much disturbed.

**Chapter 13: Semic and Cultural Codes (pp.77-83)**

This chapter describes Kumalo’s experience at Ezenzeleni with Msimangu conducting a service for the blind. Kumalo is greatly impressed by Msimangu’s readings from the holy book.

> For it was not only a golden voice, but it was the voice of a man whose heart was golden, reading from a book of golden words. (81)

This chapter in addition to most of the preceding and ensuing chapters speaks of the golden character of Msimangu. The present writer considers that Msimangu is, perhaps the spokesperson of Alan Paton.

**Chapter 14: Narrative, Cultural and Hermeneutic Codes (pp.83-92)**

On the day after their return from Enzenzeleni, Kumalo returns to Mrs. Lithebe’s house from the Mission House after midday meal. Then Msimangu and the young white man come to him and in a closed room, they reveal that Absalom is imprisoned for murdering Arthur. One of the other two accomplices was John Kumalo’s son. They go to John Kumalo’s place where Kumalo tells his brother of what has happened. Both of them go to the prison accompanied by Father Vincent the young white priest and Msimangu. At the prison Kumalo meets his son. There is an exchange of tearful greetings. He tries to find the truth from his son who confesses that he used his revolver out of confusion and not with an intention of killing Arthur. After some talk, Kumalo asks Absalom whether he is ready to marry the young pregnant girl. Absalom says ‘yes’. At the gate Kumalo meets his brother John who
has also seen his imprisoned son. John says that there is no proof to say that his son or
the other man was at the spot of murder. The young white man offers a lift but, as
Kumalo does not respond, he leaves angrily saying that it is not his business to get
lawyers. He leaves in his car and John also leaves. Kumalo decides to seek the help of
Father Vincent.

Chapter 15: Semic and Cultural Codes (pp.92-98)

Kumalo returns home. The white young man comes and meets him. When
they are alone, the young man explains his angry behaviour and apologizes and
suggests that Kumalo should engage a lawyer. Both of them go to the Mission House
and meet Father Vincent who promises to help him. Kumalo describes his present
condition as follows:

> At first it was a search. I was anxious at first, but as the search went on
step by step, so did the anxiety turn into fear, and this fear grew deeper
step by step. It was at Alexandra that I first grew afraid, but it was here
in your House, when I heard of the murder, that my fear grew into
something too great to be borne. (94)

Father Vincent tries to comfort him and advises him to pray: Father Vincent says as
follows:

> When Kumalo had sat down, Father Vincent said to him, Yes, I
said pray and rest. Even if it is only words that you pray, and even if
your resting is only a lying on a bed. And do not pray for yourself, and
do not pray to understand the ways of God. For they are secret.

> Who knows what life is? — For life is a secret. And why you
have compassion for a girl, when you yourself find no compassion? –
that is a secret. And why you go on, when it would seem better to die?
– that is a secret. Do not pray and think about these things now, there
will be other times. Pray for Gertrude, and for her child, and for the
girl that is to be your son’s wife, and for the child that will be your
grandchild. Pray for your wife and all at Ndotsheni. Pray for the
woman and the children that are bereaved. Pray for the soul of him
who was killed. Pray for us at the Mission House, and for those at
Ezenzeleni, who try to rebuild in a place of destruction. Pray for your
own rebuilding. Pray for all white people, those who do justice, and those who would do justice if they were not afraid. And do not fear to pray for your son, and for his amendment. (97-98)

With this, Father Vincent leads Kumalo out of the Mission House and promises that he would pray for Kumalo and do anything he asks for. This chapter reveals the real priestly and noble character of Father Vincent who is a white man under the Semic code. The character of Father Vincent also seems to be another mouthpiece of Alan Paton, the author. The white priest’s words are symbolic of hope and redemption and reflect the culture of Christianity as a religion.

Chapter 16: Hermeneutic and Narrative Codes (pp.99-104)

The next day Kumalo travels to Pimville by train to meet the girl who is with a child by his son. Their meeting is highly pathetic. Kumalo in his anguish even hurts that innocent young girl. However, he repents later. She agrees to marry his son and move with him to join his family at Ndotsheni in Natal. The Narrative code shows succession of events and the Hermeneutic code reveals the meeting of Absalom’s girlfriend.

Chapter 17: Narrative and Cultural Codes (pp.104-111)

After returning home he requests Mrs. Lithebe, the landlady, to allow him to bring this young girl into her house. A childless woman filled with the milk of human kindness, Mrs. Lithebe agrees and when he thanks her, she says, “Why else do we live?” Kumalo goes to Pimville and brings the girl to Mrs. Lithebe’s house in Sophiatown. This young girl is very obedient and quiet unlike Gertrude. She obeys Mrs. Lithebe and Kumalo unquestioningly. Kumalo meets his son in prison and asks him whether he can marry this girl and Absalom says he can. Kumalo also tells him that there is a lawyer to whom Absalom should tell him only the truth. His confession is also arranged through Father Vincent. Absalom agrees to do whatever his father says. The senior white lawyer, Mr. Carmichael is very famous not only as a lawyer but also as a supporter of the blacks in South Africa; he agreed to argue in the court in defense of Absalom, free of cost i.e., for God. He advises Kumalo to gather as much information as possible about the incident of murder not only from his son but also from others.

