A careful examination of Morley Callaghan's fiction reveals that beneath the surface level of plot, the inner structure of his fiction is resonant with signs. Signs in his fiction are derived either from the larger symbolic or from the cultural order and provide an extra dimension because of allusions to biblical myths and biblical characters to comment upon contemporary society. The juxtaposition and parodying of cultural signs such as priest, saint, church, law, prostitute, outlaw, Christ, Judas, etc provide rich connotations to the fixed meanings of these signs in the social structure. What I mean by signs, symbolic order, sign system, meaning and connotation will be explained in detail in the present chapter, which aims at introducing and explaining the theoretical perspective chosen for the thesis. As techniques such as defamiliarization, demythologization, interspersion of genres, parodying, hybridization of forms and subversion are inextricably woven into the fictional narratives of Callaghan, the chapter surveys briefly the development and dominance of these techniques in the twentieth-century literary theory and criticism.

Further, novels with biblical titles and biblical symbols such as Such Is My Beloved, They Shall Inherit the Earth, More Joy in Heaven and A Time for Judas are ironically juxtaposed with contemporary situation to expose the conflict between the old values and new adaptations. Meaning becomes problematic, as there is no transparent relationship between the word and the world. In other words, the study of signs in Callaghan’s novels indicates that there is no one transcendental meaning from words to their referents or objects. For instance, Judas in Callaghan’s novel, A Time for Judas, is
not the archetypal symbol for betrayal, but a sign standing for the dual meanings of love and betrayal or truth and betrayal; the prostitutes in novels such as *Such Is My Beloved*, *An Enchanted Pimp*, *A Time for Judas*, and *The Many Colored Coat* are not viewed as mere flesh traders, but capable of imparting divine grace; a criminal like Kip Caley in *More Joy in Heaven* has the potential to feel the compassion of Christ; and finally, the Church, believed to be the holy abode of Christ may not be holy at all. In effect, Callaghan seems to be destabilizing the fixed meanings of certain cultural signs in his novels to expose (and also to undermine) the duality inherent in such signs and in the society that creates them. Thereby, he intends to offer a new vision of man: human nature is always susceptible to changes in relation to other elements in a particular cultural order; any attempt to designate a fixed identity will be an ideological entrapment. He brings in mythical, biblical, and literary allusions all at once in his works, giving rise to multiple interpretations of meaning in his novels.

Recent developments in literary theory and criticism have offered new insights into signs and their signification. From the Saussurean formulation of meaning as the product of differential and relational aspects of signs, it has come a long way to the post-structuralist and postmodernist assertions that meaning is plural due to the infinite signification of signs. These insights have changed the conception of human identity in both life and art: the emphasis has shifted from the unified individual to the ever-changing, enigmatic subject. Callaghan’s novels interrogate fixed ideas and propose multiple interpretations in place of one, dominant meaning. Before analyzing such aspects in Callaghan’s fiction, it is essential to understand the development of criticism and its preoccupation with signs, meaning and identity in the twentieth century.
It is appropriate to begin with Jonathan Culler's assertion in his "Preface" to *The Pursuit of Signs* where he asserts that criticism is the pursuit of signs. According to him, criticism occurs only because of the signs of literature, which are not simply given but are pursued. Different modes of criticism are recognized and distinguished by the accounts they give of this pursuit. Accordingly, New Criticism marks the beginning of a new scientific era in Anglo-American literary criticism; from New Criticism the link to formalism becomes inevitable; formalism, in turn, is succeeded by structuralism. It is structuralism, which is closely associated with semiotics and later leads to the post-structuralist phase of semiotics. I look at the whole enterprise of structuralism to semiotics to post-structuralism as a movement in the changing conceptions of sign, signifier, signified and meaning. There is a considerable amount of energy, intellect and thinking involved in the shift from the structuralist idea of a work as a closed entity, to be deciphered by the critic for definite meanings, to see it as a plural entity, and possessing an endless play of signifiers which is never fixed to a single centre, essence or meaning.

It is an accepted fact that although the origin of semiotics can be traced back as far as Plato and Aristotle, it emerged as a self-conscious theory only at the beginning of the twentieth century, in the writings of Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Later it received fresh impetus in the hands of structuralists and achieved maturity in the hands of post-structuralists, mainly by linking itself with psychoanalysis. I begin with Saussure's insights on linguistic sign and Peirce's logical analysis of semiotics to reflect upon the later adaptations of their views by semiotics and its other interlinking modes of criticism, especially, formalism, structuralism, deconstruction, post-structuralism and psychoanalysis. Thus I would be treating semiotics, for the purpose of
my analysis of Callaghan’s novels, as a mode of literary criticism informed by the theories of signs. Before embarking upon semiotics, it is relevant to see how the text itself, devoid of authorial and historical dimensions, became the focus of literary criticism in the hands of New Critics.

As a revolt against the romantic theory of subjectivity, New Criticism evolved from the literary theories and critical practices of the British literary critics such as I.A. Richards, William Empson and F.R. Leavis, and American critics such as Cleanth Brooks, W.K. Wimsatt, Jr., Allen Tate, Richard Palmer Blackmur, Robert Penn Warren, and John Crowe Ransom. It was John Crowe Ransom’s book *The New Criticism* (1941) that provided the name for the movement. T.S. Eliot first articulated the New Critical sensibility in his collection of critical essays, *Selected Essays* in the 1920s. New Criticism laid an emphasis on text as the centre of critical thought and on explicating the text’s meaning. It was predominated by the notions of the autonomy of the literary work, the importance of demonstrating its organic unity, and as I.A. Richards pointed out, the requirement of “close reading”—“All respectable poetry invites close reading” (Richards 203). Accordingly, the literary work became an object of critical thought detached from not only authorial intention but also from historical and causal explanation. As Robert Scholes observes, it repudiated both the author-oriented approach of E.D. Hirsch and reader-oriented approach of Culler. It offered instead, “an exercise of textual ingenuity supported by the dictionary and grammar book in place of the alternatives of authorial domination or anarchy of readers” (Scholes 10).

New Criticism is closer to Russian formalism due to its critical focus on the literary work alone. It is also remotely related to structuralism, as it believes in meaning
as something determined by a structure within the text. All these approaches are
ahistorical, rejecting anything outside the text, and concentrating on language.

Although New Criticism met with severe criticism from the beginning, it began to
lose its place by the 1950s for several reasons of which I have noted only the prominent
ones. In the chapter entitled "Beyond Interpretation" of his The Pursuit of Signs, Culler
complains that New Criticism left readers and critics with only one function: "They must
interpret the poem; they must show how its various parts contribute to a thematic unity,
for this thematic unity justifies the work's status as autonomous artefact" (4). He insists
on a deflection from the focus on interpretation in criticism and calls for poetics, which
will encompass the understanding of "the conventions and operations" of literature as an
institution. Even Marxists showed that ideology and cultural matrices couldn't be ignored
in textual interpretation. They emphasized on context in literary works and insisted,
"meaning is not simply "in" the words but in a set of values and implications which are
matters of history and must be so understood" (Scholes 10). Marxists, along with
feminists, suspected of political ideology narrowed in New Criticism's respect for unity
in the text. New Criticism is more concerned with the essential components of any work
of literature such as words, images, symbols, irony etc., rather than with character,
thought, and reference to external reality. According to Scholes, the strengths and
weaknesses of New Critical interpretation arise from this extreme attention to the work as
"a uniquely meaningful work" (11).

In Canada, New Critics' advocacy of language and text as autonomous entities
can be traced in the arguments put forward by critics and writers such as Frank Davey,
Louis Dudek, Robert Kroetsch, Eli Mandel, Northrop Frye, Russell Brown, Michael
Dixon, Barry Cameron, and so on. It is appropriate here to discuss briefly Northrop Frye’s *The Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) as retaining some of New Critical (and formalistic impulse by contiguity) stances, but signalling the importance of structure, as it will, in structuralism. His ‘First Essay,’ ‘Second Essay,’ Third Essay,’ and the ‘Fourth Essay’ attempt at characterizing literature with “a conceptual framework”—to use Jonathan Culler’s phrase—of five primary modes (mythical, romantic, high mimetic, low mimetic, and ironic), five Symbolic phases (literal, descriptive, formal, mythic, and anagogic), Myths or four narrative patterns (romance, comedy, tragedy, and satire and irony), and four Genres (drama, *epos*, fiction, and lyric). The “archetypes” connect one text with another without taking into consideration the historical fact. In this sense, as the Canadian critic Barbara Godard notes, “There is a parallel between Frye’s ‘myths’ and those of structuralist anthropologist Lévi-Strauss who wrote of mythological analysis that it can claim to show ‘not how men think in myths, but how myths operate in men’s minds without their being aware of the fact’” (30).

Frye’s monumental work sprang mainly from his desire to make criticism scientific in the New Critical fashion and to reject value judgements. He shared with the New Critics a wish to discipline criticism as an objective system, because literature was made out of literature. In other words, he kept history at a distance by viewing literature as “an enclosed ecological recycling of texts, but unlike New Criticism [he] finds in literature a *substitute* history, with all the global span and collective structures of history itself” (Eagleton 80). In his insistence on considering literature an “autonomous verbal structure” without any reference to the external reality and turning it a closed entity containing “life and reality in a system of verbal relationships,” Frye displays a more
formalistic bent than the New critics (Frye120). Frye considers literature a collective enterprise of human experience rather than self-expression of individual authors. Terry Eagleton questions the validity of Frye's attempt to leave actual history, and considers Frye's approach in a sense "anti-humanistic," as it dismantles the individual subject. Being a Marxist himself, Eagleton sees Frye in the liberal humanist tradition of Arnold, desiring for "society as free, classless urbane" (Eagleton 82).

For many structuralists, Frye's work is like an introduction to structural principles, but I consider it relevant to outline formalism first, as it provides the necessary link between New Criticism and structuralism. Suffice it to note that Frye, like structuralists, believed in examining structures and general laws by which literary works function.

Formalism flourished in Russia in the second decade of the twentieth century, and became known as a distinctive literary theory due to its focus on the distinguishing features of literature. Its origin and development can be traced to Moscow Linguistic Circle, founded in 1915 by Roman Jakobson, Petr Bogatyrev and Grigorii Vinokur, and the Petrogard OPOIAZ (acronym for the society for the Study of Poetic Language) founded in 1916 by Viktor Shklovsky, Boris Eichenbaum, Osip Brik, and others. Whereas the members of the former school were primarily linguists, those of the latter were literary historians.

In Structuralism and Semiotics, Terence Hawkes traces the development of early formalism to "the symbolist concern with form as a viable communicative instrument; autonomous, self-expressive, able by extra-verbal rhythmic, associative and connotative means to 'stretch' language beyond its normal 'everyday' range of meaning" (60).
Hawkes, however, draws attention to Boris Eichenbaum, who distinguished formalism from symbolism: whereas symbolism was led by subjective philosophy and aesthetic theories, formalism focused its attention on the scientific investigation of facts. Like New Critics, formalists isolated the object of literary study by focusing on literary facts and not on the external conditions of history, sociology or psychology under which literature is created. They differed, however, from New Critics in their extreme interest in identifying and examining the devices or techniques employed in the text.

Formalism viewed literature as a specialized mode of language, and sought as their object of study, “literariness” (literaturnost) in literature. Jakobson who first used this term said, “the subject of literary scholarship is not literature in its totality but literariness (literaturnost) i.e. that which makes of a given work a work of literature” (Erlich 172). In Hawkes’s view, “Poetic language is deliberately self-conscious, self-aware” (63). Shklovsky’s view is in correlation to Jakobson’s, as for him, “works of art” are those “created by special techniques designated to make the works as obviously artistic as possible” (Lemon and Reis 8). This emphasis on literariness led the formalists, especially, Jakobson to distinguish between poetic and practical language. Whereas the ordinary language aims at efficient communication, poetic language draws attention to itself, its own formal features rather than to referents or concepts that the words represent. The present study on Callaghan’s novels is not concerned with referential meaning but with different ways in which various signs are used to bring out the multiple meanings in a particular cultural set up. In relation to the usage of words in poetry, Jakobson points out: “The distinctive feature of poetry lies in the fact that a word is perceived as a word and not merely a proxy for the denoted object or an outburst of an
emotion, that words and their arrangement, their meaning, their outward and inward form acquire weight and value of their own” (Erlich 183). It is clear that Jakobson is drawing attention to the structural aspect of a word in poetry. Jakobson’s significant contribution to the study of poetry will be dealt in detail when the discussion moves on to the second phase of formalism, which, actually heralds the beginning of structuralism.

It is essential to note here how Hawkes qualifies and clarifies the question of ‘meaning’ in Jakobson’s statement. He acknowledges that the habitual meaning of words cannot be fully separated from the words, but a word can derive more meanings depending on the context. In this sense, “Poetry, in short, does not separate a word from its meaning, so much as multiply—often bewilderingly—the range of meanings available to it. Again, it raises the degree of normal linguistic activity” (Hawkes 64). Formalists were more concerned, however, with the phonetic aspect of poetry rather than its semantic dimension. Hawkes emphasizes on another important feature of formalists: with their emphasis on language, they did not opt for figurative language, metaphors, symbols, images, etc., but on “those features of language that were precisely and solely necessary in order to cause literary art to exist” (62). Further, he states that literary analysis, in the formalist mode, was not just interested in the presence of images, but in the use to which these were put.

Such an attention to the usage of different components of literary work is closely associated with Jan Mukařovský’s description of the act of foregrounding of utterance—it meant bringing into the foreground the act of expression, to bring something into the highest level of perception. For formalists, the primary aim of literary work was to foreground its linguistic medium in order to highlight its literariness. All the formal
aspects of language were, in the formalist mode, put to one specific use: that of, “making strange” (*ostranenie*). Shklovsky used this phrase in his pioneering study, “Art as Device,” based on the distinction between a habitual response and a new perception. The purpose of art or poetry is to defamiliarize the overtly familiar things, and to disrupt the automatic response and perception in order to generate a new awareness of things. Interestingly, Hawkes connects *ostranenie*, the central preoccupation of the formalists with that of Brechtian concept of “alienation” (*Verfremdung*): “the object of art is seen to be the revolutionary goal of making the audience aware that the institutions and social formulae which they inherit are not eternal and ‘natural’ but historical and man-made, and so capable of change through human action” (63).

According to Shklovsky, defamiliarization in literature operates on three levels—language, content and literary forms. Language is made difficult and deliberately hindered; on the level of content, it challenges accepted notions and ideas either by perverting them or by showing them from a different angle; when it comes to literary forms, defamiliarization operates by breaking with the dominant artistic canons and introducing newness by hybridization or interspersion or elevation of subliterary genres. Callaghan’s novels operate on all these three levels. With the publication of his first novel, *Strange Fugitive* in 1928, Callaghan heralds a new beginning for Canadian novel, as he turns away from the historical romances and their descriptive prose and introduces a straightforward, crisp, deceptively simple language in his novels and short stories. His novels not only challenge the dominant notions of society by irony, but also offer a new perspective to the accepted ideas. The novels, with their marginal characters such as criminals, prostitutes, outlaws, labourers, expose the latent ideology of dominant
institutions such as law, church, bourgeois, etc. On the level of literary forms, Callaghan’s novels often intersperse with such minor forms as tale, vignette, romance, detective story, parable, etc and interrogate the purity of form and authority of literary canons.

Formalists did not treat form and content as separate, but as one expressed through the medium of the other. They used the concepts of ‘material’ and ‘device’ instead of form and content to drive home their point: an author transformed the material (raw stuff of literature) through the device (aesthetic principle) to create a work of art. In Shklovsky’s view, art possessed its own organizations—rhythm, metre, phonetics, syntax, and the plot of the work—that could transform material into an artistic experience. In this light, Callaghan’s assertion that he wanted to write without giving the impression that he was writing at all needs to be re-examined. His desire to present things fresh and to write in words “as transparent as glass” itself suggests enough artistry and caution (Callaghan 21).

In prose fiction, Shklovsky’s distinction between fabula [story] and syuzhet [plot] corresponded to the concepts of ‘material’ and ‘device’. Story was the raw material that consisted of the temporal succession of events and their causal relations. Plot was the distinctive device, which enabled a writer to rearrange artistically the events of the story, without paying attention to the linearity in chronology and causality. Thus plot became that aspect of the narrative structure where the process of ‘making strange’ could take place. As Hawkes observes, “‘plot’ can be seen to be as much an organic element of form in the novel as rhyme or rhythm are in the lyric, and it has a decisively formative role” (66). It follows that the formalists’ objectives of study are the devices that embody the
internal laws of plot composition. Shklovsky opposes habitual perception in the reader and proposes *defamiliarization* as essential to renew perception in art. According to Shklovsky:

we find material obviously created to remove the automatism of perception; the author's purpose is to create the vision which results from that deautomatized perception. A work is created 'artistically' so that its perception is impeded and the greatest possible effect is produced through the slowness of the perception. (27)

Callaghan's novels provide good examples of deautomatized perception. In *More Joy in Heaven* the real life story of a convict is transformed into an artistic exploration of the ambiguity and complexity inherent in certain dualities that exist in society. In *A Time for Judas*, Callaghan recreates the story of Jesus Christ and Judas Iscariot through effective handling of devices of plot such as embedded narration, flash back, prolepsis, trial scene, etc., which are discussed in later chapters.

