

Intersemiotic codes in narrative-semiotic coding of liminal space of Fowles' "The Magus": A stylistic-semiotic interface

Olena Zhykharieva

National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture
(Ucrania)

Nataliia Kravchenko

National University of Life and Environmental
Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv, Ucrania)

Victoriia Stavtseva

National University of Life and Environmental
Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv, Ucrania)

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Códigos intersemióticos en la codificación semiótica narrativa del espacio liminal de "El Mago" de Fowles: una interfaz estilístico-semiótica

Olena Zhykharieva

National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture (Ucrania)
eaap@ukr.net

Nataliia Kravchenko

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of
Ukraine (Kyiv, Ucrania)
nkravchenko@outlook.com

Victoriia Stavtseva

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv,
Ucrania)
vika0711@ukr.net

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Abstract

The article explores the concept of intersemiotic code as a narrative-semiotic, text-forming, and meaning-making device that contributes to liminal stylistics in John Fowles' "The Magus". The paper presents a nine-component classification of intersemiotic codes depending on the stylistic devices they form. It identifies simile-forming code with a connector; simile-forming code transitioning into a metaphor; allusive, metonymic and a simile-forming code with and without comparator, code-allusion and metonymy, code-metaphor, code-personification, synesthetic code that combines the artistic, olfactory or gustatory codes, and transcodic multicomponent code-simile. A symbolic potential of intersemiotic codes, giving rise to antithetical meanings, contributes to symbolic code. Intersemiotic codes, which underlie the ambivalence of characters and the entire meta-game, activate the actional code by predicting the actions of the protagonist to bridge the gap between mystification

and reality. By underpinning narrative-semiotic codes, intersemiotic codes create a liminal space that blurs the boundary between the game and actuality.

Keywords: Intersemiotic codes; Narrative-semiotic codes; Prominent positions; Liminality

Resumen

El artículo explora el concepto de código intersemiótico como un dispositivo narrativo-semiótico, de formación de texto y de significado que contribuye a la estilística liminal en «The Magus» de John Fowles. El artículo presenta una clasificación de nueve componentes de códigos intersemióticos dependiendo de los dispositivos estilísticos que forman. Identifica código formador de símil con un conector; código de formación de símiles que se convierte en una metáfora; código alusivo, metonímico y formador de símil con y sin comparador, código-alusión y metonimia, código-metáfora, código-personificación, código sinestésico que combina los códigos artístico, olfativo o gustativo, y código-símil transcódico multicomponente. Un potencial simbólico de los códigos intersemióticos, que da lugar a significados antitéticos, contribuye al código simbólico. Los códigos intersemióticos, que subyacen a la ambivalencia de los personajes y de todo el metajuego, activan el código de acción al predecir las acciones del protagonista para cerrar la brecha entre la mistificación y la realidad. Al sustentar los códigos semióticos narrativos, los códigos intersemióticos crean un espacio liminal que desdibuja el límite entre el juego y la realidad.

Palabras clave: Códigos intersemióticos; Códigos narrativo-semióticos; Posiciones destacadas; Liminalidad

1. INTRODUCTION

The article focuses on the exploration of intersemiotic codes (ISCs) in Fowles' "The Magus" as a means of actualizing key motifs, prominent positions, and narrative codes, creating liminal playful stylistics of the novel. The semiotic space of Fowles' text constructs a surrogate world of the "metatheater" of the magician Conchis, in which protagonist experiences his "spiritual odyssey." The magical-realistic mode of the novel defines its complex semiotic structure, including codes of non-literary sign systems such as painting, music, architecture, chess, poker, sculpture, and theater. This intricate encoding implies the variability of meanings in the novel while simultaneously serving as a key to their interpretation.

Even though a significant amount of linguistic and interdisciplinary research is dedicated to the issue of intertextuality, ISCs remain an understudied aspect in both linguistic and interdisciplinary frameworks, which underscores the relevance of the paper. The codes to various semiotic systems reveal the specificity of artistic thinking of Fowles, who aimed, in his own words, to write "as Picasso has painted, and Stravinsky composed" (Fowles, 1964, p. 90). The novelty of the research lies in its

interdisciplinarity - the endeavor to combine linguistic methodology with semiotic dimensions and elements of literary analysis, as well as the attempt to establish an interface between intersemiotic codes and narrative-semiotic codes of R. Barthes (Barthes, 1974).

The theoretical framework of the paper encompasses works on (a) intermediality and “intersemiotic translation,” which, as per Jakobson, goes beyond linguistic translation and the comprehension of linguistic signs, and instead involves the interpretation of linguistic signs through non-verbal means (Jakobson, 1959, 114), (b) allusions in artistic texts, (c) narrative-semiotic coding in terms of R. Barthes (1974), (d) the concept of foregrounding and prominent positions of the text, and (e) studies on liminality.

Intermediality as the “semiotic translation” of inclusions that carry information about other art forms (Hansen-Löve, 1983) relies on either the transformation of the same plot and image in works of different semiotic modes or the transcoded transmission of one image through another. In this context, intermediality as the correlation of diverse media channels is distinguished from intertextuality as the interaction of verbal texts (Müller, 1996, p. 83). However, based on the structuralists’ understanding of the world as a text, which implies that works of music, painting, sculpture, or architecture can be regarded as texts within the cultural space, the concept of intertextuality can be interpreted as connections not only between literary texts but also with the entirety of cultural texts. According to Ernst Gombrich, all art is “a manipulation of vocabulary” rather than a reflection of the world (Gombrich, 1982, pp. 70, 78).

W. Wolf refers to intertextuality as “monomedial” and intermediality as a “cross-medial” relationships (Wolf, 1999, p. 46), emphasizing their analogous features and uniting intertextuality and intermediality in the integral concept of “intersemiotic relations.” In this regard, the term “intersemiotic” seems more comprehensive to us than the notion of intermedial and is used in our research. An argument in favor of the term “intersemiotic” is the ambiguity of the term “intermedial,” which is used not only to denote the interaction of a text with other art forms but also to encompass media multimodality. Specifically, intermedial studies are defined as those that draw attention to the technical media of display and media technology, as well as the aesthetic and philosophical aspects of media (Bruhn and Schirrmacher: 2021, p. 7).