Here ends Book One in which a number of codes have been juxtaposed to create an aesthetic effect of reality.
Chapter 1: Semic and Narrative Codes (pp.112-118)

This chapter presents an account of Carisbrooke, a fertile land above the rich valley of Umzimkulu. James Jarvis is busy on his farm watching the ploughing. There has been no rain. Some of his farm labour comes from Ndotsheni where the land is almost barren. Two policemen, a captain named Van Jaarsveld and another, Binnendyle, come in a car and as directed by Jarvis’s wife, they climb the hill and meet Jarvis on the way and inform him that his son is dead. He is shocked and requests them not to reveal this to his wife. The officers tell him that arrangements have been made to take them to Johannesburg.

Chapter 2: Narrative and Symbolic Codes (pp.118-124)

Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis are received at the airport by John Harrison, Mary’s brother and late Arthur’s brother-in-law. He takes them in his car to his father’s house. They are received with great sympathy by Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, parents of Mary. They drove in the car to the Police Laboratories to see the dead body. John Harrison tells Jarvis that at the time of death, Arthur had been writing an article, ‘The Truth About Native Crime’. Arthur had a sympathetic attitude to the issues of the black natives, unlike John’s father. They go into the Laboratories and attend to the formalities and return to the house of Harrisons’. There are messages from several quarters condoling the death of Arthur. Mr. Harrison tells Jarvis about Arthur’s interest in learning the languages of the natives like Afrikaans and Zulu in which he had attained native-like proficiency. Jarvis feels a sad pride. When Mr. Harrison expresses surprise over the murder of Arthur who had taken the welfare of African’s for his mission of life. Now Jarvis is reminded of the mission at Ndotsheni. He has no faith in missions. His impression of this mission is as follows:

There was a mission near him at Ndotsheni. But it was a sad place as he remembered it. A dirty old wood-and-iron church, patched and forlorn, and a dirty old parson in a barren valley where the grass hardly grew. A dirty old school where he had heard them reciting, parrot-fashion, on the one or two occasions that he had ridden past there, reciting things that could mean little to them. (123)
This passage is a powerful archetype because it is repeated several times in the narrative (Book One, Book Two and Book Three) and it presents the indifferent attitude and poor opinion of Mr. Jarvis about the mission church and school in Ndotsheni which he happened to pass by occasionally. Understandably, through a chain of events, the very negative attitude of Mr. Jarvis slowly changes in the course of time to a highly sympathetic attitude such that he offers land and help to construct a dam to irrigate the fields of Ndotsheni and also to build a new building for the church there. Thus the beginning of an enigma of opposing attitudes on the part of Mr. Jarvis is introduced in this chapter. Hence, it is also an example of the Symbolic code. In his conversation with his wife Mr. Jarvis confesses that he failed completely to understand his son, Arthur who had noble thoughts and who had led a noble life of service to the native blacks. But his wife knew their son, she feels proud of him, though in a sad manner.

Chapter 3: Hermeneutic and Cultural Codes (pp.124-128)

Mr. Jarvis visits his son’s house at Parkworld and happens to read the correspondence of his son. Arthur had been invited by several religious and service-oriented organizations to address them. His study room is full of books and books on different subjects on South Africa and religion, Russia, crime and criminals as well as Shakespearean plays. There are also portraits of Christ crucified, Abraham Lincoln, Vergelegen and the willows by the river. According to a letter addressed to his son by the secretary of the Claremont African Boys Club, Arthur had again been elected as President. There are several papers written by Arthur. The last one is fragmentary and it thoroughly deals with the issues of native Africans, on how the white governments ruined the tribal system of South Africa through a policy of segregation and by keeping the unskilled African labour poor in spite of making huge profits with their labour. Jarvis reads the ‘The Famous Speech at Gettysburg’ by Abraham Lincoln. He returns home.

In this chapter the Hermeneutic code is very prominent because what is hitherto unknown to Mr. Jarvis about the real nobility of his son Arthur is revealed completely but the consequent change in him is not revealed and it is postponed to the ensuing chapters. The Cultural code is also powerful as the real nature and life mission of Arthur is exposed through his correspondence, his library of books and his uncompleted article along with many such articles dealing with the miserable life of
native South Africans. This reveals the broad-minded humanitarian and democratic aspirations and ideals of late Arthur Jarvis.