It is appropriate to note another important feature of literature outlined in Shklovsky's theory on plot devices. He distinguishes between realistically motivated (where the writer provides valid reasons for the presence of the devices of plot composition) and unmotivated devices (where the devices are 'laid bare,' prompting the reader to recognize their presence). Shklovsky expresses a preference for the latter where the writer could play with the expectations of the reader and deliberately destroy the illusion of reality. Shklovsky regards Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* as the archetypal novel of the latter kind, because it is a novel about itself: with various devices such as achronological events, authorial digressions, non-linear movement of chapters, it
draws attention to its own story and plot. Callaghan's novels such as *A Fine and Private Place*, *An Enchanted Pimp*, and *A Time for Judas* are also self-reflexive novels that deal with issues like reality of illusion and illusion of reality. Deliberate hints to the identity of the writer in the novel with the novelist himself and then destroying that connection, incorporation of theatrical elements into the narrative, and drawing attention to the creation of an artistic work make *A Fine and Private Place* unique among all other novels. In other novels Callaghan achieves the effect of alienation through effective handling of irony, multiple narrative structures, parody and multiple points of view.

Hawkes considers 'baring the devices' the central tenet of formalism, because by calling reader's attention to the 'defamiliarizing' techniques, the writer achieves the "major overriding device of all: the alienating sense of being thereby made privy to the process by which art works" (69). The important function of the device of alienation, as Hawkes expresses it, is to "shock us out of the anaesthetic grip our language maintains on our perceptions" (70). Significantly, he points to Saussure's views about what forms the basis of 'language's anaesthetic function': an unquestionable 'identity' between signifier and signified, between the 'sound image' and the concept (70). In this sense, Morley Callaghan's novels disrupt the passage of arriving at fixed meanings of signifiers and signifieds and offer new perspectives. In presenting criminals as saints, dishonourable women as honourable, traitor as friend Callaghan opens up the different possibilities of understanding and interpreting certain signs in society. Defamiliarization, as it operates in Callaghan's novels is very subtle. There is no overt dislocation of fixed meanings or subversion of authority; doubts, ambiguity, and confusion regarding what is accepted and believed are incorporated during the course of action to distance readers from a close
recognition with characters and incidents and interrogate them from a new perspective. In other words, he establishes the realist conventions, and subverts them, as discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis. The technique of installing familiar material and then defamiliarizing it is central to Callaghan’s fiction.

Hawkes observes that ‘defamiliarization’ cannot take place always and in order for the process to take place there should be a body of ‘familiar’ material. He is of the opinion that Vladimir Iakovlevich Propp handles this problem best in his *Morphology of the Folktale*, one of the major formalist contributions. Propp’s aim here is to develop a ‘poetics’ of Russian folklore in particular, and fiction in general. The basis for his study is the belief that all folktales are structurally identical when they are approached from the point of view of their composition rather than their characters. In Hawkes’s words, Propp is concerned with “the ‘norms’ by which narrative structures work, the units of content in which they seem to deal” (67).

Within structure, Propp is not interested in characters and their identities but in their actions. He identifies these as ‘functions’ and defines them from the standpoint of their significance for the course of the action. The tales can be analysed according to various functions of their characters. Propp listed thirty-one functions that appear in the structure of the folktale and emphasized that they are constant, regardless of how and by whom they are fulfilled. He also formulated important rules about their sequence. An individual tale can use all the functions or it can dispense with some of them, but the sequence of functions would always be identical. Thus Propp reaches the conclusion that all fairy tales are structurally homogeneous and embody the above principles. Further, he
distributes the thirty-one functions among seven 'spheres of action' corresponding to their 'respective performers':

a) villain
b) donor (provider)
c) helper
d) princess (a sought-for person) and her father
e) dispatcher
f) hero
g) false hero

A single character may be involved in more than one sphere and several characters may be involved in the same sphere of action. Hawkes notes an important point in Propp's model: "the number of spheres of action occurring in the fairy tale is finite: we are dealing with discernible and repeated structures which, if they are characteristic of so deeply rooted a form of narrative expression may, as we shall see, have implications for all narrative" (69).

It is possible, therefore, to discern spheres of action and performers to derive at repeated structures in Callaghan's novels, as most of them have quest motif and thus possess a sequence of action to follow. In the initial stage of the analysis, the fabula of each story can be deduced out of the available syuzhet. Later the fabula is systematically dissected so as to excavate the cardinal functions which constitute it. The sequence of these functions in different types can be examined in order to arrive at the structural pattern or system underlying these novels. The purpose of this thesis, however, is not to arrive at a narratological model, but to examine how meaning is constructed or made
complex through the interplay of signs in Callaghan's novels with a view to reconstructing Canadian identity.

Formalists believe that literature is a self-sufficient entity and not a window through which other elements can be perceived. Its intention is to draw attention to its own existence and function. These notions are close to Saussure's view of language as a self-contained, self-justifying structure. Under Juri Tynyanov, formalism tried to overcome some of the inadequacies of its early phase by redefining some of the fundamental concepts, and laid the foundation for structural principles. With his concepts like Dynamic structure, literary dynamics and literary evolution, Tynyanov made significant contribution to formalism. He replaced the static definition of a literary work by the concept of a dynamic structure of form: there was interaction and integration among all the components of a given structure. In a literary work, there is a continuous struggle between all its components and the one that pushes forward and dominates all other becomes the 'constructive factor.' According to Tynyanov, the relationship between the constructive factor and the subordinated factor is not constant but fluctuating. It is the continuous interaction and alteration of elements that guarantees the artistic quality of a work; otherwise, it becomes automatized. His idea of literary dynamics was understood as interrelation between elements of a given work and similar elements in other literary works and other systems. In this sense, the basic principle of literary dynamics was a continuous revival of literary forms. This was closely connected to his views on literary evolution put forward in his essay, "On Literary Evolution" (1927). Tynyanov argued that the study of literature should be always in relation to byt (social conventions); that is, literature was related to social convention in its verbal function. A writer chooses some of
The linguistic patterns at his disposal and foregrounds them in his work and turns them into literary facts. When this literary fact becomes automatized, its literary function is reduced and it becomes a social convention. Thus the study of literary evolution becomes possible only when literature as a system is seen as interrelated to other systems and conditioned by them. In this way, Tynyanov claimed, the major social factors were not discarded.

Tynyanov recapitulated his views on this subject in his 1928 essay, “Problems of the Study of Literature and Language” written jointly with Jakobson. Literature, for them, was a complex network of systems governed by its own intrinsic laws and correlated with one another. Each of these systems was in turn related to other systems through a set of specific structural laws. To comprehend literary history, one should establish the structural laws of literature first, and then analyse them in correlation with other historical systems. As is seen, by connecting literature with other systems, Tynyanov and Jakobson attempted at overcoming the adverse criticism of Marxism against formalism. They also tried to overcome such charges as full autonomy of a literary work, ahistorical analysis in favour of synchronic study, and the strict separation between literary and extra literary phenomena. Marxists, however, conceived of literature as a part of a superstructure dependent on and determined by the economic base, and did not agree with even the new theories of Tynyanov and Jakobson. The formalist model of parallel, autonomous systems governed by their own structural laws was not acceptable to Marxist critics.

The above views formulated by Tynyanov and Jakobson are similar to those of Hawkes who saw literature as natural to human species, yet, like language, an isolatable structure. In his view, literary change is not “a response to, or a by-product of social
change, but as the unfolding of a self-generating and self-enclosed sequence of styles and genres, propelled and furthered by internal exigencies” (71). Thus the formalist version of literary history was more of “a reorganization, a regrouping, of permanent elements” (72), which takes place as a part of the process of ostranenie: when the ‘strange’ becomes itself habitual, it needs to be replaced. Parody is seen as the best example of this process, as it uses another literary work as its background, but lays bare its ‘devices’. In her *A Theory of Parody* Linda Hutcheon points out the nature of parody without a mocking effect. This kind of parodic restructuring of biblical stories and myths can be discerned in Callaghan’s fiction, which will be discussed in the later chapters. Parodying old forms and stories in a new context becomes significant, as Callaghan’s aim is to portray the tensions and paradoxes of a transitional society.

Hawkes also draws attention to Shklovsky’s attempt at formulating a ‘law’ to explain the process of literary alignment, whose central principle is, ‘canonization of the junior branch’. Accordingly, the boundaries of literature are readjusted from time to time to include “elements, motifs, and devices regarded until then as ‘peripheral’ or ‘junior’ in relation to the ‘main stream’ of literary endeavour” (Hawkes 72). Hawkes explains this notion of literature as a kind of *langue* ("an autonomous, internally coherent, self-limiting, self-regulating, self-justifying structure") where the individual work of art stands as a sort of *parole* (72). The ‘canonization of the junior branch’ also leads to experimentation in literature as the literary canon undergoes transformation. We find such a kind of experimentation in Callaghan’s novels in the incorporation of other forms like parable, vignette, romance, and detective story into the genre of novel and short story. In “The Language of the Law: The Cases of Morley Callaghan,” Gary Boire
shows how “law, (its imagery, vocabulary, rituals, and institutions) functions in Callaghan as a type of social “genre,” one made up of multivalent foundational “languages,” which, in turn, are sedimented throughout his oeuvre” (75). A tendency for mixed genres and forms reflects Callaghan’s wish to break away from conventional methods of writing.

Formalism was suppressed in Russia by the end of the 1920s when the attacks on it intensified, and formalists were compelled to turn towards textual criticism rather than theoretical explorations. The most important elements, however, had taken root in the field of structural linguistics, which was then developing. Though suppressed in the Soviet Union, formalism was still influential in Czechoslovakia and Poland. Jakobson and Petr Bogatyrev moved to Prague in 1921, and established the Prague School on the basic tenets of formalist theory, but placed many of their concepts into the framework of a coherent structuralist theory. Before discussing Jakobson’s contribution to the study of literature, it is important to note briefly, the influence of formalism on other schools.

It is clear by now that formalism did not influence the development of Anglo-American New Criticism, even though they shared similar beliefs in the autonomy of literature and the need for focus on the verbal aspect of literature was similar too. Formalism influenced structuralism strongly with its insistence on the centrality of language and the importance of the linguistic model. The French structuralists such as Tzvetan Todorov, Roland Barthes and Gerard Genette were under the direct influence of formalism when two major formalist publications came out: Victor Erlich’s *Russian Formalism: History, Doctrine* (1955) and Todorov’s anthology, *Théorie de la littérature: Textes des formalistes russes, réunis, présentés et traduits par Tzvetan Todorov* (1965).
Formalism played a significant role in the development of structuralism in the Soviet Union in the 1960s when the Tartu School came into existence under Yuri Lotman, Alexander Zholkovsky and Boris Uspenskii. Formalists were the first to treat literature as a form of verbal art and to concentrate on the analysis of poetic language. The concepts of literary structure, literary dynamics and literary evolution laid the foundation for structuralism in Europe and America. The major drawbacks of formalism were its disregard for the question of creative personality and the connections between literature and reality. It relied heavily on artistic devices in its analysis of literary works and neglected the thematic and the emotional content. It met with strong opposition from Marxist critics, and later from reader-response criticism, speech-act theory and New Historicism, as they repudiated the notion of a clear division between ordinary language and literary language.

In the chapter entitled "Structuralism and Semiotics" of his *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Eagleton points out clearly how formalism was different from structuralism: "It [formalism] views literary texts 'structurally', and suspends attention to the referent to examine the sign itself, but it is not particularly concerned with meaning as differential or, in much of its work, with the 'deep' laws and structures underlying literary texts" (85). In Eagleton's view, it was Roman Osipovich Jakobson (1896-1982) who provided the major link between formalism and structuralism. In the section to follow, major theoretical contribution of Jakobson as a formalist and structuralist is discussed, and the important role he played in the development of semiotics in literature is highlighted in the section devoted to semiotics.
As a founding member of Moscow Linguistic Circle, Jakobson began his career as a linguist and formalist. When he migrated to Prague in 1920, he became one of the formative theorists of Czech Structuralism. During the Second World War, he migrated to the United States and developed modern structuralism in close association with Levi-Strauss. Jakobson's work is fundamentally based on the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure, on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, and on the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce.

Jakobson firmly believes that linguistics and literary criticism are interrelated and should be studied in correlation with each other. The most important concepts of Saussure's linguistics that Jakobson adopts for his own model for a systematic research into the relational aspects of language are: *langue*/*parole*, (language/speech or utterance) *signans*/*signatum* (signifier/signified), synchrony/diachrony (study confined to a particular period/study through historical development). These terms will be explained in detail when Saussure's theory of linguistics is discussed later in this chapter. Like Saussure, Jakobson prefers synchronic investigation of language, which is a structural network of dynamic relations. Poetic language, in Jakobson's view, focuses on the relations of the signifying elements in the sign itself, and not on the object of reference (*designatum*). Thus Jakobson is interested in *langue*, which is foregrounded in poetry due to its emphasis on the message itself. He proposes 'literariness' to characterize the literary factor, and makes it the focus of investigation. In his two essays, "The Dominant" (1935) and "Problems in the Study of Literature and Language" (1928) with Tynyanov, Jakobson puts forward his argument of literary work as a hierarchical system of devices with one device functioning as the 'dominant' within a relational network. The emphasis
on the function of devices is closer to the structuralist notion of work as an autonomous structure that is linked in a hierarchy to other signifying structures and codes.

Jakobson’s approach to poetry stems from his conviction that it is a part of the field of linguistics. As Eagleton puts it, by “poetic” Jakobson meant, “language’s being placed in a certain kind of self-conscious relationship to itself” (85). The signs are used in a different way in the poetic functioning of language than they are in communication: “In the ‘poetic’, the sign is dislocated from its object: the usual relation between the sign and referent is disturbed, which allows the sign a certain independence as an object of value in itself” (Eagleton 85). By studying the dislocation of meaning from the signifier to the signified in Callaghan’s novels, the present analysis shows that poetic functioning of language that Jakobson refers to, can take place in prose too. Callaghan opens up the possibilities of different interpretations of certain fixed cultural signs.

Jakobson postulated two general linguistic notions in order to focus on the distinctive feature of poetic language: “the notion of polarities, and the notion of equivalence” (Hawkes 75). As is well known, Jakobson derived the concept of ‘polarities’ from Saussure’s doctrine of syntagmatic (‘horizontal relation’) and paradigmatic (‘vertical relation’) axes of language. In the linguistic theory of Saussure these two planes of language operate to constitute language from a repertoire of linguistic signs. Saussure’s notions on these two linguistic performances will be discussed in a separate section devoted to his theory of linguistics. Jakobson adopted this fundamental binary opposition present in language to study the linguistic problems of the disorder called aphasia and formulated his notion of the metaphoric and metonymic poles of
linguistics. Jakobson’s original essay on this issue is “Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbance” (1956).

According to Jakobson, the operations of selection and combination should be understood in terms of the rhetorical figures of metaphor and metonymy respectively. These two operations are in turn related to the two major disorders: ‘similarity disorder’ and ‘contiguity disorder’. In Jakobson’s view, both metaphor and metonymy are figures of ‘equivalence,’ as the main subject of the figure will have “equivalent” status with a different entity. Metaphor proposes a similarity between the literal subject and its metaphorical substitute: e.g., ‘He is a lion in the battle field.’ In Metonymy, the literal subject is closely associated with its ‘adjacent’ replacement on the basis of contiguity: e.g., ‘the crown’ stands for a king, ‘the bottle’ for a drink. In Saussure’s terminology, metaphor is generally ‘paradigmatic’ (selection) in character and uses language’s ‘vertical’ relations; whereas, metonymy is ‘syntagmatic’ (combination) in character, and uses language’s ‘horizontal’ relations. Hawkes represents the two axes by the following diagram, which helps us understand the above notions:

Selective/Associative Synchronic
Dimension
(Metaphor)

Combinative / Syntagmatic Diachronic
Dimension (Metonymy)
According to this model, metaphor and metonymy are intrinsic to the working of language at every level as the processes of selection and combination to form linguistic signs. As Jakobson says: "the given utterance (message) is a combination of constituent parts (sentences, words, phonemes, etc.) selected from the repository of all possible constituent parts (the code)" ("Two Aspects of Language" 75). Language loss and language acquisition are closely related to the subject's ability to understand and manage selection and combination, or similarity and contiguity.

In his essay, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," Jakobson formulates his views on the poetic function of language on the basis of the binary oppositions: "The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination" (358). Further, he notes that the promotion of equivalence becomes the distinguishing feature of the 'poetic' use of language, as opposed to any other use: "similarity superimposed on contiguity imparts to poetry its thoroughgoing symbolic, multiplex, polysemic essence. . . . In poetry where similarity is superinduced upon contiguity, any metonymy is slightly metaphorical and any metaphor has a metonymical tint" (370). Accordingly, Jakobson considers the extent to which metaphoric and metonymic modes of writing dominate in a literary work as a rough index of literary style. Thus, realist prose tends to be metonymic, where signs are linked syntagmatically, whereas Romantic and Symbolist poetry is highly metaphorical. Significantly, Hawkes points out that Jakobson's 'polarities' seem to highlight the very act of signification and suggest the important ways of signification that can be distinguished from each other. He also refers to Jakobson's argument that any symbolic process or any sign system manifests a 'universal' competition between these two modes. Accordingly, he finds a
possibility of distinguishing between Cubism as metonymic and Surrealism as metaphoric in mode.

In the 1950s Jakobson brings together the theory of communication and the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce with his own work in poetics and communication theory in two important papers: “Shifters, Verbal Categories, and the Russian Verb” (1957), and “Linguistics and Poetics” (1960). Jakobson, however, points out that “poeticalness is not a supplementation of discourse with rhetorical adornment but a total re-evaluation of the discourse and of all its components whatsoever” (377). Further, he stresses “poeticalness” as not being confined to poetry alone,

but only its dominant, determining function, whereas in all other verbal activities it acts as a subsidiary, accessory constituent. This function, by promoting the palpability of signs, deepens the fundamental dichotomy of signs and objects. Hence, when dealing with poetic function, linguistics cannot limit itself to the field of poetry. (356)

It is clear that Jakobson calls for a poetics of prose and poetry, which can study the contrastive functioning of metaphor and metonymy at all levels.

