Notes

Chapter I

1 In her article "The Hatching Process: The Female’s Struggle for Identity in Four Novels by Patrick White," Phyllis Fahrie Edelson makes an apt comparison between the struggle for identity of "females in male-dominated societies" to "the psychological birth of the human infant" described by the psychiatrist Margaret Mahler (229). Like the human infant, women in society move from "a period of differentiation, condemned as rebellion by their social group" to "a period of practising independence, in some way separate from their social milieu." Finally, if successful, this leads "to a consolidation of self and re-entry into the social order on their own terms" (230). A parallel movement can be easily established in the identity quests of women in White and Laurence. The breaking of social norms or codes of conduct is not merely a rebellion but a way by which these women realise their "self-worth" and "individuality" as will be shown in the rest of the chapter.

2 In her article, Constance Rooke makes a similar observation:

He [Jason] is proud ... of her intelligence, but wishes it had been granted to his sons instead. So Hagar is courageous, proud, brainy--everything that her father admires; and she is also female, so that these virtues are perceived as useless ("A Feminist Reading of ‘The Stone Angel’" 28).
Coral Ann Howells makes a related argument to show how Laurence's women express their deepest desires and resistances through "fantasies, daydreams and nightmares" or "the subtexts of inner-space discourses."

Female voices speak out of domestic spheres and nurturing roles, never openly dissenting from them any more than their mothers had done, and indeed in their own lives confirming traditional cultural patterns ("Weaving Fabrications" in Colin Nicholson ed. Critical Approaches to the Fiction of Margaret Laurence 94-5).

The internalisation of their parents' values by Hagar, Stacey, Vanessa and Morag confirms this aspect. Howells' statement also proves my argument about the subtle deviations from social norms of the Laurentian protagonists.

Chapter II

In her book Patrick White's Fiction: The Paradox of Fortunate Failure (1986), Carolyn Bliss lists the crucial functions served by the coda-like last chapter of the novel. These functions include: (i) the portrayal of Laura as "the inheritor of Voss' experience" (79), (ii) identifying Mercy, Topp and Pringle as Laura's heirs and (iii) what Bliss calls "a parting view of Laura and a chance to gauge how far back into life she has ventured" (80). Bliss cites Laura's determination to stay at Belle's party and herrummaging for lozenges at the end of the novel as instances to show Laura's failure to sustain the state of grace. Disagreeing with Carolyn Bliss, I would argue that these very instances show Laura's successful re-entry into society.
This instance is of interest in many ways. It is a childish view of love. But that the child is perceptive is seen in Vanessa linking the picture of the barbaric queen "keening her unrequited love" to her Aunt Edna who dismisses Jimmy Lorimer's proposal. Vanessa understands the total mismatch of her mental picture of love and the reality she faces in seeing Aunt Edna crying in the night, for she dismisses Jimmy Lorimer only because the alliance would displease Grandfather Connor. Clara Thomas makes a perceptive observation that the stories not only show Vanessa's emotional maturing but her growing awareness of appropriate and inappropriate modes of fiction, of the insufficiencies of the high romantic mode for the actual presentations of life's losses and agonies (The Manawaka World of Margaret Laurence 103).

It is worthwhile to note that similar conclusions are drawn by Pamela McCallum. In her article "Communication and History: Themes in Innis and Laurence," she attempts to apply Harold Innis' ideas on Canadian economic history and on communications to The Diviners. Her conclusions can be summed up as follows: (i) "Writing is a means by which Morag can both formalize her denied past feelings and criticize them for the greater perception of present understanding"; (ii) While reworking lived experiences, Morag's novels also remove them "from the limited particularity" and (iii) Morag's novels mediate between "individual experience and the broad socio-historical patterns suggested by the tales" (12).

The distrust regarding the power of language to express one's experiences and thoughts are voiced by many protagonists in Patrick White's fiction. Some of the instances are as follows:
Theodora Goodman in *The Aunt’s Story* concludes that "words, whether written or spoken, were at most frail slat bridges over chasms." Elizabeth Hunter in *The Eye of the Storm* reflects that "you can never convey in words the utmost in experience." Mary Hare to Himmelfarb: "‘Oh, words, words!’ she cried, brushing them off with freckled hands. ‘I do not understand what they mean’" (*Riders in the Chariot*). Mary Hare is of the view that "the truth is what I understand. Not in words. I have not the gift for words. But know." In spite of realising the gap between words and thoughts, Laurence's protagonists are frantic to explain themselves and do so in their silent pleas. For instance, Hagar, Rachel and Stacey constantly plead "Bram, listen--," "Nick? Listen--" and "Mac--let me explain" in *The Stone Angel*, *A Jest of God* and *The Fire-Dwellers* respectively. For these characters, completely articulate speech is possible only when there is a loss of conscious control as is seen in Rachel speaking in tongues at the Tabernacle and Stacey's drunken speech at Thor Thorlakson's party.