Chapter 4: Cultural and Hermeneutic Codes (pp.128-135)

This chapter describes the funeral service for Arthur at Parkworld Church. All kinds of people, whites, blacks, coloureds, and Indians attend the funeral service. The Bishop makes a pained and uplifted speech. The concluding part of the speech is significant:

And the Bishop’s voice rose when he spoke of South Africa, and he spoke in a language of beauty, and Jarvis listened for a while without pain, under the spell of the words. And the Bishop said that here had been a life devoted to South Africa, of intelligence and courage, of love that cast out fear, so that the pride welled up in the heart, pride in the stranger who had been his son. (128-129)

James Jarvis decides to stay on for a few more days to wind up the affairs of Arthur. He arranges for his wife Margaret and daughter-in-law, Mary and her children to go and stay at Mary’s place. The police are waiting for the servant-boy who was hit, to recover, for identifying the culprits. Harrison expresses fear of insecurity. There is a likely strike by the mine workers for higher wages. Next morning the police telephone to Harrison that the servant boy who had come back to senses and recognized one of the culprits. He is a young black who had worked for Mary earlier but left her service and joined the textile factory. It was easy to identify him because he has some switching about the eyes. After breakfast Jarvis reads his son’s manuscript which articulated Arthur’s anxiety about the life of blacks because, the whites who call themselves Christians had been behaving in a very unchristian manner. Jarvis reads Lincoln’s speech. His wife comes to him and he hands over the manuscript to her requesting her to read it.

Chapter 5: Cultural, Hermeneutic and Semic Codes (pp.136-144)

In this chapter, the court proceedings are narrated. The code of behaviour in a court of law, the high status of a judge is described vividly: Consider the following passage:

You may not smoke in this Court, you may not whisper or speak or laugh. You must dress decently, and if you are a man, you
may not wear your hat unless such is your religion. This is in honour of
the Judge and in honour of the King whose officer he is; and in honour
of the Law behind the judge, and in honour of the People behind the
Law. When the Judge enters you will stand, and you will not sit till he
is seated. When the Judge leaves you will stand, and you will not move
till he has left you. This is in honour of the Judge, and of the things
behind the Judge.

For to the Judge is entrusted a great duty, to Judge and to
pronounce sentence, even sentence of death. Because of their high
office, judges are called Honourable, and precede most other men on
great occasions. And they are held in great honour by men both white
and black. Because the land is of fear, a Judge must be without fear, so
that justice may be done according to the Law; therefore a Judge must
be incorruptible.

The Judge does not make the Law. It is the people that make
the Law. Therefore, if a Law is unjust, and if the Judge judges
according to the Law, that is justice, even if it is not just.

It is the duty of a Judge to do justice, but it is only the People
that can be just. Therefore if justice be not just, that is not to be laid at
the door of the Judge, but at the door of the People, which means at the
door of the White People, for it is the White People that make the Law.

In South Africa men are proud of their Judges, because they
believe they are incorruptible. Even the black men have faith in them,
they do not always have faith in the Law. In a land of fear this
incorruptibility is like a lamp set upon a stand, giving light to all that
are in the house. (136-137)

This passage is one of the exquisite passages in the novel that gives a concrete
shape to one facet of the Cultural Code. The passage not only offers a picture of a
judge, his power and the honour due to him, but also creates suspense and hope about
the fate of Absalom who killed a white man loved by both whites and blacks. It also
clearly spells out that the makers of South African laws are the whites. The emphasis
on the incorruptibility of a Judge is quite realistic and optimistic.
First in the long proceedings, the Public Prosecutor presents the details of the case. Absalom and the other two accomplices are examined beginning with Absalom who repeatedly tells the Court that he shot at Arthur out of fear and confusion, and not with any intentions of murder. After the examination, the Court is adjourned. People stand while the Judge and his assessors leave the Court, and then pass through separate doors intended for the whites and the blacks. Here, the reader is left with suspense about the fate of Absalom and the other two accomplices, thus the code is Hermeneutic. This chapter also embodies the Semic Code because the Court is projected as a deliverer of justice.