The concept of “intersemiotic” stems from Jakobson’s identification of three ways to interpret verbal signs: intralingual “translation” into other signs of the same language, interlingual translation into another language, and intersemiotic translation, also termed as “resemiotization” (e.g., O’Halloran, Tan **and** Wignell: 2016), from language to another non-verbal system of symbols (Jakobson, 1959, p. 233). Resemiotization is predominantly considered from the perspective of intersemiotic translation of literary texts into film or theatrical productions (Bateman and Schmidt: 2012; Clayton da Silva, 2017), or within the scope of polymodal texts

that combine verbal modes with photography, graphics, visual, auditory, color, and lighting effects, iconography, musical codes, and even mathematical symbols (O'Halloran, Tan and Wignell: 2016; Kourdis and Yoka: 2014; Royce, 2007).

In other words, the study of intersemioticity is predominantly conducted within the framework of Jakobson's definition of this concept as the intersemiotic translation from language to another non-verbal system of symbols with a focus on their interaction. However, the "reverse" resymiotization, namely the translation of codes from other semiotic systems within the text, presents an equally interesting perspective for intersemiotic research, contributing to the identification of the polymodal semiotic architecture of the literary text.

This vector of resymiotization is the subject of studies, conducted primarily in the fields of literary studies and semiotics (Azerêdo, 2021; Horlacher, 2018; Odendahl, 2019; Rajewsky, 2002; Rippl, 2015). However, the codes of non-linguistic semiotic systems are termed in these studies as intermediality. In linguistics, the recoding of non-verbal texts into literary codes, utilizing the term "intersemiotics," has been studied in a limited number of works within the cognitive-stylistic (Jiang, 2020) and cognitive-semiotic perspectives (Chrzanowska-Kluczevska et al., 2017). These works consider the text as a complex system of codes, where the multiplicity of codes in isotopic relationships generates textual coherence.

Since the codes in "The Magus" often have an allusive nature, the article relies on research on allusion, including in the novels of Fowles (Azerêdo, 2021; Horlacher, 2018; Pohler, 2002). However, these studies did not analyze allusions as ISCs and were predominantly conducted within the framework of literary studies, without delving into the language mechanisms of actualizing allusive metaphors, comparisons, personifications, etc. Given that ISC-allusion can simultaneously refer to multiple «texts» of art and actualize multilayered meanings, the article utilizes the concept of polysemantic allusion, which was studied from a linguistic perspective (Kravchenko et al., 2021b). Such an allusion combines two or more facultatively decodable meanings associated with different precedent texts, which implies multiple levels of semantic interpretation with varying degrees of implicitness in the allusive meanings.

Considering that recurrent ISCs to the same works of art form a prominent position of the text, contributing to its construction and interpretation, another theoretical premise of the study is the concept of foregrounding, which enhance "the meaning potential of the text" (Van Peer and Hakemulder: 2006, pp. 546-550), forming the background against which the new elements are to be understood. Researchers identify two main mechanisms underlying foregrounding effects: (a) deviation, which can be qualitative, i.e., a departure from the linguistic norm, or quantitative, i.e., a departure from an expected frequency (Leech and Short: 2007, p. 38), and (b) parallelism as "some form of linguistic repetition in two or more parts of the text" (Douthwaite, 2014, p. 96). Parallelism can be observed at different textual levels: the macro level of the plot, the "middle" level of action, and the micro

levels of individual lines, creating a system of foregrounding components (op. cit). In the case of recurrent ISCs, it is expected to identify all the main mechanisms of foregrounding: qualitative deviation, as ISCs often form occasional metaphors and comparisons; quantitative deviation, due to the repetition of the same ISCs or their structural parts; and parallelism at the macro and middle levels.

Considering the “frame” structure of Fowles’ novel, in which reality is embedded within the space of meta-game and hypothesizing the connection of ISCs with the hermeneutic and symbolic codes, the paper also involves the concept of ludic liminality. Liminal space is understood as a “threshold” state (Thomassen, 2014) with a “falling out of reality” into “zones of interdeterminacy” (Palmer, 1980, p. 8). Studies of liminality trace back to the Van Gennep’s work (1960) on rites of passage, divided into three phases: separation, margin, and incorporation into society in a transformed state, often after symbolic death. V. Turner describes the liminal as “a realm of pure possibility whence novel configurations or ideas and relations may arise” (Turner, 1967, p. 97), which opens up “a certain freedom to juggle with the factors of existence” (p. 106).

From a linguistic perspective, there are relatively few works on liminal spaces, which focus on mythology with initiation rites (Schjodt, 2008), linguistic indices of mediators between possible worlds (Kravchenko et al., 2021a), linguistic-cognitive analysis of the liminal in poetry (Lysova, 2017), and sociolinguistic analysis of interactive discourse (Rampton, 1999). As far as we know, liminality has not been studied in linguistics in relation to the texts of Fowles or in connection with ISCs.

By hypothesizing that liminal play operates at various levels of text encoding, the article draws upon the concept of codes that construct the semiotic space of the text (Barthes, 1974) – given the function of ISCs in their actualization. Barthes identifies the (a) actional or proairetic code, associated with those elements of narration, which create tension in its plot and predict the actions of characters; (b) semantic code, also termed as the connotative (Barry, 2002, p. 151), and revealed through connotations, triggered by metaphors, metonymies, comparisons, and personifications, based on ISCs; (c) hermeneutic or “enigmatic” code (Selden et al., 2005), which refers to the enigmatic and mysterious elements of a text and pertains to the key motifs “encoded” by ISCs; (d) symbolic or antithetical code (Barthes, 1974, p.19) of the binary oppositions, and the (e) cultural or referential code (Barthes, 1974, p. 20) as the most explicit in the novel, as ISCs refer to art as part of culture.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology integrates: (1) Semiotic analysis to justify ISCs as indexes of hermeneutic, semantic, symbolic and actional codes; (2) Stylistic analysis to identify, specify and classify stylistic figures based on ISCs; (3) Contextual-

interpretive analysis aimed at identifying ISCs and determining their functions in actualizing key motifs in the text; (4) Comparison structure analysis for explicating ISCs-comparisons, and (5) Conceptual Integration tools for reconstructing metaphorical and metonymic conceptual schemas, which serve as the cognitive foundation for ISCs-metaphors and metonymies.

For analyzing complex ISCs-similes, the article employs the comparison structure proposed by Hanks (2012), which includes:

- T: the topic or tenor that acts as logical subject.
- E: the eventuality (event or state): usually a verb, which sets the frame for the common property.
- P: the common property that two entities share.
- C: the comparator explicating the presence of a comparison.
- V: the vehicle that acts as the object of the comparison.