Jakobson’s work on communication proposes six elements that must be present in order for communication to take place. He represents them by the following diagram:

Context

message

addresser---------------------------addressee

contact

code

("Closing Statement” 353).
Any communicative act involves an addresser, an addressee, and a message passed between them; codes shared by them makes the message intelligible, a physical medium of communication; contact is required to pass the message from the addresser to addressee and finally, but most importantly, a context to which the message refers and is understood by the addresser and the addressee. It is important to note Jakobson’s views on ‘meaning’ in the above context of communication model. Meaning of a message does not reside in the message itself but is constituted by other factors in communication: context, code and the means of contact. As Hawkes puts it: “all languages contain grammatical elements which have no precise meaning per se, and which are wholly sensitive in this respect to the context in which they occur” (83). He refers to Jakobson’s focus on ‘shifters’ (‘I’, ‘you’, ‘me’, etc.) in English language that are context bound and are dependent on the message itself. Hawkes points out the important relevance Jakobson’s views on ‘shifters’ has for the French structuralists: the “shifting” perspective allows the structuralists to “attack on the idea of an ‘un-shifting’ or ‘unitary’ meaning available to the reader” (84). Structuralists’ views on meaning will be discussed later in this chapter.

Jakobson’s account of ‘meaning’ then, makes it an unstable entity, and changeable when it passes from the addresser to the addressee. This is also due to the fact that the six factors of communication are never in perfect balance, and the dominance of one or the other determines the nature of communication. Thus Jakobson formulates six distinctive functions corresponding to each of the factors mentioned above that determine the nature of the message. He provides the following diagram in a similar format to the above, but with the functional dimensions of the six factors (“Closing Statement” 357):
In the above diagram, the ‘emotive’ function dominates when the communication is seen oriented towards the addressee or expressive of a state of mind; it is ‘conative’ when seen from the addressee’s standpoint; when it is oriented towards the code itself it is ‘metalingual’; it becomes ‘phatic’ when the communication is oriented towards contact; ‘referential’ function dominates when communication concerns the context; and finally, the ‘poetic’ function is dominant when the communication draws attention to the message itself. Seen from Jakobson’s point of view, the poetic function seeks similarity at the level of code, whereas the referential function is oriented to the relation of the code to the designatum (object). These two functions, however, are in hierarchical relationship with each other in poetry and prose: in prose, the referential function dominates even though the poetic function could be in subordinate position; in poetry, the poetic function dominates while the referential function could be in a subordinate position. According to Hawkes, poetic language is:

*self-conscious; concerned above all to draw attention to its own nature, its own sound-patterns, diction, syntax etc. and not to refer primarily to some ‘reality’ beyond itself. Language’s ‘poetic’ function . . . promotes ‘the palpability of signs’. As a result it systematically undermines the sense of*
any ‘natural’ or ‘transparent’ connection between signifier and signified, sign and object. (86)

Critics have described Callaghan as a realist writer in Canada referring to the domination of referential function in his language. Callaghan’s statements too, at times, support referentiality in language as can be seen in his memoir That Summer in Paris. Expressing his dislike for ornamental prose, Callaghan says: “writing had to do with the right relationship between the words and the thing or person described: the words should be as transparent as glass” (21). Callaghan’s desire to focus on the referential function in language proves contradictory when we examine different aspects of his fiction in the subsequent chapters and identify other functions of language that dominate and sometimes contend with the referential function.

Jakobson’s influence on modern literary theory is wide-ranging, but to note a few: Jacques Lacan used Jakobson’s assessment of metaphor and metonymy to illuminate his study on the notion of ‘symptom’ and on the origin of desire; Jakobson’s notion of binary oppositions as the elements of structure informs Claude Levi-Strauss’s structural anthropology. Through his comprehensive theory of language and communication, Jakobson links formalism with modern structuralism. Eagleton points out that the Prague School of linguists represents the transition from formalism to structuralism with its notions of poems as “functional structures” and literary work as an autonomous object. Linguists of Prague School begin with the ideas of formalism, but work within a more systematic framework of Saussurean linguistics. Hence, it is appropriate to concentrate on Saussure’s theory of linguistics before outlining the main features of structuralism. Saussure’s definition of sign and signs constitute meaning are fundamental to the
argument of the present thesis, as it aims at studying signs and the interplay of meaning in Callaghan’s fiction in order to understand the concept of identity, as it emerges in his fiction. The present study, however, moves beyond Saussure’s concept of sign and takes support from post-structuralist formulations of sign and its meaning to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of sign, meaning and identity in Callaghan’s novels. Before outlining Saussure’s theory, it is essential to understand the concept of structure as fundamental to human cognitive system. In “Introduction” to Structuralism and Semiotics, Hawkes undertakes such a project and provides ample information on the way structure has become integral to our way of thinking.

Hawkes traces the concept of structure to Italian jurist Giambattista Vico’s book New Science (1725), which aims at constructing a “physics of man.” Vico sees man (even from his primitive days) as a “maker,” and discovers in him an inherent “poetic wisdom” (sapienza poetica) (Hawkes 12-13). Such a discovery enables Vico to understand that any account of creation or myths is an attempt at imposing a “satisfactory, graspable, humanizing shape” on the “actual generalized experience of ancient peoples” (13). On this basis, Vico establishes the “principle of verum factum: that which man recognizes as true (verum) and that which he has himself made (factum) are one and the same.” Thus Hawkes notes that for Vico, “poetic truth” becomes “metaphysical truth,” and in turn “physical truth” (13).

This fundamental insight into the workings of human mind leads Vico to propose that man constructs myths, social institutions, and the world according to his perception; these constructions, in turn, influence man. Thus Hawkes considers this a “two-way affair” of some complexity. After some time, through continuous structuring “the world
of nations” (institutions created by man) has the effect of appearing ‘natural’ or permanent. By recognizing these structures as originating from the human mind, Hawkes says, Vico breaks the “anaesthetic grip” that such “a permanent structuring process” has (14). Further, Vico recognizes a distinctive characteristic feature in man—that of “poetic wisdom,” which creates myths and uses language metaphorically. He firmly believes that there should be a “mental language” common to all nations that is present in the nature of human institutions. Hawkes endorses Vico’s assertion by stating that:

This ‘mental language’ manifests itself as man’s universal capacity not only to formulate structures, but also to submit his own nature to the demands of their structuring. The gift of sapienza poetica could thus be said to be the gift of structuralism. . . . To be human, it claims, is to be a structuralist. (15)

Proceeding further in his tracing of the history of structuralism, Hawkes highlights Jean Piaget’s views on what a structure is (from his book, Structuralism). According to Piaget, structure is an arrangement of entities embodying a) the idea of wholeness, b) the idea of transformation, and c) the idea of self-regulation. Hawkes explains what Piaget means by these ideas. Wholeness refers to the internal coherence maintained in the arrangement of entities. The constituent parts of a structure conform to “a set of intrinsic laws which determine its nature and theirs” (16). Thus the constituent parts have no independent existence outside the structure in the same form. The idea of transformation refutes criticism against the concept of structure as being static. The structure is capable of transforming, as new materials are continuously added to it. The laws that govern a structure, however, maintain that the structure is not lost by the
changes. The last idea of self-regulation refers to the autonomous quality of the structure: it does not validate its transformational procedures in relation to the external validity. Hawkes gives the example of how language works as a self-regulated structure: it "does not construct its formations of words by reference to the patterns of 'reality', but on the basis of its own internal and self-sufficient rules" (16-17). Thus the word 'dog' functions as a noun within the structure without reference to any real four-legged barking animal.

Hawkes concludes: "structuralism is fundamentally a way of thinking about the world which is predominantly concerned with the perception and description of structures" (17). Another important feature that he notes as evolving, since Vico, is the primacy of the relationship between the observer and the observed, which gives rise to the first principle of structuralism: "the world is made up of relationships rather than things" (18). It is not possible to perceive the full significance of any entity in isolation, but in its relation to the structure of which it forms a part. Another significant point that Hawkes draws our attention to is the fact that many of the concepts now central to structuralism were first fully developed in connection with linguistics and with anthropology (18). This, once again, restates the necessity to understand Saussure's linguistic theory, which is the first fruitful attempt at studying language systematically and scientifically.

The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure laid the foundation for modern linguistics. His lecture notes delivered between 1907 and 1911 were collected by his students Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, and published as *Course in General Linguistics* in 1916. To begin with, Saussure separated 'language' into two distinct manifestations: *langue* (language) and *parole* (speech or utterance). He argued that
language as an abstract linguistic system pre-exists any individual use of it, it is the manipulation of this system that produces concrete utterances. He was not interested in what people actually said; he was concerned with language that existed outside the individual who used it. He was interested in the study of structure of signs that made individual speech event possible.

For Saussure, language was a system of signs that should be studied synchronically as against diachronically. In a synchronic study, language is viewed as a complete system (by considering the functional relation of signs in a given system) at a given point in time, whereas in a diachronic study, linguistic change is reconstructed through time. The distinction between synchronic and diachronic studies enabled Saussure to separate language as a closed entity from speech. It also helped him distinguish between the linguistics that depended on relational terms and the linguistics that depended on historical terms. Silverman finds symmetry between the concepts “synchrony” and “language,” because “language system consists of precisely synchronous elements” (12). Similarly she finds symmetry between the concepts “diachrony” and “speech,” as “speech unfolds in time, syntagmatically, and because changes are introduced into language through speech” (12). Saussure’s preference for synchronic view had an advantage for structuralists and semioticians, as it foregrounded structural relationships and functions that could be considered an independently functioning system at a given time.

Each linguistic sign, for Saussure, was made up of two essential parts: the signifier (a sound-image or its graphic equivalent) and the signified (the concept or meaning). The three marks d – o – g constitute a signifier that evokes the signified ‘dog’
in the minds of English language speakers. Saussure stressed that the relations between signifier and signified is an arbitrary one. Cultural or historical conventions determine why the three marks should mean 'dog'. Further, he refuted the relations between the whole sign and what it refers to in reality, i.e., the referent (or object—the real four legged creature with a tail). From the point of view of representation the bond is arbitrary, but meaning of any particular signifier is assured by its place within language as a whole. Each sign has meaning by virtue of its difference from the others. Thus language is a system of differences that generates meaning through its own internal mechanisms. The sign 'dog' signifies simply because we know how to place it within the English language (a word like 'pog' has no place in the system) and also because it is different from other signs like 'log', 'hog', etc. Thus signs are meaningful only in their contiguity. As Saussure puts it:

In language there are only differences without positive terms. Whether we take the signified or the signifier, language has neither ideas nor sounds that existed before the linguistic system but only conceptual and phonic differences that have issued from the system. The idea or phonic substance that a sign contains is of less importance than the other signs that surround it. Proof of this is that the value of a term may be modified without either its meaning or its sound being affected, solely because a neighbouring term has been modified. (120)

It is clear from the above passage that Saussure does not consider anything beyond the structure. It is also stressed that meaning is created only through the play of difference within a closed system. As Eagleton notes, “meaning is not mysteriously immanent in a
sign but is functional, the result of its difference from other signs” (84). Further, he notes that in order to study language effectively, Saussure “bracketed off” the referents or the things that signs actually denoted. Hence, language becomes a self-contained ‘relational’ structure in which the constituent parts have no significance in isolation but only in relation to others within the structure.

Callaghan’s novels can be viewed as sign systems with a particular structure. The signs we comprehend in his novels are in arbitrary relationship when considered from the representational point of view. The criminals, prostitutes, priests, outlaws, labourers, law, church, etc are arbitrary in their significations in a conventional society. Each of them, however, becomes a signifier capable of multiple meanings within the sign system Callaghan develops in his novels. For instance, the church and the cathedral that appear in various novels signify different meanings in different fictional contexts, thus moving beyond their referential meanings. In The Loved and the Lost, Peggy Sanderson, the heroine of the novel takes Jim McAlpine (the hero) to see a carved leopard and a small church on the same day. For Peggy, the leopard and the church are simply two fascinating aspects of life. These two objects that conventionally stand for opposite meanings (violence and peace) intrigue McAlpine who is trying to see the leopard and the church as symbols to get insights into Peggy’s strange nature. Similarly, in A Time for Judas, Callaghan destabilizes the arbitrary meaning that is assigned to the figure of Judas in his relationship with Jesus Christ. Instead of an archetypal symbol for betrayal, Judas becomes a signifier who can signify both love and betrayal in the system that Callaghan creates in his fiction. Judas signifies, because he is in a differential relationship with Jesus. The symbolic system in the novel is dependent on such a differential relationship.
Callaghan, however, does not stop at differential relationship that signs share with other signs in his novels, but moves beyond it to explore the various meanings that a signifier can emit in a system. The polysemic nature of signifier and its importance in the conception of meaning is discussed in the post-structuralist phase of semiotics.

Saussure identifies two dimensions of the relationship between signs that assume particular importance: the linguistic sign’s syntagmatic (or ‘horizontal’) relations, and its associative or paradigmatic (or ‘vertical’) relations. As language unfolds in a sequential movement through time, each sign will be associated with the signs that precede and succeed it in a syntagmatic relationship. Meaning is derived from a linear juxtaposition of signs, they are combined in series as can be seen in the sentence: ‘the man unfolds an umbrella’, in which meaning is realized as one word is placed after the other in a contiguous relationship. Saussure uses the image of a chain to illustrate the syntagmatic relationship. In her Subject of Semiotics, Kaja Silverman describes syntagmatic relation as the one, which “a sign entertains with the other signs that surround it within a concrete signifying instance”. The relationship can only be realized in a discourse, and it involves “a formal proximity” (10).

Paradigmatic relationship refers to another important feature of language where each sign will have relationship with all other signs in the system, but do not occur at a particular signifying instance. These other signs are, as Saussure explains, “part of the inner storehouse that makes up the language of each speaker” (123). Examples of such signs are synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, words with the same prefix or suffix which show some similarity, and help define the meaning of the words chosen by being outside the system. In the above example, the man ‘unfolds’, but he could also ‘fold’ or ‘hold’
the umbrella. Of paradigmatic relationships, Saussure says: “Their seat is in the brain; they are part of the inner storehouse that makes up the language of each speaker” (123). These relationships are thought of as on a ‘vertical’ plane to differentiate from the simultaneously occurring relationships of the horizontal plane. The paradigmatic axis, in short, consists of signs not chosen but substitutable for the signs chosen in a particular utterance.

The value of any sign (linguistic ‘item’ as Hawkes calls it), for Saussure, is determined both by its syntagmatic and its paradigmatic associations. As Silverman points out, “Its [sign’s] value depends in part on those features that distinguish it from the other signs within its system, and in part on those features that distinguish it from the other signs adjacent to it in discourse” (11). Saussure’s definition of syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes has influenced later studies of metaphor and metonymy. It is interesting to examine how various cultural codes combine themselves in Callaghan’s fiction paradigmatically and at times syntagmatically to produce meaning and how the meaning differs from context to context, as the meaning is context bound. The discussion of Callaghan’s fiction in the later chapters makes use of some of the insights provided by structuralism.

Formalism was directly influenced by Saussure’s theory in analysing the literary texts ‘structurally’ and in rejecting the attention to the referent. However, as Eagleton points out, formalism “did not treat meaning as differential, and did not concern itself with the ‘deep’ laws and structures underlying literary texts” (85). In his view, it was Jakobson who bridged the gap between formalism and structuralism. Eagleton draws attention to a significant feature of structuralism when he says, “structuralism in general
is an attempt to apply Saussure's linguistic theory to objects and activities other than language itself" (84). It views the object of study (a myth, a wrestling match, a fashion system, restaurant menu, etc.,) as a system of signs. A structuralist's work is to identify and separate the underlying laws by which these signs are combined to produce meanings. Eagleton notes that structuralist analyses "largely ignore what the signs actually 'say', and concentrate instead on their internal relations to one another"(84). By extension, structuralism aims at providing an objective account of all social and cultural phenomena (myth, advertisements, literary texts, system of tribal kinship, etc.,). Different types of phenomena are viewed as signifying structures, as they are a combination of signs that have a particular significance for the members of a particular culture. A structuralist's task would be to study and explain how these phenomena have acquired their cultural significance. He does this by discovering "an underlying system that consists of relationships among signifying elements and their rules of combination" (Abrams 280). Thus, the elementary phenomena gain status as signs by virtue of their relations and binary oppositions to other elements within the system. Like Saussure, a structuralist is interested primarily in langue and not in the cultural parole. The importance of any cultural phenomenon lies in it providing access to the structure and rules of the general system that render its significance. Claude Lévi-Strauss provides an extensive study of such cultural phenomena such as mythology, kinship relations, and modes of preparing food, based on Saussure's linguistic model. In fact, his approach is best described as structuralist-semiotic approach to the study of culture.

Twentieth-century structuralism enters the intellectual scene in France mainly through the ethnography of Lévi-Strauss. In addition to Saussure's Course in General
Linguistics, Lévi-Strauss’s *Structural Anthropology* (1963), laid firm foundation for structuralism in general, and literary structuralism in particular. The fundamental concern of Lévi-Strauss’s *Structural Anthropology* is the notion that different aspects of social life can be studied by the methods and concepts of linguistics. He investigates whether the inmost nature of different cultural phenomena is as same as language. If so, then the analysis of language would be an appropriate model for the analysis of culture at large.