Chapter 6: Cultural Code (pp.145-149)

At a small place called, Odendaalsrust, new gold in rich quality is found. This causes a lot of excitement and speculation about a hike in share values. People expect a second Johannesburg to emerge in the province of Orange Free State. Absalom’s trial loses its public interest. Consider the following passage:

And perhaps a great city will grow up, a second Johannesburg, with a second Parktown and a second Kensington, a second Jeppe and a second Verdedorp, a second Pimville and second Shanty Town, a great city that will be the pride of any Odendaalsruster. But isn’t that name impossible? (148)

However, some of the white leaders are against this speculation because they are interested in the welfare of the black miners. Father Beresford, other Kafferboeties like Sir Ernest Oppenheimer opine that there is no need for a second Johannesburg because they are against the conditions of the blacks at Johannesburg gold mines. Look at the passage that forwards this opinion:

They want to hear your voice again, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer. Some of them applaud you, and some of them say thank God for you, in their hearts, even at their bedsides. For mines are for men, not for money. And money is not something to go mad about and throw your hat into the air for. Money is for food and clothes and comfort, and a visit to the pictures. Money is to make happy the lives of children. Money is for security, and for dreams, for hopes, and for purposes. Money is for buying the fruits of the earth, of the land where you are born. (149)
Chapter 7: Narrative and Hermeneutic Codes (pp.149-152)

Jarvis goes again to his son’s house. There are books, letters of invitation and several articles on South Africa written by Arthur. He reads an article called ‘Private Essay on the Evolution of a South African’ in which Arthur expresses gratitude to his parents who brought him up in comfort allowing him to learn everything a child needs. But they didn’t tell him anything about South Africa. Therefore he decided to devote his life to the service of South Africa. He also decides to do what is right and to speak what is true. To quote from this article:

I do this not because I am courageous and honest, but because it is the only way to end the conflict in my deepest soul. I do it because I am no longer able to aspire to the highest with one part of myself, and to deny it with another. I do not wish to live like that, I would rather die than live like that, I understand better those who have died for their convictions, and have not thought it was wonderful or brave or noble to die. They died rather than live, that was all. (151)

In other words, Arthur had taken a decision to devote his life to bring light and respect into the life of the black people of South Africa. His words sound like the premonition of a martyr and their impact on Jarvis is deep. Now Jarvis is a changed man because he understands the noble thoughts of his late son. This chapter is important because it reveals the heart of Arthur and brings about a change in the attitude of Jarvis towards the blacks in South Africa. Jarvis’s puzzle about his son is solved throwing a new light on his own personality.

Chapter 8: Hermeneutic Code (pp.152-157)

In this chapter, Kumalo meets Jarvis on the pretext of seeking information about the daughter of a blackman, Sibeko of Ndotsheni who worked for a white man named Smith in Ixopo, and when the white man’s daughter married and moved to springs, Sibeko’s daughter also moved to springs along with them. But there has not been any information about her for twelve months. Therefore Sibeko requested Kumalo to find out her whereabouts. The black boy now working with Barbara Smith, a niece of Margaret Jarvis is asked if he has any information about Sibeko’s daughter, but the boy doesn’t know anything about this girl. After some more enquiries later, Smith’s daughter says that this girl’s character changed and she was sent away. Then
she started brewing liquor and the police put her in jail for one month. After that she was not taken back into service. After a long time, with great hesitation and a deep sense of guilt, Kumalo tells Jarvis that it is his own son, Absalom who shot dead, Jarvis’s son Arthur. But Jarvis, who is a changed man by now, says that he is not angry. Kumalo leaves with a slight relief.

This chapter reveals two types of information under the Hermeneutic Code: One is about Sibeko’s daughter who is not very important for the thread of narration but important otherwise as it reveals how the life of young black girls was being ruined by bad ways of life. The other piece of information which is important for the story is Kumalo’s informing Jarvis that Arthur was killed by Absalom. The chapter thus reveals the change of attitude in Jarvis.

Chapter 9: Narrative and Cultural Codes (pp.157-164)

John Kumalo addresses a gathering of people while the police are watching him. John is a very powerful speaker, as the following excerpt attests:

We do not ask for what cannot be given, says John Kumalo. We ask only for our share of what is produced by our labour. New gold has been found, and South Africa is rich again. We ask only for our share of it. This gold will stay in the bowels of the earth if we do not dig it out. I do not say it is our gold, I say only that we should get our share in it. It is the gold of the whole people, the white and the black, and the coloured, and the Indian. But who will get the most of this gold? (158)

He is capable of rousing the emotion of his audience. The narrator therefore, describes the conclusion of John’s speech as follows:

And the voice dies away, as thunder dies away over mountains, and echoes and re-echoes more and more faintly. (159)

The two policemen watching want to arrest John Kumalo if there is any disorder or violence. But there is no such a thing. The meeting is quiet and orderly. Once John Kumalo concludes his speech, people applaud him. Stephen Kumalo and his elder brother Msimangu is also present there. Jarvis and John Harrison also observe the scene. They leave the place.

This part of the novel is an example of several archetypes reflecting the situation of the black mine workers and how false and corrupt leaders like John
Kumalo exploit them emotionally. These archetypes repeatedly occur several times in the narrative.

The next part of this chapter is a meeting between two police officers, one higher and the other subordinate, and both are blacks. The subordinate enquires whether there will be a strike. The superior officer says that John Kumalo is a dangerous man. He adds that his subordinate may get a promotion. But that will be like sitting on a volcano.

