Chapter V

Exploring the Fictional Methods of Expression—Techniques

The human passion is first, but it must yet be joined by an equal passion for the medium before good writing can happen...

(John Ciardi. "On Writing and Bad Writing")
Critical studies on the technical aspects of the fiction of Patrick White and Margaret Laurence often deal with: images (apocalyptic/natural), symbols (diviner/mandala/chariot), quest motif, journey metaphor and the use of stream-of-consciousness techniques through interior monologues and first person and third person narrators. The aim of this Chapter is to study other techniques used by the two writers which have not been explored by critics. Two main techniques have been identified for this purpose—doubling of characters and the concept of Time. Other related techniques will also be studied.

Doubling

Answering a query by Robert Kroetsch, Margaret Laurence replied that she was not conscious of doubling or counterpointing Stacey and Rachel till she completed A Jest of God and The Fire-Dwellers. However, Kroetsch points out that devices like the "doppelgänger" motif and the act of dividing oneself or meeting oneself "in another form," in order to "discover our own complexity, our own contradictions" are commonly used by Canadian writers ("Conversation with Margaret Laurence" in A Place to Stand On 51-2). Incidentally, Patrick White has also pointed out quite often "the infinite possibilities of a single personality" (quoted in Heseltine's "Patrick White's Style" 63). It is interesting to note that multiple personalities are commonly found in the fiction of White and Laurence.

The double in itself is quite a common technique in litera-
ture. Robert Roger's illuminating study (A Psychoanalytic Study of the Double in Literature) reveals this with many instances from the works of writers including Walt Whitman, Oscar Wilde, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Shakespeare, Melville and Henry James. However, a study of this technique is rare (almost unexplored) in the critical works on White and Laurence. These two writers use this technique for several purposes. The main aim is to effectively dramatise the "intrapsychic" conflict of the protagonists. Doubling also effects the disparity between the true and false identities of the characters. Several other related techniques used to bring about doubling are: use of various guises and disguises, use of mirror images (symbol of the 'mandala' by White), dream symbolism, multiple narrators and flashback and flashforward techniques.

There are a few general characteristics in the type of fragmentation shared by the writers. For instance, fragmentation/doubling is both implicit and explicit; multiple and dual; and by multiplication and division. Let us consider these in some detail in the novels.

(i) Fragmentation of characters can be either implicit or explicit (Rogers 4). The major similarity between the two writers lies in the fact that both use implicit fragmentation where it concerns the fragmentation of a single character. Examples from Laurence's novels include the division of Shipley-Currie personalities of Hagar in The Stone Angel, Cameron-MacAindra sides of Stacey in The Fire-Dwellers, Gunn-Skelton facets of Morag in The Diviners and the younger and older Vanessa in A Bird in the House. Examples from White's novels include the Salkeld-
Hunter personalities of Elizabeth in *The Eye of the Storm*. Gluyas-Roxburgh identities of Ellen in *A Fringe of Leaves* and the *Eudoxia-Eddie-Eadith* personages in *The Twyborn Affair*. Patrick White uses explicit fragmentation where there is a distribution of a single selfhood into various characters. Instances include Laura and Voss in *Voss*. Waldo and Arthur in *The Solid Mandala* and Himmelfarb, Mary Hare, Mrs. Godbold and Alf Dubbo in *Riders in the Chariot*. The distinction between implicit and explicit fragmentations also reveals a marked difference between the two writers. Whereas Laurence uses only the implicit method, White uses both. This implicit method, in turn, accounts for the predominant use of interior monologues and first person narrators in Margaret Laurence. White combines the narrative and dramatic, first and third person narrators.

(ii) Fragmentation can be either dual or multiple (Roger 4). Most of the characters mentioned above serve as instances for dual break up of characters. Let us discuss multiple fragmentation in this section. In *Riders in the Chariot*, four characters combine to form a single personality or psyche. In Jungian terms, they constitute Thought, Feeling, Sensation and Intuition (A detailed analysis has already been done in the Fourth Chapter). Jung sees these four elements as basic constituents of human personality, even though one or the other of these elements may dominate in a person. In religious terms, these four characters are the *Zaddikim*, according to Jewish Merkabah, who through their goodness counteract evil in the world. *The Twyborn Affair* offers a different picture where E. Twyborn successively alternates
between male and female roles with his/her sexual ambiguity. By creating three avatars out of a single individual, White attempts to emphasise the fact that sexuality is not even biological but is only man-made. Alex Gray in Memoirs of Many in One serves as an excellent example of splitting of this kind. She consciously undertakes various roles to find, what she calls, "the frame which would fit me." In a spellbinding attempt to fix her own identity, she alternates successively as Cassiani, the nun, Sister Benedict and Dolly Formosa. Her intermediary roles include that of Empress Alexandria of Byzantium, Dolor Gray and Eleanor Shadbolt. All these roles reveal her attempt to grasp her own self in material, spiritual and artistic terms. As far as the works of Margaret Laurence are concerned, we find the role-playing in almost all the protagonists. (This has already been analysed in Chapters One and Two).

(iii) Another category of fragmentation is that of doubling by multiplication and by division (Roger 5). Doubling by multiplication is characterised by several persons striving to define a particular concept or attitude. The Aunt's Story offers rich evidence in this aspect. The various father figures serve to bring into focus an intimate knowledge of Theodora's true nature. These figures include George Goodman, The Man Who Was Given His Dinner and Holstius. The first two predict Theodora's self-realisation whereas Holstius actually helps her to grasp the truth. Also, many of the figures of the first section are complemented in the Jardin Exotique section—Theodora-Katina Pavlov, Mrs. Goodman-Mrs. Rapallo etc. In The Eve of the Storm, Lotte Lippman, Flora Manhood and Sister de Santis are projected as supplementing
and symbolising various aspects of Elizabeth Hunter. David Tacey sees them as Elizabeth's 'acolytes' extending her own sensual and spiritual aspects. There is only one instance in Margaret Laurence for the use of doubling by multiplication. In The Divinners, Colin Gunn, Christie Logan and Royland serve as father-figures. All these characters contribute to Morag's realisation about her ancestral and creative heritages. Christie Logan and Royland also function as guiding spirits of Morag. Both function as diviners in the novel.

Doubling by division takes place when characters are shown to be 'complementary' (Rogers 5). Characters with opposing qualities are contrasted against one another, say 'good' and 'bad' father. In The Aunt's Story, Frank Parrott and Huntly Clarkson are portrayed as conventional suitors who fail to establish a fruitful bond with Theodora. On the other hand, the almost silent, yet strong, bond created by Moraitis vividly conveys the foundations of true love. Further, Theodora herself is matched unfavourably against Fanny (These two aspects have already been elaborated in the First Chapter). In Riders in the Chariot, characters are contrasted in terms of motherhood. Mrs. Godbold, the epitome of ideal motherhood, is contrasted with Mrs. Jolley and Mrs. Flack. In Voss, Laura Trevelyan is differentiated from Belle Bonner and Una Pringle. She remains a spinster and becomes a headmistress after Voss' death and thus tries to work for social welfare instead of following the roles of wife and mother in a stereotypical fashion. Similarly, in the final scene of A Fringe of Leaves, Ellen Roxburgh is set off
against Miss. Scrimshaw with her longing for Promethean heights and Mrs. Lovell who is totally subsumed in her maternal role.