The paper also introduces into the model the “comparison sample” – the object or idea with which the tenor and vehicle are compared to create an image, visual picture, or sensation. The order of comparison elements is flexible, allowing for the omission of the property, sample, or the comparator. For example, in the simile – *Dim traces showed that there had once been colors, but now it was only black outlines that remained. As remote as an Etruscan wall painting; of a culture long-sunken under time* (Mag., 424), the tenor is *black outlines*, the vehicle is *an Etruscan wall painting*, the common property is “ancient,” which is implied by the metaphorical adjective *remote*. The comparator is *as*. The eventuality “looked” is omitted. The comparison sample, which is *a culture long-sunken under time* helps convey the sense of antiquity associated with the wall painting being compared.

Israel, Harding and Tobin (2004) point out that any construction that can make a comparison is a simile, even if it does not contain a comparative element. They claim that “one weakness of the definition of simile is its qualification ‘usually by means of like or as’,” which is “much too narrow a view of the forms which similes may take”, and concludes “that a fairly wide range of distinct constructions may in fact serve to express a simile” (pp. 124-125). Examples like “This publication had the heart of a music fanzine but the character of an underground comic” and “The retirement of Yves Saint Laurent is the fashion equivalent of the breakup of the Beatles” are provided as comparisons without a comparative element (op. cit). Being a conceptual process of analogy that follows the structure of literal comparisons, similes differ from comparisons in that the entities compared must belong to different domains, as in the case of conceptual metaphors. Unlike literal comparisons, similes are “figurative – comparing things normally felt to be incomparable, typically using vivid or startling images to suggest unexpected connections between source and target” (p. 125).

When exploring ISCs-metaphors, the paper employs the method of Conceptual Integration Theory (Fauconnier and Turner: 2002), based on the concept of a four-space mental model involving three blending processes: composition, completion, and elaboration. The model encompasses input source space (hereinafter ISS) or spaces, input target space (hereinafter ITS) or spaces, a generic space (hereinafter GS) based on the compositional process with attribution of connections between elements of the input spaces, and applying a compression mechanism in relations such as part-whole, cause-effect, and so on (Fauconnier & Turner, 2000). The blended space (hereinafter BS) encompasses selected elements from the input spaces that are mapped to background knowledge in long-term memory, corresponding to the completion process, and implies the development of a «scenario» associated with the elaboration process. The blend can be further «integrated» with other mental spaces, both blended and input, resulting in the emergence of another blended space.

The stages of analysis include: (1) identification and classification of ISCs associated with stylistic devices, with an emphasis on their functions in activating the semantic code of the text; (2) specification of ISCs as indexes of prominent positions in the text; (3) interpretation of ISCs as signs of the hermeneutic code, based on the key motifs of the text, and the symbolic code in oppositions such as “life and death,” “naturalness and artificiality,” “illusions – enlightenment”, “captivity – liberation”, etc.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

References to names of artists, visual and non-visual art works, styles, artistic elements, symbols, and motifs underlie the interaction of the novel with the codes of various semiotic systems, such as painting, music, sculpture, architecture, and logical games. The research algorithm includes identifying the functions of ISCs in (a) actualizing stylistic devices and the associated semantic code of the text, (b) creating prominent positions of the novel, (c) underlying hermeneutic, symbolic and semantic codes and constructing a liminal space of alternative worlds within the novel.

3.1. The Stylistic function of ISCs: semantic code of a novel

According to the criterion of stylistic function, ISCs are divided into 9 subtypes:

(1) Simile-forming ISC with a connector: *he swayed round, flaring her stole, like a figure from Beardsley* (Mag., 276); *Ornamental geese that floated on the water as on a silk painting* (Mag., 172); *glimpses through bead curtains of Lautrec-like interiors* (Mag., 239): In the last simile the tenor is *bead curtains*, the vehicle is *Lautrec interiors*, the comparator is *like*, and the eventuality is omitted in the nominal sentence. The comparison sample is the style of Toulouse-Lautrec.

(2) Simile-forming ISC transitioning into a metaphor: *The harpsichord began a long lute-stop passage, a new movement, as gentle as rain, the sounds stealing through the house, mysterious, remote-sounding harmonies* (Mag., 148). The tenor is the *lute-stop passage*, the vehicle is *rain*, the comparator is *as*, the eventuality is *movement*, the property is *gentle*, and the comparison sample is the harmonious sound of *harpsichord*. The development of the simile into a metaphor, *stealing through the house, mysterious, remote-sounding harmonies*, connotes the motif of “mystery” associated with the text’s semantic code.

(3) allusive, metonymic and a simile forming ISC with an explicit comparator: *You look so ravishing. Like a Renoir* (Mag., 189); *His face was as gloomy as an El Greco* (Mag., 155). In the last simile the tenor is *his face*, the vehicle is *El Greco*, the common property is *gloomy*, the comparator is *as...as*, and the eventuality is *was*. A comparison sample is the execution style of portraits and self-portraits by El Greco and the feeling of the protagonist evoked by them. The comparison sample underlies the metonymy transferring the atmosphere of Bosch’s paintings onto the artist himself. Both ISCs also function as allusions to the style and imagery of the artists, based on the comparison sample.

Bosch-like fish that peered foully out of crevices (Mag., 131). The tenor is *fish*, the vehicle is *Bosch*, the comparator is *like*, the eventuality is *peered*, the common property is *foully*, and the sample is the atmosphere of the Bosch’s paintings. The ISC underlies not only simile but also allusion to “The Garden of Earthly Delights,” where the symbolic image of fish is one of the frequent ones, and metonymy *Bosch-like fish*, transferring the atmosphere of Bosch’s paintings onto the artist himself. The ISS of metonymy is the Bosch’s paintings, ITS is the fish on the ocean floor, and GS is the ominous appearance of the fish observed by the narrator and the menacing symbolism of animals in Bosch’s paintings. In BS the images and atmosphere of the paintings is metonymically transferred on the associated artist and produces the connotations of mystery, and symbolism, associated with the novel’s semantic code in the semiotic space of the “sinister game” in which the protagonist is involved.