In the next two parts of the chapter, are again manifestations of the Cultural Code, the possibility of a strike by the miners is considered and reported that as time passed the strike was over with almost no loss of life and all becomes quiet. The short concluding part of this chapter is again an archetype which is a symbolic comment by the narrator on the entire situation:

In the deserted harbor there is yet water that laps against the quays. In the dark and silent forest there is a leaf that falls. Behind the polished paneling the white ant eats away the wood. Nothing is ever quiet, except for fools. (164)

Chapter 10: Narrative and Cultural Codes (pp.164-167)

The narration continues and the situation in Mrs. Lithebe’s house is described. Mrs. Lithebe gently admonishes Gertrude for her mixing with bad people and for laughing carelessly. Gertrude apologizes. A neighbouring woman brings a newspaper which reports that a European householder was shot dead by a native housebreaker. They try to hide the paper from Kumalo’s notice as he enters the house supported by the young girl. Msimangu also comes. They decide to stop Kumalo from going to the Mission House for dinner and so Mrs. Lithebe offers food for all. After the night meal they attend a meeting at the church and return home. Now Gertrude tells Mrs. Lithebe in private that she has been inspired by a woman who spoke at the meeting, and told them that she would become a nun. Gertrude also wants to become a nun. She hopes that Kumalo’s wife will look after her son better than herself when she is gone. Before going to bed, Gertrude also takes a promise from the young girl that the latter will care for her son.

This chapter besides serving the purpose of the Narrative code also provides the necessary Cultural code that throws light on a change in Gertrude and her worry about the future of her son.
Chapter 11: Cultural and Hermeneutic Codes (pp.168-174)

This chapter narrates the court proceedings and therefore it is an expression of the Cultural code. This chapter also is part of the Hermeneutic code because there is a certain degree of suspense until the final sentence is pronounced. First the interpreter translates the opinions of the Judge and his two assessors into Zulu. On the basis of long explanation and strong evidence, the second and the third accused (i.e., Mathew Kumalo and Johannes Pafuri) are found not guilty and therefore discharged while Absalom Kumalo, the first accused is found guilty. The Judge pronounces his judgment as follows:

I sentence you, Absalom Kumalo, to be returned to the custody and to be hanged by the neck until you are dead. And may the Lord have mercy upon your soul. (174)

Kumalo, Absalom’s father, Gertrude start crying when they hear the judgment. Absalom falls to the floor crying and sobbing. The young white man comes breaking the custom by coming to the side allotted to the blacks, and along with Msimangu helps the old and broken Kumalo to move out.

Chapter 12: Cultural and Semic Codes (pp.174-185)

In this chapter, Kumalo’s meeting with his son in the prison is described. He is accompanied by Father Vincent, Msimangu, Gertrude and the girl. Kumalo asks Absalom whether he is ready to marry the girl and Absalom answers in the affirmative. Father Vincent solemnizes their marriage in the prison chapel. Absalom wants his child to be named Peter if he is a son. He also tells his father to take his Post Office Book that has four pounds in it, from the office and also a parcel which he left at one Joseph Bhengu’s house at Germiston for the sake of his prospective son. Absalom will be sent to the big prison at Pretoria. Their parting is pathetic. From the prison Kumalo goes the place of John Kumalo, his younger brother. He warns his brother to be careful about his cheap and corrupt politics, Kumalo intentionally hurts his brother. John almost turns out Kumalo from his shop.

Jarvis leaves Johannesburg. Before leaving he gives a cheque of one thousand pounds to John Harrison, as a donation to the Boys Club which he wishes to be named ‘Arthur Jarvis Club’.
At Mrs. Lithebe’s house, they have a party to mark Kumalo’s departure. They close the party with a hymn and prayers. Msimangu announces to Kumalo that he is forsaking the world and possessions. He gives his Post Office Book which has thirty-two pounds, to Kumalo. They also talk about the possibility of mercy to be decided by the Governor-General-in Council. They depart and Kumalo returns thanking Msimangu for his help and kindness. He prays before going to sleep. The next morning he rises early to start his journey to Ndotsheni. Gertrude is missing, she is gone.

This chapter is narrated under the Cultural and Semic codes which reveal the human relations among the different characters in a moving manner.

3.2.3 BOOK THREE (pp.186-236) (7 CHAPTERS)

In this book, Kumalo’s return to Ndotsheni and the events that happen later are narrated.

Chapter 1: Cultural and Semic Codes (pp.186-194)

Kumalo’s return to Ndotsheni is welcomed by the villagers. At the railway station Kumalo is received by his wife and a friend of his who helps him with his bags. He is told that there has been no rain. They pray at the church. He tells his friend what happened at Johannesburg and requests him to tell this to all. The boy i.e., Gertrude’s son sleeps and Kumalo tells his wife about the generosity of Msimangu. She is happy. Her hopes for a stove and new clothes for Kumalo are revived.

