

**ROBERTSON DAVIES'S INNOVATIVE USE OF
THE TRILOGY FORM IN HIS FICTION**

By

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the Trilogy Form in His Fiction**

As the *Salterton*, *Deptford* and the *Cornish* trilogies and the incomplete fourth (with two novels published) represent Robertson Davies's entire body of fictional work, this study of his innovative use of the trilogy form focuses on him as a writer of trilogies rather than simply as a novelist. The Thesis examines his development as a writer of trilogies; his creativity or inventiveness with the form; and the rhetoric and artistry with which he unites each of his trilogies. An important part of its argument is that for reasons that not even Davies understood fully, he needed the form of trilogy to express his vision. The thesis also argues that Davies made an original contribution to the form or subgenre of the trilogy.

Because the novel sequence has not been sufficiently recognized as a distinctive genre, and also because critical studies have been less than definitive, the introduction provides both a brief survey of the rise and development of the English novel sequence, illustrated with work of Anthony Trollope, Joyce Cary, Lawrence Durrell and Evelyn Waugh, and an explanation of the cause of the problems in the critical studies. Two theoretical approaches to the novel sequence are examined to offer a better understanding of the ultimately indefinable nature of the sequence form and of the paradoxical coexistence of unity in the sequence and autonomy in the individual novels. Chapter 2 explores Davies's notion of the novel sequence and the evolution of his three completed trilogies. The contrast between his critical treatment of other sequences and of his own confirms that he tries intentionally to create linked novels in his own way. The ensuing three chapters examine his varying ways of building each trilogy structure and his

experimentation with various narrative elements and techniques, and illustrate different intertextual effects achieved and the differences between one structure and another. The conclusion highlights the unique features of each trilogy, summarizes his main achievement as a trilogy novelist, and offers an explanation of why he has been fond of the trilogy form and has used it constantly.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Robertson Davies's Trilogies and the Rise and the Development of the English Novel Sequence

Robertson Davies's Trilogies: Issues to Be Considered

Robertson Davies is unusual as a novelist in that all his novels are interconnected in groups of three. However, he has not been studied as a trilogy writer. During his lifetime (1913-1995), he produced eleven novels, and nine of them form trilogies. They have been published in one-volume editions under the titles of *The Salterton Trilogy* (1986: *Tempest-Tost*, 1951; *Leaven of Malice*, 1954; and *A Mixture of Frailties*, 1958), *The Deptford Trilogy* (1983: *Fifth Business*, 1970; *The Manticore*, 1972; and *World of Wonders*, 1975), and *The Cornish Trilogy* (1992: *The Rebel Angels*, 1981; *What's Bred in the Bone*, 1985; and *The Lyre of Orpheus*, 1988). The interconnections between the last two novels, *Murder & Walking Spirits* (1991) and *The Cunning Man* (1994), suggest, and Davies's letter to his friend Gordon Roper confirms, that, had Davies lived longer, he would have completed one more trilogy¹.

¹ On August 27, 1992 Davies wrote to Roper : "When I finished *Murder and Walking Spirits* I thought I had done all that I could do as a novelist. But another novel has come into my mind, which is linked to that one as my novels tend to be. And yet another has begun to appear as a possibility. So I may yet complete another trilogy, 'if I'm spared'..." (Trent University Archives, Gordon Roper Fonds, accession 95-015, Box 1, Folder 1, hereafter recorded as Trent followed first by Box and then Folder number).

Although Davies's novels are commonly all classified as trilogies, their structures differ greatly from one another². The three stories in *The Salterton Trilogy*, for example, are linked explicitly and chronologically by their setting, Salterton, and by the recurrence of some characters. While each book relates a complete, self-sufficient story or "chain of events (actions, happenings)" (Chapman 19), the plots of all three narratives take place in the same Salterton community (except that Monica Gall's story in *A Mixture of Frailties* moves between Salterton and Europe) and a group of characters is involved in all the plots. The novels in the Deptford trilogy, though also unified by their setting, Deptford, a place which has an even more important influence on the psychological growth of the main recurrent characters, are intrinsically intertwined on the basis of one complex plot resulting from the incident of a snowball with a stone wrapped in it. Davies uses this incident as a key organizational device to present both the individual lives of the major recurrent characters, who were involved directly or indirectly in the plot, and their entangled relationship determined by the snowball. In contrast, the element of setting does not have the same explicit unifying power in the Cornish trilogy as it does in the previous two. Davies lets the recurrent characters play a more important role in establishing a distinctive trilogy structure on the basis of two patterns. The reappearance and involvement of the characters in all three stories constitute an easily recognizable linear narrative development. The story of Francis Cornish recounted in the three novels coalesces into a triptych-like pattern. His life story related in the second novel functions as if it were the central panel, with the accounts of him in the first and the third novels serving as the side panels. This second pattern results in a dichotomous temporal system of both "prolepsis" and