(4) allusive, metonymic and a simile forming ISC with an omitted comparator: *The light flowed downwards, concentrated on the white cloth, and was then reflected up, lighting our faces strangely, Caravaggio fashion, against the surrounding darkness* (Mag., 99). The tenor is *the light lighting our faces*, the vehicle is *Caravaggio fashion*, the common property is *strangely*, the eventuality is *flowed downwards, concentrated, reflected up*, and the comparison sample is the manner of Caravaggio’s painting, specifically the use of chiaroscuro with a sharp contrast between light and shadow. The sample underlies the allusion by invoking some knowledge about Caravaggio’s style and adding connotations related to the semantic code of “mystery” since Caravaggio’s paintings, with their play of light and shadow contrasts, often evoked a mysterious subtext.

(5) ISC-allusion and metonymy: *I stood with him once and watched a line of peasants laboring a turnip field. A Millet brought to life* (Mag., 174). ISS of the metonymic allusion is Millet's paintings, and ITS is *peasants laboring a turnip field*. GS bases on the similarities between the observed scene and the themes of the artist's paintings and realistic style, used to depict rural life. In BS, the plot and the artistic style are metonymically transferred to the author associated with them.

(6) ISC-metaphor: *he had the overdone macabreness of a horror-magazine illustration* (Mag., 196): In the metaphor PERSON is TERRIFYING ILLUSTRATION, ITS is the character's appearance, ISS is a horror magazine, GS selects attributes such as darkness, horror, and mystique. BS is the character's enigmatic nature, the sense of anxiety and fear evoked by him, associated with the semantic code in connotations of mysticism and liminality.

And rather maliciously I played him the Goldberg Variations. If one wishes to reduce a sensitive German to tears there is no surer lachrymatory (Mag., 384): in the metaphor GOLDBERG VARIATIONS is LACHRYMATORY, ISS is agents that provoke the tears, ITS is the music by Goldberg. GS includes the ability of both the irritating agent and music to evoke tears. BS involves the completion process by juxtaposing selected elements from the input spaces with background knowledge and refers to the emotions evoked in Germans by the music of the German composer Goldberg.

(7) ISC-personification: *The little Priapus threw up his arms at me, jeering his pagan smile at my English face* (Mag., 128); *The statue stood in the sun and eternally commanded the wind and the sea* (Mag., 209). The personifications of the statue and sculpture of the ancient god of fertility contribute to the semantic code through connotations of mystification and antiquity, which are pervasive throughout the text.

(8) Synesthetic ISC that combines the musical code with: (i) an olfactory code: *It was clear to me that the smell was connected with the singing. The sound faded, went completely. After a few minutes, the smell too was fainter* (Mag., 127), and (ii) a gustatory code: *I thought it must be coming from the walls from the gramophone in Conchis' bedroom (...). Then – unimaginable and strangeness of it, the snack of it, the sound swelled again and I knew beyond doubt what was being sung up there. It was 'Tipperary'* (Mag., 126). The liminality of the narrator's sensations, conveyed through synesthetic ISC, contributes to the connotations of liminality, the borderland of the world in which he undergoes his initiation, at the level of the semantic code.

(9) Transcodic multicomponent ISC-simile, combining codes of different semiotic modes.

Then there was a folio: Wild Life in Scandinavia. As with The Beauties of Nature of the week before, the "wild life" turned out to be all female (...). I went twice through the pictures; they clashed unpleasantly with the still-echoing Bach (Mag., 159).

The tenor – *a folio: Wild Life in Scandinavia*, and the vehicle – Bach’s music, form an antithesis between the musical and visual codes, evoking the narrator’s contrasting connotations underlying his liminal sensations, which pertain to the semantic code.

3.2 ISC as the index of prominent positions of the text

ISCs foreground the “strong” positions of the novel underpinning its subtextual level. The reference to a real painting, seen by Nicholas in Conchis’ house *My mind traveled up to the Bonnards* (Mag., 233) becomes the mechanism of qualitative deviation by subsequent references to the picture, underlying the hermeneutic, semiotic, and symbolic codes of the novel: *I thought of the Bonnard; that was the reality; such moments; not what one could tell* (Mag., 90); *Bonnard. He painted them both five or six years before he died. (...) and he gives the whole of existence a reason* (Mag., 89).

The hermeneutic code with motifs of “existential search” and “the impossibility of attaining the desired world” are marked by a simile-forming ISC – *Those Bonnards, their eternal outpouring of a golden happiness, haunted me; they were like windows on a world I had tried to reach all my life, and failed* (Mag., 377), and simile-forming polycomponent ISC-allusion:

Those Bonnards (...) bred a kind of Watteau-like melancholy in me, the forevergoneness of pictures like L’Embarcation pour Cythere. As if Bonnard had captured a reality so real that it could not exist; or only as a dream, a looking back and seeing where the way was lost and if it had not been lost but it had been lost (Mag., 377).

In a simile-forming ISC the tenor is narrator’s sensations from Bonnard’s paintings and the vehicle is *a world I had tried to reach all my life*. The metaphor of *golden happiness* becomes the common property of the compared terms, connecting the connotations from the artist’s paintings with the image of the sought-after world.

In a simile-forming polycomponent ISC-allusion the tenor and the vehicle are, respectively, the connotations associated with Bonnard’s paintings and the elusive reality that the protagonist strives for. The common property is the impossibility of attainment, *a dream*. The implied sample of comparison is incorporated in ISC-allusion, referencing Watteau’s paintings, which connotes melancholy and unattainability, such as in the painting “L’Embarcation pour Cythere.” The connotations of “unattainability” resonates with the lexemes *failed* and *eternal* from the previous simile-forming ISC.

In the culmination of the protagonist’s initiation, the reference to Bonnar’s disappearance from Conch’s house encodes the meaning of unattainability of transformation and inner harmony, despite all the trials in the metatheater of his

initiation: *I guessed, with a tinge of sadness, that the Bonnard had also come down* (Mag., 409). It is associated with the actional code, projecting into the protagonist's further quest for identity, transcending the boundaries of meta-game.

The recurrent ISCs associated with Bonnard, who was one of the first artists to reveal the inner life of women, realize the motif of the rejuvenating feminine principle, which is one of the keys in the novel. The stylistics of Bonnard's paintings, characterized by soft, muted, and light tones, relates to the semantic code, contrasting with the dramatic nature of the hero's initiation:

Bonnard. (...). It was an unforgettable painting; it set a dense golden halo of light around the most trivial of moments, so that the moment, and all such moments, could never be completely trivial again (Mag., 89).