Morag's naming of the plants in her garden is very similar to what Mary Daly describes as "new naming." In her book, *Beyond God the Father*. Daly speaks of Adam's naming in the Genesis story as a "false naming" in which women and the world have been described from men's point of view. Citing Daly, Carol Christ remarks that "[a]s women begin to name the world for themselves not only will they create new life possibilities for women, they will also upset the world order that has been taken for granted for centuries" (*Diving Deep and Surfacing* 24).
Such attitudes to words by Vanessa, Morag and Alex afford interesting interpretations. In an article entitled "Intersecting Marginalities: Post-colonialism and Feminism," W.D.Ashcroft considers language as an oppressive weapon which marginalises colonials and women. Curiously enough, strategies used by the three protagonists match those forwarded by Ashcroft to resist the hegemony of language. Such strategies include authenticating the existing language to the particular situation, using language as a tool for constructing a different reality and gaining power through the process of naming (27). The parallels in the novels are quite direct.

Chapter III

In her interesting study of the 'divine fools' in White's novels, Patricia Morley also places them in the long tradition of the fool in cultural history and in literature. Some of the 'fool' figures that she mentions include Perceval in the Arthurian legend, Fool in Shakespeare's King Lear, Myshkin in Dostoevsky's The Idiot, Little Pip in Melville's Moby Dick and Mr. Feebleminded in Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress (The Mystery of Unity 85-95).

It is interesting to note an echo of these ideas in Margaret Laurence's "A Statement of Faith" (published in George Woodcock's A Place to Stand On 60) and Patrick White's "Credo" (quoted in Patrick White Speaks 197). Quoting a poem/prayer from Rev. Lois Wilson's Like a Mighty River. Laurence affirms her
faith in love and hope as redeeming factors of the spirit of humanity:

It's so easy
and so arrogant
to think that God
speaks only English
and works only through Christians.
Help me, 0 God,
to relate to those
other living faiths
with openness and trust.

White, on the other hand, rests his belief

not in God, but a Divine Presence of which Jesus, the
Jewish Prophets, the Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi and Co. are
the more comprehensible manifestations .... the Tere-
as, St. John of the Cross, Thomas Merton, .... — all
these along with the anonymous who lift us from the
gutters, wiping the vomit from our lips, who comfort us
as our limbs lie paralysed on the pavement, feed us
within their limited means, and close our eyes--these
humble everyday saints created for our consolation by
the same mysterious universal Presence ignored, cursed,
derided, or intermittently worshipped by the human
race.

3 Pointing to the difficulty and provisionality in grasping
the superpersonal cosmic reality in terms of the personal, Dr. S.
Radhakrishnan, in his book Eastern Religions and Western Thought,
quotes Sankara's distinction between the absolute self, the
divine person, and the human individual.

Therefore the unconditioned self, being beyond speech
and mind, undifferentiated and one, is designated as
"not this, not this"; when it has the limiting adjuncts
of the body and organs which are characterized by
imperfect knowledge, desire, and work, it is called the
empirical individual self; and when the self has the
limitation of the creative power manifesting through
eternal and unlimited knowledge, it is called the inner
ruler and divine person. The same self, as by its
nature transcendent, absolute, and pure, is called the
immutable and supreme self (29).

This commentary by Śankara on Brhadaranyaka Upanishad points out
both the multifaceted nature of the self and the problem of
defining the self in terms of any one feature.

4 Self differentiated as subject and object finds its parallel in the Self/Other distinction much debated by Feminist, Post-colonialist and Existentialist thinkers. Simone de Beauvoir's question in her book *The Second Sex*. "Why is woman the Other?", is crucial because it differentiates clearly between the self as "free, determining being who defines the meaning of ... existence" and the other as "the object whose meaning is determined" by "the definitions, tables, and essences limiting ... existence" (Rosemarie Tong. *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction* 6). In the colonial situation, Self/Other refers to the distinction made between the coloniser and the colonised. From this basic situation, further distinctions between black and white, male and female arise (the specific references here are to works like Albert Memmi’s *The Coloniser and the Colonised*, Aimé Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism*, O. Manonni’s *Prospero and Caliban* and Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin. White Masks*). In Existentialist thought, this reference is directed towards Jean Paul Sartre's distinction between Being-in-itself, Being-for-itself and Being-for-others in his book *Being and Nothingness*.