² The term "structure" has become very complex in literary theory since the emergence of "structuralism". In my discussion it retains its etymological and common meaning of "arrangement", "construction" and "building" and "has the status of 'thing' or 'entity'" (Rowe, "Structure" 23, 28). I am principally concerned with the relation of each narrative to the trilogy as a whole.

"analepsis" (Eagleton 105). Because of the unusual role Francis Cornish plays in uniting the three novels, his name is adopted as the title of the third trilogy.

The differences in the structures of the trilogies show that Davies used the trilogy form ingeniously and inventively. The fact that he constructed his novels all in trilogies suggests that he had a consistent interest in the trilogy form, which over a period of four decades became a kind of trademark. Because novels that are intentionally constructed to interrelate "must all be written under great strain, of the kind unknown to the majority of fictional writers", such practice requires extra efforts as well as skills for a novelist to keep readers' interest not only in one but in three consecutive books as well (Moore vii). Writing novels in groups of three, Davies unwittingly establishes "a contract" between himself and his readers (Culler 147). The trilogy structure he created arouses "certain relevant expectations" and invites readers to interpret and evaluate his novels within the conventions of the trilogy or sequence and to appreciate his artistic talent and achievement more as a trilogy or sequence writer than just as a novelist (Culler 147).

However, Davies's unusually slow public confirmation of the three completed trilogies hindered his readers' responses both to the underlying and larger narrative structure in each trilogy and to the special efforts he made to create it. All his novels were published as self-contained individual works, and he never publicly informed his readers before completing each trilogy that he was writing three interrelated stories. The only hint he gave them is a very brief prefatory note in the third novels of both the Deptford and the Cornish trilogies explaining the relationship of the third with the previous two³. It seems that he wanted his readers to discover by themselves how one

³ One note says: "*World of Wonders* is the last of the three linked novels, the others being *Fifth Business* (1970) and *The Manticore* (1972)". The other reads: "*The Lyre of Orpheus* is the third of a series of novels which explore the life and influence of Francis Cornish. It was preceded by *The Rebel Angels*, 1981, and *What's Bred in the Bone*, 1985".

book is linked with another. The trilogy structure recognized in the Salterton and Deptford novels thus conditions his readers to predict and anticipate the third trilogy after the publication of *The Rebel Angels*. Yet when this prediction was proved true and the three stories were grouped as the Cornish trilogy, Davies still made no claim that they could be read as a unified work.

Added to the slow confirmation of these three trilogies is the delay in the publication of the one-volume editions. *The Salterton Trilogy* did not appear until twenty-eight years after the publication of the third novel (1958-1986), *The Deptford Trilogy* eight years (1975-1983) and *The Cornish Trilogy* four years (1988-1992). As a result, Davies's novels were often read more as independent stories than as trilogies. He himself has not drawn attention to his achievement as a trilogy novelist nor to his inventiveness and ingenuity in using the trilogy form. His novels have not been studied in relation to the structure and conventions of the subgenre of the novel sequence, and his specific methods of integrating three seemingly independent and individual narratives have remained virtually unexplored.

The purpose of this study is to help increase the recognition of Davies's unique merits as a trilogy creator, of his developing skill and deliberate efforts to contrive a variety of intertextual relationships within three novels, and of the special place his fictions have in the Canadian canon. Jonathan Culler writes: "To study writing, and especially literary modes of writing, one must concentrate on the conventions which guide the play of differences and the process of constructing meanings" (133). This is the crucial approach I will take. I will establish Davies's status as a trilogy novelist by comparing his practice with that of other trilogy/sequence novelists and evaluate his works in the light of the conventions of sequences. To be more specific, I will conduct a careful structural analysis to show the salient features of each trilogy and the differences and similarities between the structure of his trilogies and those created by other sequence novelists.