In his famous essay, “Structural Analysis in Linguistics and Anthropology” (1945), Lévi-Strauss argues that anthropologists might learn more directly from linguistics, because anthropology teaches that phenomena should be understood as manifestations of an underlying system of relations. More specifically, as both Culler and Hawkes point out, Lévi-Strauss’s method involves applying phonological model for the studies in social sciences. Lévi-Strauss claims, “like phonemes, kinship terms are elements of meaning; like phonemes, they acquire meaning only if they are integrated into systems” (*Structural Anthropology* 34). Culler explains the reason behind Lévi-Strauss’s emphasis on phonology as an attempt at reconstructing “an underlying system” out of the “apparent chaos of speech sounds” (28). Proceeding along the same line of thought, Hawkes states:

He [Lévi-Strauss] attempts to perceive the constituents of cultural behaviour, ceremonies, rites, kinship relations, marriage laws, methods of cooking, totemic systems, not as intrinsic or discrete entities, but in terms of the *contrastive relationships* they have with each other that make their structures analogous to the phonemic structure of a language. (34).
Seen thus, each system that Hawkes refers to constitutes "a partial expression of the total culture, conceived ultimately as a single gigantic language" (Hawkes 34).

Another important principle that informs Lévi-Strauss's investigation is the belief that it is possible to uncover the universal structures that exist in the collective unconscious of different cultures. These universal structures give rise to all possible systems in a culture. Accordingly, consciously created models of structure are only a part of the data of analysis that leads to the structure. It follows that kinship terms or mythological elements do not contain meaning in and of themselves; they gain meaning only at the unconscious level, through their relationship with other elements. Such views are again derived from a similar conception in phonology. As Culler explains:

A speaker of a language is not consciously aware of the phonological system of his language, but an unconscious system of distinctions and oppositions must be postulated to account for the fact that he interprets two physically different sound sequences as instances of the same word, yet in other cases distinguishes among sequences which are acoustically very similar. (28)

Thus Lévi-Strauss claims that phonology has moved "from the study of conscious linguistic phenomena to that of their unconscious infrastructure" (qtd. in Culler 28).

All of Lévi-Strauss's works—The Elementary Structure of Kinship (1949, Trans., 1969), Totemism (1962, Trans., 1969), The Savage Mind (1962, Trans., 1966), and his four-volume work on North and South American mythology—are informed by the method outlined above. It is sufficient to examine Lévi-Strauss's method in his study of myth (most acclaimed in the application of structuralist methodology for the study of
literature), as even a brief note on all of his works will go beyond the scope of this chapter.

The basic assumption is that different myths, despite their chaotic appearance and heterogeneity, possess certain constant universal structures, which could be identified by treating them as a kind of language. Lévi-Strauss rejects the way myths have been treated in the past, as collective ‘dreams’, as the basis of ritual, as the result of “a kind of esthetic play” (*Structural Anthropology* 207). Through particular varieties of myths (parole) Lévi-Strauss aims at reaching the langue of the whole culture—its underlying system and general laws. He breaks down myths into constituent units (“mythemes”), which like the basic sound units of language (phonemes), gain meaning only when they are combined in particular ways. As Hawkes puts it: “each unit consists of a ‘relation’ in which a certain function is attached to a given subject (e.g. ‘Oedipus killed his father’)” (44). He extrapolates from Lévi-Strauss when Hawkes says that “the true ‘constituent units’ of a myth ‘are not the isolated relations themselves but bundles of such relations, and it is only as bundles that these relations can be put to use and combined so as to produce meaning’” (44). The combination of bundles is governed by a set of rules or relations that can be seen as a kind of grammar, which is an inherent quality of the human mind itself. Hence, Eagleton is of the opinion that when we study a body of myth, “we are looking less at its narrative contents than at the universal mental operations which structure it” (90). As making binary oppositions is fundamental to these mental operations, myths are in fact, “devices to think with, ways of classifying and organizing reality, and this, rather than the recounting of any particular tale, is their point” (Eagleton 90). In his analysis of Oedipus myth, Lévi-Strauss distinguishes between the acts of violence and acts in
violation of kinship prohibition into two separate 'bundles of relations'. When the constituent elements are grouped in their respective bundles, the myth seems to present itself as a series of internal oppositions. Such an analysis allows Lévi-Strauss to detect the crisis of origin in Oedipus myth: “the Oedipus myth provides a kind of logical tool which relates the original problem—born from one or born from two?—to the derivative problem: born from different or born from the same?” (Structural Anthropology 216).

Lévi-Strauss stresses the collective consciousness behind the origin of all myths; no individual consciousness can be attributed to myth making capacity. Thus, he declares that his aim is to show “how myths think in men, unbeknown to them,” rather than how men think in myths (qtd. in Hawkes 41). The implication is, despite individual recreation of myth or borrowed from tradition, the structure of myth remains the same. The constancy of structure emphasizes the fact that whatever the individual version of a myth (parole), the power of the original myth is never affected in the act of recounting. Hawkes considers this the third level of the myth: “Unlike poetry, myth does not suffer by ‘translation’” (43). He quotes from Lévi-Strauss to support his view:

> Whatever our ignorance of the language and the culture of the people where it originated, a myth is still felt as a myth by any reader anywhere in the world. Its substance does not lie in its style, its original music, or its syntax, but in the story which it tells. Myth is language, functioning on an especially high level where meaning succeeds practically at ‘taking off’ from the linguistic ground on which it keeps on rolling. (43)

Such a view, as Hawkes observes, refers to myth as “a kind of super-langue, which emits a fundamental message” (44).
Two important tenets of structuralism emerge from the discussion of Lévi-Strauss's account of myths: structure is permanent and it can be identified by studying the underlying system of relations of phenomena; the individual subject who creates phenomena in a parole is 'decentered', as he/she is no longer the source of meaning.

Since the sources from which the basic tenets of structuralism derive have been noted, it is essential to understand the theoretical as well as the methodological implications of structuralism to the field of literature. The immediate implication of Lévi-Strauss’s method to literature, as Culler points out, is that “elements of a text do not have intrinsic meaning as autonomous entities but derive their significance from oppositions which are in turn related to other oppositions in a process of theoretically infinite semiosis” (29). Thus structuralism replaces the notion of literature as an expression of an individual author and thus possessing an essence by the notion of literature as a construct. Structuralism, in fact, can be described as a revolt against humanism, as it undertakes to 'decenter' the focus on the individual. In structuralism, author is simply regarded as a 'space' where linguistic and cultural codes traverse to produce a text. Eagleton summarizes the structuralist emphasis on meaning as 'constructed' and not as given by an all-knowing author:

Meaning was . . . the product of certain shared systems of signification. . . . language pre-dated the individual, and was much less his or her product than he or she was the product of it. Meaning was not 'natural’ . . . the way you interpreted your world was a function of the languages you had at your disposal, and there was evidently nothing immutable about these. (93)
Such an emphasis on language, Eagleton observes, redefines the relationship of language to reality. Language is seen less as a mere reflection of the external world; instead, it is seen as producing reality. As Eagleton says: “it [reality] was a particular way of carving up the world which was deeply dependent on the sign-systems we had at our command, or more precisely which had us at theirs” (94). He views structuralism as “a modern inheritor” of the belief that reality and our experience of it are not continuous with each other. Hence, Eagleton is of the opinion that structuralism undermines the empiricism of the literary humanists which believed that ‘reality’ was what was experienced. Thinkers such as Marx and Freud are held in great esteem due to the emphasis they placed on social structures and unconscious mind.

Since he is a Marxist, Eagleton raises serious objections to some of the tenets of structuralism. He questions the very preoccupation with language that made structuralism differ from traditional criticism, but at the same time remain “mortgaged to it in many others” (97). In his view, the focus on “the integrated nature of a sign-system” in structuralism is another version of the work as ‘organic unity’. Thus, Eagleton is of the opinion: “Traditional criticism had sometimes reduced the literary work to little more than a window on to the author’s psyche; structuralism seemed to make it a window on to the universal mind” (97). Traditional criticism reduces all ‘surface’ features of the work in search of an ‘essence’, whereas the structuralist criticism is engaged in the same process, but in search of the ‘deep structure.’ This leads Eagleton to conclude, “if traditional critics composed spiritual elite, structuralists appeared to constitute a scientific one, equipped with an esoteric knowledge far removed from the ‘ordinary’ reader” (97-98).
Structuralism replaces the human subject with that of system. It sees a literary work as a system having independent existence without paying attention to the individual subject’s intentions. As Eagleton observes: “the new subject was really the system itself, which seemed equipped with all the attributes (autonomy, self-correction, unity and so on) of the traditional individual. Structuralism is ‘anti-humanist’... that they reject the myth that meaning begins and ends in the individual’s ‘experience’” (98). Accordingly, the individual author as the producer of a work and thereby as the source of meaning is ruled out; instead he is seen as a construct in whose mind the existing system of literary language, conventions, codes, and rules of combination interact to produce a text. In his essay, “The Death of the Author,” Barthes declares, “As institution, the author is dead.” Structuralism also dissolves the role the reader occupied in traditional humanist criticism as a thinking, perceptive, conscious individual. It regards reader as someone who would use all codes and conventions to make sense of the structural components of a text. As Eagleton notes, for the structuralists, an ideal reader “was just a kind of mirror-reflection of the work itself—someone who would understand it ‘as it was’” (105).

Eagleton is of the opinion that structuralism’s emphasis on language as the origin of everything—“In the beginning was the Word”—is an important advance on the humanist tradition, which saw language as ‘the ‘expression’ of an individual mind’ (98). He does not agree, however, with structuralism’s rejection of human subjects and their intentions altogether. He sees language as a practice (which presupposes human subjects) rather than as an object, and argues that the ‘context’ in which language is spoken and the ‘orientation’ at which the language is directed are necessary to see meaning in any piece of language.
Eagleton criticizes Saussure's preference for *langue* rather than *parole*. In
Eagleton's opinion, such a view is one-sided, because "it sees the system as determined
and the individual as free; it grasps social pressures and determinants not so much as
forces active in our actual speaking, but as a monolithic structure which somehow stands
over against us" (99). He questions Saussure's inability to see *parole* or individual
utterance as "an inevitably social and 'dialogic' affair, which catches up with other
speakers and listeners in a whole field of social values and purposes" (99). According to
Eagleton, Saussure's theory overrides the fact that an individual, in addition to being a
member of a society, assumes different roles in his actual life (such as teacher, lawyer,
doctor, brother, sister, etc); human beings inhabit different 'languages' simultaneously,
some of them perhaps mutually conflicting. Such concerns lead Eagleton to consider the
later ramifications of structuralism that aim at overcoming the constraints structuralist
view placed on literary criticism. In the late 1960s, structuralism is attacked severely by
other theoretical modes such as poststructuralism, deconstruction, Marxism and so on.
The scientific claims of structuralism are repudiated and the view that literary meanings
are determined by a system of unalterable conventions and codes is subverted.

Before focusing on such developments, it becomes necessary to examine how
structuralism is closely associated with semiotics. The subtle difference between
structuralism and semiotics is best summed up in Eagleton's words:

The word 'structuralism' itself indicates a *method* of enquiry, which can
be applied to a whole range of objects from football matches to economic
modes of production; 'semiotics' denotes rather a particular *field* of study,
that of systems which would in an ordinary sense be regarded as signs:
poems, bird calls, traffic lights, medical symptoms and so on. But the two terms overlap . . . semiotics commonly uses structuralist methods. (87)

Although it is true that structuralism and semiotics coincide at many points, an understanding of semiotics will help us identify an important difference between them in literary criticism: structuralism aims at studying the structure, whereas semiotics aims at studying signification in order to understand and interpret how signs produce meaning.

We have noted that although the history of semiotics begins with Plato and Aristotle, and continues with the Stoics, St. Augustine, Poinsot, and Locke, it is the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the American logician Charles Sanders Peirce who gave it a theoretical status. They formulated theories of signs and their functioning which serve as a basis for research of major specialists in various fields: literary studies, sociology, anthropology, the visual arts, film studies, etc. Semiotics is treated as an interdisciplinary field, as its object of study can be anything that is a system of signs organized according to signification processes. Before understanding its influence on literature, it is necessary to understand the basic concepts of semiotics as formulated by Saussure and Peirce with a view to relating them to the construction of signs in Callaghan's fiction in the chapters to follow.

Although Saussure began his study in the domain of linguistics, he anticipated a new science to be called semiology:

A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology; I shall call it semiology (from the Greek sêmeion 'sign').

Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them . . .
Linguistics is only a part of the general science of semiology; the laws discovered by semiology will be applicable to linguistics, and the latter will circumscribe a well-defined area within the mass of anthropological facts. (16)

Saussure considers language a network of signs and distinguishes between langue and parole. As the salient features of his theory have already been discussed, suffice it to recast its relevance to semiology. Saussure’s particular contribution in this respect is to have reconceived linguistics along semiotic lines and to have provided an opportunity for the application of its semiotic principles to different aspects of culture. In a perceptive analysis of Saussure’s theory, Silverman points out that the logocentricity of Saussure’s model has proven to be a general feature of semiotics. In her view, most of the semioticians consider that “language constitutes the signifying system par excellence, and that it is only by means of linguistic signs that other signs become meaningful” (Silverman 5). Hence, it is important to note the emphasis Saussure placed on ‘sign’ and ‘system’ in order to examine the interplay of meaning in certain cultural signs within the system Callaghan creates within his fiction.

Semiotics, a science of signs, finds ideas meaningful only in relation to each other. Hence, the contiguous nature of signs acquires singular importance in Saussure’s semiology. Meaning in this sense, is a product of the relations (‘differential’ and ‘oppositional’ which have been already explained) between the elements within the system. According to Saussure, neither the signifier nor the signified is a sign in and of itself; it is always the structural relationship they share with each other that constitutes a sign. In his view, speech or parole is important in the realization of the linguistic
signifier, but not in the linguistic signifier itself. Saussure stresses the arbitrary nature of
the linguistic sign: “The bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. Since I
mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the
signified, I can simply say: the linguistic sign is arbitrary” (67-68). The relationship
between a given signifier and its signified is entirely conventional and it is established
only within a certain linguistic system. There is no natural motivation behind why the
word ‘horse’ represents the concept it evokes. Another important aspect of Saussure’s
theory which has been already discussed is that the individual units of a system become
meaningful only through oppositions and differences. From a Saussrean perspective,
meaning is entirely a product of the relations between the elements within the system.

Callaghan develops a counter sign system in his novels to that of the sign system
accepted by society by questioning the arbitrary relationship between certain signifiers
and their signifieds. In society, the sign, ‘priest,’ stands for someone who abides by the
laws of the Church and is therefore respected; the sign, ‘prostitute,’ stands for someone
who is involved in a dishonourable work and is rejected or despised; and the sign
‘criminal’ stands for someone who is villainous and is punished and imprisoned. The
relationship between law, outlaw, marginal people, and the dominant class is an enclosed
system in a society. Callaghan’s novels first install such a system and then subvert it by
changing the contiguous relationship between elements and offering new meanings for
signs installed, as evident in characters such as Father Dowling (Such Is My Beloved),
Kip Caley (More Joy in Heaven), Simon the Idumaean (A Time for Judas), Illona Tamory
(An Enchanted Pimp), Annie Laurie (The Many Colored Coat), Mary of Samaria (A Time
for Judas), and so on.
Saussure’s emphasis on the arbitrary character of language and on its differential functioning constitutes his most significant contribution to structuralist-semiotic thought. His definition of sign has exerted a strong influence on the development of semiotics, particularly in its relational emphasis. Critics, however, object to his synchronic view of language. Initially, Saussure’s concepts dominated structuralist-semiotic studies; in recent years, Peirce’s ideas have extended the scope of semiotic study.

Charles Sanders Peirce’s works remained unknown for a long time, because of their non-availability, and, in part, because of their complexity. A new edition of Peirce’s philosophical works, however, in eight volumes of his *Collected Papers* (1931-58), has extended the influence of his thought. As Silverman points out, Peirce’s definition of sign differs from Saussure’s scheme in its attentiveness to the referent, and in its reliance upon two interlocking triads: 1) *sign, interpretant, and object*, 2) *icon, index, and symbol*.

As a logician, Peirce is interested in signs in their relation to epistemology and abstract thought. According to him, *semiosis*—the process of the production and interpretation of signs—is fundamental to all of reality. Human beings possess the innate capacity to understand and interpret the simple signalling systems to highly complex symbolic structures. For Peirce, signification occurs because of the interaction among the triad composed of *sign, interpretant* and *object*. As he says:

> A sign . . . is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the *interpretant* of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its *object*. It stands for that object, not in all respects,
but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the

*ground*. . . (Vol II, 135)

Peirce’s concept of the *interpretant*, distinguishes his thinking on signs from that of others. The *interpretant* as the ‘mental effect’ or ‘thought’ generated by the relation between the sign and object, is itself a sign. Through the process of understanding and interpretation, this sign is capable of producing a further sign (a further interpretant). Thus, Peirce attributes infinite commutability to the *interpretant*. In his *A Theory of Semiotics*, Umberto Eco refers to this successive production of new meanings or interpretations as “unlimited semiosis”. In Peirce’s scheme, each *sign* and each *interpretant* enhances knowledge.