The division of characters along this axis is relatively rare in Margaret Laurence's novels. One example which comes in handy is the various men in Morag's life in *The Diviners*. There are noticeable differences between Brooke Skelton, Harold, Chas, Dan MacRaith, and Jules Tonnerre. All except Jules fail her. Her relationship with Brooke is sterile and is marked by his authoritarianism. To Harold and Chas she is nothing but a woman and that too in a very physical sense. For Dan, making love is an extension of speech, comfort and reassurance all of which he constantly needs. On the other hand, though Jules and Morag come together at long intervals, there is a complete giving and understanding between the two.

The three categories mentioned above constitute the major types of doubling. Let us now discuss some of the other devices closely related to this technique.

(i) Use of masks, guises and disguises:

All these are interrelated in the sense that disguises form the physical aspect of masking in a character. In *A Fringe of Leaves*, the stripping of Ellen by the aborigines constitute in a crude physical form the metaphorical stripping of the superficial values of civilization. In *The Twyborn Affair*, Eadith's transformation into Eddie at the end of the novel, is portrayed in a grotesque manner. Eddie wears male attire whereas he still keeps the mask of the bawd.
The great magenta mouth was still flowering in a chalk face shaded with violet, the eyes overflowing mascara banks, those of a distressed woman, professional whore, or hopeful amateur lover (TA 428).

Through this description, White re-emphasises the thin line which demarcates male and female sexuality. Another instance of the use of disguise recurs throughout the novel. This is the repeated versions of Eadie in Judge Twyborn's clothes.

She [Eadie] was dressed in a pair of check pants and a coat which could have belonged to my [E.'s] father. Certainly the waistcoat of crumpled points was his, though she hadn't been able to commandeer the watch-chain. . . . Its most incredible detail was that Mummy had corked on a moustache: . . . (TA 38).

Eadie's disguise not only highlights her lesbian relationship with Joanie Golson but also serves as constant reminder of the sexual ambiguity of her child. Alex Gray's repetitive transformations also bring out the disguise element. Alex's desire to dress up brings out her sensual nature as also the constant doubt about her real identity. One such instance, in Memoirs of Many in One, is the scene when Alex dresses up in a "lovely film of sari," "pale lipstick" and "black liner" (MMO 26) in order to go out with Patrick. While on the one hand, this shows her desire to look her best, physically, in spite of her advanced years, this also fixes one of her many identities for she says: "I am Alex once more" (MMO 27). This fondness for the best attire and jewellery is shared by Alfreda Courtney in The vivisector and Elizabeth Hunter in The Eve of the Storm. In Elizabeth Hunter's case, two instances in the novel serve to emphasise this point. The first of these is the scene in Brumby Island when Dorothy and Mrs. Hunter compete to attract Edvard Pehl. Throughout this scene, Mrs. Hunter's costume and dress are
... she had obviously dressed herself for an occasion, in a long white robe of raw silk, of unbroken fall if it had not been for a corded girdle, and faint fluting which gave her slenderness an architecture (ES 382).

... why leave off her shoes? ..., Elizabeth Hunter had done it to impress, if not to seduce. She was sitting sideways at the table, sipping the wine she had brought up from the bunker, exposing her slender, miraculously unspoilt feet from beneath the white, raw-silk hem (ES 385).

This desire for dressing up continues to be Mrs. Hunter's passion till the end. She orders Flora Manhood to make her up in the best manner. Thus, she adorns "rose brocade," emerald earrings, "an emerald stomacher" and "green wig" (ES 522). That she is not satisfied with all this is seen in her desire to wear the pink sapphire ring. In a well-argued article, "The Structure of The Eye of the Storm," David Kelly connects the 'mask' element in the novel to the epigraph from a NO play. It is interesting to note that the NO tradition in Japanese drama is dominated by the use of masks. Contrasting Mrs. Hunter's mask of cosmetics and Basil's hypocritical mask of an actor, David Kelly observes:

Mrs. Hunter's mask is not a protection against the threatened annihilation of the self. Wearing it, she seems "conscious of her own fiend": it is a way of acceptance, which leads her to accept that nothingness which Basil screens off, and to discard that mock substance which Basil clings to (67-8).

In Margaret Laurence's fiction, Hagar (The Stone Angel) matches Mrs. Hunter in her desire to wear the best. She always chooses pure silks and suitable colours like lilac. Her good taste is also evident in her criticism of Doris' choice like dark brown silks. Later, when Doris comes to meet her in the hospital,
Hagar first notices only the inappropriateness of her [Doris’] dress.

She's wearing her gray silk suit... . How like her to get dolled up just to visit a hospital. The bouquet on her hat nods foolishly. She's got terrible taste in hats, that woman. They're always loaded with artificial flowers. Her head looks like a greenhouse full of tuberous-rooted begonias, petals of all rosy shades, flesh and blush and blood (SA 278).

Hagar displays her interest in dresses almost till the end, for she notices what each one wears. She also strikes a bond with Sandra Wong by sharing a dab of perfume. Stacey, in The Fire-Dwellers, also shares these traits with Hagar. However, she soon realises the absurdity of the whole thing on seeing the stark contrast offered by her daughter, Katie.

In a green dress Katie MacAindra simple and intricate as grass is dancing by herself. Her auburn hair, long and straight touches her shoulders and sways a little when she moves. She wears no make-up. Her bones and flesh are thin, plain-moving, unfrenetic, knowing their idioms.

Stacey MacAindra, thirty-nine, hips ass and face heavier than once, shamrock velvet pants, petunia-purple blouse, cheap gilt sandals high-heeled, prancing squirming jiggling (FD 117).

Another type of guise is the mask of the role the characters play. An extreme adaptation of it can be seen in Rachel Cameron (A Jest of God). She herself detects the ‘simpering tone’ in her voice so typical of primary schoolteachers. This device of mask/guise/disguise is used by both the writers to emphasise the essentially grotesque nature of existence.

(ii) Dream symbolism and fantasy elements:

Both these devices serve to emphasise the inner lives of the characters which are markedly different from the roles they play. They also focus on the gulf between the inner and outer selves of
the characters. An excellent example of the use of these devices is seen in the telepathic communication that exists between Voss and Laura in Patrick White's *Voss*. Through this device, White tries to bring out the strong bond between Laura and Voss. This bond is more mental and spiritual than physical. The first instance occurs when Laura, at the height of her fever, tells Voss: "You need not fear. I shall not fail you. Even if there are times when you wish me to, I shall not fail you" (V 358). In the following lines, she is even aware of how dry Voss' skin is and that his dog is licking him. Barely five pages later, Voss riding through the hell of a desert hears the same words which soothe him like an "ointment." "I shall not fail you,' said Laura Trevelyan. 'Even if there are times when you wish me to, I shall not fail you"' (V 363). Such a fantasising is perfectly accomplished in the scene where Laura appears alternately as an aboriginal 'green' woman and in an immaculate state before Voss. They also live mentally as husband and wife. She promises not to leave him. They not only pray together but receive the holy communion of wafers (V 393).

