Chapter Three

Around the Code of Fishing
SEMIO TIC THEORY: A READING

A text, any text, takes its identity from the fact that it has been penned on paper to be read and reread by a variety of consumers. It would still be identifiable, though in an extremely narrow and negligible manner, if it remained confined to its writer/creator. But the volume of commentary, both unacademically appreciative and academically critical, that any written piece of work generates is primarily due to the fact that it has become a commodity for public consumption over time, open for all and available to every interested reader. Therefore, no matter what the reader response to any text may be — one may be a naive and untutored receptacle for the text's "story" or the author's point of view, or an extremely scholarly and theoretical critic, the indisputable fact remains that we, all of us, the gullible and the sceptic, depend unquestionably and largely on such texts. We may simply read, relax and grow nostalgic, or react volubly and jargonistically, to any recent reading, or otherwise enter into our own parallel act of a written critique to counter another written piece, but we cannot, and perhaps will not, deny that our activities revolve largely around a text. So, whether reading is restricted within a technical or ideological framework, or its importance is assigned to writers and readers, or better still, meaning is seen as continuously deferred and unstable, it will not do to engage in a constant denouncing of authors,
texts, readers or the act of reading. Instead, a more meaningful enterprise would be to look for means of understanding and interpretations of the entire act of production and consumption of texts either within specific frameworks or in one which incorporates in itself elements from a few different ones.

Semiotics, a theory concerned with communication, linguistic and otherwise, is accurately defined as the "Science of Signs". Though the initial set of propositions, which began with Saussure's signifier, signified, langue, parole and synchrony and diachrony and Peirce's signs and their various classes, have undergone many changes — having been redefined, renamed, reclassed and rejected — to understand the import of the theory as it is today, it is imperative to resort to two of Saussure's terms. A diachronic and synchronous reading of Semiotics is the only way to understand the theory and thereby arrive at a methodology, simplistic or cryptic in order to apply it to a set of texts for analysis and interpretation. However, to write about what one has understood of theory and its history is never an original or easy task and, therefore, it is doubly difficult to protect a written piece from the faults of repetitiveness and boredom.

One of the most visible and enduring aspects of modernism is the perspective in literary criticism called formalism. This broad movement took the modernist aesthetic and epistemology to heart and attempted to analyze literature not
by its identifiable, or "natural" (or "representational") content but consistently by its form how it is constructed and how it functions so as to have meaning in the first place. This emphasis on form in literary criticism has two general applications: (1) an understanding of the text's interior patterning, or how it works; and (2) the recognition that form marks a work as belonging to a particular genre — novel, drama and so on. Thus, formalism in the broadest sense views literature as a complex system of forms that may be analyzed in relation to one another at different levels of generality — from the specifics of a poetic image or line through that poem's genre. Formalism, in short, attempts to view literature not as constituted by its intrinsic ("natural") meaning, as an imitation of reality, but by relational patterns that are meaningful in a particular work of genre.

One of the earliest attempts to make literary studies a scientific and independent discipline, Formalism (though it has a specific theoretical inclination toward poetic language rather than prose) focused on the "literariness" of any literary work. Concentrating on the particular literary material available at hand and excluding its mimetic and expressive associations, Formalism sought to make "the stone stony", where art became a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object though the object was itself not important. The primary means of doing so was by using the method of defamiliarization, a method which would assuredly refresh the reader's perception and experience of the text at hand. "The Russian formalist critic Victor Shklovsky uses the term ostranenie, usually translated as 'making strange' or 'defamiliarization', to denote what he sees as the primary function of literary texts — to make the familiar unfamiliar,
to renew the old, or make the habitual appear fresh or strange".² Some of
the other Formalist terms which were coined to investigate texts and their
connectedness were Fabula and Sjuzhet. Fabula, also referred to as ‘story’
or ‘histoire’, is a description of the events of a narrative; the representation
of the action in its chronological order. Sjuzhet, the ‘plot’ or ‘narrative’
structure denotes the way in which the semantic material is presented in
a given text, its ‘discourse’ or telling as opposed to the events of the
narrative.

Though I.A. Richards, T.S. Eliot, John Crowe Ransom, W.K.
Wimsatt, Cleanth Brookes, and Allen Tate developed their ‘New Criticism’
independently of the Formalist theories certain features evidence a close
affinity between the two movements. "The New Critics advocated ‘close
reading’ and detailed textual analysis of poetry rather than an interest in
the mind and personality of the poet, sources, the history of ideas and
political and social implications. The application of semantics to this
criticism was also important".³ However, the contrast between New
criticism on the one hand and Formalism and Structuralism on the other,
comes from the fact that the New Critics defined their readings in
humanistic terms by resorting to the readers’ response and evaluative
criticism rather than treating textual properties as features inherent in
literature itself.
It is obvious, however, that whatever the theory may be, the chances of overlapping ideologies are inevitable, even when there is a deviation from a given point of view. It is important, therefore, to keep in mind that any reading of a Semiotic theory must first take into consideration the theories previously formulated.

"[The] rise of structuralism and semiotics in the 1960s vividly dramatizes — among other things — the extent to which modern theory became an interdisciplinary phenomenon. Structuralism and semiotics virtually constituted a field in themselves, designatable simply as "theory", because, by taking meaning and the varying conditions of meaning as their objects of study they cut through without being confined to traditional humanities and social sciences such as literary studies, philosophy, history, linguistics, psychology, and anthropology, all of which directly influenced literary theory since the late 1960s". In the structuralist and semiotic theories the how becomes more important than the what. The theories analyse how language and literature convey meaning within certain frameworks rather than questioning what the texts mean. The theories acknowledge that linguistic communities share certain codes and conventions of expression — codes which vary from one linguistic pocket or community to another — and though expressions are primarily coded
According to an individual repertoire of linguistic components, they rely essentially on the collective, shared element.

It is useful at this point to refer to Lori Hope Lefkovitz's essay 'Creating the World: Structuralism and Semiotics' which succinctly describes the interrelatedness between the two movements mentioned in the title of the article. "Structuralism and semiotics are presented together, here and in other expositions of literary theory, because they are closely related enterprises, and both are related as well to the development referred to as post-structuralism. Structuralism, Semiotics and Semiology carry different connotations because they are sometimes associated with different founding figures, precursor movements, practitioners, or with different academic disciplines, though everywhere in this history there is cross fertilization and overlap." Features particular to either theory will become clear as this writing proceeds; for now we theorize about both under one head.

As with structuralism and semiotics, so with the terms semiotics and semiology. They both derive from a common Greek root: Semeion 'sign'. Therefore, the science of signs. 'Semiotics', more the philosopher C.S. Peirce's, term, has over the years been collapsed with Ferdinand de Saussure's 'semiology'. "Strictly speaking, semiology is the science of signs
(and signals) in general; while semiotics refers to the theory of sign systems in language. For all practical purposes they are both concerned with the means of communication as conventions, with particular emphasis on language. Semiotics as a theoretical enterprise has come to include within its boundaries communication systems from across a range of universes — animal communication, bodily communication, dress codes/fashion systems, rituals and rites, eating habits, gestures, even olfactory signs — apart from its major concern with linguistic signs in literary texts. In fact Semiotics make it its business to understand and decode everything that forms a part of a/any universe of signification.