It is worth noting Silverman’s observations on Peirce’s triadic relationship, as her observations help us understand Peirce’s scheme better. She points out that the *sign* which initiates the play of meaning in this model stands closer to Saussure’s *signifier*, as it is also a form aimed at eliciting a concept. She notices, however, the difference in sign’s (signifier’s) representational qualities. Unlike Saussure’s *signifier*, Peirce’s *sign* sometimes “resembles or adjoins the object” (14). Thus in Silverman’s view, Saussure’s *signified* is synonymous with Peirce’s *interpretant*, as it is generated by the relation between the sign and the object. Yet, in contrast to Saussure, notes Silverman, Peirce attributes to the interpretant, “the quality of endless commutability” (15). Since the endless commutability excludes any reference to the object, “signs and interpretants (signifiers and signifieds) would appear to be locked in self-containment,” says Silverman (15). Such a sense of “semiotic closure” leads Silverman to examine Peirce’s views on the relationship between signs and objects or between signification and reality.
Her discussion of relevant passages from Peirce’s *The Collected Papers* reveals a contradiction in Peirce’s views, as evident in the passage below:

“We have *direct experience of things in themselves*. Nothing can be more completely false than that we can experience only our own ideas. . . . Our knowledge of things in themselves is entirely *relative*, it is true; but all experience and all knowledge is knowledge of that which is, independently of being represented. . . . At the same time, no proposition can relate, or even thoroughly pretend to relate, to any object otherwise than as that object is represented. (qtd. in Silverman 16)

Silverman points to Peirce’s argument that “we have *direct experience*, but *indirect knowledge* of reality” (16). Reality remains impermeable to thought until it is represented; yet, the authenticity of any representation becomes a crucial issue. As she observes: “Peirce never abandons his belief that reality can be truly represented. However, he does admit that the means for determining the truth of a representation lie beyond the reach of the individual. . . . ultimately this cognitive process is diachronic . . . and collective” (17). The “provisional nature of reality” and the certainty that it can be known only through signs, leads Silverman to conclude that the referent is excluded from Peirce’s semiotic scheme as it is from Saussure’s. In her view: “It is present within signification only as a concept which may or may not be representative of it” (17).

Silverman reinforces two important precepts of Peirce’s theory of signs: (i) sign or signifier represents object or referent, which is available only as an interpretant or signified; (ii) the interpretant, since it generates additional interpretants, gives rise to endless commutability. These two tenets are central to the present thesis which examines
the signification of signs in Callaghan's fiction in order to assert that Callaghan challenges fixed meanings of certain signs in society by generating additional significations of such signs. New meanings are elicited in the differential and oppositional relationships of various signs within the system Callaghan creates in his fiction.

Another important assertion of Peirce becomes indispensable to the present thesis. In Peirce's view man is a sign and therefore, has access to reality. As he says:

\[\text{[T]he word or sign which man uses is the man himself. . . . the fact that every thought is a sign, taken in conjunction with the fact that life is a train of thought, proves that man is a sign. . . . the man and the . . . sign are identical. . . . Thus my language is the sum total of myself; for the man is the thought}^\text{18}\].

Peirce's affirmation anticipates the recent developments in the conception of human beings and their identity. Silverman points to two radical perspectives as emanating from Peirce's affirmation. Firstly, "our access to and knowledge of ourselves is subject to the same semiotic restrictions as our access to and knowledge of the external world" (18). Secondly, "we are cognitively available to ourselves and others only in the guise of signifiers, such as proper names and first-person pronouns, or visual images, and consequently as for all intents and purposes synonymous with those signifiers" (18). These radical perspectives have changed the conventional notions of man as having an essence (or a maker) and thus possessing a fixed identity. Instead, man is viewed as a subject or a sign that signifies continuously in relation to other signs and thus assumes a fluid identity. The fourth chapter of this thesis analyses the concept of identity as
developed in Callaghan’s fiction with an aim to claim that Callaghan constructs fluid identity for his characters rather than a fixed identity.

Among all of Peirce’s classifications, the second triad of icon, index, and symbol has received more attention from theorists in semiotics. They are usually differentiated from each other as per the criteria of intention to communicate, their representational relationship with things, and by the fact whether they are natural, or conventional or arbitrary. The icon resembles its conceptual object in some recognizable way. As Silverman says, it may share certain of the properties, which that object possesses, or it may duplicate the principles according to which that object is organized. The most obvious icons are paintings, photographs, sculptures, cinematic images, algebraic equations, and graphs. Prose descriptions of Montreal, stage costumes, make-up, etc., are also iconic. The resemblance may be natural or conventional depending upon the extent to which the perception may be defined culturally.

Peirce defines index as “a real thing or fact which is a sign of its object by virtue of being connected with it as a matter of fact and by also forcibly intruding upon the mind, quite regardless of its being interpreted as a sign” (IV. 359). Thus, an index is related to its object by some factual or causal connection. Examples are: smoke is an index of fire, fever is an index of illness, a pointing hand, and a weathervane. Silverman offers some clarification on the existential bond that Peirce emphasizes between the indexical sign and its object:

The signifying value of the weathervane resides not in its physical relationship to the wind, but in the concepts “wind” and “direction” which it permits the observer to link up. . . . the signifying capacity of the
symptom inheres not in its physical residence within the patient’s body, but in its ability to assist the physician in making a diagnosis. Because the indexical sign is understood to be connected to the real object, it is capable of making that object conceptually present. (19-20)

Thus Silverman points to the necessity of a person who can read the signs correctly or associate the signs with their conceptual meanings in a system. In any literary work, readers derive meanings by their ability to understand and differentiate signs and their significations.

The symbol differs from the icon and the index in that the relationship between the sign and its signification is virtually always arbitrary and conventional. The relationship is established on the basis of some implied ‘rule’ of habitual association between the symbol and its object. As Peirce points out: “A Symbol is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object. . . . Not only is it general itself, but the Object to which it refers is of a general nature” (II. 143). Thus words in a language act as symbols as they signify conventionally determined concepts: the colour black is often associated with evil, the colour white with peace, dove stands for peace, while red rose signifies love, etc. It is important to note the distinction Silverman makes between Peirce’s and Saussure’s use of the term ‘symobl’: Peirce means by symbol a relationship between two dissimilar elements, while Saussure uses it to designate the union of elements which have some point in common. Silverman concludes that symbol represents “a general class of things, rather than a single, discrete object.” In her opinion, “Peirce’s division of signs shows greater flexibility than
Saussure’s, and a keener sense of the overlapping functions served by a single signifying entity” (20). For instance, Peirce insists that icons are essential both in direct and indirect communicating acts. The picture of a horse directly communicates the idea of horse irrespective of language barriers, whereas the word ‘horse’ in an English speaking community will convey meaning only when it evokes the mental image of a horse.

Another important observation Silverman makes is, Peirce’s emphasis on linguistic syntagms, which are dependent not only on icons, but also on indices. A general assertion is transformed into a specific statement with the help of indexical elements, which, in turn, help to locate a discourse in relation to time and space. Proper names function as indices, as they elicit the mental image of a person or a thing. Other examples of indices are expressions such as “that,” “this,” “which,” “here,” and personal pronouns. In Peirce’s view the richest signs or signifiers are those which combine iconic, indexical and symbolic elements. Literature is one such area where we come across interesting combination of various types of signs. Callaghan evokes and combines iconic, symbolic and indexical signs in his novels to offer multiple meanings. For instance, in *The Loved and the Lost*, McAlpine draws sketches of both Catherine and Peggy, combining iconic, symbolic and indexical signs on two special occasions. He names his sketch of Catherine as “Madame Radio” and Peggy’s as “Peggy, the crimper,” giving them specific identities in the roles they perform on those occasions. To Catherine and Peggy the sketches are iconic, but to McAlpine, they are indexical and in some ways symbolic, as they indicate an aspect of their personalities he is trying to capture in his sketches. The sketches, however, serve ironically as indices when Catherine matches the handwriting in her drawing with Peggy’s and concludes that McAlpine is the murderer.
The instances where different signs are combined to offer new meanings in different contexts are many in Callaghan's novels which need to be analysed.

Silverman explains in detail how Saussure's scheme does not provide a way of distinguishing between linguistic signifiers, photographic signifiers, or signifiers generated by the codes of editing, camera movement, lighting, and sound. The discussion of the relevance of Peirce's scheme to cinema is beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to note that Peirce's classification enables us to make a number of valuable distinctions among signs and the way they are used in a particular signifying instance.

Silverman finds the following features of Peirce's semiotic system as of lasting value and as anticipating and facilitating later theoretical developments:

a) the connections the system establishes between signification and subjectivity
b) the account it provides of motivated signifiers
c) the emphasis it places upon the endless commutability of the signified, upon the capacity of the signified to generate a chain of additional meanings. (25)

In her opinion, Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida share the last of these concerns—one from a rhetorical and the other from a philosophical point of view. Peirce's influence on these writers will be examined in the later sections of this chapter.

In *The Pursuit of Signs*, Jonathan Culler points out clearly the differences as well as the similarities between Saussure's and Peirce's theories of signs. Although Saussure's theory gives semiotics a practical program by conceiving it on the linguistic model, it gives rise to questions about the similarities between linguistic and non-linguistic signs. Peirce attempts to construct "an autonomous semiotics on taxonomic speculation" which fails to bring him recognition until semiotics is well developed (23). According to Culler,
by identifying a few communicative practices that might be benefited from semiotic
approach, Saussure provides a point of departure. Peirce, however, does not help much to
found a discipline by his insistence that everything is a sign. Despite these differences,
Culler identifies some similarities in their approaches and concludes that they are
complementary in various ways. Saussure argues that all signs are arbitrary and they are
determined by ‘social rule’ and ‘semiotic convention’. Although Peirce begins with a
distinction between arbitrary signs (symbols) and motivated signs (icons and indices), he
reaches the same conclusion as Saussure when he says, “every material image is largely
conventional in its mode of representation” (qtd. in Culler 24). Icons, even though seem
to be based on natural resemblance, are in fact, determined by semiotic conventions.
Finally, Culler concludes that both Saussure and Peirce agree that “the task of semiotics
is to describe those conventions that underlie even the most ‘natural’ modes of behaviour
and representation” (24).

Inspired by the theories of Saussure and Peirce, other practitioners of semiotics
have offered definitions of signs. In Problems in General Linguistics, Emile Benveniste
is of the opinion that “the role of the sign is to represent, to stand as a substitute for
something else” (51). Accordingly, signs become an essential feature of communication
and they elicit several interpretations that do not have to be mutually exclusive. A
written, drawn or other representation of fire may be a sign of light, heat, danger or a
combination of all these. The importance of Benveniste’s work lies in the fact that he
always thinks of linguistics in relation to human subject. He differs from Saussure in
claiming that while language is composed of a system of rules, actual enunciation takes
place in a concrete utterance, in which the speaker assumes the role of the subject. His
views on *discourse* and *subjectivity* have directed language-oriented structuralist-semiotic perspective in a new direction and have exerted a long lasting influence on literary criticism. The present section on Benveniste, however, is intended at understanding some of the basic concepts he put forward about sign and system.

As sign signifies within a system of signs, the definition of which is semiotics, Benveniste lists the characteristics of such a system as (1) its mode of operation (how we perceive a sign); (2) its context of validity; (3) the nature and number of its signs; and (4) the way the signs relate to each other within a given system. He illustrates all the characteristics using a simple system of traffic lights: red and green lights. The traffic lights operate visually; in the context of road traffic; the two lights are colour differentiated; and they alternate. Within the binary system of this system, red signifies 'stop', and green 'go'.

When applied to language, the above characteristics of a system become complex, especially when we consider within language any text or group of texts constituting a system. An important contribution of Benveniste to semiotics is, his account of sender and receiver that makes a system work. Thus a sign implies not just a system, but the presence of a sender and a receiver who make the system operate in a signifying context. In the above example of traffic lights, the sender is the light along with switches, electronic circuits, etc., and the receiver can be the vehicle driver or any passerby who understands the meaning of the sign. Similarly, in a literary text, the sender may be an author, a narrator, a character, etc.; the implied receiver may also be varied depending on the context in which the text is understood.
Significant changes have taken place in semiotics since Saussure's definition of sign as a binary entity: it combines the signifier (sound-image) and the signified (concept). However, meaning in a sign system unfolds in a particular context and is always related to and enriched by their previous contexts of reference. On this basis Roland Barthes identifies the signified as being composed of two parts: denotation (concept) and connotation (associations evoked by a particular sign in a given context).

Although Saussure described the sign as a binary entity, most theorists (following Peirce) consider the sign as a triadic entity: signifier, signified, and referent. In 1923, C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards in *The Meaning of Meaning* suggested the triad, symbol, thought or reference, and referent. In 1938, Charles Morris presented a similar definition of sign: sign vehicle or signifying vehicle, designatum or significatum, and denotatum. In all these attempts, the first, second and third terms correspond to signifier, signified and the referent. In 1934, Jan Mukařovský proposed that a work of art (signifier) gains its meaning (signified) from a given historical, social and cultural context, which is known as its ideological context. In his view, reader interprets the artistic referent as a particular ideological expression of a specific context. As a linguist, Mukařovský was interested in the aesthetic or poetic function of a work of art. Later theorists such as Mikhail Bakhtin, Louis Althusser, and Michel Foucault and Barthes were interested in the aesthetic signification of the ideological sign. For these theorists, the signified is plural in its signification as per the changing ideologies or contexts.

Saussure had argued for the arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified within the linguistic system. In literature too, many symbols or situations become conventionally associated with particular meanings and become fixed. For example, a
pastoral scene signifies innocence and idyllic happiness. The link between a signifier and a signified, however, can alter over time; literary texts are best examples that seek this flexibility in order to destabilize a cliché (thereby restoring the meaning) or employ other methods (parody, irony, etc.) to twist a stereotypical message. Such experiments have prompted the theorists to add as well as to alter some of the early concepts in structuralist-semiotic thought. A complete discussion of all of the theorists is beyond the scope of this chapter; only a few of them—in view of their relevance to the discussion of Callaghan’s novels and with an intention to find continuity in the way semiotic thought has developed—will be discussed in the sections to follow.

The inclusion of referent, as we noticed in different theorists, represents an important shift from the focus on structure to a broader field of investigation. This is so, because the referent is usually determined by its context and is the actual object to which the sign refers. It opens the field of semantics, which was overlooked by Saussure, formalists and structuralists. Beginning with Jan Mukařovský, a host of theorists (some of them were literary critics) extended the semiotic enterprise to the field of culture, ideology and discourse, thereby giving rise to the post-structuralist phase of semiotics. Before discussing theorists such as Barthes, Bakhtin, Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, and Derrida, it is important to note the structuralist-semiotic contribution to the study of literature. It provides a neat passage from the text seen as an autonomous and closed entity to text seen as a signifier deriving its meaning from a given historical, social and cultural context. Many of the theorists mentioned above started as structuralists, but imbibed broader semiotic concerns later in their theories to effect such a change. As Eagleton says: “What semiotics represents, in fact, is literary criticism transfigured by
structural linguistics, rendered a more disciplined and less impressionistic enterprise which . . . is more rather than less alive to the wealth of form and language than most traditional criticism” (90). Semiotic contribution to literature is evident in poetry, narrative, theatre and criticism. Its impact on criticism resulted in a major shift in the focus on structures and relations within texts rather than on a mere naming of ‘themes’. The traditional literary criticism was concerned primarily with the meaning of texts, whereas semiotic enterprise emphasizes on how meaning is produced in texts by patterns of interrelating signs. In semiotics, meaning is constructed, as a product of codes and conventions rather than as a natural event.

In poetry, the works of the Soviet theorist Yury Lotman and of the French-born American critic Michael Riffaterre have provided important critical models for the analysis of poetry. Lotman, the founder and leading theorist of the Tartu School of semiotics, inherited and developed the ideas and methods of the Russian formalists. His works *The Structure of the Artistic Text* (1970) and *Analysis of the Poetic Text: Verse Structure* (1972) constitute one of the major expositions of Soviet literary semiotics. For Lotman, it is the nature of the signifier in poetry which determines the signified. In his view, a poetic text is ‘semantically saturated’, because it condenses more ‘information’ than any other discourse. He sees a poetic text as a complex, stratified system, each of whose elements is correlated with the others. Every literary text is made up of several systems (such as rhyme, lexical, graphic, metrical elements, etc.). The clashes and tensions between these systems generate the text’s effects on the reader. Each of these systems represents a ‘norm’, from which the others deviate, setting up a code of expectations that are transgressed in the process of reading. Such a feature of the poetic
text results in ‘defamiliarization’ that breaks the regularity of the system to create a new awareness. For example, our perception of the poem’s grammatical structure, its metrical pattern, its syntactical organization and the way these systems contrast and clash with each other will heighten our awareness of its meanings. When two words are brought together because of the similarity in their sound or position in the metrical scheme, it produces a sharper awareness of their similarity or difference of meaning. As Eagleton observes, “each sign thus participates in several different ‘paradigmatic patterns’ or systems simultaneously, and this complexity is greatly compounded by the ‘syntagmatic’ chains of association, the ‘lateral’ rather than ‘vertical’ structures, in which signs are placed” (89). In his view “poetry activates the full body of the signifier” by signifier’s differential relation to other signs within the system. Lotman describes poetry as a “system of systems,” as it compresses several systems, each of which is characterized by its own parallelisms, differences, repetitions, and so on. Lotman argues that the absence of certain devices will also produce meaning: when our expectations (set up by the codes generated within the text) are thwarted, it will be as effective a device as any other present in the poem. Hence, Eagleton is of the opinion that “the literary work, indeed, is a continual generating and violating of expectations, a complex interplay of the regular and the random, norms and deviations, routinized patterns and dramatic defamiliarizations” (89).