Both these elements operate in A *Fringe of Leaves* where Ellen, after the dip at St. Hya's well, waits with hope for a Tristan to rescue her. Alex's account of her theatrical tour of outback Australia shares elements of fantasy. Even though Alex's performances as Cleoptara and as Dolly Formosa are very realistically described, there are subtle hints by White and Alex to prove otherwise. For instance, Alex says: "[s]ometimes I am carried off into dreams" (MMO 126). "I wonder who will inherit
my midnight robe and sequined fan. Or have I never existed for any of them?" (MMO 140). The editor, White, tells Hilda that the tour was a "fantasy life which we have helped her create for herself" (MMO 143). Hilda talks of her mother's account of the famous tour: "Even if it took place only in her mind, I hope she will have learnt a lesson. It should have got theatre out of her system" (MMO 141).

In Margaret Laurence's fiction, these devices operate in the erotic fantasies of Rachel and Stacey. Whereas, in A Jest of God dreams and fantasies operate to bring out Rachel's repressed sexual instincts, in The Fire-Dwellers, they bring out Stacey's longing for an idyllic world free of everyday chores. The opening chapter of A Jest of God closes with sexual fantasy: "A forest. Tonight it is a forest. Sometimes it is a beach. It has to be right away from everywhere. Otherwise she may be seen" (JG 18). Rachel does not see her dream-lover's features or face clearly. She only sees his body distinctly. Immediately following this, is her dream of a mortuary where she sees silent people "lipsticked and rouged, powdered whitely like clowns" (JG 19). These two dreams show clearly her revolt against the tabooed topics of Manawaka society--love and death.

Though escapist like Rachel's, Stacey's fantasies cover a wider range. They include elements of science fiction when Stacey imagines the galaxy as controlled by "a scorpion-tailed flower-faced film buff": "He switches off the pictures which humans always believed were themselves, and the imaginary planet known as Earth vanishes" (FJD 69). It is wistful longing, the type offered in the advertisements of Richalife, when Stacey imagines
that,

Out there in unknown houses are people who live without lies, and who touch each other. One day she will discover them, pierce through to them. Then everything will be all right, and she will live in the light of the morning (FD 77).

Science fiction is combined with erotic fantasy when she imagines Zabyul, a planet with a very advanced technology. She imagines herself to be transformed into a beautiful young woman who would make love to a handsome "galactic pilot" (FD 85). At other times, it is a desire to lead a carefree life with her husband Mac. Stacey imagines the place to be an island where,

There is a ladder leading up to each sleeping plateau, and when she and Mac are safely on top, they pull up the rope ladder after them. The children are not there. They are in another place, grown and free, nothing to worry about for her at this moment (FD 221).

Other devices which bring out the technique of doubling/fragmentation are the use of mirror images and of multiple narrators. The use of flashback and flashforward techniques will be studied in detail in the following section on Time.

Both White and Laurence use mirrors and mirror images to enable the characters to come to terms with themselves. These devices collapse the boundaries between appearance and reality and fact and fiction. Doubling is also seen in devices such as double narrators, double voices and double narratives. Elizabeth Waterston considers Laurence's focus on the twin motif as reflecting the Zeitgeist of the 1960s when speculation of doublingness was rife—"an ambidexterous universe, a black-hemispheric brain, a double helical structure of DNA, the fundamental genetical material" (in Colin Nicholson's Critical Approaches to
the Fiction of Margaret Laurence 84). However, doubling in both White and Laurence can be traced in their fiction before the 1960s also. The common aim of the writers seems not only to present "polarities such as radical setting of young versus old, havenots and haves, black versus white, dropouts against establishment, men versus women" (Elizabeth Waterston 89) but also to see the divisions within the individual personality.

Many of the protagonists in White and Laurence look into mirrors to get an objective perspective of themselves. The paradox lies in the fact that "while what they see is an accurate subjective vision, it is often an inaccurate objective one" (Cheryl Cooper. "Images of Closure in The Diviners" 93). This comment is very true of Laurence's novels where we can trace a development in attitude to mirror-watching. Hagar Shipley in her old age still sees the youthful Currie self reflected in the mirror. "Hagar, with her indomitable will, defies the mirror" (Cooper 93). As Clara Thomas rightly points out, "[only her [Hagar's] body has aged; her spirit is indomitably young, tough, and brave" (The Manawaka World of Margaret Laurence 63). Rachel is confused about what she finds in the mirror. "Do I see my face falsely? How do I know how it looks to anyone else? Do I have good bones? I can't tell. I'm no judge." After a series of confrontations with the mirror, Stacey, unlike Hagar, learns "to reconcile Stacey Cameron and Stacey MacAindra." Only the older Morag has an enviable mirror image. Morag realizes that who she is, depends on more than what the mirror offers (Cooper 93-4). Perhaps, only Morag achieves the self-objectivity so desired by the others. The striking feature about mirror-watching in White's
novels is the insight that the protagonists gain about themselves. For instance, in *The Eye of the Storm*, Elizabeth Hunter catches a glimpse of her "spiritual semblance" in a mirror on the night of her husband's death. As Manly Johnson points out ("The Eye of the Language"), what Mrs. Hunter sees is "her Doppelganger: aged, dishevelled, ravaged, eyes strained by staring inward, in the direction of a horizon which still had to be revealed" (347). Conversely, Ellen's reflection in the mirror in *A Fringe of Leaves* arouses her sensual self. "She was at first too amazed to move, but then began to caress while uttering little, barely audible, cries of joy and sorrow, not for her own sinuous body, but for those whose embraces had been a shared and loving delight." This scene assumes importance because she is herself and not a work of art of her husband or the aborigines. In her article "A Properly Appointed Humanism," Veronica Brady sums up the implications of this scene. "Here she is her own creation, poised between the two extremes of the "raw" and the "cooked," nature and art, in possession of herself whether naked or clothed because she has taken possession of an essential humanity" (64).

Both White and Laurence use various other devices to bring out the twin motif. For instance, White doubles or counterpoints characters: Arthur-Waldo; Himmelfarb-Mrs.Godbold-Mary Hare-Alf Dubbo; and Laura-Voss. Laurence uses puns and echoes, double plot, allusion to twins, twinned phrases and double entendres as in *A Jest of God* (Elizabeth Waterston critically analyses A *Jest of God* in this light. See Colin Nicholson 85-91). Both the
writers extend the two-character technique to double/multiple plots, narratives and narrators. This aspect has attracted a lot of critical attention. However, the important fact to be mentioned is the advantages and disadvantages of the technique. For instance, the double perspective in *A Bird in the House* helps in juxtaposing young and old Vanessa as also the narrator and the writer. As Kent Thompson perceptively remarks, "Vanessa sees things but Laurence sees the significance of things" (George Woodcock 232). On the negative side, the two-character technique forces Laurence "to overuse both the eavesdropping device and the listening-but-not-understanding device" (Leona Gom. "Laurence and the Use of Memory" 55). Similarly the "now-then" distinction gives ironic vision to Hagar but also makes it "difficult to see the relationship between the humour-less, self-involved Hagar of the past and the self-mocking, witty, and ironic Hagar of the present moment" (Claudette Pollack. "The Paradox of The Stone Angel" 267). *The Diviners* offers the two-character technique successfully because the older narrator Morag is reliable and self-aware.