Semiotic theory takes off primarily from the concepts of the signifier and the signified. Though later additions bring in a third concept to define the relationship between these two, the sign, which in turn is altered by being assigned properties of 'differance', Saussure's signifier and signified are the very foundation of semiotics. Saussure's fundamental position is that language is a system built up of signs, where each sign is made up of two parts, a sound-image (or its written, linguistic equivalent which evokes an image in the mind) and a concept. Each sound-image is the signifier and the concept it evokes in the mind, the signified. Though this correspondence between the sound or its linguistic substitute and the evoked concept is arbitrary (i.e. it is a correspondence which has been
forced on the sign by the user) the system exists and flourishes because its users share a system of codes and conventions. "Codification, in fact, is an agreement among the users of a sign: they recognize the relation between the signifier and the signified and respect it in practice. Such agreement may be more or less exclusive and more or less precise. Thus a monosemic sign is more precise than a polysemic sign. Objective denotation is more precise than subjective connotation; an explicit sign is more precise than an implicit one, and a conscious sign more precise than an unconscious one." A more general definition of code would be, "It was used by Saussure as a synonym of langue. In the more generalized meaning of repertory of signals, code is found in information theory. Jakobson (1971) suggested that the term code as used in information theory expressed more operationally what has been called langue or linguistic pattern in linguistics. He took it to mean a stock of signs shared by sender and receiver and opposed it to the term message, previously called parole in French Speech in the American tradition of linguistics." A sign, according to Saussure, also derives its significance from the fact that it is not another sign within the limits of any particular code. So the difference between signs becomes an important factor in imparting an identity to each sign.

The concepts of langue and parole are possibly the most significant pair of terms after the importance accorded to the signifier/signified pair.
While langue is the language system, the common, collective sphere of utterances, parole is the user's individual repertoire of utterances which nevertheless relies essentially of the shared social codes and linguistic components. Langue, then, is the more important part of the pair though any linguistic analysis of a literary text or even, non-literary socio-cultural readings, depends on both parts of this binary opposition. As a pair, the terms evidence a dichotomy between the social and the shared and by extension, implying that while langue is abstract, parole is concrete. To put it in simplistic words, langue is what people use when thinking and conceptualizing (abstract); parole is what they resort to when speaking or writing (concrete). Noam Chomsky's binary oppositional pair of competence and performance corresponds somewhat to Saussure's parole and langue. "Chomsky characterizes competence as "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language" and performance as "the actual use of language in concrete situations."9

In connection with these principles Saussure introduced two further oppositions both of which have had the greatest importance for the development of modern linguistics: the opposition between synchronic and diachronic language study, and that between syntagmatic and associative relationships in the language-system. Language study before Saussure was predominantly diachronic, in the sense that it was predominantly interested in the way languages change through time. While accepting wholeheartedly the value of this sort of study — the discipline that goes by the name of philology in English speaking countries — Saussure argued that it gave only a partial account of linguistic phenomena.
In practice the analysis of linguistic change meant tracing the history of individual linguistic facts across the centuries, and consequently a neglect of the properties of language as system. Synchronic study, on the other hand, considers how a language functions as a system at a given moment in time, analyzing the simultaneous relationships between its constituent parts; it examines how a language works not how it develops. A tradition of language study which neglected this, as nineteenth century philology did, failed to account for the real nature of its object. Saussure called for, not the abandonment of diachronic study, but the recognition that synchronic and diachronic study led to different kinds of knowledge, and that both were necessary for the true understanding of language.¹⁰

Within the synchronic study of language there is present the syntagmatic and associative concepts. Linguistic components make units of communication which are then arranged with other units and so on. In order to understand and grasp the import of each unit it is necessary to study them in relation to all other components, both present and absent. This study of the relationship between say sounds which make up words and words which make longer units is the syntagmatic study of language. This part of the study concerns elements which are present and available for study. The associative aspect of language study concerns the absence that may be perceived in linguistic analysis, the use of synonyms, antonyms, substituted utterances which could have been a part of the language under study but are not. These absent associations of form and meaning contribute significantly to the study of signs and, therefore, literary texts. It is from this study of syntagmatic and paradigmatic study...
of language that Roman Jakobson formulates his extensive theory of Metaphor and Metonymy.

C.S. Peirce's trichotomies of signs though often overshadowed by Saussures' semiotic concepts are nevertheless an important formulation in the field of semiotic theory. Peircean semiotics is different from the Saussurean one, and the subsequent ones as well, in that it is "logical" where "logic was understood as the general theory of representation, that is a theory of the ways a "mental product" is able to "reflect" or "mirror" veridically the world."11 "The semiotic focal point of Peirce's work...is the fundamental trichotomy of the ways a sign can be related, via an "interpretant", to its object and what this three fold relationship tells us about the ultimate conditions of semiosis, the process of the production and interpretation of signs."12 As Peirce himself puts it, "signs are divisible by three trichotomies; first, according as the sign in itself is a mere quality, is an actual existent, or is a general law; secondly, according as the relation of the sign to its object consists in the sign's having some character in itself, or in some existential relation to that object or in its relation to an interpretant; thirdly, according as its Interpretant represents it as a sign of possibility or as a sign of fact or a sign of reason."13 To summarise these divisions of signs into various categories would help to understand the theory overall. According to the first category, there is a Qualisign (a sign
which is an embodied quality), a Sinsign (which is an actual or existent thing that has become a sign and it necessarily involves a Qualisign because it is the quality which makes the thing a sinsign), and a Legisign (literally, a law that is a sign, i.e. any convention which has been generally agreed upon and becomes significant through its application). The second trichotomy comprises an Icon, an Index and a symbol, each of which gives the sign a particular identity. Any object, whether real or not, becomes an icon if its characteristics are denoted as a sign. When a sign is associated with its referent (a common example being, smoke refers to the presence of fire) it becomes an index or possesses indexical properties. A symbol functions through an association of general ideas, i.e., the sign and the referent have an arbitrary relationship. And, the final category of signs contains the Rheme, the Dicent sign or Dicisign and the Argument. A Rheme is a sign which represents a possible object, a Dicent sign is a sign of actual existence, while an Argument is a sign of law. "Or we may say that a Rheme is a sign which is understood to represent its object in its characters merely; that a Dicisign is a sign which is understood to represent its object in respect to actual existence; and that an Argument is a sign which is understood to represent its Object in its character as Sign."14

How Peirce's ideas are a precursor to other ideas and additions or deviations to semiotic theory may be seen from the following passage. "The
sign stands for something, its object, to someone. How the sign for the object is understood by a particular someone is the interpretant. Peirce thus focuses attention on the relay of thoughts that signs generate. In so doing he begins to describe an infinite process of signification: An interpretant becomes a sign of another object, which in turn generates another interpretant. According to Peirce, the world can be known only indirectly, through this signification process, and the process depends upon community. Barthes' theoretical elaboration about myths and their system of signification is very close to Peirce's theory. In 'Myth Today' Barthes speaks of the tri-dimensional pattern of myths, consisting of the signifier, the singified and the sign, and how they form a second-order semiological system. "That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second." It is this "staggered" relation between the components of the sign that corresponds with Peirce's chain of generated Interpretants. Derrida's differance also proceeds on this basic idea of the indeterminacy of meanings in language and their inherent deferred quality.