A significant feature of Lotman’s work is that he does not situate the meaning of the text within the linguistic properties of the poetic text or any literary work. In his view meaning in a text is generated in “text’s relation to wider systems of meaning, to other texts, codes and norms in literature and society as a whole” (Eagleton 89). He emphasizes
on the reader's capacity to identify various operations and devices in a literary text, and this ability is manifested through the "receptive codes" that are at reader's disposal. By taking into consideration the role of the reader, Lotman moves away from the strict formalist adherence to the 'closed' structure of the text, and from the classic structural emphasis on the structures of the text.

In *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978), Riffaterre distinguishes between two levels of the poetic text: that of mimesis or 'heuristic' and that of semiotic or "retroactive" or "hermeneutic." At the mimetic level, the text is seen as a representation of reality, a string of successive information units; whereas at the semiotic level, the text is treated as a unique semantic unit, constituted by interpretation. In mimetic reading, linguistic signs are understood as having referential meanings, a direct representation of objects and situations. Riffaterre, however, notices that even at mimetic level, reader encounters certain "ungrammaticalities" or signs giving contradictory meanings when read referentially. Also, the metrical, phonological or rhetorical patterns of a poetic text cannot be interpreted at the mimetic level. These difficulties give rise to the second level of reading which Riffaterre describes as, "the guideline to semiosis, the key to significance in the higher system" (6). Literariness, in Riffaterre's opinion, is grasped at the level of semiosis, which requires reader's passage from the mimetic level to the level of significance. All those elements that resist mimetic reading are said to have some common traits, which make them the "variants of the same structural matrix." In other words, Riffaterre seeks in these elements a semiotic unity, which is one of the most striking features of his theory. Riffaterre describes the matrix as follows:
The poem results from the transformation of the matrix, a minimal and literal sentence, into a longer, complex and non-literal periphrasis. The matrix is hypothetical, being only the grammatical and lexical actualization of a structure. The matrix may be epitomized in one word, in which case the word will not appear in the text. It is always actualized in successive variants; the form of these is governed by the first or primary actualization, the model. Matrix, model, and text are variants of the same structure. (19)

A poet creates a poem by expanding or converting a matrix into a text by using a series of hypograms. Riffaterre's semiotic model begins with the reader's recognition of a hypogram—a word, cliché, sentence, or group of conventional associations. A hypogram is located outside the text, and is, in Culler's words, "a product of past semiotic and literary practice" (83). A word or phrase in a poem becomes a 'poetic sign' when it refers to the pre-existing hypogram and is also a variant or transformation of text's matrix. It leads Culler to say that poetic signs are over determined.

For Riffaterre, "the literary phenomenon is a dialectic between text and reader" (1). Whereas a poet creates a poem in expanding a word or sentence into a text by using a series of hypograms, the reader interprets the same poem by recognizing references to hypograms. Such an active participation from the reader enables him to reconstruct "the original matrix detectable in the common feature of the transformations to which the hypograms have been subjected" (Culler 83). The reader discovers the hidden network of associations that forms the hypogram by tracing semes (minimal units of meaning) and presuppositions which words from the text suggest. Culler refers to the objection
Riffaterre's theory faces because of its reductionism—identification of a unifying matrix. He finds, however, the answer for this objection within Riffaterre's claim that the matrix is not the meaning of the poem. Discovery of the matrix only helps to unify the poem, whereas meaning or significance is something else. As Riffaterre explains: "Significance is, rather, the reader's praxis of transformation, a realization that it is akin to playing, to acting out the liturgy of a ritual—the experience of a circuitous sequence, a way of speaking that keeps revolving around a key word or matrix reduced to a marker" (12). It is not significance or meaning which is the matrix, but the active process through which the reader is constantly oriented back, "from mimetic reading to the pursuit of hypograms to the discovery of semiotic unity" (Culler 92). Further, Culler notes that "Riffaterre's positing of a matrix is an attempt to identify the structure which enables readers to discover unity when they are interpreting the poem" (92). What Riffaterre calls as semiosis consists of all the elements that participate in this promotion of a text's signs from the mimetic level to the level of significance.

It is evident that semiotics offers a more scientific analysis of texts by employing structuralist methodology. Its influence on the study of narrative has been revolutionary to the extent of giving rise to a new field—narratology. The semiotic study of narrative begins with the Russian formalists' efforts in the 1920s, particularly, in Propp's (Morphology of Folktale) attempt to formulate typologies of the basic plot-functions of narrative based on more abstract concepts of role and function. Shklovsky, too, makes another pioneering contribution to the study of plot in 1929, by arguing that narrative forms are the product of "special laws of plot formation still unknown to us" (Theory of Prose 18). His studies of plot construction focus on devices such as repetition,
parallelism, framing, embedding, juxtaposition, and the emplotment of puns and riddles. He evaluates them in terms of their contribution to the textual machinery, in particular, to the aesthetic effect of defamiliarization. In both these formalists' attempt we can see that the elements of plot are considered in relation to their contribution to the totality of the textual mechanism. The Prague School structuralists continue and expand the work in narrative semiotics which the formalists begin. Narratology flourished in France in the 1960s and the 1970s and produced important theoretical and critical studies by Algirdas Julien Greimas, Tzvetan Todorov, Gérard Genette, Claude Bremond and Barthes. The impact of Russian formalism and Saussurean linguistics is evident in these theorists' attempt to designate units in the text: narremes, mythemes, functions, roles, modalities, types of events, etc. According to these theorists, in any narrative, the various units of plot are combined in a temporal sequence as per the rules of a narrative syntax.

Although it is not the aim of this thesis to examine or formulate narrative structure of Callaghan's novels, many observations in the present study have been benefited by the insights the theorists provide in narratology. It is essential to examine how Callaghan transforms the well known stories in a culture into new plots through the techniques of parallelism, juxtaposition, defamiliarization and embedding. In novels such as More Joy in Heaven, That Summer in Paris, and A Time for Judas, real life incidents, biographical details and myths are transformed into narrative artefacts. Meaning in these novels is produced by the interplay of various signs, which, in turn contribute to the transposition of structural units. Hence, it becomes necessary to understand briefly the theories of narrative, which structuralists such as Greimas, Todorov, Genette and Barthes formulate.
As discussed early in this chapter, Lévi-Strauss lays the foundation for modern structuralist narrative with his pioneering work on myth. “Narratology,” says Eagleton, “consists in generalizing this [Lévi-Strauss’s] model beyond the unwritten ‘texts’ of tribal mythology to other kinds of story” (90-91). Following Saussure, Jakobson, and Lévi-Strauss, Griemas claims that structure precedes meaning. In his view, a literary text is the actualization of literary discourse encompassing several semiotic systems. Comprehension of meaning or analysis of the problem of signification in a literary text, in Greimas’s opinion, requires a transposition of one level of language (the text) into a different level of language (the metalanguage) and working out of adequate techniques of transposition.

In works such as Sémantique Structurale (1966, translated as Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method, 1983), Du Sens (1970, translated as On Meaning: Selected Writings in Semiotic Theory, 1987), and Maupassant: La Sémiotique du texte: Exercise Pratiques (1976, translated as Maupassant. The Semiotics of Text: Practical Exercises, 1988), Greimas attempts a grammar of plot from narrative texts with the help of concepts from structural linguistics. Basically, Greimas seeks a deep structure underlying all narrative texts. In Structural Semantics, he tries to describe narrative structure in terms of an established linguistic model. Hawkes succinctly describes the model as “the Saussurean notion of an underlying langue or competence which generates a specific parole or performance, as well as . . . Saussure’s and Jakobson’s concept of the fundamental signifying role of binary opposition” (88). The perception of binary opposition underlies Griemas’s theoretical model, which accounts for the “elementary structure of signification.” The elementary structure involves recognition and distinction
of two aspects of an entity: its opposite and its negative. As Hawkes represents it: B is the opposite of A and \(-B\) is the opposite of \(-A\); but \(-A\) is also the negation of A and \(-B\), the negation of B. These binary oppositions form the basis of a deep-lying "actantial model," which acts as \textit{langue} to the surface structures of individual stories.

Since man uses language—"Man is the Talking Animal"—Greimas believes that the basic structures of his language will inform and shape the basic structure of his stories. Despite their differences on the surface level, a structural analysis of stories reveals a common "grammar" or "enunciation-spectacle" from which the stories are generated. Enunciation spectacle refers to the permanent structure of narrative, assured by the fixed distribution of roles regardless of the varying actors and the content of their actions. As a result, the semantic structure of sentences imprints itself on much larger entities. As Hawkes describes, "at the surface level, the structure of the enunciation spectacle is manifested through the various \textit{actants} who embody it, as \textit{parole} to its \textit{langue}" (89). Any narrative sequence embodies the oppositional model through two actants whose relationship reflects opposition. This relationship generates the fundamental actions on the surface level—"of disjunction and conjunction, separation and union, struggle and reconciliation, etc" (Hawkes 90). The meaning of the narrative is obtained in the process of the movement from one action to another, which involves "the transfer on the surface of some entity—a quality, an object—from one actant to the other" (Hawkes 90). In other words, Greimas's "actantial model" results from the application of the analysis of syntax to the analysis of plot, in the tradition of Propp's analyses of narrative.
Any given plot, in Greimas’s view, can be reduced to the opposed actantial functions of three pairs; in fact, he reduces the seven “spheres of action” proposed by Propp: 1) Subject Vs Object, 2) Sender Vs Receiver, 3) Helper and Adversary. Thus characters are classified according to their function in the fabula. Hawkes regards these categories as representing some sort of ‘phonemic’ level of analysis with their oppositional structure. He proceeds to explain another level of ‘syntactic’ analysis in Greimas which can account for the ways these elements may be joined together to form narratives, so that the ‘grammar’ will be complete. Since a complete discussion of Greimas’s analysis is impossible to include in this section, suffice it to note that Greimas reduces thirty-one ‘functions’ of Propp into twenty ‘functions,’ based on their potential for binary oppositional combination. For instance, Greimas combines the two separate functions in Propp’s list into one on the grounds that the terms presuppose one another: ‘prohibition’ and ‘violation’ are combined under ‘prohibition vs violation.’ On the whole, Greimas’s emphasis on the relationship between entities marks his affiliation with structuralism. In his assessment of Greimas, Hawkes regards Greimas’s work as an advancement and improvement on Propp’s original insights, but his ultimate goal as similar to that of Propp’s. Hawkes defines the goal as:

The establishment of basic plot ‘paradigms’, and an exploration of the full range of their combinatory potential: the construction, in other words, of what the structuralists would call a narrational combinatoire, or story-generating mechanism: a competence of narrative, which generates the performance of stories; a langue, in short, of literature. (95)
Thus by isolating narrative as the object of knowledge Greimas joins the legacy of structuralism and formalism.

As in Greimas’s theoretical model, the perception of binary opposition is basic to the elementary structure of Callaghan’s narratives. The present study, however, is not concerned with the structure of plot, the study of which will result in a grammar of Callaghan’s narratives. On the other hand, it examines how meaning is problematized in the construction and undermining of diametrically opposed signs (actants) in Callaghan’s fiction.

In a similar fashion to Greimas, Todorov attempts a ‘grammar’ of narrative from which individual stories derive. He believes in the existence of a ‘universal grammar’ which underlies all languages. In Hawkes’s opinion, Todorov argues for “a common human basis of experience which goes beyond the limits of a particular language, and which ultimately informs, not only all languages, but all signifying systems” (96). For Todorov, literature constitutes a secondary signifying system similar to that of language. The proper subject matter of poetics, however, is not interpretation but the structures that are generally inherent in literary discourse. Todorov is more interested in the syntactical aspect of language than in the semantic aspect. The influence of Russian formalists, the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss, and the poststructuralist arguments of Barthes and Derrida are discerned everywhere in his works.

In his analysis of Boccaccio’s Decameron (Grammaire du Décaméron, 1969), Todorov isolates three aspects of literary discourse: the semantic (content), the syntactic (the structural units), and the verbal (words and phrases in which the story is told). Hawkes summarizes the main features of Todorov’s analysis which begins with
distinguishing two fundamental units of structure: *Propositions* and *Sequences*. As propositions are the basic elements of syntax, they can be compared to sentences. A collection of propositions gives rise to a sequence, and a sequence is capable of existing as an independent story. A story contains many sequences or at least one.

The stories in *Decameron* are analyzed on the model of grammar: Todorov treats the units of propositions and sequences as *parts of speech*. The propositions and sequences themselves function as ‘sentences’ and ‘paragraphs’ that constitute the whole of the text. In this way, characters are seen as nouns, their attributes as adjectives and their actions as verbs. Each story of *The Decameron* becomes a kind of extended sentence, combining these units in different ways. Propositions are formed by the combination of a noun with either an adjective or a verb. Attributes and actions are further reduced to three conditions and three verbs respectively.

Todorov’s ‘grammar’ of *The Decameron* is much more complex than what is discussed here. In Hawkes’s view, the advantage of Todorov’s narrative grammar lies in the extent to which such analysis loosens the anaesthetic grip that fiction has on readers. The linguistic ‘grammatical’ mode of Todorov pushes the linguistic nature of the stories into the foreground. The disadvantage that Hawkes notices is its complexity, deriving from its emphasis on particular ‘performance’ (i.e., *The Decameron* itself) rather than on ‘general competence’ (‘rules of the game’ which produced those stories). In conclusion, Hawkes observes that Todorov is no exception to the structuralist notion, “literary works are ultimately *about* language, that their medium is their message” (100). Todorov’s significant contribution in the areas of genre and theory of reading has considerable importance to the structuralist enterprise as a whole.
In *Narrative Discourse*, Gérard Genette has developed the most elaborate and systematic taxonomy for the study of fictional texts. Whereas Todorov treats text as an expansion of a sentence, Genette approaches all fiction as the “expansion of a verb,” and analyzes a fictional text according to its “tense, mood, and voice” (Scholes 92). Genette distinguishes three aspects of fictional texts in narrative: *recit* (narrative discourse) which relates a set of fictional events as they actually happen in the text; *historie* (story) which is the order in which those events actually occur in a situation different in time and space from the text itself; and *narration*, which concerns the very act of narrating in relation to the events narrated and to some *narratee* (audience). The first two categories of *recit* and *historie* are equivalent to the formalist distinction between *plot* and *story*.

Genette proposes five central categories of narrative analysis for the examination of fictional “tense,” as he discerns these categories in the temporal arrangement of fiction: *Order*, *Duration*, *Frequency*, *Mood* and *Voice*. Order refers to the arrangement of events in the text, which may have discordances with the actual chronology of the story. The order of presentation takes place by analepsis (flash back), prolepsis (anticipation), or anachrony (differences between the time of action and the time of narration). Duration, in Eagleton’s words, “signifies how the narrative may elide episodes, expand them, summarize, pause a little and so on” (91). In Scholes’s opinion, duration can be expressed as “a ratio between the hours, days and years of story time and the words and pages of printed text” (93). Frequency refers to the number of times in which events are repeated in the story and in the discourse. An event that happened once in the story may be narrated once or many times in the discourse, or happened several times but may have been narrated once, or happened several times and also narrated several times. In the
category of Mood, Genette distinguishes between ‘distance’ and ‘perspective.’ Distance involves recounting the story that can be described as ‘diegesis’ or ‘mimesis.’ In other words, it involves various types of discourse in the narrative of events versus words or dialogue. Perspective is best understood as ‘point of view’: Genette develops his theory of forms of narrative focalization in terms of the narrator’s vision and knowledge of events versus characters’ vision and knowledge of events. Eagleton explains the way Genette formulates variations of these focalizations:

The narrative may be ‘non-focalized’, delivered by an omniscient narrator outside the action, or ‘internally focalized’, recounted by one character from a fixed position, from variable positions, or from several character-view-points. A form of ‘external focalization’ is possible, in which the narrator knows less than the characters do. (92)

In short, narrative focus determines how far we can penetrate into the life of characters. Scholes is of the opinion that Genette’s terminology for varieties of perspective—“internal, external, fixed, variable, multiple, and unfocused”—does not possess sufficient analytical value to justify their taxonomic complexity (97).

The final category, Voice, deals with the act of narrating and the kind of narrator and narratee implied in that act. Various levels and combinations are possible between the time of the narrative and the narrated time. The events may be recounted after, before, or at the time they happen. Genette distinguishes between the ‘heterodiegetic’ narrator, who is absent from the story he recounts, and the ‘homodiegetic,’ who is present in the narrative as in first-person stories, or ‘autodiegetic,’ who is present in the story as one of its characters. There are many sub categories and terminologies in Genette’s theory of
narrative, but discussing all of them is not within the confines of this chapter. The significant aspect of discourse to which he draws our attention is the difference between narration and narrative.

Although an analysis of all the five categories of Genette’s theory in Callaghan’s narratives will result in a systematic study of Callaghan’s fiction, the present study does not aim at a ‘taxonomy’ or ‘grammar’ of his fiction. The analysis of some of the categories such as Order, Mood, and Frequency in the later chapters assists the study of signification of signs in Callaghan’s works. Analysis of ‘distance’ and ‘perspective’ becomes necessary in Chapter Three, which re-examines realism in Callaghan’s fiction, whereas analysis of Voice is important in Chapter Four that examines the concept of identity.