Despite the disadvantages of the mirroring technique pointed out by critics like Leona Gom and Claudette Pollack, the major advantage of this technique has been examined by Veronica Brady in her review of White's *Flaws in the Glass*. She connects the mirror image to the Lacanian mirror stage of development. Brady's argument is acceptable in this regard:

> [T]his reflection of the self can have a formative effect something like the process of psychoanalysis, which enables the individual to come to terms with feelings of powerlessness by contemplating the painful, even shameful as well as the more pleasing possibilities of the self and mastering them at least in imagination (106).
The culminating point of this almost narcissistic dive into the self can be seen in juxtaposing not individual selves or characters but the protagonists and creators as in The Diviners (Morag and Laurence) and Memoirs of Many in One (Alex Gray and White). Such juxtapositions collapse the boundaries between fact (autobiography) and fiction, and the creator and created. For example, in Memoirs, White frequently collapses the boundaries between an editor and a writer.

Now, let us consider the advantages of using the technique of doubling/fragmentation. Robert Rogers' conclusions are useful on this point. What he puts forward holds good for White and Laurence.

This technique stimulates defensive adaptations by the author/reader and character alike. Rogers points out that a "character may be said, to defend against an inner drive or conflict by projecting the unwanted 'thing' onto another character [or object]" (173). The best instance of this is the "Great Monster Self" of Theodora Goodman which is projected on to the hawk, clay ducks and to all the intriguing fantasy in the Meroe section.

This technique also affords distortion. Author and reader alike can distort things and thus register unconsciously those things which cannot be easily confronted in all its naked glory (Rogers 173). Both White and Laurence see existence as essentially grotesque. The best way to reveal this is through distortion as is seen in E. Twyborn's sexual shifts, Alex's transformations, Rachel's sexual confrontation and Stacey's
mental projection of the chaos in the familial circle onto the social circle through fantasising of violence in media and motor accidents.

As Robert Rogers rightly remarks, all these techniques contribute to establish an aesthetic distance which has a balanced appeal to the reader's mind (173). Further, the intimate becomes distorted in these "inner space fiction" (to use Doris Lessing's phrase) through the use of doubling.

**Time**

In keeping with the popular trend in the fiction of this century, both Patrick White and Margaret Laurence emphasise the importance of time both in the form and the content of their novels. Time, in their novels, is not chronological but circular thus encompassing past, present and future in one continuum. This shifting of emphasis away from the linearity of time constitutes the modernity and psychological weight of their novels. Here, an attempt is made to study time in relation to: (i) Nicholas Berdyaev's categories of time-history, (ii) the Australian aboriginal concept of Dreaming (dreamtime) and (iii) Patricia Tobin's idea of the genealogical aspect of time. In a way, all the three categories are interrelated, for they basically point out the various aspects of time and the simultaneous operation of time at various levels. The commonly used techniques in both the writers to bring out the concept of time are the use of memory as a mode of linking the past with the present and the related techniques of flashback and flashforward. Another technique is to begin the
novel in roedias res, thus focusing on the present with a hindsight of the past and foresight of the future. Whereas White conforms to conventional techniques, Laurence uses innovative techniques (as in The Fire-Dwellers and The Diviners). The use of the river image (in The Diviners) to denote the flow of time and life has its implications in almost all the novels of the two writers.¹

According to Nicholas Berdyaev, there are three categories and corresponding symbols for describing time (qtd. in John Henry Raleigh's Time, Place and Idea: Essays on the Novel 45). The first type is 'Cosmic time' symbolised by a circle, which refers to the endless recurrence of things: night following day, season following season, the cycle of birth, growth and decay. In short, it is the circular character of human and natural experiences. The second type is 'Historical time' symbolised by a horizontal line and referring to the course of nations, civilisations, tribes through time. Likewise, an individual has a linear as well as a circular relationship to time. That is, the individual takes part in the historical and cosmic occurrences. The third type is 'Existential time' symbolised by a vertical line, referring to a notion of time somewhat like Bergson's duree, only religious or mystical in nature. This concept of existential time is actually an extreme form of individualism, or in Berdyaev's words, 'personalism,' and presupposes the individual's ability to free himself from either cyclic or historical time. It is interesting to note that these three types correspond to Morris Philipson's categories of natural time, society-determined time and self-
determined time (qtd. in Clara Thomas' "The Wild Garden and the Manawaka World" 402). We can also find parallels in categories like Time spiritual, Time historical and Time psychic mentioned by Jitendra Kumar Sharma in his analysis of T.S.Eliot's works in his book Time and T.S.Eliot: His Poetry, Plays and Philosophy.

According to the aboriginal mythology, dreaming (Alcheringa) denotes the mythical distant past when the cultural heroes and totem ancestors inhabited the earth. The popular aboriginal belief is that these spirits, which are form-changing, continue to live in the present and will do in the future. Quoting A.P. Elkin, John McLaren defines dreaming as encompassing "a past which is recreative in the present through ritual, and ... a future which is assured by that same ritual" (Australian Literature: An Historical Introduction ix-x). stating a similar idea in his essay "Twyborn: The Abbess, The Bulbul, and The Bawdy House,"

Manly Johnson observes:

This [aboriginal] view of the relationship between man and nature, between man and other species, sees humanity as part of nature, as bound to other parts of nature by strong emotional ties. All share a life force which is sacred. The individual is believed to contain the same spiritual essence as the mythic being with which he is most closely identified (167).

By linking an individual to a range of mythic beings and to the land itself, dreaming emphasizes its "unchanging nature within the context of seasonal fluctuation" (McLaren 146-7) as also the fact that "the past, present and future ... [form] a continuing and uninterrupted stream" (McLaren 302). Such an attitude to time prevents any abstract conceptualisation and results in the merging of objective and subjective realities.
It is the working out of the flow of time that is of importance in the works of both the writers. The graphic image in Margaret Laurence is the Yoruba symbol of the continuum of time, the three interflowing circles of the serpent swallowing its tail. The Yoruba belief that "the dead, the living and the unborn, literally inhabit the same time and same place" (David Richards in Critical Approaches to the Fiction of Margaret Laurence 21) is echoed in the Manawaka work where "history proceeds simultaneously along the linear, horizontal and syntagmatic paths of the Western consciousness of time and paradigmatically along a vertical, African axis" (Arthur Ravenscroft "Africa in the Canadian Imagination of Margaret Laurence" 39). The corresponding image in Patrick White is the serpent eating its own tail, according to the Kunapipi ritual in Australian aboriginal mythology. It is easy to see a connection between these two images and the concept of the 'uroboros.' Uroboros is the Greek equivalent of the tail-biting snake. Quoting C.G. Jung, David Tacey defines the uroboros as "the most basic and primordial of all archetypal symbols... . The uroboros symbolizes the all containing (self-fecundating, self-devouring) nature of the unconscious prior to the advent of human consciousness" (Patrick White: Fiction and the Unconscious 6). In almost all mythologies and alchemical sciences, the uroboros is identified with the primordial dragon and represented as the "circle-as-beginning." Contrasting the uroboros from the mandala, "which signifies the 'recovered' unity which includes humanity, time and creation," Tacey considers the uroboros as leading "one out of time and space into an inchoate, eternal dream-state" (238).
In an interesting study (*Time and the Novel*), Patricia Drechsel Tobin offers the metaphor of the 'genealogical imperative.' According to her, the genealogical assumption results out of the linking of genetical descent (one of the oldest ideas of Western man) with mere chronological succession. If events in time come to be perceived,

as begetting other events within a line of causality similar to the line of generations, with the prior event earning a special prestige as it is seen to originate, control, and predict future events. When in some such manner ontological priority is conferred upon mere temporal anteriority . . . , time is understood as a linear manifestation of the genealogical destiny of events (7).