To understand the importance of signification in Semiotic and Structuralist theory, one needs to recall a few things. A structure is a relationship of connectedness between the various parts of any whole, which in a literary work denotes its organic unity, its unified wholeness.
Structure may be perceived in every single thing and if we speak of a literary structure, then it can be seen in the word, then in the sentence built of words, and on to a paragraph, a page, a chapter, a book and between books to the entire issue of interrelatedness and intertextuality. Both theories see everything around as texts, some literary and some not, and, therefore, each text as a construction with a set of codes and conventions all of which functions as signs and signals. Thus, the primary concern of the theories is with decoding all of these signs in order to understand the underlying universes of signification, which function primarily to convey information (messages) between human beings. Though language is arbitrary, and, therefore, so are codes, conventions, signs and signification, the langue or the language system belongs to a commonly agreed upon set of elements, all of which are shared and understood by the users of that particular linguistic community. Therefore, a knowledge of the codes enables the user to use the signs and messages and also, more importantly, to decode the signification contained in them. Signification is a property inherent in the signifier-signified combine and may be unravelled through the processes of denotation and connotation. Denotation is the dictionary meaning of a word, while connotation is that which becomes meaningful through association and relatedness.
How signification may be understood from the methodology propagated by semiotic theories can be best seen through certain examples.

At the beginning of Madame Bovary, Flaubert describes his hero's monstrous cap; he does so by means of words, and these words could be transcribed by an illustrator into a picture made of lines and colors. Words and pictures are signs the meaning of which is the cap. But the cap in its turn has a meaning: it is the sign of Charles's clumsiness, his lack of taste, his gaucheness in his relations with his friends.

The cap is thus both the signified meaning and the signifying sign. But the meaning does not stop there: Charles's clumsiness is the sign of his relations with Emma; his relations with Emma are the sign of a certain form of marriage; which in turn is the sign of a cultural situation, etc.

The meaning is a relation, and this relation envelops each meaning in a new meaning. Thus if semiology is to be the science of signs it encompasses all knowledge and all experience, for everything is a sign: everything is signified and everything is signifier. 17

Another elaboration which helps to understand the concept of signification is, "the gesture we call a 'Salute' made on a particular occasion is in itself neither a sign nor a signifier, merely a physical movement; within the code of military gestures, it is a sign which combines a signifier (the physical gesture as understood by some one who has internalized that code) with a signified (the acknowledgement of a relationship of authority also understood in terms of the internalized code)." 18
Roland Barthes' contribution to structuralist-semiotic theory has been seminal not only due to its volume but also because of the evolutionary quality inherent in it. Barthes' numerous treatises and essays are each an elaboration of an idea or theory and always a detailed and copious theoretical elaboration which shifts, even if only slightly, the critical mass of analysis and methodologies already part of the canon. Any indebtedness of a critical methodology formulated subsequently would be complete, or at least more easily understood if Barthes' key ideas — all of which either lead from one to the other or complement each other — are all brought together. Writing extensively about style in Writing Degree Zero (1953;1970) Barthes also deals with the questions of form, language and essentially, writing. "Style is almost beyond it (literature): imagery, delivery, vocabulary spring from the body and the past of the writer and gradually become the very reflexes of his art. Thus under the name of style a self-sufficient language is evolved which has its roots only in the depths of the author's personal and secret mythology, that subnature of expression where the first coition of words and things takes place, where once and for all the great verbal themes of his existence come to be installed." While equating style with metaphor, Barthes says that writing and its various modes (i.e even among a group of contemporary writers all of whom share the same language at the same time their writing will be essentially different, separated by tone, purpose, expressions etc.) are always under
pressure from Tradition and History and so is the writer. Writing is then not an exercise of freedom but a compromise between it and remembrance.

In *S/Z* (1970) Barthes puts forward his dichotomous pair of the readerly (lisible) and the writerly (scriptible) texts. While readerly texts must simply be read or "consumed" because it is closed in and confined within its signifiers and signifieds, the writerly texts are open-ended and encourage free play between the sign components. Reading becomes a dynamic and creative act, almost a partnership with the author/creator. While readerly texts are static and simply hand down their meaning, writerly texts encourage the play of codes, a process which does not allow the text to stagnate within a given or fixed set of meanings. In the words of Terence Hawkes, "In his critical *tour de force* *S/Z* he argues that literature may be divided into that which gives the reader a role, a function, a contribution to make, and that which renders the reader idle or redundant, 'left with no more than the poor freedom either to accept or reject the text' and which thereby reduces him to that apt but impotent symbol of the bourgeois world, an inert consumer to the author's role as producer."^{20}

The five Barthesian codes which can be used to analyse the signifiers present in literary texts are the hermeneutic code, the code of semes or
signifiers, the symbolic code, the proairetic code and the cultural or reference code. The hermeneutic or 'story telling' code articulates questions, formulates their responses and basically resolves the suspense and mystery created within any text. The code of semes and signifiers dealing with themes or thematic structures uses the connotative method to read and interpret meanings in the signifiers. The symbolic code functions as a means to recognize groups and categories which are dominant repetitions within the text. The proairetic code is the code of actions and its sequences. The cultural or reference code implies historical and cultural knowledge. "This code manifests itself as a 'gnomic', collective, anonymous and authoritative voice which speaks for and about what it aims to establish as 'accepted' knowledge or wisdom."[21]

Certain expressions in semiotic theory have gained so much currency that they bring to mind an accompanying set of words as soon as they are said. So for denotation and connotation. Dictionary meaning and associative, relational meanings are what immediately come to mind with the evoking of these terms. These meanings for these words are correct, but it would be useful to refer to Barthes' own elaborate and extremely theoretical definitions. According to Barthes, signification is built up of a 'plane of expression (E)' and 'a plane of content (C)', and signification becomes correspondent with the 'relation (R)' between these
two planes, a process understood as ERC. This noticeable ERC could become only an element in another subsequent system. This means that two systems of significations are 'staggered' into each other but this relationship is at the same time disjointed. Therefore, two different semiotic systems can emerge depending on the point of intersection of the two systems of signification. "In the first case, the first system (ERC) becomes the plane of expression, or signifier, of the second system.... the first system is then the plane of denotation and the second system (wider than the first), the plane of connotation. We shall therefore say that a connoted system is a system whose plane of expression is itself constituted by a signifying system...."22 "In the Second (opposite) case of derivation, the first system (ERC) becomes, not the plane of expression, as in connotation, but the plane of content, or signified, of the second system.... This is the case with all metalanguages: a metalanguage is a system whose plane of content is itself constituted by a signifying system, or else, it is a semiotics which treats of a semiotics."23

Roman Jakobson though categorised as a formalist influenced semiotic-structuralist theories with his influential formulations of narratology and metaphor and metonymy. Under the heading Constitutive Factors of Communication Gerald Prince in his Dictionary of Narratology writes:
The elements entering into any act of (verbal) communication and essential to its operation. Bühler had isolated three such elements: the ADDRESSER, the ADDRESSEE, and the CONTEXT. Jakobson, in what has proven to be the most influential model of communication in NARRATOLOGY, proposed a six-factor schema including the addresser (the sender or encoder of the MESSAGE), the message itself, the CODE (in terms of which the message signifies), the context (or REFERENT to which the message refers), and the CONTACT (the psycho-physiological connection between the addresser and the addressee):

Context  
Message  
Addresser ____________ Addressee  
Contact  
Code

Some theorists (Hymes, for example) prefer to speak of seven factors and replace context with topic (what is communicated about) and setting (the scene, the situation, the context of the communicative act). To each of the factors corresponds a particular FUNCTION OF COMMUNICATION, and any communicative act fulfills one or more of these functions.24

These six basic functions of verbal communication can further be complemented by another scheme of six corresponding functions:
The referential function of this scheme is the 'denotative', 'cognitive' function, while the emotive function "aims a direct expression of the speaker's attitude towards what he is speaking about." Therefore, this is the 'expressive' function. The conative function concerns itself with the "grammatical expression in the vocative and imperative, which syntactically, morphologically, and often even phonemically deviate from other nominal and verbal categories." The phatic function refers to the exchanges, dialogues and the communicative aspects with the literary work. The metalingual or "glossing" function speaks of the language and not the objects in the texts. The poetic function of language "by promoting the palpability of signs, deepens the fundamental dichotomy of signs and objects." 