In ISC-metaphor, the ISS is Bonnard's painting. ITS is significance of any moments in life. GS encompasses the depth and special significance of the painting and the understanding that even in the most trivial moments of life, there can exist depth and special meaning. BS creates a new perception of ordinary life, imbuing it with a unique significance akin to *a dense golden halo*. At the symbolic level, the references to Bonnard symbolize the opposition of "sublime vs. trivial", which are cross-cutting in the text.

Allusions to Bonnard's paintings, due to their recurrent nature in the text, acquire polysemy, as integrated into the semantic oppositions of the symbolic code, connotations of the semantic code, and key motifs associated with the hermeneutic code.

A recurrent ISCs are made to Botticelli's paintings, which is reproduced either literally, as *a Botticelli beauty, long fair hair, gray-violet eyes* (Mag., 108); *The Botticelli face; gray-violet eyes* (Mag., 146), *a slim white shape, Botticelli's Primavera* (Mag., 442), or its second part "gray-violet eyes" (Mag., 203, 311), "gray-amethyst eyes" (Mag., 437), which is associated with the "Botticelli face" due to the ISCs repetitions.

The repeated ISCs evokes connotations of mysticism and a transcendent world, as they refer to the portrait image of Conchis' long-deceased bride and later to Lily. The interplay of ISCs highlights the similarity between the portrait and the living character, establishing a liminal space and bringing forth the actional code linked to the protagonist's actions in the pursuit of solving the enigma.

Prominent positions of the text are foregrounded through recurrent ISCs to puppet theater. The world of the "puppet theater" is embedded in the semiotic space of meta-theater, which forms a narrative-conceptual frame of the entire narration. Although ISCs to theatrical staging are the most numerous, the article does not analyze the construction of meta-theater, considering that such a problematic should be the subject of a separate study, and it focuses on one aspect of conveyance of theatricality – the marionette theater.

For the first time, the image of marionettes appears in Conchis's story about dolls:

In it he kept his company of automata—puppets, some almost human in size, that seemed to have stepped, or whirled, out of a Hoffman story. (...). But the chief piece was Mirabelle, la Maltresse-Machine. A naked woman who when set in motion lay back in her faded four-poster bed (Mag., 174).

References to dolls are recurrently repeated in prominent positions, associating them with symbolic and hermeneutic codes. Thus, the doll – a mechanism for satisfying sexual fantasies – becomes a hint at Nicholas's self-destructive element, treating women as objects. The entire meta-game of Conchis, named by him "the disintoxication," is directed against this element.

Secondly, the dolls become a pervasive ISC characterizing Conchis's "god game": *perhaps he was jealous of us – (...) jealous of us as rebellious puppets (Mag., 425)*. The personification of *puppets (rebellious puppets)*, on the contrary, becomes a means of depersonifying all the characters involved into metagame.

Thirdly, Mirabelle becomes an identifier and, at the same time, an opposition to the image of Lily-Julie. The antithesis to Mirabelle is marked by ISCs, comparing Lily with the images of Renoir, Botticelli, Nefertiti. The identification with Mirabelle is associated with the image of Lily as a symbol of temptation, marked by reference to Goya's *Maja Desnuda*:

On it, superbly white and completely naked, was Lily. She was lying against a mound of pillows, deep gold, amber, rose, maroon, themselves piled against an ornate gilt and carved headboard. She was turned sideways towards me in a deliberate imitation of Goya's Maja Desnuda (Mag., 486).

The ISC support the ambivalence of the character Lily, actualizing the actional code, motivating the protagonist to seek the "authentic" Lily.

The interpretation of Lily as a symbol of temptation is also based on ISC-allusion to Leighton's painting "Cophetua and the Beggar Maid": *"Who am I?" It was a pose, a sexual guessing-game. "The slave?" "Cophetua. (...). "Her first love affair" (Mag., 444)*. The peculiarity of this allusion emphasizes the liminality of what is happening. Intersemiotic reminiscence, marked by the title of the painting, refers to its poetic narrative of the meeting of the king and the beggar girl, into whom he falls in love. While the "Beggar Girl" from Leighton's narrative embodies innocence and virtue, with which King Cimabue was tempted, Lyli's interpretation reimagines the narrative as a seduction scene, highlighting the cynical transformation of Lily from innocence to seductress.

The allusion to "Cophetua" simultaneously serves as a marker of hypertextuality (Genette, 1997, pp. 1-7) as its interpretation of Lily is parodic and even burlesque

– with an intentional use of a high theme in a vulgarized context. In contrast, Leighton’s Pre-Raphaelite painting embodies the ideals of the Pre-Raphaelites – chivalry, romanticism, and the quest for perfect love.

The ISCs to the puppet theater associated with the character of Lily become, at the end of the novel, a culmination of the narrator’s liminal state, blurring the boundary between the mystical and the real:

They were hanging from the branch of a pine tree. One was a doll. The other was a human skull (...). Around its ankles were its only ‘clothes’—two wisps of rag, one ivory, the other indigo. I recognized them as the fabrics ‘Lily’ had worn the second weekend. The doll was her and said that she was evil, she was black, under the white she so often wore... Hanging dolls in sacred woods... (Mag., 427).

The ISC referring to dolls is polysemantic, actualizing various layers of meaning in the novel. The symbolism of the doll as Lily reveals the key motif of the protagonist’s “disintoxication,” demystifying the image of Lily and denying her ambivalence: *The doll was her, and said that she was evil, she was black, under the white she so often wore (Mag., 427).*

The skull hanging next to the doll-Lily may signify the metaphorical death of Nicholas with his “awakening” and transfiguration. Symbolically confirming such an interpretation is the image of the Sacred Woods – a archetypal place of initiation and symbolic death: *Hanging dolls in sacred woods*, with a symbolic return to reality, and the Conchis’ words: *An answer is always a form of death (Mag., 589).*

The third projection of hermeneutical interpretation arises from establishing an associative connection between the hanging dolls and the scene from Conchis’s story about the hanging of a Greek youth and two girls by the Germans. The monstrosity of the scene is depicted through ISC-comparison to Goya’s works, specifically his series of etchings called “The Horrors of War”: *Bodies hung from the branches, pale in the shadow, as monstrous as Goya etchings (Mag., 399).*

One of the components embedded in the semiotic space of the “meta-theater” is the use of ISCs describing the characters through the language of logical games such as chess and poker.

His eyes hesitated, black with suspicion, a lightning assessment; it was like playing chess with a five-second move limit (Mag., 410); Her face was bland, but as intent on mine as a chess player’s on the game (Mag., 559).