In Tobin's thinking, the fact that the concept of linear time is as intimate and peculiar an aspect of Western civilization as patriarchy, is no accident. "The prestige of cause over effect, in historical time, is analogous to the prestige of the father over the son" (12). In literature, the 'genealogical imperative' can be found in the conceptualized frame of the temporal form of the classical novel (6-7). Tobin contrasts this with the Eastern Philosophies which consistently emphasize "gigantic cycles of eternal recurrence" which is the reason for "the symbolic rather than mimetic nature of Eastern literature" (13). Thomas Mann, D.H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, Vladimir Nabokov and Gabriel Garcia Márquez along with James Joyce are the exponents who broke the linearity of time in their novels. Patrick White and Margaret Laurence easily form part of the list. What Tobin says for the rest holds good for these two writers.
Patrilineal authority gives way to matrilineal accommodation, relations of descent to those of affiliation, the socialized family to the biological community or mythical alienation... . The simple line, ..., of genealogical structures, is replaced by such wild divergencies as the double cycle, the circle and the Moebius strip (26-7).

The symbol of the mandala in White's novels and the interflowing continuum of time symbolised by the river which flows both ways in Margaret Laurence bring out this idea. The matrilineal accommodation can be seen in the re-definition of the mother-daughter relationships and the obvious affiliation to the mythical/archetypal models. Tobin cites matrilineal accommodation as the reason for the sins committed against the family which include adultery and incest. According to her, these sins are portrayed in the novels, in "a spectrum of value that arches from the tragic recognition of disorder to its joyous celebration" (26). The familial-social aspects were studied in the First Chapter and the archetypal resonances (for example, the Demeter-Persephone relationship) were examined in the Fourth Chapter. The genealogical imperative entails an emphasis on the present with constant revisitation of the past which, according to Helen Buss, indicates a religious movement away from a patriarchal world-view that emphasizes cause-effect moral behaviour based on logical rules and notions of rewards and punishment, towards a maternal world-view in which one responds to the needs of the present moment through a freeing of the positive values of emotion and instinct. In such a world-view, the past is not remembered through recall on a cognitive level, but re-membered through a felt participation in life's cycles (30).

The main purpose accomplished by all three categories of time mentioned above is to establish the simultaneous presence of time at various levels. The novels of White and Laurence share this quality in their treatment of the past which is not only
individual past but encompasses the past of the nation and the ancestral/mythical past of the land. For instance, *The Stone Angel* treats not only Hagar's personal past but the pioneering past and the Scottish Presbyterian values of Canada through Jason Currie's past and the mythical past through the clan motto and war-cry of the Curries and finally the Old Testament Biblical past through references to *Abraham*, *Agar* and *Jacob*. *A Bird in the House* treats Vanessa's past which runs parallel to the Depression years. It moves backward to the pioneer past of Grandfather Connor and touches upon the Metis past through references to the Tonnerre family. In this respect, *The Diviners* is the culmination of such a treatment. The novel scans through the Gunn and Logan heritages through Christie's stories, some Snapshots and Memory-bank Movies and the early pioneering past of the country through Morag's imaginary conversations with Catherine Parr Traill. It divines the Metis heritage through Jules' songs and finally combines all these by bringing together the Currie plaid pin and Tonnerre knife.

Patrick White also follows a similar method to suggest the flux of time in Australian society and history in his novels. Thus, we come across the 'settlers' ('huddlers' in David Tacey's terms) represented by the Bonners and Pringles in *Voss* and Merivales in *A Fringe of Leaves* and convicts (Rose Portion and Judd in *Voss*) and aborigines (Alf Dubbo in *Riders in the Chariot* and Jackie and Dugald in *Voss*). Let us now analyse the various aspects of time evident in White's novels.

*The Aunt's Story* combines Theodora's personal past with the
materialist past of the society with its definite views on norms like marriage, physical appearance, behaviour, etc. through Mrs. Goodman, Fanny, Frank Parrott and Huntly Clarkson. The novel also brings in aspects of the 'new world' in Theo's travel in America. It also goes back to the mythical Abyssinia, so well brought out in the Meroe section. Voss traces the individual pasts through the characters of Laura and Voss, the historical past by recreating the exploration of Ludwig Leichhardt, the German explorer, the past of the settler society through the Bonners, the outback culture through Sanderson and Boyle, the penal past through Rose and Judd and the aboriginal past through figures like Jackie and Dugald. The novel also traverses the distant mythical past of the aborigines through references to the appearance of the comet, The Great Snake. The Biblical reference is invoked through Laura's teachings to Voss about the virtues of love, grace and humility. Riders in the Chariot is a confluence of the Australian pasts of Mary Hare and Ruth Godbold, the aboriginal background of Alf Dubbo and the effects of the concentration camps in Nazi Germany through Himmelfarb's past. To this, is added the Biblical and Jewish Kabbalistic thought through references to Isaiah and to the four riders as the hidden 'zaddikim' who do good to counteract the existing evil in the world. In A Fringe of Leaves, the reader encounters the personal past of Ellen through her past in Zennor farm as a peasant girl and in Cheltenham as Austin's wife. The historical past surfaces in White's basing of the novel on the Mrs. Fraser myth. The penal past is brought to focus through the personal histories of Garnet Roxburgh and Jack Chance. The aboriginal presence is
brought out by Ellen's sojourn with them and their mythical past is re-created by such instances like the Ulappi dance and the episode of cannibalism. The Scottish mythical past is captured in Ellen's visit to the St. Hya's well when she firmly believes the truth behind the Tristan and Iseult myth. References to the Genesis myth are clear in the description of the near idyllic lives of Ellen and Jack in the forest. The Twyborn Affair offers three different pasts through the three avatars of E.Twyborn. Eudoxia's relationship with Angelos signifies the Byzantine past and the Bogomil heresy. Eddie's stint as a jackeroo establishes the Australian past. Eadith's brothel in London and his/her final death before meeting Eadie, brings out vividly the reality of war-torn England. The title, *Memoirs of Many in One*, itself signifies the plurality of Alex's transformations which in turn signifies her multicultural heritage. In the introduction of Alex, the novel portrays Greece during the World War. It moves on to the Australian past in Alex's tour to the outback as an actress. There is also a reference to Christians of ancient Nisos in Alex's account of herself as Cassiani, the nun and lover of Onouphrios, the monk and as Sister Benedict, who, on the Feast of the Kippers, leads the frailest member of her order in the bush. Apart from minor transformations, Alex also has her stint as the Empress Alexandra of Byzantium and Nicaea at Lady Miriam's party.