Jakobson's metaphor and metonymy correspond to a large extent to the Saussurean concepts of the syntagmatic and the associative. While
metonymy is based on the sequential or contiguity axis of language, metaphor is a relationship of equivalence between figures. It is associative in character. Metaphors and metonymic features exploit the selective and combinative processes in the use of language.

The Greimassian contribution to semiotic theory essentially refers readers back to a Proppian narratology apart from the formulation of the 'semiotic square'. Vladimir Propp's narrative theory depends on the division of any narrative tale or text into units of function which refer to the significant actions which constitute the narrative. Though all units of function may not be found in any single text, the elements present follow a more or less sequential path. These thirty-one units of Propp's theory are subsequently complemented by seven 'spheres of actions'. These 'spheres' or roles are:

1. Villain
2. Donor (Provider)
3. Helper
4. Sought-for person and her father
5. Dispatcher
6. Hero (seeker or victim)
7. False Hero.
A.J. Greimas reduces or reorganizes these seven units into three sets of binary oppositions which total six roles or actants. These are:

1. **Subject Vs. Object** which includes the hero and the sought for person, an unit which generates search or desire.

2. **Sender Vs. Receiver**, a pair which describes communication. And,

3. **Helper Vs. Opponent**, a category which speaks of support or hindrance from a subsidiary source.

The Greimassian or semiotic square, another step toward an understanding of semiotic theory is,

the visual representation of the logical articulation of any semantic category or, in other words, the visual representation of the CONSTITUTIVE MODEL describing the elementary structure of signification. In the Greimassian model, given a unit of sense $S_1$ (eg., rich), it signifies in terms of relations with its contradictory $S_1'$ (not rich), its contrary $S_2$ (poor), and the contradictory of $S_2$ ($S_2'$, not poor):

\[
\begin{array}{c}
S_1 \\
\text{(rich)}
\end{array} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
S_2 \\
\text{(poor)}
\end{array} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
\overline{S_2} \\
\text{(not poor)}
\end{array} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \begin{array}{c}
\overline{S_1} \\
\text{(not rich)}
\end{array}
\]

Where,

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\longleftrightarrow \quad : \text{relation of contradiction} \\
\quad \quad \downarrow \quad \quad \downarrow \quad : \text{relation of contrariety} \\
\quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \downarrow \quad : \text{relation of complementarity.}
\end{array}
\]
According to Greimas, the (semantic) course of narrative can be said to correspond to a movement along the semiotic square: the narrative deploys itself in terms of operations (transformations) leading from a given unit to its contrary (or contradictory). 

Gérard Genette’s theory of the narrative is explicated in his analysis of Proust’s *Remembrance of Things Past*. Genette first writes about the prevalent definitions of narrative and then goes on the elaborate on his definition and the theory of narrative discourse. The common usages of the term narrative according to him either refer to the narrative statement or discourse which unfolds a sequence of actions or events or the real or fictitious events in discourse. Narrative could also mean "the act of narrating taken in itself". Stating that his interest is the ‘narrative text’ Genette goes on to designate his own terms on existing sets of relationships between the various aspects of the text. "I propose, without insisting on the obvious reasons for my choice of terms, to use the word story for the signified or narrative content (even if this content turns out in a given case, to be low in dramatic intensity or fullness of incident), to use the word narrative for the signifier, statement, discourse or narrative text itself, and to use the word narrating for the producing narrative action and, by extension, the whole of the real or fictional situation in which that action takes place." Genette then goes on to categorize
narrative analysis into the five units of 'order' (referring to the time-order in the narrative): 'duration' (time allocation, which may mean presence and absence, expansion or contraction, of episodes and events), 'frequency' (number of times an episode is narrated vis-a-vis the number of times it actually takes place in the narrative text), 'mood', a category sub-divided into 'distance' and 'perspective' and finally, 'voice' which concerns itself with the act of narrating and the kinds of narrators and narratees in the text.

Any theoretical canon is characterized by its vastness and almost confusing variety. And yet, on scrutiny it becomes clear that this expansive canvas is actually confined within specific boundaries. That is to repeat that all theoretical ideas and positions use as springboards preceding ones and subsequently become take-off points for succeeding viewpoints. Even when ideas do not derive from or give birth to others, the interrelationships between them is too obvious to overlook. An elaboration of this premise could be seen in the following passage from Lori Hope Lefkovitz which succinctly and appropriately brings out the trace that theories leave each other. The passage goes:

Umberto Eco, in *A Theory of Semiotics*, defines a sign system as anything that can be used to lie. Language is one such system, literature another. Genres of literature, as well as other modes of communication, comprise signifying systems. By implication semiotics teaches one how he or she is lied to or how to lie. (Advertisers have long understood a practical
application of semiotic theory as they manipulate codes to create desire in consumers in order to sell products.) An alternative to describing a sign system as something that can be used to lie, the metaphor of seduction has been used by semiotic critics such as Barthes and Julia Kristeva. We can see stories as seductive in so far as realist literature lulls us into a receptive posture:

Everyone loves a good story; and many people go to the movies for passive escape into the fiction displayed before them.30

The above mentioned theoretical positions assign theory, or particular theoretical models, a superior position in the hierarchy of the theoretical model, the text (which could be substituted by the photograph, the moving picture, or the object), and the reader/consumer. Infact, the reader/consumer is downgraded to such a level that she becomes a mere consumer (who simply consumes, takes in and accepts) to the extent that she is "lied" to or deceived. Such text oriented positions are countered by theorists like Jonathan Culler who reassigns to the reader a more useful and important role by allowing her to be able to interpret the text and its 'intelligibility'. The readers' 'literary competence' allows them to interpret meanings in the text, which though different still belong to the same set of interpretative conventions. Therefore, though it is not possible to determine the rules which govern the interpretation of texts it is on the other hand possible to do so with the conventions of reader interpretations.
It is obvious from the varied theoretical stands recounted here that even while existing under one rubric the positions are constantly shifting. This dynamism is however not reductive but ensures a lively interest in theory, texts and the very processes of reading and interpretation.