Both explicit ISCs-similes involve the tenor, which is the characters’ face expression, and the vehicle, which is the game of chess, with common properties of the compared terms such as concentration, quick decision-making, attention and focus on the action. ISCs to chess contribute to prominent positions within the text, associated with the liminality of the game space and the blurred boundary between the realms of the game and reality.

Similar function is performed by ISCs to poker.

It seems so cold-blooded. "Poker is a cold-blooded game." "Poker? (...). "I thought that was what we were playing (Mag., 439); a clear glimpse of a profound future happiness; of at last having in my hand, after a long run of low cards, the joker and all four aces. Or three, at any rate (Mag., 333-334).

In the first ISCs-metaphor, ISS is the game of poker, and ITS is the meta-game in which the narrator is involved. GS includes the cold-blooded and calculated behavior of both poker players and the characters involved in Conchis's meta-game experiment. BS is the realization by Nicholas that the series of his trials is not a coincidence but someone else's game.

In the second ISCs-metaphor, ISS is the winning cards in poker, and ITS is the image or idea of foreseeing future happiness. GS is associated with the concept of satisfaction, achieving success, or overcoming difficulties. BS represents a premonition of luck comparable to winning in poker.

Thus, based on the criterion of significance in highlighting strong positions in the novel, the article distinguishes four main types of ISCs that refer to the semiotic codes of painting, puppet theater, chess, and poker.

3.3. ISCs in underpinning key motifs and semiotic codes

ISCs function in "The Magus" as means of creating a hermeneutic code, as they encode the key motifs of the novel: (a) the motif of mystification, influence, and control, in combination with the motifs of the hero's existential quest and initiation, freedom and the impossibility of attaining the desired world; (b) the motif of the revitalizing feminine principle, which, "unlike Adam societies, offers the world innovation and experiment, and fresh definitions, aims, modes of feeling" (Fowls, 1969, p. 166); (c) the motif of the vital force of nature, embodying the opposition of the naturalness of nature and the artificiality of the world and its social norms.

3.4. Motif of mystification: iscs th the image of conchis

The motif of temptation vs. salvation is actualized through ISCs to the image of the antagonist – Conchis, who is *the old center to the whole enigma* (Mag., 342), creating the liminal space of the novel. Conchis is a Creator of Metagame in the novel, constructing it as a semiotic space of trials for Nicholas, aimed at freeing him from selfishness, and attaining a newly transformed identity. Conchis plays the role of the magus who puts Urfe into a play, a 'godgame,' involving all other characters who perform different roles.

ISCs underlie the meaning of “mystification,” appealing to the Trickster archetype. This is achieved by referring to precedent names of artists embodying this archetype through allusive simile: *He had a bizarre family resemblance to Picasso* (Mag., 72) based on the structure: the tenor is Conchis, the vehicle is Picasso, the common property is marked by the word *family resemblance* to denote inherent, “innate” similarity. The comparison sample is the behavior and character of Picasso, known as a mystifier-eccentric. That the ISC-simile precisely designates the Trickster archetype is confirmed by its repetition in other contexts, with the actualization of the semes “imitation”: *Now he looked like Picasso imitating Gandhi imitating a buccaneer* (Mag., 132) and “ambivalence”: *he seemed in an excellent humor; at his most Picasso-like and dangerous* (Mag., 373). The tenor in the last ISC-simile is “Conchis’s mood,” deictically indicated through “he,” the vehicle is the mood/behavior of Picasso, the common properties – characteristics of the antagonist’s behavior associated with Picasso, are omitted. Omission flouts the maxim of information clarity, and the implicit antithesis between “excellent humor” and “dangerous” violates the maxim of relevance, triggering an implicature of unpredictability and ambivalence in the antagonist’s behavior. This is supported by the repetition of *imitating* in the first ISC-simile.

In addition to the Trickster role, ISCs also refer to another archetypal component of the antagonist’s character – the Creator, through a ISC-metaphor BACH – DEVALUATION OF WORDS: *You make words seem shabby things* (Nicholas), *Bach does* (Conchis) (Mag., 159). References to Bach, symbolizing spiritual music and high art, and the association with him through Conchis’ musical performance, contrast with Conchis’ character as an imitator and create an antithesis between the mundane and the sublime, contributing to the symbolic code.

The additional meaning actualized by the reference to Bach is the multi-dimensionality and complexity of Conchis himself, akin to the polyphonic nature of Bach’s music: *Conchis’s polyhedral character* (Mag., 159). The multi-dimensionality of the antagonist is further actualized through two ISC-similes comparing Conchis with Bach and Bonnard: *He played as I suppose Bach himself would have played (...). It was the first time I had heard him play great music, and I was moved as I had been by the Bonnards* (Mag., 178).

An omitted common property of the first ISC-simile is inspiration, creative impulse, harmony, beauty, and virtuosity, with the comparison sample being Bach’s music as a composer and performer. The sample underlies the development of the musical ISC-simile referring to the artistic works of Pierre Bonnard, a virtuoso master of color, tone, and harmony.

As the text develops, ISCs to Bach’s music become polysemantic, enriched by connotations that disrupt preconceived notions and expectations associated with Conchis’ character, leading to a reassessment and reconfiguration of his perception by protagonist.

By employing ISCs that simultaneously evoke the archetypes of the Trickster and the Creator, the novel establishes a liminal space and actualizes the actional code that guides the protagonist's further actions in his quest to transcend the gap between mystification and reality.

The blurring of boundaries in the liminal space of the text is further supported by the mismatch between the connotations of the «sublime,» marked by ISCs to music and painting, and the «manipulative,» through the use of ISCs of «chess». The opposition «sublime / sincerity vs. manipulation» contributes to the symbolic code. Thus, ISC to Bach's playing, *things like the humanity in his playing of Bach* (Mag., 187), which actualizes the meanings of «sincerity» and «soulfulness» forms a subtextual antithesis with the ISCs to chess, which are associated with «manipulation»: *I had the distinct feeling that he was a chess master caught between two moves; immensely rapid calculation of combinations* (Mag., 214); *I hadn't played chess for years, but I remembered that the better you got, the more it became a game of false sacrifices. He was testing not my powers of belief but my powers of unbelief; assaying my incredulity* (Mag., 219).