In terms of the Cultural and Semic codes, this chapter depicts human relations vividly and reveals how Kumalo is loved and respected by the villagers.

Chapter 2: Cultural and Hermeneutic Codes (pp.195-203)

Kumalo goes to the Chief’s house which is on a hill. After long waiting he meets the chief and conveys to him his feeling that young men should be kept in the valley. He suggests that this can be done as follows:

By caring for our land before it is too late. By teaching them in the school how to care for the land. Then some would stay in Ndotsheni.

(196)

The Chief tells Kumalo that he has also been thinking about it and that he has also discussed this matter with the white inspector (of schools). Kumalo expresses
regrets over the lack of grass and water and the dying of cattle and children. The chief says that he will also see the magistrate. The behaviour of the chief and his counselors is described in this context, in a satirical and witty manner. Consider the following passage:

He sat frowning and perplexed. Kumalo knew that nothing more would come, and he made small movements so that the chief would know that he was ready to be dismissed. And while he was waiting he looked at the counselors who stood behind the chief, and he saw too that they were frowning and perplexed, and that for this matter there was no counsel that they could give at all. For the counselors of a broken tribe have counsel for many things, none for the matter of a broken tribe.

(198)

As a next step, Kumalo goes to the school and meets the headmaster who shows him the circulars from the Department in Pietermaritzburg relating to the training in the school. But the headmaster is helpless. Kumalo returns home. A small white boy comes there riding his horse. Kumalo is surprised. The small boy greets him. There is some talk between them. The boy wants to see the inside of a parson’s house and enters the house. He is the grandson of Jarvis, the white landlord who lives above in the valley. The boy shows interest in learning Zulu, the local language, and Kumalo helps him in this effort. Before the boy leaves, he comes to know that there is no milk for children in Ndotsheni and that children are dying. The boy leaves. By the evening, his friend who works on the farm of Jarvis brings milk powder sacks and cans. He says that he will continue to bring the sacks and cans every morning till grass grows in Ndotsheni. Every day he will take back the cans. Kumalo becomes very happy over the generosity of the stern silent man at High Place, i.e., Jarvis.

Cultural and Semic codes pervade this chapter because different kinds of human relation are celebrated in this chapter. Particularly Jarvis’s generosity is revealed as a noble gesture of the white man’s culture.

Chapter 3: Narrative, Hermeneutic, Cultural and Semic Codes (pp.203-210)

Kumalo receives four letters, from Johannesburg, two from Absalom in Pretoria, the third from Msimangu and the fourth from Mr. Carmichael, the lawyer. The lawyer in his letter says that mercy has been denied to Absalom and that he will
be hanged on the fifteenth day of that month. His wife becomes very sorrowful when she reads this letter. In his letters one to his parents the other to his wife, Absalom informs them that he is well and enquires about their welfare. Kumalo goes out in the hot sun and finds in some distance, some people coming in a car from Carisbrooke into the valley. Jarvis also comes on his horse. After some time, the chief also joins them. The magistrate is also there along with the people who came in a car. They all survey the land and plant some sticks with flags marking a large area. Suddenly it becomes dark and a storm breaks out, Jarvis with his things rides to Kumalo’s church seeking shelter. Both go into the church, but there is rain water dropping everywhere in the church because it is a very old structure. After some time when the storm subsides, Jarvis rises to go and enquires whether there is mercy for Kumalo’s son. Kumalo shows him the letter from Mr. Carmichael. Jarvis tells Kumalo that he will remember the fifteenth day. In the evening people come to the place when sticks with flags have been planted. Boys play there in the rain water. Kumalo asks his friend about these sticks, and the latter has no knowledge but will find it out the following day. In this Chapter also Cultural and Semic codes dominate the narration by throwing light on the major characters. The Hermeneutic code resolves the suspense about Absalom’s future. He will be hanged to death.

Chapter 4: Hermeneutic and Cultural Codes (pp.210-217)

This chapter begins after many days. The sticks stood there for days but people do not know their purpose. The young girl and the small boy at home are happy. One day Jarvis’s grandson comes to Ndotsheni and meets Kumalo. The parson is about to finish his church accounts. The white boy expresses his desire to continue his lessons in Zulu with Kumalo’s help. In the course of their conversation, the boy tells Kumalo that his grandfather has gone to Pretoria and they will go permanently to Johannesburg after his grandfather returns. The small white boy leaves, and a new young man comes to Kumalo’s place. He is twenty-five years and introduces himself as the new agricultural demonstrator. His name is Napoleon Letsitsi and he shows his credentials to Kumalo. Jarvis has sent him there to teach the school children, new ways of agriculture. Jarvis appoints him at Ndotsheni at a salary of ten pounds a month. They have their meal and afterwards, it is decided that the demonstrator will stay in Kumalo’s house. On Kumalo’s enquiry, he tells him that people have to adopt new methods of agriculture and that there is going to be a dam built for storing water
brought from the river, for irrigation. The white boy comes again and informs Kumalo that because his grandfather returned soon, they are going to Johannesburg the next day. The boy leaves saying Good-bye.