It is obvious from the theoretical positions that each theorist holds that though classed under the broad heading of semiotic-structuralist theory, each stand is a variation (some times a deviation, some times a modification and some times an addition) from the other. But the overall result can only be a more exact and clearly understood scientific exercise. Also, most theorists explicate and elaborate (literally, test) their theories by a direct application to literary texts. The significant point in the entire process is that each theorists' position, whether to complement or to modify another theoretical position, is nevertheless a critique of the theory it desires to alter. For, if the theory was complete (static, closed, unalterable) there would be no scope for an alternate or different theory. However, alteration or modification need not reduce the previous theory to a position of being unnecessary. In fact, constant revamping renders the critical-theoretical enterprise creative and dynamic. Moreover, a close historical reading of the theoretical canon will show how impossible or improbable one theory would be without the other. Any methodology for a critique of literary texts would then have to retain elements from all
positions (albeit, in a harmonic unity) in it. Only then would the enterprise of analysis of literary texts be a viable project. As for the semiotic enterprise, it teaches through an application of theory to the various social, cultural and literary fields, how essential it is to 'read' signification into everything around us to make understanding a complete exercise, and how redundant it would be to reject any of the available and existing universes of signs, including texts.

FISH/ING ACROSS CULTURES

Myths are traditional stories occurring in a timeless past and involving supernatural elements. Products of prerational cultures, myths express and explain such serious concerns as the creation of the universe and of humanity, the evolution of society, and the cycle of agricultural fertility. Many theories have been advanced to explain myths. The Greeks' explanation of their own mythology was most fully developed in Stoicism, which reduced the gods to moral principles and natural elements. Such allegorical interpretations continued into the eighteenth century. Theologians have tended to view myths (e.g., the blood myth or the myth of a golden age) as foreshadowings or corruptions of Scripture. Modern investigations of mythology began with the nineteenth century philologist Max Müller, who saw myths as having evolved from linguistic corruptions. Anthropological explanations have also abounded. Sir James Frazer in his *Golden Bough* (1890) proposed that all myths were originally connected with the
idea of fertility in nature, with the birth, death, and resurrection of vegetation as a constantly recurring motif. Bronislaw Malinowski considered myths to be validations of established social patterns. Among influential psychologists, Sigmund Freud related the unconscious myth and dream, while Carl Jung believed that all peoples unconsciously formed the same mythic symbols. In the twentieth century Mircea Eliade believes that myths serve to return their adherents to the time of the original creative act, and Claude Lévi-Strauss contends that myths should be interpreted structurally.31

This extended definition of myths is comprehensive though extremely general and broad based. However, it is typical of most other definitions commonly available. For a more analytical and linguistic comprehension of myths, it is important to refer to Barthes' extensive theoretical study of myths in the essay 'Myth Today'. The essay provides a semiotic methodology to decode 'myths' — or what Barthes sees as the necessity of perceiving the codes and contexts of our universes of significations as 'myths' — almost as a means of liberation from the oppression of these 'myth-signs'.

After positing right at the beginning of the essay that "myth is a type of speech",32 Barthes goes on to elaborate his own statement. "Of course, it is not any type: language needs special conditions in order to become myth .... But what must be firmly established at the start is that
myth is a system of communication, that it is a message. This allows one to perceive that myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept, or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form.\textsuperscript{33}

The Barthesian reading of myths contends that though myths are necessarily a part of history and not "nature", myth-making is a naturalising process. Myths with their "tri-dimensional pattern" comprising the signifier, the signified and the sign, become "a second-order semiological system", i.e., "that which is a sign (namely that associative total of concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second".\textsuperscript{34} Therefore, a myth becomes a metalanguage, which though not eternal, gives way to another and yet another. It is this "staggered" quality which gives myths an apparent "naturalness", and it is this naturalness which Barthes warns us against. Therefore, it is imperative that any reading of myths must be a two-fold process — that is, while being aware of its historical trace the reader must also constantly decode its latent messages within a universe of contemporary significations.

The form remains the same, the interpretations vary. Across cultures and religions, whether at home or outside, a single signifier promotes a varied, though limited, number of signifieds. Inherent in fish symbolism are certain beliefs which have remained the same over centuries and across
regions. Whether it is the deluge legends or the literal and symbolic regenerative-reproductive powers of the fish, its associations with abundance and fecundity or sometimes with the monstrous, destructive powers its possesses, the fish evokes numerous significances, though within specific boundaries, for most peoples. If one were to chart the various interpretations of the fish it would make an interesting yet familiar chart.

The Greek word for fish is ICHTHUS. It is an acrostic for the words Jesus Christ, and therefore held a special meaning for early Christians.

Iesous (Jesus)

CHristos(Christ)

THEou (of God)

Uios (the Son)

Soter (Saviour)

This analogy between fish and Saviour may be extended further and applied to the saved. According to the Encyclopedia of Religion new Christians have been compared to little children, and in an early symbol, they are likened to "little fish, so named for our great Ichthus, Jesus Christ, who is born in water and remains alive by living there" (Tertullian, On
Baptism 1.3). The "little fish" are therefore baptised by/like Jesus Christ or Ichthus. Christ's disciples or the newly baptized were denoted by the sign of a fish and such depictions have also been found on early Christian lamps. It is perhaps not surprising then to find that the early Christians adopted a headgear of their own which they reserved for their bishops. This headgear, called the mitra or mitre, took a long time to attain its final from. Curiously this final form bears a close resemblance to the headgear of the priests of Dagon. Dagon is often regarded as a Phoenician fish-god and it is the head of a fish with open mouth that this ancient pagan headgear resembles. As such it conferred upon the celebrant the power of the God.

The fish is primarily connected with the idea of water and hence with the concept of 'primal waters'; consequently, they can stand as symbols of the origins of things and of the powers of rebirth. The fish is often considered to be a mystic and psychic animal that lives in water which is symbolic of dissolution and, at the same time, of renovation and regeneration. The depiction of Jesus standing in water confirms the metaphor of a fish drawn from the deep to bring salvation to mankind. A corollary of the fish is its assimilation to a saviour. The alchemical sign for Salvator mundi is a fish.
The zoologists of the ancient world tended to the belief that fish were the spontaneous creations of the water itself. In a Sumerian legend the first fish to rise from the primordial waters became the teacher of the arts of civilization to men. Perhaps then it shouldn’t surprise us when we come across variants of the same belief in cultures as diverse as of India or even of the Biblical world. The fish-as-teacher idea is very closely interlinked with some of the deluge legends as well.

In the story of Jonah a reluctant prophesier of the imminent doom to the Assyrian people of Nineveh flees his task aboard a ship. His effort proves to be futile as he is cast into the sea as a result of a storm representing God’s anger. However, preservation is foretold. A big fish swallows Jonah and later regurgitates him upon dry land. Jonah moves on to fulfil his divine destiny of enlightening the ignorant people of Nineveh and to prepare them for divine forgiveness. The experience of entering the belly of a whale or a big fish, as in this story, is equated to a religious idea that informed the initiatory mysteries and rituals of death and of rebirth through newfound wisdom.

In the mythical belief of the Matsya, the Vishnu-avatar, the God assumed the form of a fish in order to save Manu Vaivasvata, the progenitor of the human race in this present cosmic age from a great
deluge. Manu is believed to have been the bearer of the seeds of creation for all living species (which the fish had instructed him to collect), and thus the parent of the human race was prevented from drowning. A further purpose of this incarnation is believed to be for the restoration of the vedas and the instruction of the true doctrine of Brahma’s eternal soul. Theologically, the idea of an avatar is the literal “descent” of a deity in an assumed form, and the purpose is the restoration and maintenance of cosmic order.