My analysis and comparison serve as one way to read Davies's three linked texts and to interpret the "potential meanings" of each trilogy (Iser, *Act of Reading* 22)⁴. I am aware that "[i]nterpretations differ because readers differ, differences between readers are a function not just of their personalities but of the convention they employ in reading" (Martin 161). If everyone reads Davies's three linked novels with an awareness of the literary tradition of the English novel sequence, the diversity of his trilogy structure, his innovativeness and fondness for employing the trilogy form can be fully appreciated. In addition, a knowledge of the conventions and assumptions within which Davies was working can help narrow the possible number or range of interpretations. A brief review of the conventions of the novel trilogy/sequence is a necessary starting point.

The Concept of the English Novel Sequence: Polemical and Problematic

The English trilogy emerged together with the European novel sequence, a comprehensive term referring to novels written in series, such as trilogy, tetralogy or series of more than four volumes. The individual novels in a sequence are to various degrees self-contained and are published separately. Therefore they can, to a point, be read as independent and individual stories. The novel sequence, however, has never been widely recognized as an individual and distinctive form or genre per se; no general agreement has ever been reached either among writers of trilogies/sequences, or among literary critics about the concept of novels written in sequence. One of the main reasons is that, because all the novels in a sequence are written and published as individual works and their collected editions (not all sequences have such editions) often take years to become available, the concept of the novel sequence is as polemical

⁴ The word "meaning" used in this context maintains Iser's definition: "Meaning is the referential totality which is implied by the aspects contained in the text and which must be assembled in the course of reading" (*Act of Reading* 151).

and problematic as that of the novel. In *Recent Theories of Narrative*, Wallace Martin scrutinizes the changing theories of the novel and calls attention to this never settled critical area: "[w]hile critics debate about theories [of the novel], creative writers may produce new literary works that alter the very ground of the debate" (28). In his essay "Epic and Novel", Mikhail Bakhtin offers his explanation of the indeterminacy of the novel genre: "The study of the novel as a genre is distinguished by peculiar difficulties. This is due to the unique nature of the object itself: the novel is the sole genre that continues to develop, that is as yet uncompleted.... The generic skeleton of the novel is still far from having hardened ..." (3). He regards the novel "as a genre-in-the-making, one in the vanguard of all modern literary development" (11). Because the novel sequence has some generic and formal affinities to the novel, critics most often study it with the same tenets as those applied to the novel. Even those who recognize the additional features of the novel sequence have not paid much attention to the structural distinctions between a sequence and a novel.

Nevertheless, the increasing interest in this extended narrative form has resulted in some critical discussion. Robert Morris, in his *Continuance and Change: the Contemporary British Novel Sequence* (1972), focuses his study on "this rather special--and in recent years phenomenal--novelistic form" (xiv). Alan Friedman's essay, "The Modern Multivalent Novel: Form and Function" (1974), not only makes a similar point, but also explains what has given rise to the development of the form:

One of the notable phenomena of twentieth-century fiction is the extent to which it has become extended. Forster gave the term "novel" one meaning when he defined it as a prose work in fiction of a certain extent. But many novels have moved beyond "certain" to become "indefinite". For since the novel has become psychological and open, the novelist who would terminate the stream of his fiction finds that it has no necessary ending, that

it goes on multiplying perspectives and possibilities--often into several or many volumes.... The result is the modern multivalent novel⁵. (121-122)

Friedman's explanation suggests that the rise of the novel sequence reflects novelists' on-going experiments with the novel form, more noticeably, with narrative "perspectives and possibilities". It is as if after Bergson, Freud, Jung, Proust and Joyce narrative point of view and closure--to cite just two aspects--became problematic in practice and in theory. Henry James's comment about the difficulty of knowing where to end a novel takes on new urgency and meaning⁶.