By projecting the past (both distant and near), both White and Laurence present the heritages offered by the past (This is seen in their *affirmative* and positive attitude and treatment of
the aborigines and Metis), as also the cruelties in history (the harsh penal code, for example). The experiences of the past add to the present. The emphasis on the past by the two writers is, arguably, an attempt to understand the present as an interplay of various 'pasts' (both distant and near). To state it in Henri Bergson's words:

there is no consciousness without memory, no continuation of a state without the addition, to the present feeling, of the memory of past moments (An Introduction to Metaphysics 40).

Further, going back to mythologies, both the writers try to universalise the otherwise personal and psychic journeys/quests of the protagonists. For example, Morag says that the echoes of Christie's tales and Jules' songs, go "back and back." As David Williams rightly points out in his article "The Indian Our Ancestor,"

They [tales and songs] sound finally, in racial "memory," in the subterranean haunts of the Dream Time. Ultimately, for Laurence, the ancestors are within; if in the blood, also in the unconscious as those who never lived in "so-called real life," but who will always be. If they come dressed in history, if they make their appearance through the particular time and place of the individual, they nevertheless make over the present in their own image. Thus the Dead live, and through ecstasy or intuition... (324).

However, personal and family histories provide alternate modes to the historical and archaeological models, in the works of White and Laurence. What John Thieme says of Laurence's novels can be applied with equal validity to White's fiction.

Mythos of personal and family origins provide another obvious focus for such investigation, with genealogy, another discourse of the past, providing the model for this kind of search, and the tracing of individual ancestry and the construction of family trees assuming representative significance as the ancestors being traced are located as archetypal figures in the Canadian [and Australian] consciousness ("Acknowledging Myths" 153).
Other related techniques used by the two writers are: the use of memory to reconstruct the past and the use of premonition to bring in the future. In narratological terms, these devices may be termed flashback and flashforward. In his book *Narrative Discourse*, Gerard Gennette labels these devices as ‘prolepsis’ and ‘analepsis.’ These two devices function by, what Leona Gom calls, ‘associative memory.’ Thus, something in the present triggers the memory of a past event in the lives of the protagonists.

Another common feature shared by White and Laurence is to begin the novels *in medias res*. The novels open in the present and then swings back and forth. Only in *The Stone Angel*, memories of the past are chronological.\(^7\) Even here, as in other novels, memory works by association. Thus, Hagar’s lilac dress reminds her of the lilacs which bloomed in the Currie courtyard. The rhymes sung by children while playing reminds Rachel of her own childhood. Mac's angry words reminds Stacey of her father's angry words to her mother. Brooke's photograph published in the paper reminds Morag of her own married years with him. The main device used by Laurence to bring out the thoughts of the individual is through interior monologues. Apart from self-reflexive analysis of their own actions and words, all the heroines even address their partners silently. These are italicised in the text. Thus, the reader encounters such phrases as "Bram, Listen--," "Nick, listen--" and "Listen, Mac--." In *The Fire-Dwellers*, Laurence has used audio-visual techniques and fantasy elements. As Miriam Packer succinctly *sums up*, in her article "The Dance of Life: The
Fire-Dwellers."

"Form is intricately related to content in this novel. The indented memories, italicized fantasies, private thoughts preceded by a dash, capitalized news from the media, narrator's comments in ordinary type, and actual conversations in ordinary type create a page which is visibly cluttered and untidy just as is Stacey's life and her inner passion..." (John Sorfleet ed. The Work of Margaret Laurence 126).

More important than the neat dovetailing of form and content is the novel's unfolding of Stacey's re-discovery of her psychic wholeness. In her illuminating article "The Fire-Dwellers: Circles of Fire," Sharon Nancekivell makes detailed analyses of Stacey's dreams, memories and fantasies to show how the novel follows the heroic quest pattern demonstrated by Joseph Campbell in The Hero of a Thousand Faces. Nancekivell's conclusions are perceptive. "The novel unfolds laterally and cyclically, progressing forwards and backwards simultaneously through many levels of time and the psyche" (158). A graphic representation of Stacey's memories, fantasies and dreams reveals "a recurrent pattern of peaks and valleys" (166) which indicates the reaffirmation of "the cyclic continuum of life" (167). Quoting Campbell, Nancekivell emphasises "this idea of circles turning within circles" which indicates "the cosmogonic cycle [which] is normally represented as repeating itself, world without end" (167). The identification of the circular nature of the quest is in accordance with the earlier argument about the circularity of time at the beginning of this Chapter. In The Diviners, there are a variety of devices to convey the past apart from the image of the river. They are Snapshots, Memorybank Movies and Innerfilms apart from Christie's tales, Jules' songs and Morag's tales to
Pique. Laurence's preoccupation with time in *The Diviners* is seen in the dedication "To the Elmcot people--past present and future and for the house itself--with love and gratitude." Michel Fabre makes interesting connections between the epigraph and the novel.

The three-fold time reference hints at the river of now and then; the "house" hints at the log cabin erected by the Coopers at McConnell's landing; and Laurence's "love and gratitude" parallels Morag's final thankfulness for her heritage and roots ("Text, Mini-Text and Micro-text" 174).

Similarly, almost all the novels of White begin in the present and then swing to the past (Eg. *The Aunt's Story*, *The Eye of the Storm*, *Memoirs of Many in One*). The difference lies only in the shifting of time in the novels in relation to the past and present. In novels like *The Aunt's Story* and *Voss*, it is a pendulum movement between the past and the present. There is a "bio-dramatic" shift into the past as in *Riders in the Chariot*. In *A Fringe of Leaves*, there is an initial backward movement followed by a continuous move towards the present barring occasional reminiscences. The movement is circular in *The Eve of the Storm* and *The Twyborn Affair*. To sum up what has been described in the earlier paragraph, Bergson's concept of 'inner duration' comes in handy and is described as:

... the continuous life of a memory which prolongs the past into the present, whether the present distinctly contains the ever-growing image of the past, or whether, by its continual changing of quality, it attests rather the increasingly heavy burden dragged along behind one the older one grows. Without that survival of the past in the present there would be no duration but only instantaneity (An *Introduction* to Metaphysics 41).

Veronica Brady, in her article, "The Novelist and the New World" arrives at a similar conclusion about the time aspect in White's
novels which may be extended to Laurence's novels as well.

... in his handling of time White respects reality, resisting the temptation to soar above past, present, and future to live instead in the continuous present, the time dear to Romantics, in which the past is dead and the future represented only by desire. The Romantic hero lives in what Lawrence Durrell has called *the adventive moment,* the moment of intensity which cannot be measured or dismissed but only experienced, ... (179).

This explains the appropriateness of the river image in Laurence's *The Diviners.*

The river flowed both ways. The current moved from north to south, but the wind usually came from the south, rippling the bronze, green water in the opposite direction (D 3).

... the river, ..., seemed to be flowing, both ways. Look ahead into the *past,* and back into the *future,* until the silence (D 453).