In this chapter, the Hermeneutic and Cultural codes dominate. The information that Jarvis is trying to improve the life condition of the villagers by making efforts to construct a dam and sending a demonstrator whose salary he pays are part of the Hermeneutic code because Kumalo now understands the purpose of the flagged sticks planted to mark an area. This area has been identified for the construction of the dam. Thus the puzzle of the people is solved and the generosity of Jarvis is also revealed. In terms of the Cultural Code, this chapter shows how people respect and help each other for collective good.

**Chapter 5: Cultural and Semic Codes (pp.217-225)**

This chapter describes a confirmation ceremony in the church of Ndotsheni. People wait for the Bishop to solemnise the confirmation ceremony. Kumalo’s friend brings milk powder and cans in his cart from Jarvis place earlier than the usual time. The reason is that Jarvis’s wife has passed away. All of them feel grieved and send a letter of condolences through a boy. All of them talk appraisingly about the kindness of the deceased white woman till the Bishop arrives. After the confirmation, people crowd into Kumalo’s house where simple food is served to all. The Bishop suggests that Kumalo should leave Ndotsheni for another place for mental and physical relief. But Kumalo wishes to stay in Ndotsheni. Now they receive a reply letter from Jarvis who thanks all of them at Ndotsheni for their condolences. He adds in the letter that his wife was ill long before they were in Johannesburg, i.e., before Arthur’s death. This brings some relief to Kumalo. He tells the Bishop that God wants him to stay in his own village. The Bishop agrees with him. Kumalo explains to the Bishop the compassionate help that Jarvis extended to their village. They go into the church and pray. The Bishop leaves bidding farewell to Kumalo. Then Kumalo, with the help of his friend and others, makes a condolences wreath and sends it to Jarvis on behalf of the people of St. Mark’s Church, Ndotsheni.

This chapter gives expression to Cultural and Semic codes that influences the behaviour of Kumalo, the people of the village, throwing light on their characters and positive behaviour. This is one of the many chapters in the novel that prove that the human relations between the blacks and the whites in South Africa can be as positive and mutually affectionate as possible, if they think and act logically.
Ploughing of the land begins in Ndotsheni. But it goes slowly. The chief and the young demonstrator supervise the work. Dung is collected by women and boys but it is very little in quantity. The chief orders that a kraal be built so that all cattle will be in one place and dung can be collected easily from the kraal. The demonstrator assures that next year, it will be better. They boil the wattle seed after the practice in the white man’s fields, despite the demonstrator’s advice that the maize kept for planting should be thrown away as it is of an inferior quality and that he will get better seed from Jarvis’s farm. People keep it for eating instead of throwing it away. Those villagers who have to give away their fields for the dam are unhappy. For example, Kuluse’s brother is one such farmer. But the chief is a stern man and conducts several meetings to discuss agriculture and dam construction. The demonstrator also advises them to get rid of their cows which do not yield much milk. A tractor has been brought for ploughing. People are filled with wonder. Kuluse’s brother is pacified when he is told that when the dam is full next year, other villagers like Zuma and his brother also will have to give away their lands for growing the white man’s grass for the cattle in the kraal. At last, there is some light and some new spirit in the valley.

Kumalo calling the demonstrator, the second Napoleon, praises him for his achievements. Though it takes time, the demonstrator assures that when the dam is completed, there will be enough milk in this valley so that people need not depend upon the white man for milk. Kumalo, however, does not agree with him because they can never underestimate the help of Jarvis. From their conversation, it becomes clear that the young demonstrator has been working hard and will continue to work hard neither for money nor for any favours. He works for his own country, South Africa. Kumalo blesses him. When Napoleon goes into the house, Kumalo contemplates his own future.

He has become old and weak but it is enough for him as he is convinced that their valley will be restored. And he does not mind if people often called him and others like him ‘a white man’s dog’.

This chapter illustrates two codes, viz., the Semic and Cultural codes. The Semic code celebrates symbolically how the village of Ndotsheni has started its journey of prosperity with the help of Jarvis, the white landlord. It also reveals how
young and skilled people like the young demonstrator should serve their country without any selfish motives. Thus the Semic Code merges with the Cultural Code, the latter code unfolding itself in the activities, talk and behaviour of the people of Ndotsheni, a village which is but a symbolic representative of the entire rural South Africa. This chapter, like several other chapters in Book Three describes a new dawn in the life of the rural folk of Ndotsheni.