However, most critical approaches to the sequence are misleading because of problematic and ambiguous notions about it. For some critics, the novel sequence is simply the English version of the French "roman fleuve", which established its identity in French fiction with the appearance of Balzac's *Comédie Humaine*, a kind of novel sequence particularly "pursuing a family history through a number of related novels in order to render a comprehensive account of a social period..." ("Roman fleuve" *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* 5th ed.). For example, Joseph Warren Beach, a pioneer in promoting and propagating the recognition of the rise of the novel sequence in English fiction, makes no distinction between the French "roman fleuve"

⁵ Friedman's view that the modern novel has become an open and expanding form was expressed and discussed earlier in *The Turn of the Novel* (1966). The last sentence of his book reads like an anticipation of this essay: "Like the modern cosmos, the modern novel is ever expanding, and it is racing away fastest at its outmost reaches" (188).

⁶ In his "Preface to *Roderick Hudson*", James raises the question of where to end a novel: "Where, for the complete expression of one's subject, does a particular relation [certain figures and things] stop--giving way to some not concerned in that expression?". He then concludes: "Really, universally, relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so. He is in the perpetual predicament that the continuity of things is the whole matter for him, of comedy and tragedy; that this continuity is never, by the space of an instant or an inch, broken, and that, to do anything at all, he has at once intensely to consult and intensely to ignore it" (*The Art of the Novel* 5)

and the English novel sequence. Focusing on Trollope's "famous cathedral series", Arnold Bennett's "Clayhanger series" and John Galsworthy's "Forsyte Saga" and "A Modern Comedy", Beach treats all as a "sort of chronicle which is carried through a series of novels covering a long period of years" (235, 238, 246). He then directly associates these sequences with the "roman fleuve": "[T]hey all perhaps go back, in general scheme, to Balzac's *Comédie Humaine* (1827-47) and Zola's series of 'Les Rougon-Macquart' (1871-93)" (247).

Beach's account of the major features of these novel sequences embodies the early popular perception of the English novel sequence:

[W]hile they cover a long period of time and tend to include a large number of characters in the aggregate, each separate novel is limited in time, in the number of characters, and in the special dramatic issues involved; so that, just as each novel has its own title, it has generally its own distinct unity of design, and is capable of being read by itself and standing alone. And yet there is never any question about the intimate connection of each of these novels with all the rest in the series. There is very often one central character who is carried through the whole series and who most often carries with him a large number of the other people from book to book. (247-48)

Such a generalization does not reflect the main differences between the "roman fleuve" and the English novel sequence; for one thing, the former is often characterized by the large number of volumes in one sequence (ninety-one volumes in *Comédie Humaine* and twenty in Zola's series), while the latter contains a smaller number of volumes (six in Trollope's sequence, three in each of Galsworthy's and three in Bennett's). Beach's overview is also unhelpful in discriminating between "loose" sequences such as Balzac's and briefer, more tightly organized ones like Galsworthy's. If Balzac's is a "sequence" it is formally and temporally very loosely, often casually, organized;

Galsworthy's by contrast gives the impression of achieving certain fictional "unities". Moreover, Beach makes no mention of the term "trilogy" when he discusses Galsworthy's two trilogies and Bennett's *Clayhanger* trilogy, the form which represents one of the main features of the English novel sequence. Beach's study shows that he did not recognize that the changes and experimental variations taking place in the English novel sequence had already altered some of the main characteristics of the "roman fleuve".

Like Beach's, Robert Morris's notion of the English novel sequence also builds upon the "roman fleuve". He states explicitly that the six British novel sequences⁷ he chooses to study are affiliated with the "roman fleuve":

There is ... perhaps no form more susceptible to a time-ordered view than the series novel or (as it is often called in deference to its French origin) *roman fleuve*. Not merely concerned with time's compression and expansion, its subjective and objective, psychical and physical workings ... the novel sequence links moment-by-moment personal change with expanding historic change and projects both against a backdrop flowing on relentlessly and continually. (xiii)

Viewing the English novel sequence within the conventions of the "roman fleuve", Morris asserts that "the overriding idea of continuance and change is broad enough to embrace most aspects of the sequences without forcing comparisons of a qualitative nature" (xviii-xix). This statement shows that he either fails or refuses to take into consideration divergences of the English novel sequences from the "roman fleuve".

⁷ The six sequences are Doris Lessing's *Children of Violence*, Olivia Manning's *The Balkan Trilogy*, Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*, Anthony Burgess's *The Malayan Trilogy*, C. P. Snow's *Strangers and Brothers* and Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time* (which was not completed yet with four more novels coming).