The novel opens and closes with the river image. What happens in the middle is an explication of this statement. Laurie Ricou makes an interesting comment on the passage quoted above.

The past is something eluding us, still something to look forward to, but the future, already determined, seems behind us. And the silence which will provide resolution to the paradoxes is not only the silence of the grave, but also the silence of unspoken love and intuitive understanding ("Never Cry Wolfe" 178).

The knowledge and experience of the present enables *Morag* to revisit and re-assess the past, whereas Pique's future course is directed towards a movement in the past, that of joining her living ancestors. Such an attitude towards time enables Morag as well as the other Manawaka heroines to probe the past in order to understand the present. As Morag rightly points out: "[a] popular misconception is that we can't change the *past--everyone* is constantly changing their own past, recalling it, revising it" (D
Thus, Morag's reconstruction of the Snapshots is more fictive than real. Thus, the past is not a 'given' existing 'out there,' but a psychological reality which can be revisioned or changed. On the other hand, by an honest re-assessment of the past, Hagar, Rachel and Stacey are able to change the course of their present and future. Vanessa's reaction to her Grandfather is no longer a hatred for an authoritarian figure but a sympathetic understanding of the man behind the mask, 'proclaiming himself in her veins.' For instance, time plays an important role in self-realisation in Hagar's life. As Shirley Crew observes ("'Some truer image': A Reading of The Stone Angel"):

The changes put forward by Marvin and Doris do not only threaten the immediate pattern of life but also those apparently settled interpretations of the past... . Driven back to her memories for comfort, she finds that, contrary to her expectations, the existing situation has altered the past in disturbing ways by producing unaccustomed perspectives and unwelcome truths (38).

Thus, these novels prove true Laurence's statement in "Time and Narrative Voice" that the "past and the future are always present, present in both senses of the word always now and always here with us" (A Place to Stand On 156). The same idea holds good for White's novels. The honest self-reflexivity of almost all the characters enable them to come to terms with the present.

At this juncture, it may be helpful to examine the flashback and flashforward techniques which are used by these writers to bring out the flowing continuum of time. The Fire-Dwellers offers a special insight in this regard. Stacey realises that she stands
"in relation to ... life both as child and as parent, never quite finished with the old battles, never able to arbitrate properly the new, able to look both ways, ... " (FD 40). The time span in the novel includes Stacey's past as a young girl in Manawaka, her present as a parent which is similar to the past of her parents and Katie's present which corresponds to Stacey’s past. Thus, her memories are constant comparisons between herself, her mother and her daughter.

Flashback techniques in White's novels, include various instances of the protagonists' memories of the past. Certain instances, however, may be singled out for analysis. In The Eye of the Storm, apart from associative memories, there are conscious recallings of the past. One is Elizabeth Hunter's reminder to Dorothy about their stay at Brumby Island and their meeting with Pehl.

'What was that man's name, dear?'
'Which man, Mother?' ...
'You know--the Norwegian--when somebody invited us to an island' (ES 336).

Dorothy only remembers hating her mother's treachery in competing with herself for the attention of Pehl. However, to Elizabeth it is a re-living of a great experience as also a penitence for her past behaviour. Another instance when Mrs. Hunter forcibly recalls the past is during the last moments of her life when she tries to experience once again her illumination during the 'eye' of the storm (532). Michael Cotter's observation in "The Function of Imagery in Patrick White's Novels" is perceptive:
The storm is central to the novel's narrative and symbolic structures. The main character's past, present and future experiences are gathered within it into a single moment, so that the storm episode becomes a microcosmic enactment of the whole novel. By an interchange between the detailed events in the storm episode and the developments of Elizabeth Hunter's inner progressions... White conveys most powerfully what it is to understand the condition to which she aspires, both at the moment and more permanently (Ron Shepherd and K. Singh 23).

In The Twyborn Affair, White uses the theatrical technique of entries and exits to mark off the past and the present. Joanie Golson's intrusions into E.'s life at strategic points signify a forced memory of the past. In the first section of the book, Eudoxia is forced to leave the place for fear of exposing her identity. In her own words, "... just when I'd begun to order my life, perhaps even make it into something believable, this emissary comes to smash it to pieces" (TA 22). Similarly, Eddie's exit from the Lushington household is preceded by the visit of the Golsons. In the final section, again, Eadith Trist's life is somewhat disturbed by the arrival of Joanie Golson in the scene. However, this time the exit is marked by a renewed relationship with her/his mother. Another feature of Joanie's entry is the constant reminder of Eadie's tragedy which refers to Eddie's disappearance on the eve of his engagement. Joanie's appearance also reminds E. of Eadie's disguise in Judge Twyborn's clothes which, in turn, emphasises the lesbian relationship between Eadie and Joanie.

There is a two-way movement in the use of the flashback and flashforward techniques. One is a journey from the present to the past, while the other is a linear journey from the past to the present and the future. Quoting Miller, Patricia Tobin describes
these journeys as "a circle of time" and sees them as the doubling back of two linear journeys: "the setting out at the beginning, when nothing is known (prospective experience), and the analysis at the end of the journey, when everything is known (retrospective evaluation)" (24).

Premonition of events to come is one of the commonly used flashforward techniques in the works of the two writers. However, the future is accommodated in other ways as well. The presence of children towards the end of the novels is one example of this. Thus, in White's novels, Ray Jr. in The Tree of Man continues Stan Parker's quest, Mercy in Voss acts as the future referent to Laura's life, the Godbold children in Riders in the Chariot and the Lovell children enable Ellen's easy transit from nature to culture in A Fringe of Leaves. In Laurence's novels, Hagar's self-realisation is affirmed by her sharing of confidences with young Sandra Wong in The Stone Angel. Rachel refers to her mother as "the elderly child" at the end of A Jest of God. Duncan's newly found confidence with Ian and Mac in the beach scene, Jen's first words, Katie's sharing of responsibility with Stacey—all these events greatly help Stacey's self-awareness. In The Diviners, Pique's journey parallels and explicates Morag's own quest. Laurence seems to emphasise the need to learn from the experiences of the children. Thus, Morag wonders at the openness and flexibility that exists in Pique's relationship with men. Further, Pique's journey moves back towards the heritage offered by her ancestors whereas Morag's journey, earlier in the novel, takes her away from her roots.
Another aspect to be noted in the presence of children is the category of 'spirit children.' While almost all the children fit into this category, the divine fools (discussed in the earlier Chapter) and the mysterious child who appears and disappears soon after the Wullunya flood in *The Tree of Man* and Margaret Quong in *Happy Valley* serve as fine examples. Pique is the spirit child in Laurence's canon. In his article, "'Leave the dead some room to dance!' Margaret Laurence and *Africa*," David Richards draws an interesting connection between Pique and the *abiku* figure, the child spirit in Yoruba mythology. Richards describes Pique as "a living miracle, a point of intersection between this world and the other, the present and past" (23). According to the Yoruba belief, the world of unborn is older to the world of the living. Richard sees Pique as the converging point of the Indians, Metis, Highlanders and English in the novel (23).