Chapter 7 (the last chapter): Narrative, Cultural and Semic Codes (pp.230-236)

This is the last and concluding chapter of the narrative. It is the fourteenth day and Kumalo’s son, Absalom, will be hanged to death at Pretoria tomorrow. Kumalo sets out to the mountain as it has been his habit to go to the mountain top alone and pray to God confessing his sins, irregularities and weaknesses. He did so three times in the past: once, when Absalom, as a small boy, fell ill; second time when he thought of leaving his parson’s job and starting a native store at Donnybrook for a white man, for more money; and the third time when he was tempted, during the absence of his wife, to commit adultery with a school teacher who was weak and lonely. His wife is not aware of the third occasion. He asks his wife whether she would like to follow him. She says ‘No’ because the young pregnant girl is near her time. She gives him a bottle of black tea and a few heavy cakes of maize.

It is almost dusk when Kumalo starts his walk to the mountain. On the way a man on a horse, meets him and hands over a letter for the people of his church. It is no other than Jarvis who tells Kumalo that if Kumalo wants a new church building, it will be built according to his taste. But Kumalo says that he will show the letter to the Bishop. Jarvis tells him that he wants the work to be done fast as he is leaving the place. This news shocks Kumalo. As Jarvis enquires about the young demonstrator, Kumalo says that he is working day and night. Jarvis adds that because he is alone, he wants to leave the valley and settle in Johannesburg to live with his daughter and her children. Jarvis asks if Kumalo knows the small boy and whether he is like Arthur. Kumalo says ‘yes’ and praises the boy as an extraordinary child. On enquiry from Jarvis, Kumalo tells him that he is going into the mountain. Jarvis understands his feelings and gets ready to go. Kumalo thanks him for what all he has done for the black natives of the valley. Jarvis says that he is not a saintly man and wishing well for Kumalo, he rides away. Kumalo reciprocates and starts climbing again. He feels tired but continues his uphill walk. His mind turns to his son. He confesses his sins
and prays to God for absolution. He thanks God for the many blessing He showered on him. He prays for Msimangu, the white young man, Mrs. Lithebe, Father Vincent, the lawyer who took up his son’s case for God – all in Johannesburg – who helped him several ways, for their mercy and kindness. He recollects his return to Ndotsheni, his wife and his friend who received him at the railway station and the people who expressed great joy over his return. Thus he forgets his pain for a short while. Then he ponders over the restoration of the valley and wonders why, of all people, only the white man, Jarvis, whose son was murdered by his own son, should help him and his people of Ndotsheni, and concludes that it has been so because of God’s mercy which is a secret. Wishing to thank Jarvis, his wife and the small boy, he slowly slips into sleep due to tiresomeness. After some time, he wakes up suddenly. He feels pity for the suffering people like Gertrude, the blacks of Shanty Town and Alexandra, and above all, his own son, Absalom. He starts crying and prays to God to be with the boy in his last moments. He guesses as to what they would be doing now – Absalom, his wife, the young girl at home, and Jarvis. He remembers the small white boy who said to Kumalo that when he goes, something bright would go out of Ndotsheni. Kumalo says, ‘God save Africa’. He craves for the freedom and honour of his people. He remembers Msimangu who hates no man. Again he falls asleep. When he wakes up, the east is bright and it is four o’clock in the morning. Moved with deep grief he walks further and thinks of his son. Offering the tea and the cakes first to God, he eats the cakes and drinks the tea. Gradually the day becomes bright and when the time (of the hanging of his son) approaches, he takes his hat off and kneels on the ground with clapped hands. Then comes dawn symbolizing hope and emancipation of the black people of South Africa.

In this chapter, one can find an intermixing of Narrative, Cultural and Semic codes from a semiotic perspective.

The novel ends with this chapter. As the entire narrative progresses, it is noticed that how different semiotic codes function in giving a realistic picture to the narrative by portraying different scenes, episodes, characters, dialogue and above all the moving human situation obtaining in South Africa especially in Ndotsheni and Johannesburg focusing on its slum areas inhabited by the black workers who suffer from the misery of unemployment, poverty, dirty environs and above all from fear of the police and imprisonment, during the pre-Apartheid period in South Africa. For
these reasons, Alan Paton’s *Cry, the Beloved Country* can be described as a ‘cult novel’ after Umberto Eco (1976), which has set an example for the other South African novels on apartheid, in spite of its imperfections like the passive acceptance of white superiority by the Blacks, their lack of initiative for freedom except by corrupt leaders like John Kumalo, the protagonists’ younger brother, the black people’s overdependence on religion, i.e., Christianity etc.

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