No one will deny that the literary tradition of the "roman fleuve" has had some important influence on the English novel sequence. However, one has to realize that the English sequences studied by Beach and Morris do not follow the conventional pattern of the "roman fleuve". In the English novel, history, for instance, is not the dominant subject matter and the stories in a sequence are not necessarily connected in a linear and chronological order. Take one of the earliest sequences, Trollope's Barsetshire novels, for example. Even though Trollope uses the word "chronicle" both in the title of the last novel in the sequence, *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867) and in the overall title, *The Chronicles of Barsetshire* (1879), he does not, in contrast to Balzac, include in his novels "both history and a criticism of society, an analysis of its evils, and a discussion of its principles" (Balzac, Introduction lxix). As such, neither the last novel nor the whole sequence renders a particular historical period or deals with representative social issues of that period. Although social history is the main ingredient of the Victorian realistic novel, in Trollope's Barsetshire sequence it only serves as a background rather than a foreground as is seen in Balzac's *Comédie Humaine* or in a chronicle or other "roman fleuve".

What is more, the English novel sequences deliberately abandon or ignore most of the essential features of the "roman fleuve". In addition to the decrease in the number of volumes, the element of time is often either subordinated to the consciousness of the first-person narrator in the separate volumes or is used anachronistically. Such a departure from the conventions of the "roman fleuve" is best exemplified by Joyce Cary's two trilogies⁸. In each, Cary presents a triangle relationship between a woman and two men: Sara Monday was a mistress first to Gully

⁸ His first trilogy contains *Herself Surprised* (1941), *To Be a Pilgrim* (1942) and *The Horse's Mouth* (1944). The second one which is often referred to as the political trilogy includes *Prisoner of Grace* (1952), *Except the Lord* (1953) and *Not Honour More* (1955).

Jimson then to Tom Wilcher, Nina Woodville Latter was a wife first to Chester Nimmo and then to Jim Latter. In each case, the three characters are respectively the protagonists of the separate novels. Cary lets each character relate his/her own life which interacts with the lives of the other two. In *Joyce Cary: The Developing Style*, Jack Wolkenfeld particularly comments on the unusual temporal structure of the two trilogies and directs attention to such a change:

Both trilogies are unusual in that they are neither strictly circular nor strictly sequential. That is, they do not cover what is essentially the same ground, usually with psychological emphasis, from three separate points of view ... nor do they simply follow each other in time, usually with sociological and historical emphasis.... (21)

Although Wolkenfeld makes no mention of the "roman fleuve" in this passage, his comment indicates that he indirectly compares the subject matters of the two trilogies and Cary's use of time with the main features of the "roman fleuve": its "sociological and historical emphasis" and its "strictly circular" or "strictly sequential" order. Writing both sequences with three volumes and with the first-person narrator as the protagonist of each book, Cary distinguishes his practice not only from the conventions of the "roman fleuve" but also from that of his English precursors such as John Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett and Ford M. Ford⁹ whose sequences are often referred to as chronicles.

Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*¹⁰ (1962) represents another kind of change. In writing this tetralogy, Durrell consciously and deliberately revolts against

⁹ Ford wrote two sequences: the Fifth Queen trilogy (*The Fifth Queen*, 1906; *Privy Seal*, 1907; and *The Fifth Queen Crowned*, 1908) and the *Parade's End* tetralogy (*Some Do Not ...*, 1924; *No More Parades*, 1925; *A Man Could Stand Up*, 1926; and *Last Post*, 1928).