Let us now consider the flashforward technique in the works of Patrick White. This is done by way of a premonition of the future. This technique is not evident in Laurence's works. In White, these premonitions are made in the past of the novel's time-history. Thus, what is foreseen as the future is actually perceived by the reader in the present. In *The Aunt's Story*, for instance, George Goodman, The Man Who Was Given His Dinner and Miss. Spofforth have insights into Theodora's true self. George Goodman says that Theodora 'has great understanding' (AS 31). The Man Who Was Given His Dinner and Miss. Spofforth are prophetic about Theodora's future. What the readers encounter in the present time of the novel is, in fact, an explication of
Similarly, Ellen's premonition of the evil to come, in *A fringe of Leaves*, explains the moral stands she has to take in future regarding her seduction by Garnet, and her cannibalism. Another related technique used by White is the prologue-like opening chapter. The opening pages of White's novels assume importance in that they provide hints about the future course of the novel. Consider the opening chapter of *A Fringe of Leaves*; Mrs. Merivale and Miss. Scrimshaw rightly predict that Mrs. Roxburgh has been denied of a deeper experience in life and for realising which she would undergo tremendous amount of suffering. As the Merivales return home, they meet Delaney who tells them about a cannibal episode which subtly hints Ellen's cannibalism later in the novel. Further, there are repeated references to the beautiful fringe of Ellen's shawl which symbolically foresees her dress of a fringe of leaves which, in turn, points to the thin veneer that separates nature and culture. Similarly, the opening pages of *Voss* are significant and are full of hints to the future course of events.

The flashback and flashforward techniques reveal the Janus-faced view gained by the protagonists in relation to time. While historical-time is circular in that it repeats itself and individual time is linear, a combination of the two gives a spiral movement to the quest. Quoting Peter Brooks' *Reading for the Plot*, Gayle Greene sees the fundamental motive of narratives as: "the recovery of the past, transformation of the present, and transmission of inheritable wisdom to the future"
The protagonists do not merely experience repetitions of past events but,

...the circular movement of the novel[s] suggests a fruitful intertwining of ends and beginnings, a sense of life like that symbolised by the Ouroboros, the serpent swallowing its tail, figure for 'the continuity of life' and 'continual return, within a cyclic pattern' (200).

Furthermore, almost all the novels share the structure "in which time present alternates with time past until, in the final section, the past catches up with and becomes the present" (Gayle Greene 181). Identifying a similar structure in White's novels, Peter Beatson terms "anticipation, experience and contemplation" as the three stages of "inner, psychological time" (The Eve in the Mandala 66).

Perhaps, we can consider A Bird in the House in some detail in the light of the above-mentioned structure. The shifting of generic boundaries (short stories, fiction, autobiography, history etc.) reveals above all "the strangeness and mystery of the very concepts of past, present and future" (Margaret Laurence in "Time and Narrative Voice"). Stating that the stories are formally and temporally related, Sherill Grace observes that "the stories form a circle, within the mind of the narrator, that is embodied in the opening and closing words of the book.... The present tense of the opening sentence underscores the point of the entire book--one never merely drives away. The past lives on in the present as we re-create it" ("Crossing Jordan" 333). The
entire collection bears evidence to this fact by depicting the memory of a past moment, its connection with other events and its explanation offered by hindsight.

The discussion of time in the preceding sections has many implications in the novels of the two writers. The implications are not merely the use of various devices but what they address within the texts and outside them. Margaret Laurence states openly that in her writings she attempts "to assimilate the past, partly in order to be freed from it, partly in order to try to understand [her]self and perhaps others of [her] generation, through seeing where [they] had come from" (George Woodcock ed. A Place to Stand On 15). In another essay in the same volume, Laurence explains the use of time in her novels.

In any work of fiction, the span of time present in the story is not only as long as the time-span of every character's life and memory; it also represents everything acquired and passed on in a kind of memory-heritage from one generation to another. The time which is present in any story, therefore, must by implication at least include, not only the totality of the characters' lives but also the inherited time of perhaps two or even three past generations, in terms of parents' and grandparents' recollections, and the much much longer past which has become legend, the past of a collective cultural memory... . It is the character who chooses which parts of the personal past, the family past and the ancestral past have to be revealed in order for the present to be realized and the future to happen... . The past and the future are both always present, present in both senses of the word, always now and always here with us (George Woodcock 155-6).

Laurence's statement vividly sums up the preoccupations underlying White's novels also. The statement further echoes Heidegger's philosophical speculations which see time "not [as] a string of meaningless points to which significance is attributed . . . . time is not something . . . neutral and general."
Elaborating Heidegger's discussions, Wesley A. Kort emphasises the notion of time as an interflowing continuum of past, present and future.

Future time, the time of anticipation and possibility, and past time, the time of conditions and memories, have to do with present time because things future, while not yet existing, can be matters of concern in the present, and things past, while no longer existing, concern me as well in the present... . The past both yields to the present and conceals itself from it, and the future both withholds from the present and grants something to it... . In other words, present time provides us a sense of the unity of our temporality.... That unity is a kind of fourth dimension of time (Modern Fiction and Human Time 161-2).

The discussion in preceding pages also reveals the importance of time (whether past, present or future) in the self-realisation of the protagonists. Here again, Heidegger's ideas come in handy. Quoting Heidegger, Wesley Kort states:

Raising the question of temporality means facing the incompleteness and uncertainty of one's own existence, and it locates the meaning of that existence in something yet outstanding in and for one's life. Raising the question of temporality to the level of consciousness is, consequently, a difficult act for any person, but it is that person's defining and individuation act (157).

Commenting on the awareness of the sense of time, Wesley Kort sees the plots which reveal psychological or personal time as melodic.

Since melodic plots find their most congenial associations in the developing internal life of an individual person or group, metaphors and seatings of a psychological or internal nature are most congenial to it. Movement is caused neither by attraction to nor conflict with something outside the individual, ..., but by an actualization of internal potentials. The process originates from within, and its end grants identity to the individual (Wesley Kort 19).
Conclusion

The preceding sections attempted to study in detail concepts such as ‘doubling’ and ‘time’ through a study of the related techniques which are used to exemplify these concepts. Collectively, all these techniques help in reinforcing the central themes of the novels. One reason for the choice of these two concepts and related techniques is to find a critical path unfrequented by others. More importantly, these bring out the neat dovetailing of form and content in the works of White and Laurence. As Harry Heseltine rightly puts it, "White’s style is .... in fact a direct function of his deepest response to life" ("Patrick White’s Style" 61). Arguing that White's style is more emotional and less logical, Heseltine concludes by saying that "every element of White's style works to explode and elucidate his themes" (74) . White has openly accepted the role played by intuition in his novels. Laurence echoes this idea when she describes form as a ‘vehicle’ of communication in a novel.

Form, in writing, concerns me .... as a means of conveying the characters and their particular dilemmas ... . [It] is the kind of vehicle or vessel capable of risking that peculiar voyage of exploration which constitutes the novel ("Gadgetry or Growing: Form and Voice in the Novel" in A Place to Stand On 157).

Thus, the two writers are not innovators of particular techniques but use suitable variations of available techniques in their fiction to explore the predominant theme of self-realisation in its spiritual and psychological aspects.