As in the Jonah and the Matsya-avatar beliefs, so for the Babylonians. For them the sea was a source of wisdom, and the mythical hero Ea-Oannes, half man, half fish, rose from the waters to bring culture and wisdom to mankind. The act of fishing, therefore, symbolizes both looking for souls and looking into the soul, drawing the treasure of wisdom from the sea of the unknown. As the mystic ship of life the fish is seen as "the spindle spinning out the cycle of life after the pattern of the lunar zodiac". This meaning finds its direct representation in the zodiac of the Pisces, a sign composed of two fish arranged parallel to one another but facing in different directions: the left hand fish indicates the direction of involution or the beginning of a new cycle in the world of manifestation, while the fish that faces the right points to the direction of evolution — the way out of the cycle.
The symbolism of the fish in its vegetative aspect, signifying abundance and fecundity, a symbol which takes birth from the extraordinary number of eggs that a fish lays, is also variously apparent. Certain cult goddesses of regeneration appear in myriad forms, the most prominent among others being the fish.

The peculiar relationship, even equation, of the fish with the uterus of the regenerating goddess accounts for its prominent role in European symbolism. A considerable number of fish-faced sculptures from Yugoslavia are engraved with labyrinths, which suggests that the goddess represents a generative womb. However, phallic symbolism is also inherent within this reproductive symbolism of the fish. It is said to represent the male principle in an active state, while the head alone symbolizes the female. Freud, typically, conceived the fish to be the symbol of the male organ.

The idea of abundance however is not limited to the fertility principle. It is extended to other areas as well. In many cultures the success of a fishing expedition depends on the state of "purity" of the community in general and the participants in particular. Confession becomes an imperative preparatory practice before any such activity is undertaken. Abstinence from certain practices becomes a part of the daily routine. The
fish-abundance correlative also applies to a Chinese new year custom. New Year is observed by seven traditional practices, one of which is the family reunion meal around the stove. The last course of the meal is a fish, which must not be eaten, however, for "fish" is homophonous with "having abundance" or "yii". Such fish taboos have been observed by many cultures, particularly in those where it is considered sacred. Fish is nevertheless an important food for the Christians, substituted for meat on days when fasting is observed. It is believed that only the faithful can partake of the sacred food on the day of the judgement, and it will be a single fish. It follows easily from beliefs like this that the Grail King's, also known as the Fisher King, only occupation is fishing, in the hope that it will finally bring salvation and redemption for his "waste land".

Jessie L. Weston's research about why the Fisher King is called so leads her to answer her query thus. "... the title is naturally connected with the use of the Fish Symbol in early Christianity: the Ichthys anagram, as applied to Christ, the title 'Fishers of Men', bestowed upon the Apostles, the Papal ring of the Fisherman..."36 Further, her research concludes "that the Fish is a Life symbol of immemorial antiquity, and that the title of Fisher has, from the earliest ages, been associated with Deities who were held to be specially connected with the origin and preservation of Life".37 And then, Weston, quoting another source, throws more light on Fish
Symbolism, an aspect which has been recurrently perceived in the analyses of the texts shown so far. She says, "The writer of the article in The Open Court asserts that "the Fish was sacred to those deities who were supposed to lead men back from the shadows of death to life."38

THE NARRATIVE OF FISHING:

A REAPPRAISAL

Textual analysis does not attempt to describe the structure of a work; it is not a matter of recording a structure, but rather of producing a mobile structuration of the text (a structuration which shifts from reader to reader down through History), of staying within the signifying volume of the work, within its signifying process. Textual analysis does not seek to know by what the text is determined (collected as the final term of a causality), but rather how the text explodes and scatters. Hence we shall take a narrative text, a tale, and shall read it, as slowly as will be necessary, stopping as often as we must (deliberation is a crucial dimension of our work), trying to locate and to classify without rigor not all the meanings of the text (which would be impossible, for the text is open ad infinitum: no reader, no subject, no science can exhaust the text), but the forms, the codes which make meanings possible. We shall locate the avenues of meaning. Our goal is not to find the meaning, nor even a meaning of the text, and our work is not related to a literary criticism of the hermeneutic type (which attempts to interpret the text according to the truth it regards as hidden within it), as is for instance Marxist or psychoanalytic
criticism. Our goal is ultimately to conceive, to imagine, to experience the plurality of the text, the open-endedness of its signifying process. The stake of this work is therefore not limited, evidently, to the academic handling of the text (albeit overtly methodological), nor even to literature in general, it borders on a theory, a practice, a choice which are caught up in the battle between men and signs.39

The continuous caution that most literary theories, especially semiotics, sound to interpret any/all texts in isolation from all influences, whether outside of the text — intertextuality and the like, or inside the text — authorial intention, biographical elements, et al., naturally forces the focus on the linguistic components which build the work up. As the underlying basis for any textual reading dependent on these specific theoretical frameworks, is ambiguity and uncertainty — because each reader is a significant and indispensable interpreter of any text, and each interpretation is as valid as the next — reading and more importantly understanding becomes vast, generative, open-ended and continuous. The process of signification makes it imperative to accept even extremely disparate readings and the nature of the sign, with its vast potentials, makes all explications and elaborations of texts relevant. Since parole necessarily evokes the concept of a langue, all interpretations, whatever they may be, are apposite because they share from the same codes of a language. It becomes imperative then to come to an understanding of the codes of language which work unobtrusively in our mind — this would
be the social and cultural conditioning of our thoughts and ways of thinking — and those codes which can be unraveled from the linguistic analyses and readings of the texts at hand. Different permutations and combinations of the varied codes available to the reader will then lead her to an individual understanding of the text. If the same codes — or similar ones — can be decoded from other texts then the reader may be allowed to read parallel interpretations into a few different pieces of work. This — a reading of similar or corresponding codes in different texts — could be viewed as an extension of the reading of corresponding codes or signification within different words, sentences, paragraphs and pages of any single text.

This thesis has decoded the code of fishing used in a variety of ways in a number of texts of varying lengths by the writer Ernest Hemingway. Though the autobiographical elements so obviously present in the texts are left unhandled, the inescapable similarity in the use of the code in each separate text forces the interpretation to bring together the different readings under one broad perspective.

The unified significance or connotation of the code of fishing can be read as that where each text revolves around action or actions — physical and psychological — concerned with the act of fishing. In each case either
the fish is a physical presence, palpable and within reach, or on the other hand, an absence, where all action, physical, psychological and emotional, converges to a single point which aims to substitute and transform this absence or gap with narratives which may be actual experiences or imagined and desired ones. Whereas, on the one hand fishing may simply be the pursuit of pleasure or a game, on the other, it takes on the more serious and philosophical role of action which infuses life with richness and meaning. In some however, the connotations become more subtly complex with the collapsing of separate codes into one, where one man’s game (the consequences can be extremely serious if a game is dishonorably played) becomes another’s lifelong lesson which may sometimes result in death.