Unlike Greimas, Todorov and Genette, who are interested in deriving a grammar for the narrative texts, Roland Barthes explores the cultural impact on narrative texts. His works are an amalgamation of structuralism, semiotics, literary criticism and cultural studies. His eleven books and one hundred and fifty two articles give rise to what is now described as cultural criticism. Barthes provides a significant transition from the structuralist phase of semiotics to the post-structuralist phase—the transition can be identified in the following discussion of his works. As a strong advocate of structuralism, Barthes uses structuralist methodology in most of his works. He explores, however, the full implications of structure, language, and signs in the larger field of culture, thereby initiating the poststructuralist emphasis on ideology, discourse and culture. His wide-ranging books resist the simple classification of Barthes as a ‘structuralist’: from the semiology of fashion (System de la Mode, 1967. Translated as The Fashion System, 1983)

In the early phase of his career, Barthes is concerned with how ideologies or value-systems are encoded in language and in social usages, and tend to appear 'natural.' He follows the lead taken by theorists such as Edward Sapir, Benjamin Lee Whorf, and Claude Lévi-Strauss in insisting on language's powerful determining influence on the way individuals and societies see the world around them. Barthes believes that language is never transparent, since it creates and structures the world we inhabit and encounter in our daily experience. He, along with the theorists mentioned above, comes closer to the views of Vico and Piaget who stress the inherent nature in human beings to invent, modify and reconstruct the world they inhabit. Barthes argues that language is never innocent or free of ideology, and it is the responsibility of every thinker to be aware of this fact. The notion that language is inherently ideological leads Barthes to propose the idea of "the death of the author"—the author is no more in a privileged position to determine meaning in a work. In his first book, Le Degré Zéro de l'Écriture (1953. Translated as Writing Degree Zero, 1967), Barthes severely attacks the classical French style of writing, which had, until then, proved a natural way of writing, an innocent reflection of reality. He sees it as a characteristic corruption of modern bourgeois society, which infiltrated its life and values through such notions of writing, and declares that writing is all style. According to Barthes no writing can be described as "white writing," which aims at clarity or transparency or naturalness (the bourgeois ideals); literature is
complex and multiple in its signification, because it is shaped by complex social, political and economic affairs. Barthes explains this complex process through developing the notion of structure of codes in his later works. Hawkes rightly points out the significance of codes in Barthes's theories:

The codes act as agencies—whether we are conscious of them or not—which *modify*, *determine* and, most importantly, *generate* meaning in a manner far from innocent, far from untrammelled, and very much closer to the complicated ways in which language itself imposes its own mediating, shaping pattern on what we like to think of as an objective world 'out there'. (110)

Hence, writing does not simply reflect reality, because language partly creates and endorses a structure to the world; thereby, language exerts a powerful influence on the way individuals perceive the world around them.

Barthes elaborates his ideas in *Mythologies*, which aims at uncovering or demystifying ideological myths created by French mass media through their manipulation of codes. In “Myth Today” (last section of *Mythologies*) Barthes treats myth as “a type of speech”, as “a system of communication” and therefore as “a mode of signification.” He considers it “coextensive” with *semiology*. He defines semiology as “a science of forms, since it studies significations from their content” (111). Semiology, for Barthes, postulates a relationship between the two terms *signifier* and *signified*, but the relationship is not one of “equality” but of “equivalence.” We do not grasp this relationship as one term leading to another, but as correlation which *unites* them. Thus *sign*, for Barthes, is the “associative total” of signifier and signified. He explains it with
two examples; one of them is a bunch of roses. When it is used to signify passion, the bunch of roses becomes the *signifier*, and passion, the *signified*. The relation between the two produces the term, the bunch of roses as a *sign*. Barthes makes it clear that the bunch of roses as a *sign* is different from the bunch of roses as a *signifier* (a "horticultural entity"). The bunch of roses is *empty* as a *signifier*, but it is *full* as a *sign*. In other words, the *signifier* is filled with signification or meaning (intention of the speaker and the social convention) when it is used to signify passion. The range of possibilities to fill in a signifier is infinite, but society conventionalizes some of them and makes them finite. Barthes's contribution to semiology lies in the fact that he distinguishes clearly the *sign* from the *signifier*.

In the examination of signs in Callaghan's novels, it is discovered that Callaghan reconstructs certain stereotypical signs created by society. Human beings and objects are signifiers, but society creates certain institutional and cultural signs such as priest, prostitute, bishop, judge, police, criminal, and outlaw by filling in different signifiers with specific meaning. After a certain period of time, these signs become automatized or look natural with a fixed meaning and give rise to, in Silverman's words, "a circumscribed group of privileged signifieds" Silverman's phrase refers to ideology or myth, which is a major device used to cover contradictions in a culture to shape the world in the image of the dominant class, to reduce "all textual materials, all cultural artefacts, all signifying transformations to a circumscribed group of privileged signifieds" (Silverman 30). In Callaghan's novels, however, the meaning of automatized signs is destabilized with intentions to reveal the ideology in such signs and to invoke each signifier's capacity to signify multiple meanings. Hence, prostitutes in novels such as *The
*Enchanted Pimp, The Many Colored Coat* and *A Time for Judas* signify positive meanings (against the negative meaning attached to them in society) in a different semiological chain which Callaghan develops in his novels. In this sense, they form the secondary or counter-signifying system to the system society creates. In his discussion of myth, Barthes explains in detail how secondary signifying systems are created.

In myth, Barthes finds the "tri-dimensional" pattern of signifier, signified and sign, but discovers myth as a peculiar system: "it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a *second-order semiological system*" (114). Accordingly, the sign in the first system becomes a mere signifier in the second. The materials of mythical speech such as language, photography, painting, posters, rituals, objects, etc. are treated in myth as only signs of the first semiological chain. Thus, Barthes says:

> Everything happens as if myth shifted the formal system of the first significations sideways. As this lateral shift is essential for the analysis of myth, I shall represent it in the following way, it being understood, of course, that the spatialization of the pattern is here only a metaphor:
If language can be taken as providing a model for primary signification (bunch of roses) myth represents the model for secondary signification. Barthes differentiates these two levels of signification when he considers language a language-object (as myth builds its system based on language), and myth a metalanguage (as it is a second language). A semiologist, in his analysis, need not be concerned with the language-object, but only its “total term or global sign, and only in as much as this term lends itself to myth” (115).

Literature is a prime example of the “second-order” signifying system, as it builds upon language. Barthes describes second-order signifying systems as “connotative” and distinguishes them from “denotative” or “first-order” signifying systems. Significantly, Silverman points out that Barthes is not the first to propose this category, as the Danish linguist Louis Hjemslev had isolated it in Prolegomena to a Theory of Language (1969). She states that Barthes works with the model Hjemslev formulated much earlier. According to Hjemslev’s model, the denotative signifier and the denotative signified join together to form the connotative signifier. In language, the denotative sign is formed by the sound image and the concept it evokes, as in the Saussurean model. The two parts of denotative sign combine together to form the connotative sign and help to produce additional meaning or meanings which become connotative signified (as shown in the diagram). Hawkes sees connotation as characteristic of the ‘literary’ or ‘aesthetic’ use of language, because for Barthes, “connotation represents the same kind of ‘gearing up’ from denotation as myth does from ordinary signification” (133). Hence, for Hawkes literature forms one of the “second-order signifying systems” which characteristically superimposes upon the “first-order” system of language. As stated earlier, in Callaghan’s novels, signification of various signs does not stop at the denotative level, but moves to
connotative level to indicate their endless commutability. Barthes names the ability of the second-order signifying system to connote further as “signfication,” Hjemslev calls it “connotation” and later, Derrida describes it as “free play.”

*Mythologies* also marks the beginning of the second phase of Barthes’s career which is inspired by the methods of structural linguists and the light they throw on other signifying systems such as those of narration or of fashion. He finds in structuralism the possibility of developing a science of culture. His 1966 essay on the structural analysis of narrative, “Introduction à l’Analyse structurale des récits” (1966. Translated as “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative” in *Image, Music, Text*. 1977) has greatly influenced the studies in narratology. In a similar fashion of Propp, Barthes proposes to transform the narrative text into distinct structural units: functions and indices (indicators of character psychology, atmosphere and so on). He attempts at a structural model of analysis applicable to narrative texts in general, by separating these texts from their sequential order and subscribing them to a structural frame of explanation. In his later work, *S/Z* (1970. Translated in 1975), however, Barthes abandons his 1966 approach of breaking a text into fixed structural units. Instead, he focuses on the text’s polysemy and on the multilevel dynamic play of meaning. Before embarking upon *S/Z*, which is Barthes’s *tour de force*, it is essential to understand briefly his views on *code*, *author* and *writer*, and *pleasure* and *bliss*.

Connotation is an important element in Barthes’s semiotics, as seen in the discussion of myth. Since connotation is only explained through reference to a larger social field, Barthes associates connotation with other two important elements, ideology and codes. According to Barthes, codes manifest themselves through connotation, which
in turn points to the ideology behind codes. In *S/Z* Barthes argues that a text is "traversed" by various codes; codes refer to other texts and to the cultural reality which it tries to define. As Barthes describes codes:

They [codes] are so many fragments of something that has always been *already* read, seen, done, experienced; the code is the wake of that *already*. Referring to what has been written, i.e. to the Book (of culture, of life, of life as culture), it makes the text into a prospectus of this Book.

(21)

That Barthes thinks of literature in terms of codes leads to an important distinction he makes between two sorts of writer and writing. In his essay, "To Write: An Intransitive Verb" (1970), Barthes describes the *writer* (*scripteur, écrivant*) as the one who writes in a *transitive* mode, that is, he intends to move through his writing to other things in the world. In contrast to him is the *author* (*écrivain*) who does not intend to take his readers through his writing to a world beyond it, but to highlight the process of writing. The author, in Barthes's view, has "nothing but writing itself, not as the pure "form" conceived by an aesthetic of art for art's sake but, much more radically, as the only area for the one who writes" (144). *An écrivain* aims at drawing attention to the activity of writing itself, thus making writing an end in itself. Hawkes describes Barthes's stance in this essay as "full formalist position" where "writers write; they offer us *writing* as their art; not as a vehicle, but as an end in itself" (113). Further, Hawkes notes that such writing requires from readers to concentrate on signifiers in the text, rather than moving beyond them to the signifieds implied. The examples of such writers he gives are Marcel
Proust, James Joyce, Thomas Becket, etc., who by their experimental writing created a new position for the writer.

Barthes also pays attention to the kind of reader who can understand an écrivain's work. In other words, he proposes a theory of reading in his S/Z that redefines the status of reader by providing him “a role, a function, a contribution to make” (Hawkes 113). For Barthes, literature, which subscribes to a clear passage from signifier to signified, and established is readerly (lisible). As Silverman describes it, “the readerly text [for Barthes] purports to be a transcript of a reality which pre-exists and exceeds it, and it tightly controls the play of signification by subordinating everything to this transcendental meaning” (243). Thus readerly texts encourage readers to follow the direction of finding meaning in which the author might have framed it. They project and perpetuate the ‘established’ view of reality. In contrast to this, Barthes proposes writerly (scriptible) text, which requires from readers a self-conscious attempt to read it, and participate actively in understanding the free play of signifiers. It does not provide an easy passage from signifier to signified, to an already existing ‘real world,’ but calls upon the reader to examine the nature of language itself. Hawkes describes both the approaches as “In readerly texts the signifiers march: in writerly texts they dance” (114). Such a description refers to an endless play of signification in writerly texts, due to the heterogeneity, and unpredictable nature of the various elements in them. As Silverman describes the writerly text: “It brings to light the cultural voices or codes responsible for the enunciation of a classic text. In the process it discovers multiplicity instead of consistency, and signifying flux instead of stable meaning” (emphasis added 246). Thus it is clear that the reader
participates in an ongoing discovery of meaning, instead of being a passive consumer of what has already been created and established.

Barthes differentiates between two kinds of pleasure in order to describe the experience offered by both readerly and writerly texts: plaisir (pleasure) and jouissance (bliss, ecstasy). Pleasure is experienced through the straightforward process of reading readerly texts, whereas ecstasy is experienced when the easy passage from signifier to signified breaks down. As Barthes explains it in *The Pleasure of the Text*:

Text of pleasure: the text that contents, fills, grants euphoria; the text that comes from culture and does not break with it, is linked to a comfortable practice of reading. Text of bliss: the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts (perhaps to the point of a certain boredom), unsettles the reader’s historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language. (14)

Barthes’s analysis of “Sarrasine” (a short story by Honoré de Balzac) best exemplifies the process of creating a readerly text and experiencing the jouissance. It demonstrates, by pointing to plurality of meaning in the text, that the reader is no longer a consumer but a producer. Barthes’s notion of plurality is closely associated with writerly text: it does not have a determinate meaning, no fixed signifieds, but is “an inexhaustible tissue of galaxy of signifiers, a seamless weave of codes and fragments of codes” (Eagleton 119). A brief glance at his analysis of Balzac’s story will help us understand Barthes’s ideas in a better manner.
Barthes divides the story into 561 *lexias* (minimal units of meaning) in the true structuralist fashion and analyses these “textual signifiers” in terms of five codes: the *semic*, the *hermeneutic*, the *proairetic*, the *symbolic*, and the *cultural*. The *semic* code acts as the major device for thematizing persons, objects, or places by associating a cluster of signifiers or “flickers of meaning” around either a proper name, or another signifier which functions temporarily as a proper name. The signifiers, which provide another signifier with its semantic value, are called “semes.” According to Barthes, “when identical semes traverse the same proper name several times and appear to settle upon it, a character is formed” (67). For instance the ‘e’ in the title, “Sarrasine” suggests femininity in this code, a quality, which is very much at the centre of the story’s later complications. Barthes gives importance to the play of signification that the *semic* code makes possible. He describes the seme as *connotative signified*, which prolongs rather than expedite the revelation of “truth.” The connotative signifieds, however, do not refer to the closure of signification, but refer beyond themselves. For instance, in Callaghan’s *Strange Fugitive*, the Jews are presented with the connotative signified, “the feminine”, which is in fact, deduced from the cluster of signifiers that surround Jewish characters—“slim,” “graceful,” “lipsyled” “oiled hair” and “rouged cheeks.” But the connotative signified connotes further in the novel: “the feminine” signifies “other than masculine,” and therefore, “the powerless.” It also signifies Harry Trotter, the protagonist’s hatred towards the ethnic community represented through the Jews, the Italians and the Chinese. Hence, for Barthes, connotative signified is always filled with additional significations. The writerly project is a process of “skidding” from one signified to another, in a
relentless search for new signifieds. In Barthes’s view, the goal of writerly project is a constant deferral of meaning.

The *hermeneutic* code consists of those textual units by means of which the narrative raises questions, creates suspense and mystery, before resolving it. Barthes divides the hermeneutic code into ten constituent parts or “morphemes,” whose order of occurrence in any text can be varied. These morphemes are: thematization, proposal of the enigma, formulation of the enigma, request for an answer, snare, equivocation, jamming, suspended answer, partial answer, and disclosure. About ‘thematization,’ Barthes says, “an emphasizing of the object which will be the subject of the enigma” (209). Semic code plays an important role in ‘thematization,’ as it involves definition of character, place or object in ways that denote mystery. The second morpheme, ‘proposal’ states that there is an enigma. The third morpheme, the ‘formulation’ involves explaining the enigma, upon ‘request for an answer,’ the fourth morpheme, which initiates the narrative movement. The ‘snare’ refers to units that deliberately evade the truth through different sorts of deception—intentional and unintentional ones. ‘Equivocation’ involves both a snare and a truth in the sense that the statement, which is equivocal, can be understood in two different ways. ‘Suspended answer’ and ‘partial answer’ perform the functions suggested in their names. Jamming refers to a stage in the narrative when there is an apparent failure of resolving the mystery with the exhaustion of available resources. The tenth morpheme, ‘disclosure’ is the final discovery or the resolution of mystery or the end of signification. Barthes is of the opinion that the *hermeneutic* code operates in close association with the semic code, as they both reach toward a subject that is finally discovered and known.
The proairetic code deals with the sequence of 'actions' and events in the story. It is embodied in sequences as we record them along the narrative and name them. Barthes does not offer much information on this code, but describes it as:

the proairetic sequence is never more than the result of an artifice of reading; whoever reads the text amasses certain data and under some generic titles for actions (stroll, murder, rendezvous), and this title embodies the sequence; the sequence exists when and because it can be given a name, it unfolds as this process of naming takes place, as a title is sought or confirmed. . . . (19)

In fixed generic forms, the sequences can be anticipated. Proairetic code, too, does not operate in isolation, but in association with the other codes in a text. Silverman points out "the code of action is often at the service of the others—that its operations can be anticipated and indeed coerced through a preliminary conjunction of semic, hermeneutic, symbolic, and cultural elements" (268).

The symbolic code is associated with the articulation of binary oppositions, which are central to the cultural order to which they belong. Balzac's "Sarrasine" challenges the most dominant of all binary oppositions—that between the male and female subjects. As Silverman says, "'Sarrasine' dramatizes how dependent the usual operations of the symbolic code are upon sexual difference, and the radical transformations which are registered within the larger cultural order when that difference is belied" (272). For Barthes, the plurality of meaning in the story derives from its violation of the most dominant of its culture's binary oppositions. In many of Callaghan's novels symbolic code depends upon binary oppositions that give rise to conflict. Any attempt to bring
together oppositions is seen as transgression. In novels such as *Such Is My Beloved*, *More Joy in Heaven*, and *The Loved and the Lost* the symbolic code operates through oppositions such as ideal/real, innocence/prudence, human love/divine love, rich/poor, white/black, emotion/reason, and individual/society. These antitheses are central to the organization of the cultural order from which they arise. The symbolic code is assigned with the maintenance of cultural order's prominent binary oppositions. Callaghan neither tries to bring together the opposites nor wants to reverse the usual relationship. Instead, he explores how one set of opposites enjoys privileged position because of the cultural coding. Also, he shows how the presence of one meaning in a term is dependent on the absence of its opposite for its operation and vice versa.