¹⁰ It contains *Justine* (1957), *Balthazar* (1958), *Mountolive* (1958) and *Clea* (1960).

the tradition of the "roman fleuve". His challenge is explicitly expressed in the author's notes provided both for the individual books and for the collected edition. He explicitly states in his preface to the tetralogy: "The whole was intended as a challenge to the serial form of the conventional novel: the time-saturated novel of the day" (*Quartet* [9]). The "conventional novel", according to his earlier note to *Clea*, obviously refers to the "roman fleuve" as he points out that "even if the series were extended indefinitely the result would never become a *roman fleuve* (an expansion of the matter in serial form)" ([5]). Reading the *Quartet*, one experiences and witnesses Durrell's "challenge" in his anachronistic representation of some characters and events, particularly those events in which Justine is involved. After Darley, the narrator of *Justine*, *Balthazar* and *Clea*, relates in the first novel his affair with Justine and what he knows about her person and her relationships with several other men including her husband, time seems to stop in the rest of the sequence. Durrell creates this effect by letting Darley recount Balthazar's and Clea's knowledge of some events already told in *Justine*. In this way, Darley's narratives in the later novels seem to dwell on the same events and the same group of people but are loaded with new information and different interpretations. As a result, there is no easily recognizable temporal order in the *Quartet*, and readers are forced to work out the latent order as they read on from one novel to the next.

The deviations from the "roman fleuve" in the English novel sequence, exemplified by the works of Cary and Durrell, inevitably lead some critics to revise their notion of the English novel sequence, to look for a proper expression for this new form and to adjust their principles for evaluating the new features that have emerged in recent English sequences. Whereas Beach and Morris associate the English novel sequence with the "roman fleuve", other views go beyond it. Alan Friedman offers a new view of the English novel sequence, arguing that there exist two main forms: one is "multivolume" and the other "multivalent". He describes "multivolume novels" as

follows: "In their simplest form, multivolume novels offer linear sequels in the episodic fashion of the picaresque or the chronicle form of the *roman fleuve*" ("The Multivalent Novel" 123). He defines "multivalent" as "a double-edged term: it applies equally to multiple ways of viewing and to multiple ways of being seen" (123). Interestingly, Friedman uses trilogies to illustrate the differences between these two forms:

The triple-volume novel ... occurs in two main forms: (1) the triple perspective, as in Beckett's and Cary's multiplistically narrated trilogies ... predicated upon a prismatic, pluralistic conception of reality; and (2) the *Bildungsroman*--Dreiser's Frank Cowperwood series, Farrell's *Studs Lonigan* and *Bernard Carr*, Henry Miller's trilogies, Hartley's *Eustace and Hilda*, Waugh's *Sword of Honour*--tauter forms of the *roman fleuve* that more extended works generally become. (125)

The examples Friedman offers here make it easy for us to see not only the distinctions between "multivolume" and "multivalent" but more importantly the uniqueness of the "multivalent" sequence which a "multivolume" sequence can never achieve because of its single point of view and straightforward narration.

It has to be pointed out, however, that, although Friedman's view is very promising and supported by some English sequences, his discussion of the "multivalent novel" reveals certain ambiguities due to his claim that "many single-volume novels and single-volume parts of larger works may be dynamically multivalent" (124). Based on this claim he treats as "multivalent works" not only Cary's trilogies, but also Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, *Absalom, Absalom!* and *As I Lay Dying*, and Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway* (124). His inclusion of "many single-volume novels" as multivalent, such as Faulkner's and Woolf's, creates a confusion between a novel and a sequence since neither author's works constitute a sequence. What they have in common is that each narrative is presented from the perspective of more than one character through the technique of stream of consciousness and,

therefore, a series of individual viewpoints emerges. But no matter how multivalent each of these novels is in point of view, the multiple viewpoints within each book bear no relation to those in other novels, nor do they have any function and significance for building a larger narrative structure. In Cary's two trilogies, however, each individual viewpoint plays an essential part of the total structure. At this point Friedman's view blurs the distinction between a sequence containing multiple points of view rendered by several individual novels and a novel composed of more than one point of view and thus undermines the specialness of the novel sequence. Despite the ambiguities I have just pointed out in Friedman's view, it at least opens up a new way of perceiving the English novel sequence, especially the novel trilogy. The alternative forms he sees in these trilogies suggest that the sequence form is not immutable and that the trilogy form is especially prone to variation.

Like Alan Friedman, Martin Ausmus is also a proponent for a new concept of the English novel sequence. In his unpublished dissertation, "Some Forms of the Sequence Novel in British Fiction" (1969), Ausmus shows more willingness to acknowledge changes in the form of the English novel sequence. He discusses four sequence forms created by four English sequence novelists and asserts that it exists in a number of variants. Coincidentally, the sequences he chooses to discuss are all trilogies: Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga*¹¹, Siegfried Sassoon's *The Memoirs of George Sherston*¹², Arnold Bennett's *Clayhanger* trilogy¹³ and Cary's *First Trilogy*. He claims

¹¹ It contains *A Man of Property* (1906); *In Chancery* (1920); and *To Let* (1921).