If only the word fishing is brought to one’s notice it would immediately raise associations of the art of catching fish either for a livelihood or for pleasure. As the Webster’s puts it, it is “the technique, occupation or diversion of catching fish”. As none of the main characters who form the backbone of the texts which come under the rubric of this thesis are fishermen by profession, (apart from Santiago and for him too fishing transcends narrow commercial concerns and becomes a means of psychological and spiritual fulfilment), it would not be amiss to call the fishing carried on in these works as first and foremost a game. "If play has
normally been underesteemed as a human activity (devalued by the
doubtful antithesis between it and seriousness and by the narrow
assumption that it is at best "merely" play) then this attitude needs to be
reworked. Play and games are at best, a mode of education and
socialization and reflectors of aspects of culture. "...Another philosophical
tradition, reaching back at least as far as Friedrich Schiller, holds that play
is both central and fundamental to human experience because it is in play
that human beings manage to realize themselves or, put somewhat
differently to make real their highest ideals. This seems to be what Schiller
means when he argues in On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series
of Letters, that only in play is man fully himself. The drive to play
mediates between two other basic "drives", toward the material and the
formal, or the empirical and the ideational... and allows the actualization of
human thought. Play is, thus, the vehicle of human expression and the
foundation of all aesthetics". "To use Todorov's logic, a game is a
structure of events governed by rules; social relationships also possess a
structure governed by rules; therefore, "game" can signify the social life of
human beings". And then, as Eugen Fink defines play, "Play is a basic
existential phenomenon, just as primordial and autonomous as death, love,
work and struggle for power, but it is not bound to these phenomena in
a common ultimate purpose. Play, so to speak, confronts them all — it
absorbs them by representing them. We play at being serious, we play
truth, we play reality, we play work and struggle, we play love and death — and we play play itself."43

Gradually then, what starts from being merely a game takes on extremely serious connotations, the implications of which reverberate cyclically not only within each text but in certain patterns throughout the chosen group of works. The texts revolve powerfully around the metaphors of absence and presence, the metaphors themselves rotating constantly around the fish in the texts, while all other references, whether to the characters or actions or thoughts, gravitate and converge toward the above mentioned signifiers.

Interestingly, the metaphors of absence and presence do not function as simple, isolated units but are inextricably woven into other paired motifs such as honor/dishonor, discord/happiness, or even, a desperate necessity for relief versus a crude desire for a means of pride. To understand this point each text must be scrutinised again. In 'Out of Season', 'Now I Lay Me', and 'A Way You'll Never Be', no actual fishing takes place, whereas in all the other texts, including The Old Man and the Sea, there is a lot of fishing, both honorable and dishonorable. We have then two groups, the "absence" and the "presence" groups as it were. However, these texts may be reshuffled and allotted into two different
brackets, each controlled by a different set of signifiers this time. These units could now be labelled the "discordant, dishonest, commercial" unit (this pocket with the dominant sense of the negative includes 'Out of Season', 'One Trip Across', and 'The Last Good Country'), and, the "ideal, sincere but 'victimized'" group in which fall the rest of the texts. In the absence group, all movement is continuously an attempt to be able to fish. The analysis is of course proceeding on the assumption that to be able to fish is the ultimate and most profound goal in life for all the characters irrespective of the group they belong to.

In 'Out of Season', the note of discord between the three characters arises from the fact that none can understand the other or the context within which they exist. The men ("fishermen") form a coterie from which they exclude the woman; the woman oscillates between the husband and Peduzzi, rebuffed by one and patronised by the other; the husband's misplaced dependence on Peduzzi for a good day of fishing and Peduzzi's mistaken confidence in his own abilities to make good his promise are all instances of an absence of knowledge and, therefore understanding, and in turn, faith. Fishing, is hence, constantly deferred and remains an absence effected by other absences.
In 'Now I Lay Me' and 'A Way You'll Never Be' the protagonists are "good" soldiers, both victims of the trauma let loose by war. While in the latter text, the protagonist, unable to shut 'it' out, can only speak incoherently about grasshoppers, baits and traps, in 'Now I Lay Me' the soldier (at the risk of extending the meaning too far, these two texts may be perceived as Parts I and II) can linguistically, (with words and thoughts), carve out a soothing/meaningful space of rivers and fish in his mind in the middle of meaningless violence. Fishing, though not a palpable experience, can however come very close to being such for them.

The site for parts I and II of 'Big Two-Hearted River' shifts right to the middle of the forest along the river. This shift is not only spatial (fishing becomes a real, felt presence) but also social (the isolation that each protagonist desires through a rejection of ties, roots, relationships and friendships has really taken place here as the protagonist becomes completely enveloped by the forest and is overtaken by a total absorption with the river). This is a soldier in a 'burnt-over country' (a soldier mentally free from the baits of war and physically free from the sites of violence) who will allow the river and the ritual of fishing to completely heal his body and soul. He literally becomes a site which is not discordant, dishonest or commercial but truly ideal, sincere, victimized and, therefore, genuinely in need of renewal and re-energizing, in other words to undergo
a baptism by water and to be blessed by fish. Among the shorter narratives the two parts of 'Big Two-Hearted River' may be placed strategically in between the "absence" and "presence" groups. As these two texts are situated completely within the trope of fishing, they do not come within the parameters of the 'absence' group. And, though, they belong to the 'presence' group, they are removed from them (we are, here, not speaking of The Old Man and the Sea) by virtue of keeping the fish/ing narrative totally untarnished by any commercial motive at all. This text, or the two parts of it, is almost complete as a vehicle for all the signifiers that the reader comes across through the range of texts chosen for analysis. Where the signifiers are not apparent, they emerge metonymically. A continuous cross referencing, therefore, between all the texts helps in a deeper comprehension of the network of signs.

The final two texts of the entire group, 'The Last Good Country' and 'One Trip Across', are both marked by parallel significances. They mention fishing, in fact entire passages are devoted to this end; in both, fishing is initially an economic transaction, and subsequently, mentioned as a much loved enterprise; and in a striking similarity, the main characters are both affected, in fact, literally hounded, by misfortune which strikes as a result of some action gone wrong. 'The Last Good Country' is significant because despite forcing Nick into "exile", fishing also initiates him into
adulthood. It weaves for him the same fascination and magnetism as it has done for the other 'true fishermen'. In Nick's trout fishing the law has been broken, but the punishment he receives seems more a result of vindictiveness than justice. This immediately puts the law enforcers in a negative role while simultaneously allowing Nick the help and support of all the other characters who are associated with more positive roles and values. Mr. Packard (the mature, guardian-like voice in the text), Mrs. Packard (the warm, affectionate mother figure), Littleless (the devoted sister, and representative of the family, however, nameless and faceless they may be), and even Suzy, the hired girl, all fitting into significant social and cultural roles, come out unwaveringly in support of Nick. It is also an important sign that Nick, fleeing the law, should not escape to any place whatsoever but take refuge deep inside the womb-like atmosphere of the forest and river. The river then literally gives him the solace he has not found elsewhere. It is a refuge for him like it has been for the other traumatized beings. Nick is henceforth redeemed simply because the river receives him into its protective fold.

'One Trip Across', the last of the six shorter narratives, may be placed as diagonally opposed to the 'Big Two-Hearted River' texts. The code of fishing unfolds with more complexity in this narrative than in any of the others. The experience of fishing is vicarious for the main character
in the text, Harry. This means that the pivotal action in the text, the fishing, is metonymically shifted to a subsidiary character, Mr. Johnson, and that Harry fishes only by association. This associative substitution may be interpreted as a collapsing of the metaphorical and metonymical aspects in the text. To elaborate, since Harry directs the actions he is, at least partially, in control of the way the actions proceed. To this extent Mr. Johnson represents or stands for Harry as an indexical sign. He is Harry's counterpart by association. On the other hand, Mr. Johnson literally wrests the directing powers from Harry and proceeds to act on his own. He substitutes Harry and takes over the fishing. This substitution is a metaphoric move and it is this shift that causes the code of fishing to shift simultaneously from an honorable act to a dishonorable one. This moral shift or transformation within the text (this transformation affects the fishing which in turn affects the characters. The characters however retain their inherent qualities, i.e., Harry does not become Mr. Johnson simply because he associates with him and vice versa) takes place because of the individual attitudes of the fishermen involved and Harry must atone by default for the dishonor caused to the act of fishing.