5 The existential basis for this argument can be found in Heidegger's concept of the 'moment before death.' Commenting on this, John Macquarrie observes:

Death is not merely a negative phenomenon. To anticipate death with resoluteness is to find a certain wholeness in it. It sets a boundary to my existence and so makes possible a unity of existence. [It is] .... a kind of eternity within time. It is the moment in which my past, present, and future are gathered into the unity of the resolute self (*Existentialism* 218).
On the one hand, this statement refers to death as a **meeting point of 'essence and existence'** or to put it differently, **'self and other.'** On the other hand, it refers to the moment of conjunction of the past, present and future. Time, at this point, is not linear and discrete but a unitary whole. This circularity can be found in the quests of almost all the protagonists. However, the **'time'** element involved will be discussed in detail in the Chapter on Techniques.

A different mode of Biblical interpretation can be found in David Jeffrey's article "Biblical Hermeneutic and Family History in Contemporary Canadian Fiction: Wiebe and Laurence." Jeffrey draws attention to the **"basic inner rhetorical pattern"** that can be discerned in the **"typical Biblical model."** He compares The Stone Angel and the Book of Isaiah in this light and comes to the conclusion that **"the point of Laurence's evocation of the Genesis story is its Pauline hermeneutical understanding, and her "old covenant" Hagar delineates a binary structure to which "a new covenant" understanding is the presupposed complement"** (99).

As a point of contention, it may be argued that Humanism is incompatible with the metaphysical and transcendental aspects of the works of the two writers. Nicola Abbagnano defines Humanism as a broad concept which embraces doctrines as different as Communism, Pragmatism, **Personalism** and Existentialism ("Humanism" 72). Hence, it becomes necessary to define the term in the sense in which I have used it. White and Laurence emphasise "the value and dignity" of the individual, but steadily move forward to embrace "human nature, its limits, or its
interests" as their ultimate themes. Further, in stressing human freedom, they see "traditional hierarchical orders an obstacle rather than an aid" (Abbagnano 70). This is evident in the scepticism expressed by the protagonists about traditional religions. The works of the two writers are also "permeated by the spirit of tolerance" and "diversity of beliefs" (Abbagnano 71). Thus, the protagonists choose from among various beliefs ranging from orthodox Christianity to aboriginal religion. Lastly, Humanism has been used to designate both Personalism/Spiritualism which affirms human capacity "to contemplate the eternal truths or, ... to enter into a relationship with transcendent reality" and Existentialism which affirms "human subjectivity" (Abbagnano 72). These apparently contradictory doctrines are combined by White and Laurence. Even while exalting the soul, like the humanists, White and Laurence focus on "the body and that which pertains to it" (Abbagnano 70). The failure to notice the broader base of Humanism results in the questioning of the humanistic concerns of the two writers.

[There are no notes to Chapter IV]

Chapter V

1 The use of the river image to denote the continuous flow of time is a trait that can be discerned from Heraclitus down to Herman Hesse. According to S.H. Vatsyayan, this image success-
fully captures the "timeless co-presence" of events for "in a river one can travel upstream as well as down." It also brings attention to memory which "has a non-uniform, dynamic order, commensurate with our experience of time as. a non-uniform, dynamic flow" (A Sense of Time 26).

2 Manly Johnson uses Berndt's summary of the doctrine of dreamtime to point out the balancing of opposing qualities and characters in White's novels, quoting The Solid Mandala as an example.

... the fixation or instituting of things in an enduring form, and the simultaneous endowment of all things--including man, and his condition of life--with their good and/or bad properties (Iconography of Religions vs Australian Aboriginal Religion 7).

This, interestingly enough, refers back to the discussion of the double in the preceding section. Both Patrick White and Margaret Laurence have used the techniques of the double to expose the good and bad in individuals and in society in general. While White may be credited with a knowledge of aboriginal mythology, Laurence's usage is purely accidental.

3 The epigraph from Gerald Moore's The Chosen Tongue to Clara Thomas' book The Manawaka World of Margaret Laurence clearly explicates the significance of the serpent eating its own tail and the Kunapipi ritual. Here is the quotation:

The tropical forest does not evoke symbolism of a seasonal death followed after some interval by a seasonal resurrection, but rather a continuous, un-broken process of decay and renewal. Thus the snake's ever-devouring mouth expresses life drawing its sustenance from decay and death, even as the young shoots of the forest do (3).
Peter Beatson echoes this idea when he talks of "the twin spiral" in White's novels "in which processes of degeneration and regeneration are locked together in a vortex, highlighting each other by contrast and relief" (The Eye in the Mandala 54).