The input spaces of both ISCs-metaphors coincide. ITS is Konchis/his behavior, and ISS is the chess master/chess game. However, GSs differ. In the first metaphor, the features include masking moves to deceive the opponent and psychological pressure to confuse and control the opponent's behavior. In the second metaphor, the features involve a strategic approach with foresight of the opponent's moves, calculation of moves, power, and control over the chessboard (metatheater) and the pieces. BS of the first ISC-metaphor encompasses manipulation of the protagonist's trust, creating an illusion of «playing» on his side and blurring the boundaries between the game and reality for him. The blend of the second metaphor involves a meta-game that is thoroughly planned and calculated by Conchis, but he improvises with new combinations.

Both ISCs-metaphors support the hermeneutic code of the novel as they encode the motif of mystification, influence, and control.

3.5. ISCs coding the motif of the vital force of nature

ISCs referencing nature underlie the semantic code of the novel, actualizing connotations of “mystery,” “eternity,” “primordiality,” and “serenity,” creating a contrast with the world of destruction and psychological labyrinth, with a *descent into a modern Tartarus* (Mag., 609). The opposition “serenity vs destruction” pertain to the novel's symbolic code.

In ISC-allusion and metonymic simile, *The sea and the mountains floated in the steady evening sunshine. It was all peace, elements and void, golden air and mute blue distances, like a Claude* (Mag., 61), the compared tenor and the vehicle are *the*

sea and the mountains and *Claude* metonymically referencing to Monet's landscape paintings. The common property is *peace, elements and void, golden air and mute blue distances*, and the comparison sample is the Monet's artistic atmosphere, visual imagery, and harmony, a sense of peace and space while the comparator is *like*. Although the comparison is explicit, its "right" term serves as the source space in metonymy, identifying the Monet's pictures with an artist himself. Through the metonymic component of the allusion, the strategy of intimacy is achieved, creating connotations of the narrator being close to the world of nature.

In the structure of the allusion, the common property is the key meaning-generating element, corresponding to the connotative code of "serenity" and "calmness," and indirectly to the hermeneutic code encoding the motif of the "spiritual power of nature."

The same function is performed by the bases of ISC-simile:

the colors softened by the imperceptible mist of autumn, as simple and pleasing in its way as a Boudin beachscape (Mag., 609) and ISC-metaphor: *The mountains on the mainland took snow, and magnificent white shoulders out of Hokusai stood west and north across the angry water* (Mag., 47). ITS of the metaphor is the mountain peaks and ISS is Hokusai's engravings; GS involves refinement, clarity of contours, and meaningfulness of the landscape and the artistic style of Hokusai with its clear lines, minimalist technique, and profound portrayal of nature's details. BS space is grandeur, depth, and meaningfulness of nature, associated with connotations of the semantic code, is formed based on the processes of completion and elaboration of background knowledge that in Hokusai's prints, the landscape ceases to be a simple background, and each detail enriches its own significance.

In addition to painting, nature is also described and spiritualized through ISCs to music. In the ISC-allusive simile, *Outside, the crickets chirped monotonously, with a Webern-like inconsistency yet precision of rhythm* (Mag., 93) the chirping of crickets – tenor, is compared with vehicle – *Webern* based on the common property *inconsistency yet precision of rhythm*. This actualizes connotations of orderliness, logic, internal law, and polyphony regardless of the dissonant nature of natural sounds – like the constructiveness of Webern's music, which, beneath its apparent lack of harmony within the twelve-tone system, contains clarity of rules, constructivism, and boundless possibilities of self-expression.

The connotations of eternity and infinity are marked by ISC-simile referring to two musical codes – the earthly and otherworldly realms: *But the song came with a dreamlike slowness, almost as if it was being sung out of the stars and had to cross all that night and space to reach me* (Mag., 126), which contributes to the blurring of the chronotope in the novel as one of the characteristics of its liminality. The tenor is *the song*, and the vehicle is *out of the stars*. The common property is *dreamlike slowness*, the eventuality is *sung* and *came out*, and the connector is *as if*.

The comparison sample is the idea of distance from space to Earth, exemplified in *to cross all that night and space to reach me* (since information from space reaches Earth after decades or centuries).

Through the simile, the song is attributed with characteristics of the otherworldly, unattainable, and mysterious, creating the impression of its supernatural origin as a special message intended for the protagonist. It emphasizes the magical and mystical connotations in the novel, which is associated with its semantic and hermeneutic codes.

In *some warbler in the thickest of the bushes reeled out a resonant, stuttering song (...)*. *It scolded, fluted, screeched, jug-jugged, entranced* (Mag., 60), the ISC-metaphorical personification associates the bird's song with the sound of a flute using terms that are characteristic of humans – *stuttering, scolded, fluted, jug-jugged, entranced* connoting spirituality and the living force of nature. These connotations are reinforced by a combination of other stylistic devices – alliteration, creating musicality and rhythm (“resonant, stuttering song,” “scolded, fluted, screeched”), onomatopoeia – “jug-jugged,” imitating the bird's sounds, and the climax achieved through the rhythmic “build-up” of verbs.

The connotations of mystery, antiquity, and eternity are actualized by ISC-allusive simile that links the sounds of the river to the trumpets of Tutankhamun – the oldest musical instrument that is over 3,000 years old: *I heard high overhead one of the frequent sounds of the river, a very beautiful one, like the calling of Tutankhamun's trumpets* (Mag., 288). In hermeneutic code, the allusion associated with Tutankhamun and his mysterious trumpets contributes to the creation of an alternative world of mysticism and mythology in which Nicholas is involved. The name Tutankhamun itself has mystical and symbolic significance: «Tut» and «Ankh-Amun.» «Tut» refers to the god Thoth, associated in Egyptian mythology with wisdom and magic. «Ankh-Amun» indicates a connection to the Egyptian god of the black sky.

In an even greater degree, the hermeneutic code is underpinned by the implicit ISC-allusion associated with the name of the antagonist Conchis. The pronunciation of this name by the islanders with a hard «ch» sound – *He pronounced the ch hard – the ch of loch* (Mag, 62), forms homonyms between Conchis and the plural of «conch,» which signifies «shells,» the spiral-shelled mollusks symbolizing the triton trumpets. According to ancient Greek mythology, these trumpets were used by the god of the woods and pastures, Pan, and served as signaling instruments in the time of Homer. In India and Tibet, such shells are still used as musical instruments (Oliver, 1975).