The cultural code forms a direct connection with the larger discursive field that is identified as the symbolic order. Thus it refers to things already known and codified by a culture. Cultural codes operate in such a way as to organize and naturalize the symbolic order. Barthes further explains that the information from the authoritative texts of a given symbolic order find their ways into the cultural codes of novels, poems and films. Proverbial statements are considered as one of the most conspicuous manifestations of cultural coding. In Barthes's view, certain stylistic groupings in literary works make explicit the effect of cultural codes. Silverman, however, points out that in a classical text, cultural codes make their effect felt not just through style but through "the activity of the semic, hermeneutic, proairetic, and symbolic codes" (275). Callaghan's fiction provide us with coded narratives, whose antitheses and preoccupations enable us unearth cultural codes of Christianity, law, bourgeoisie, Christian humanism, and pluralism.
Further, as his fiction brings together contradictory cultural codes, it gives rise to plurality in terms of signification and meaning.

The above information on codes is only an attempt to state their most important characteristic features; a detailed analysis of each of them is not possible in this chapter. With the help of these codes, Barthes turns Balzac's short story from a "readerly" text into a "writerly" one. Although he breaks the text into units, it is arbitrary rather than proposing a general structural framework for all narratives; the codes he selects are chosen out of many codes that still exist, and they possess no hierarchy in their application. His scathing analysis of this story proves Balzac to be no 'realist' at all. His narrative does not act as an 'innocent' window on to a 'reality' that lies 'beyond' the text. Barthes's analysis shows the text, as Hawkes describes it "a minefield of concealed 'shaping' devices, a corridor of distorting mirrors, a heavily stained glass window which imposes its colours and its shapes definitively on what (if anything) can be glimpsed through it" (119). On the whole, Barthes does not believe in the notion that a text has a unitary meaning created by a unitary individual. For him the notions of individuality and originality are myths. His objection is part of his larger attack on 'individualized' bourgeois society which projected certainties and constructed 'reality' on that basis. In Barthes's view, literature emerging from such a society is also institutionalized; thus, influencing a similar institutionalization of its criticism or interpretation. Barthes's aim in S/Z is therefore to show that an unchanging reality as depicted in 'realistic texts' (like that of Balzac's Sarrasine) does not exist, and to unveil the "signifier-signified connection as the un-innocent convention" (Hawkes 120-21). In other words, Barthes assigns high value to the process of reading that is capable of creating reality through the interplay of
signs, and thus experiencing jouissance. “The central theme of S/Z” as Hawkes observes, is “the notion that meaning arises from the interplay of signs, that the world we inhabit is not one of ‘facts’ but of signs about facts which we encode and decode ceaselessly from system to system . . .” (Hawkes 122).

By studying the interplay of signs in Callaghan’s fiction, the thesis aims at promoting meaning as constructed rather than given or ‘natural.’ Reality is not given in a text, but created in the process of reading signs. His fiction invites us to decode and encode the meaning of signs, since the arbitrary nature of signs is put to question.

By moving away from ‘work’ to ‘text,’ and by redefining the role of the reader Barthes begins the post-Saussurean movement, generally described as post-structuralism. In his attack on realism, Barthes redefines the concept of ‘sign’ and rediscovers the potentiality of language, which had become restricted in the structuralist emphasis on a fixed meaning. Saussure explores the arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified and defines the sign as something that possesses a fixed concept according to conventions. For Bathes, sign is one that can draw attention to its own arbitrariness, instead of passing itself as something fixed or ‘natural.’ When a sign conveys its meaning, it should convey some sense of its artificial status. Such a view is in correlation with Barthes’s political attack on the bourgeois society, which tries to project its ideology in a covert fashion: signs are created to suit the ideology and passed on to the masses as ‘natural,’ innocent, and unchangeable. As Eagleton points out, “Ideology seeks to convert culture into Nature, and the ‘natural’ sign is one of its weapons . . . . Ideology, in this sense, is a kind of contemporary mythology, a realm which has purged itself of ambiguity and alternative possibility” (117).
Barthes recognizes such an ideology in literature in the realistic mode of writing. Realism believes in the direct representation of objects through the words; i.e., it sees sign as representational. Language becomes the transparent window that opens onto a world of objects in the real world. Barthes argues against such a view by claiming that sign is a changeable entity and is always determined by rules of a particular sign system which is very much situated in a particular culture. Thus the realist or representational sign, as Eagleton describes it:

> effaces its own status as a sign, in order to foster the illusion that we are perceiving reality without its intervention. The sign as 'reflection', 'expression' or 'representation' denies the productive character of language. It suppresses the fact that we only have a 'world' at all because we have language to signify it, and that what we count as 'real' is bound up with what alterable structures of signification we live within. (118)

This notion of sign as a changeable entity and thus fostering new significations enables Barthes to reformulate the relation between literature and criticism and put forward a new theory of intertextuality. In an analysis of Barthes' two works, *System de la mode* (1967) and *Critique et vérité* (1966), Eagleton notes that Barthes does not see criticism as the ultimate metalanguage. Whereas the structuralists viewed criticism as a form of metalanguage, Barthes proposes that one man's criticism can always become the object of study for another critic, and so on. Another important point to which Eagleton draws our attention is, Barthes's view of language in the second essay, in which Barthes sees 'language as 'without bottom,' something like a 'pure ambiguity' supported by an 'empty meaning'” (Eagleton 119). This notion has a close relation to Barthes's definition
of denotation and connotation in *Mythologies*, in which he formulates his views on 'infinite semiotics.' These innovative ideas of Barthes begin the poststructuralist phase of semiotics, which deviates from the structuralist way of seeing sign, language and Self.

Structuralism, with its emphasis on 'structure,' presumes "a centre, a fixed principle, a hierarchy of meanings and a solid foundation" (Eagleton 116). Structuralists inherit Saussure's view of language as a closed and stable entity, because the signs in it produce meaning by their differential nature within the system. Accordingly, signifiers denote signifieds that are arbitrarily associated with each other. Post-structuralism, as beginning with Barthes, begins to question the division of signifiers themselves. Accordingly, a signifier denotes a signified not just because of its union with the signified, but because it is different from other signifiers. It is worth noting Eagleton's views in this regard, as he questions Saussure's view of the sign—"a neat symmetrical unity between one signifier and one signified" (110). The signifier 'boat' yields the signified 'boat', as it 'divides' itself from the signifier 'moat.' The signified is not just the product of the difference between two signifiers, but a number of other signifiers: 'coat,' 'boar,' 'bolt,' etc. Thus Eagleton concludes that the signified is obtained as a product of "a complex interaction of signifiers, which has no obvious end-point" (110). Further, he observes:

Meaning is the spin-off of a potentially endless play of signifiers, rather than a concept tied firmly to the tail of a particular signifier. The signifier does not yield us up a signified directly, as a mirror yields up an image: there is no harmonious one-to-one set of correspondences between the level of the signifiers and the level of the signifieds in language. To
complicate matters even further, there is no fixed distinction between signifiers and signifieds either. (110-111)

In other words, signifiers yield different signifieds depending on the context in which they are understood. Hence, meaning never resides fully in a sign. Thus writing, for post-structuralists, is a powerful activity in which meanings beyond the confines of structure can be created. As Eagleton points out “the tyranny of structural meaning could be momentarily ruptured and dislocated by a free play of language; and the writing/reading subject could be released from the straitjacket of a single identity into an ecstatically diffused self” (122).

Jacques Derrida adds one more radical definition of sign to the post-structuralist views described above. He dislocates the metaphysical concept of ‘presence’ in the sign that Saussure puts forward. His concepts of *supplement* and *différance* are a refinement over Saussrean notion of difference. For Saussure meaning of a sign is a matter of what the sign is *not*; Derrida exploits this notion by declaring that absence is a kind of absent presence. The signifier, which is a supplement of the absent referent, does not present it, but occupies its empty place. In this sense, signification is always a silent play of deferral; representation never points at presence, but delays/defers the presence of the signified. Whereas Saussure defines signification as a play of binary oppositions, Derrida defines it as an endless play of *différance*, which brings it closer to Barthes’s “infinite semiosis.” Another term that Derrida uses to signify this process is *dissemination*, a flickering of meaning, which is the condition of production of meaning. Eagleton describes *dissemination* in simple terms: meaning is “dispersed along the whole chain of signifiers: it cannot be easily nailed down, it is never fully present in any one sign alone,
but is rather a kind of constant flickering of presence and absence together” (111). In effect, Eagleton defines meaning as never identical with itself because of two reasons: it results in the process of “division and articulation” of signs; and signs are always “repeatable or reproducible” (112). The reproducibility of signs, says Eagleton, is what divides its identity further, because signs can always be reproduced in different contexts and yield different meanings. In this sense, it is never possible to know the ‘original’ meaning or context of signs. Signs in Callaghan’s fiction, too, best illustrate the impossibility of comprehending their ‘original meaning’ or ‘original context.’ This is so, as Callaghan chooses archetypal symbols, set icons of society, and places them in a different context, by changing the relationship between the signifiers and the signifieds.

The post-structuralist stance on signs and meaning is a direct attack on the traditional theories of meaning. Representational theories project sign as a reflection of inward experiences of an individual (Humanism) or objects that exist in the real world (Realism). Their quest is towards a ‘transcendental signifier’ that can affirm ‘the signified,’ which in turn, will render a unified meaning. Such trends have been manifested from time to time in Western philosophy: religion (God as the transcendental signified and ultimate meaning), Pragmaticism (Idea), Romanticism (the Self), etc. They are based on the foundational theory that tries to resurrect any one of the signifieds just mentioned as the origin or center of everything that surrounds it. Eagleton rightly point out that: “‘Teleology’, thinking of life, language and history in terms of its orientation to a telos or end, is a way of ordering and ranking meanings in a hierarchy of significance, creating a pecking order among them in the light of an ultimate purpose” (114). It is this theory of history or language as a linear evolution (foundational philosophy) which has
been criticized by poststructuralists such as Barthes, Derrida, Lacan, Foucault and feminists like Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous and many others. They prefer to use the term ‘text’ to denote a “web-like complexity of signs” and “the back and forth, present and absent, forward and sideways movement of language in its actual process” (Eagleton 114).

Derrida discovers in structural linguistics the founding concepts of a philosophy that has always believed in a ‘centre’ and has depended on concepts such as truth, presence, origin, or their equivalents. In particular, he is against ‘logocentrism’ of the Western philosophy that designates a fundamental opposition between speech and writing. This tradition prefers speech to writing, because it sees speech as possessing an immediacy and presence, as both the speaker and his living voice are present. It sees writing as secondary representation of speech, and therefore, the exteriority of language to thought. Derrida’s views on signs, however, repudiate such philosophy. In Saussure and his structuralist followers, the pre-eminence of the signified over the signifier corresponds to the expression of the same metaphysical assumption of meaning as the foundation of a transcendental signified. Derrida attacks the “structurality of structure,” the emphasis on organization around a single centre that is implied by structural analysis. Although he acknowledges that an escape from metaphysical thought is impossible, his deconstructive methodology aims at deconstructing “first principles” (to use Eagleton’s term). Deconstruction can be described as a strategy to undermine the binary opposition that characterizes certain philosophical foundations, or as a strategy that aims at showing these binaries undermining each other within the textual dynamics. Structuralism aims at
discovering binary oppositions—black/white, man/woman, high/low—and at exploring
the logic by which they work. Derrida’s method, as Eagleton puts it, is to:

Seize on some apparently peripheral fragment in the work—a footnote, a
recurrent minor term or image, a causal allusion—and work it tenaciously
through to the point where it threatens to dismantle the oppositions which
govern the text as a whole . . . to show how texts come to embarrass their
own ruling systems of logic; and deconstruction shows this by fastening
on the ‘symptomatic’ points, the *aporia* or impasses of meaning, where
texts get into trouble, come unstuck, offer to contradict themselves.(116)

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the ideas of the other
poststructuralists. Suffice it to note that the theory of signs has come a long way from
being merely representational to the very extent of examining the textual dynamics. The
shifting trends in understanding the concept of sign and meaning has effected a radical
change in the conception of self; the term ‘individual’ has been replaced by the term
‘subject’ in describing human beings.

Influenced by Descartes’s *Discourse on Method*, the term ‘individual’ dominated
the philosophical systems from the Renaissance to the twentieth century. The terms
“individual” and “man” are equated with “reason” and “consciousness,” qualities, which
suggest that man is an autonomous and stable entity. Individuality attributes free
intellectual status to man and suggests that man’s thinking processes are not mediated
through material and cultural world. Descartes’s famous dictum—“I think, therefore I
am” asserts the private consciousness or cognitive operation as inherent in man. The
personal pronoun, “I” reflects transparently the identity of the speaker rather constructing
it. In other words, "I" in Descartes's philosophy, refers to a fully conscious and knowable self. He also attributes the quality of coherence to self, because it is knowable. In other words, Descartes projects man as a creator of meaning, and as remaining outside the symbolic world. As Silverman points out:

For Descartes, both God and man transcend cultural definitions; the concepts of goodness and perfection which the latter discovers within his own mind are not time-bound or specific to a given civilization, but eternal and immutable. They confer identity not only on things external to man, but on man himself. (128)

Formalism and structuralism repudiate the idea of transcendental signified in Descartes's philosophy (contiguous with the western philosophy), with their investigation and theorization of meaning as the result of structural relationship among various signs and elements in a system. For these theorists, identity of a human being is constructed through the mediation of various structural elements within a system. Thus in structuralism, structure replaces man as the creator of meaning. Poststructuralism, however, differs from structuralism in recognizing the role played by historical and cultural discourses, and the unconscious in the construction of human identity. Hence, in poststructuralism, 'the subject' replaces the 'individual' of the dominant philosophies originating from Descartes. Thinkers such as Benveniste, Foucault, Barthes, Lacan and Derrida deconstruct the notions of individuality and of a self, considered synonymous with consciousness.
In *Problems in General Linguistics*, Benveniste argues that language, discourse, and subjectivity are inseparable. He establishes that linguistic elements, such as pronouns and verbs acquire the signifying status only in specific discursive situations. As he says:

> There is no concept "I" that incorporates all the I's that are uttered at every moment in the mouths of all speakers, in the sense that there is a concept "tree" to which all the individual uses of tree refer... I refers to the act of individual discourse in which it is pronounced, and by this it designates the speaker... The reality to which it refers is the reality of the discourse.

> ... And so it is literally true that the basis of subjectivity is in the exercise of language. (226)

Two important points emerge from Benveniste's argument: 1) the signifiers "I" and "you" always imply a speaker and a listener respectively in discursive situations—these roles are reversible just as the signifiers; 2) like the linguistic sign, the subject, too, depends upon another term within the same paradigm, which is activated through discourse. Thus an individual forms his or her cultural identity only within a concrete discourse through the signifiers (pronouns) "I" and "you." There is no stable "identity," as it is in the constant process of being constructed through various discursive instances.

In a similar fashion, Foucault (in *The Order of Things*) insists that man is the product of certain historically and culturally determined discourses. In his view, ethnology and psychoanalysis are most important discourses, as they focus on human reality, which is shaped by culture and the unconscious. Silverman points out that Foucault stresses "the interconnectedness of ethnology, psychoanalysis and semiotics," because ethnology and psychoanalysis are organized "by means of historically
circumscribed signifying operations” (129). She discerns similar concerns in other theorists, and identifies the close connection between ethnology and semiotics emphasized in Lévi-Strauss’s theories (discussed earlier in this chapter); the dependence of psychoanalysis on semiotics stressed in the theories of Sigmund Freud and Lacan.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to undertake a detailed analysis of the influence of semiotics on psychoanalysis. Suffice it to note the most important aspects of the convergence of the two fields. Psychoanalysis draws attention to the division of conscious and unconscious realms in a subject and challenges the notion of stability attributed to the individual. Since Freud is interested mainly in the psyche and its productions, he connects art with dream; he considers dream work as the road to the unconscious. Early applications of psychoanalytic theory to arts tend to be biographical, with an intention to study the psychology of the person—artist, writer, character, and audience. As a result, the text and its creator are grouped under “the analysand” and the critic is the analyst. Lacan establishes the importance of Freud’s ideas for semiotics, when he argues, “the unconscious is structured like language,” and cannot escape from the influences of the symbolic order. For Lacan, language is at the centre of psychoanalysis, just as language structures and moderates human existence. Lacan articulates three “orders” in human experience which become important in the constitution of subjectivity: the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real. These terms and their implication for the analysis of literary works is explained in detail in the next chapter which studies characters in Callaghan’s fiction. On the whole, it is clear that signification is fundamental to the formation of subjectivity or identity. Silverman rightly points out:
The term “subject” foregrounds the relationship between ethnology, psychoanalysis, and semiotics. It helps us to conceive of human reality as a construction, as the product of signifying activities which are both culturally specific and generally unconscious. . . . It suggests that even desire is culturally instigated, and hence collective; and it de-centres consciousness, relegating it (in distinction from the preconscious, where cognitive activity occurs) to a purely receptive capacity. (130)

This chapter has traced briefly the important role signs and signification play in different literary theories and textual analyses. These theoretical formulations prove indispensable for the present study of character, realism and identity in Callaghan’s fiction, as they reveal the means through which meaning is produced. Meaning produced through the interplay of signs in Callaghan’s fiction appears to be multiple rather than fixed. That Callaghan destabilizes the fixed meanings of certain cultural and social signs is evident in the analysis of various aspects of his fiction. Allegorical, realistic and thematic interpretations have described characters in Callaghan’s fiction as individuals, stereotypes, and archetypes. The examination of character as sign in the chapter to follow reveals a particular strategy that Callaghan employs in the depiction of character: various conventional and marginal characters are juxtaposed with the dominant representatives of society in order to give expression to the ideological conflicts.