One inevitable question which arises from this view is whether the preference of circular over linear time by the two writers amounts to a rejection of patriarchy? Though the answer, prima facie, is affirmative, more research has to be done to justify the conclusion.

That this description and story owes a lot to Sidney Nolan's Eliza Fraser paintings is acknowledged by White himself. For a closer reading of the versions of the myth and its connection to the paintings, see Kay Schaffer's "Australian Mythologies: The Eliza Fraser Story and Constructions of the Feminine in Patrick White's A Fringe of Leaves and Sidney Nolan's 'Eliza Fraser' Paintings." Kunapipi XI. 2 (1989): 1-15.

This fantasy closely resembles the first theatrical performance in the Australian penal colony so well re-created by Thomas Keneally in The Play-makers.

There are critical debates about the artificiality of Hagar's chronological memories. Simone Vauthier is of the view that the unequal narrative sequence "leads to the discrepancy between remembering and remembered time; chronological and psychological time; telling time and remembering time" ("Note on the Narrative Voice(s) in The Stone Angel" 136). On the other hand, Reingard M. Nischik considers the flashbacks to the past as revealing "not only what kind of person Hagar is but also how she has developed into what she is" ("Multiple Plot in Margaret..."
Laurence's *The Stone Angel* (126). It also enables the writer to distinguish between what Wayne Booth calls "telling" or "showing" (Reingard Nischik 128).

The technical devices used in Laurence's *The Diviners* have attracted a lot of critical attention. They include: Sherill E. Grace's "Crossing Jordan: Time and Memory in the Fiction of Margaret Laurence," Ildiko de Papp Carrington's "Tales in the Telling: *The Diviners* as Fiction About Fiction," and Terry Goldie's "Folklore, Popular Culture and Individuation in *Surfacing* and *The Diviners*.*

In *The Diviners*, Laurence places emphasis on re-telling rather than telling. Thus, there is a re-working of history and there is an enormous range of stylistic variation. Lynette Hunter makes an interesting comment on the Memorybank Movie, "Once upon a Time There Was"—"The story is told in the historical present, a tense conveying a sense of fatalism as if everything is known before it happens." Hunter quotes the example "Mrs. Pearl ... has come to Morag's house" ("Consolation and Articulation in Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*" 136).

There are detailed analyses of the opening chapters of White's novels. In his article "Patrick White: Chaos Accepted," Peter Shrubb critically examines the opening chapter of *Voss*. Similarly, John Colmer in "Patrick White's *A Fringe of Leaves*" and Carolyn Bliss in the chapter on *A Fringe of Leaves* in her book *Patrick White's Fiction: The Paradox of Fortunate Failure* discuss the prologue-like opening scene performed by 'minor actors.'
In a well-argued article, Paul M. St. Pierre sees the spiritual movement of White's protagonist as a spiral. Quoting Aristotle, Paul M. St. Pierre recognises two types of motion: "discontinuous linear and continuous circular; natural and enforced." Citing the hurricane, dance, mandala and tunnel images as symbols of the spiral, St. Pierre sees the spiritual movement in White's novels as being "linear and circular, natural and enforced." St. Pierre's conclusions may be applied with equal validity to Laurence's novels.

As [the quester] advances along the threads of an ostensibly contracting spiral the visionary moves both towards the centre of the circle and through the hole. His journey is enforced because he cannot return to the beginning, and natural because it is continuous and circular. As the quester moves away from the beginning his enforced movement decelerates, and as he nears the end it accelerates into a natural movement; ... . Because the "unmoved mover" motivates continuous circular motion the quester along the spiral approaches this motion as he acquires spiritual enlightenment (in Ron Shepherd and K. Singh 101).

The dominant images, in Laurence's novels, used to express the spiral are: the river flowing both ways and diviner/divining in *The Diviners* and the stairs which lead to light as in *A Jest of God* and *The Stone Angel*.

In his book *Modern Fiction and Human Time: A Study of Narrative and Belief*, Wesley Kort analyses the underlying preoccupations with time in philosophers like Mircea Eliade, Alfred Whitehead and Martin Heidegger and relates it to works of writers like Hemingway, D.H. Lawrence, Herman Hesse, Virginia Woolf and others. Stating that each of the three thinkers give importance to past, present or future, he concludes by analysing the predominance of one of the three aspects of time in the writers.
Kort divides the plots in their works into three categories: rhythmic, polyphonic and melodic. While the three categories coalesce freely, it is easy to identify the dominant note. The fiction of White and Laurence mainly follow the melodic pattern though strains of the other two patterns are evident. In this respect, White and Laurence share a common platform with writers like Virginia Woolf and Herman Hesse whose works Kort analyses.