A look at Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not* allows the reader to elaborate still further on the dichotomous honorable and dishonorable codes of fishing. In this text, the first section of which is 'One Trip Across'
all over again (the concluding section of 'One Trip Across' has more positive aspects to it than in a similar section of To Have and Have Not), the same set of characters, the same ambience and the same set of actions, results in a more violent fate for Harry — death. In fact, both texts explicate the semiological chain of actions and reactions which work in a latent manner within the code of fishing and which may then be 'read' within the other texts included in this thesis. Mr. Johnson is characterized by his strong 'desire' to fish, but at the same instance is set apart by what his desire connotes. His is a wish to be 'seen' as an awesome and inspired 'fisherman', with its connected connotations to be regarded in a certain esteem by a collective inhabiting his social space. Johnson's code, then, excludes fishing's therapeutic or redemptive values since he only desires to 'appear' great but does not need to redeem himself in any manner. In the other texts fishing helps to transform situations from say x to x* or rather from x* to x. That is, in the instances involving the war-damaged, fishing allows these psychologically impaired protagonists to relocate themselves within their social spaces, either physically or at least in their thoughts. In 'The Last Good Country' fishing helps to initiate Nick into a desirable way of life by teaching through experience the honorable way of the sport; and even in 'Out of Season' the marital discord (referred to by a corresponding unaccomplished fishing trip) is given slight direction to either resolve itself or to make a clean break (the end is left ambiguous and
uncertain) by Peduzzi's intuitive anticipation that the promised fishing trip will actually not take place. But Johnson undergoes no transformation from one state to another except that his desire to be a great fisherman remains unfulfilled. This negative state of things (where fishing leaves no positive impact on the person involved in it) then rebounds (to use a semiotic term, is staggered) and devastates the surrogate fisherman. Harry's existence undergoes a complete negative transformation from one of contentment to one of suffering. Harry then is forced to make amendments for Johnson's dishonorable behavior toward fishing. Another remarkably similar situation is evoked in Islands in the Stream where though the ambience and the sphere of actions are similar, the consequences are totally opposed because of the vast attitudinal difference toward fishing between Johnson and David, the young fisherman of the above mentioned novel. I will condense a few pages into a fairly illustrative passage to make the signification more interpretable.

David braced his feet, tightened the drag well down with his right hand, and struck back hard against the great weight. He struck again and again bending the rod like a bow. The line moved out steadily. He had made no impression on the fish.... The line kept going out and down, out and down, out and down. The rod was bent so far it looked as though it must break and the line was taut as a tuned cello string and there was not much more of it in the reel ....
'The damned straps are killing me', David said. 'They cut my shoulders off....

'He's an awfully big fish, Dave', Roger told him. 'You can't bull him around. You've got to lead him and try to convince him where he has to come....'

'But he's monstrous', Tom said. 'And Dave's fastened to him just as much as he is to Dave....'

(More than an hour later),

Then, astern of the boat and off to starboard, the calm of the ocean broke open and the great fish rose out of it, rising, shining dark blue and silver, seeming to come endlessly out of the water, unbelievable as his length and bulk rose out of the sea into the air and seemed to hang there until he fell with a splash that drove the water up high and white....

David was on his knees on the low stern now, the rod bent so that its tip was underwater, its butt in the leather socket of the butt rest that was strapped around his waist....

It was well into the fourth hour of the fight now. The boat was still working out of sea and David, with Roger holding the back of his chair now, was raising the fish steadily. David looked stronger now than he had an hour before but Thomas Hudson could see where his heels showed the blood that had run down from the soles of his feet. It looked varnished in the sun....

(Close to the end of four hours and an exhausting struggle David still unwilling to 'quit' says),

'I don't care if he kills me, the big son of a bitch,' David said. 'Oh hell. I don't hate him I love him.'
(And, a last few lines from the text),

He could see David's bloody hands and lacquered-looking oozing feet and he saw the welts the harness had made across his back and the almost hopeless expression on his face as he turned his head at the last finish of a pull.

(Islands in the Stream, pp.96-119).

This extremely condensed passage still manages to retain all the signs and the consequent spheres of significations that can be interpreted from the primary texts which have been analysed in depth so far. David contrasts sharply with Johnson and subsequently becomes a part of the circle which comprises all the other fishermen, especially Santiago and including Harry. Apart from Johnson, the involvement of all the others with fishing and, therefore, water (an almost hypnotic attachment) is unquestionable, and there are certain common signifiers pertinent to them all. Each fisherman goes to (the word return because of the repetitive nature of this journey would be more suitable) fish in order to escape from something and in association set other things in balance. Like all the others, Santiago too returns to the ocean to replenish his self. The waters become a source of life for these men. And as Thomas Hudson tells his son Tom in Islands in the Stream, "But please know I would have stopped this long ago except that I know that if David catches this fish he'll have something inside him for all his life and it will make everything else
easier." (p.115) Johnson neither seeks to escape (this denotes to slip away from or elude and connotes a desire for solitariness, isolation, privacy) nor to set any things in balance. His need is in direct opposition to this desperation to be with the self and with the fish and water. He wants to be "seen". Even in David the reader sees a boy unwilling to give up or let go of his fish to anybody else. He must be with it himself. Johnson at sea is a merely superfluous happening, and therefore, when the repercussions start to get out of hand he makes his 'escape' leaving another to suffer instead of him.

The perseverance which characterizes each protagonist and allows them the capacity to take extreme physical, emotional and psychological bruising is again missing in Johnson. It is these effervescent and nonchalant feelings toward fishing (his code is the opposite of and negates the more positive and dominant code of the others and the texts in general) which does not allow him to comprehend and understand the code, which in its turn does not allow him to fish well at all and, therefore, forces him to make himself dishonorable, a state which again taints the code of fishing and those associated with it. Nick in 'The Last Good Country' also deviates from the code but only momentarily and not at all because of a mistaken conception of the code to which he should belong. It is this grasp of the
significations that are latent within the code of fishing which shields Nick from becoming a victim to the law.

It seems significant that all the fishermen (except Johnson) who are well entrenched within this particular code of fishing are men (denoting age; connoting maturity) with Santiago at the head of this hierarchy. Only Manolin, Nick and David are boys, at the initial stages of initiation, both into the world of fishing and by extension and representation to the world around. Both Manolin and David conform strictly to the demands of the code (fishing must be honest and the demands that it makes on the self must be borne stoically; it does not allow for lying, stealing, begging or boastfulness — in a capsule, it demands love and humility), and Nick, (who has an inherent love for the sport) learns in the course of the narrative to transform this feeling from a latent (and a slightly misguided one) to a manifest and well intentioned one. The initiation into the code, therefore, starts early. And because Johnson had never been initiated early he can never ever do it again (Harry's directions are all fruitless; with Johnson there can be no proxy fishing). The code then is an early lesson, something which remains with the learner through life and allows him to return periodically to the fold for therapy, renewal and life.