The implied allusion to shells as a musical instrument in the name Conchis serves as a means of actualizing key motifs of the hermeneutic code. Conchis's metagame, whose name forms a homonym with the triton shell-trumpet, is intended

to prompt the protagonist towards self-awareness and the discovery of his true self (the image of a seashell closing its valves symbolizes self-realization). The sound of the shell as a musical instrument, symbolizing eternity and the primordial cosmos in India and Tibet (op. cit) is associated with the eternal and life-giving forces of nature. The symbolic significance of the bivalve shell as an Indian-Tibetan symbol of femininity, the feminine watery essence, and the universal regeneration is associated with the motif of creative femininity.

3.6. Intersemiotic allusions coding the motif of creative femininity

The motif of transformative and animating power of the feminine creative principle is repeated in Fowls' works, who sees man as "a kind of artifice, and woman as a kind of reality. The one is cold idea, the other is warm fact. Daedalus faces Venus, and Venus must win" (Fowls, 1969, p. 172). In the novel, the existentially inauthentic Nicholas embarks on his spiritual journey and initiation through encounters with mysterious women who possess godlike qualities, including those marked with ISCs:

(a) to the realm of art: *As an unscrupulous collector falls in love with a painting he wants. And will do anything to get. Except that this wasn't a painting* (Mag., 563).

(b) to the style of artists: *slightly heavy Gibson-girl handsomeness of feature that the age so much admired* (Mag., 89); *I looked at the woman's eyes; they hadn't the usual fishlike pallor of Modigliani eyes* (Mag., 84): ISC forms here a metaphorical allusive antithesis to Modigliani's images.

(c) to picturesque images and sculptural representations that are well-known precedential phenomena: *I turned and she was smiling at me; the Leonardo smile* (Mag., 440); *A little smile at the corner of her mouth; the Leonardo smile again* (Mag., 445); *They sat on the bed like a pair of sphinxes, enjoying their secret, their silence, and my impatience* (Mag., 441).

(d) to specific artworks: *Light from outside distorted the shadows round her figure, isolated her face, so that she looked like a Munch lithograph. Jealousy; or Envy; or Innocence* (Mag., 600).

Through a transcoded ISC-metaphorical allusion that combines codes from semiotic modes of music and painting, connotations of mysterious femininity are created, connected to the semantic code: *she had, yes, I suppose a Botticelli beauty, long fair hair, gray-violet eyes. But that makes her sound too pale, too Pre-Raphaelite* (Mag., 108).

ISCs to Botticelli's paintings associate Lily-Joly with the image of ethereal and lyrical women. Such meanings are supported by ISC to the Pre-Raphaelites, who created a new type of female beauty in the visual arts – detached, serene, and mystical, developing the myth of Eternal Femininity. The allusion to the Pre-

Raphaelites likely refers to the specific image of Ophelia in Millais' painting, which is detached from reality due to her pale porcelain face. In addition to the semantic code, the allusion to the Pre-Raphaelites, whose paintings are characterized by the motif of duality and the transition from life to death, is connected to the hermeneutic code, creating a liminal space associated with the character of Lily.

The metaphoric allusion involves ISSs of music and painting projected into ITS of "mysterious beauty of a woman". Multiple ISSs are simultaneously engaged, each forming its own metaphor that develops within the blended space:

- (1) Painting is Music: based on the generic attributes of tone, composition, aesthetic pleasure, and the rhythm shared by music and painting.
- (2) Feminine Beauty is Music: GS includes several common attributes – a source of aesthetic pleasure; fluidity of music's movement and a woman's natural grace; ephemerality and uniqueness.
- (3) Feminine Beauty is Painting: GS includes expressiveness and emotional power; harmony and openness to interpretations and associations. BS: Lily's beauty was harmonious, unique, natural, and at the same time mysterious, like music and painting.

The ISC – allusive simile with the symbol in the painting *She wore no jewelry, no ornament; simply the white dress, like a figure in a tableau symbolizing Purity* (Mag., 280) juxtaposes Lily (the tenor) with *a figure in a tableau symbolizing Purity* (the vehicle). The common property is *wore no jewelry, no ornament; simply the white dress*, the eventuality is *wore*, comparator is *like*. The comparison sample is most likely "The Lady of Shalott" of Waterhouse, in which the white color of the girl's dress symbolizes purity and innocence. The allusion depicts one of the facets of the heroine, who plays the most enigmatic and mystical role in Consis' meta-theater, constantly transforming into various images – goddesses, Victorian ladies, modern women, seductresses, and others, creating a liminal space of play into which the protagonist enters.

The allusive metaphor *She had a beautiful neck; the throat of a Nefertiti* (Mag., 169) refers to the sculptural bust of Queen Nefertiti, symbolizing feminine beauty and refinement. The ISS of the somatic metaphor is the sculptural bust of Nefertiti, and ITS is the appearance of Lily. The generic attributes include beauty, refinement, and regality. In BS, additional connotative attributes such as divinity, regality and eternity emerge through completion and elaboration operations. Similar metaphorical connotations in the blend are supported by the semantic code of the novel by allusive similes and metaphors characterizing the heroine as Demeter, Astarte, Ariadne, Electra, Clytemnestra, and Persephone. The reference to Nefertiti in the description of Lily is also hinted at by the ISC-simile: *Her mouth was incredibly like that of the stone statue* (Mag., 176).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the criterion of stylistic function associated with the semantic code, the paper identifies and classifies ISCs into simile-forming ISC with a connector, simile-forming ISC transitioning into a metaphor, allusive, metonymic and a simile-forming ISC with and without comparator, ISC-allusion and metonymy, ISC-metaphor, ISC-personification, synesthetic ISC that combines the artistic code with the olfactory or gustatory codes, and transcodic multicomponent ISC-simile.

The blended space of ISCs-metaphors, the common property and sample of similes, personifications, and the contrasting combination of codes contribute to connotations of mystery, mysticism, liminality, symbolism, transcendence, infinity, otherworldliness, unattainability, and secrecy, indexing the semantic code of the novel in the semiotic space of meta-play.

ISCs link the strong positions of the novel related to its key motifs that underlie the hermeneutic code: the motifs of mystification, influence, and control, the hero's initiation, his existential quest, "detoxification," freedom and the impossibility of attaining the desired world, as well as the motifs of revitalizing feminine principle and the spiritual and life-giving power of nature. In the symbolic code, ISCs actualize oppositions such as "game vs. reality," "sincerity vs. manipulation," "death vs. rebirth," "naturalness vs. artificiality," "serenity vs. destruction." At the level of the actional code, the ISCs-based oppositions drive the protagonist's subsequent actions in his endeavor to bridge the gap between mystification and reality.

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