¹² *The Complete Memoir of George Sherston* (1936) contains *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man* (1928), *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930) and *Sherston's Progress* (1936).

¹³ The three novels are *Clayhanger* (1910); *Hilda Lessways* (1911); and *These Twain* (1916).

that these four trilogies represent "four formal patterns" existing not only in trilogies but also in the English novel sequence in general (64).

Of the "four formal patterns", Ausmus thinks that "Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga* represents the most frequently employed sequence novel pattern, the chronological narrative told from the third-person point of view" (73), a pattern frequently used in the "roman fleuve". He then takes Sassoon's trilogy as a representative of the "second major form" in which "the events progress chronologically throughout the sequence and are narrated by a single individual within the narrative" (121). It is worth emphasizing that the only notable difference between these two patterns is in the use of point of view. Bennett's *Clayhanger* trilogy is seen by Ausmus to represent "a third pattern" in which "the time spheres within the separate volumes are presented synchronously from an omniscient third-person point of view" (175). Thus the use of a "synchronous" time scheme distinguishes it from the other two patterns. The "fourth major pattern" is represented by Cary's *First Trilogy*. Its main feature is described as follows: "[E]ach volume is narrated in the first person by a different individual; although the moment of narration throughout the sequence is chronologically progressive, the substance being narrated in essence is temporally synchronous" (241). The fourth pattern seems more complicated than the other three, yet, like the others, its focus is still on the two same elements: time and the narrative point of view.

It is interesting to note that as the key elements to all narratives and novels, time and point of view, as Ausmus's discussion shows, assume a special narratological importance in creating the interactions between the novels in a trilogy and in forming a different structure. One can imagine that, had Ausmus included Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* in his discussion, he would have had one more exemplary pattern, or were the temporal orders--chronological, synchronous, anachronous, proleptic and analeptic--used in combination of one either with another or with others, more patterns would

emerge. Another interesting aspect of his study is that it shows the surprising possibilities in the ways the novel sequence can be constructed. The patterns formed by these two narrative devices significantly illustrate how variable each of the four trilogies can become if either the element of time or the narrative point of view is used differently. From Ausmus's study one can perceive that no pattern is permanently fixed and any variations in the use of these two key elements will produce a different pattern or form for a sequence; similarly, further variations in the use of other narrative elements will produce different patterns or forms.

However, Ausmus tries to draw attention not to the mutability and variability of the novel sequence form, but rather to his own theory. He begins by arguing: "From these variations of time and point of view emerge the formal pattern of the entire sequence". He then asserts that "time and point of view become the cardinal concern of a critic of the sequence novel, for they create the form through which the author conveys his general theme" (333). Taking time and point of view as his "cardinal concern", he evidently overemphasizes the function of these two elements and consequently neglects the fact that, however important they are, many other key constitutive narrative elements can also play significant roles in framing a sequence structure, such as setting, character or theme, just to cite these three major ones. Among the sequences already mentioned, some of the titles indicate that setting is a meaningful and representative feature such as Trollope's *Barsetshire*, Durrell's *Alexandria*, and *Salterton and Deptford* in Davies's trilogies. Similarly, a novelist's presentation of one particular character through several novels can also give to a sequence a defined and distinctive form of *Buildungsroman* as perceived through such protagonists as Dreiser's Frank Cowperwood, Farrell's Studs Lonigan and Waugh's Guy Crouchback. If judged by the elements of time and point of view, these three trilogies, though they are all third-person narratives and follow a chronological order, do not conform exactly to the pattern that Ausmus bases on Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*.

The fact that Cary's second trilogy is often referred to as a "political" trilogy, Waugh's as a World War II trilogy and Dreiser's as a trilogy of "desire" further shows that the major theme of a sequence can also add a distinctive feature to its structure. It is clear that Ausmus's concept of the English novel sequence is limited because it focuses only on time and point of view.

This brief examination of the concept of the English novel sequence in the studies by Beach, Morris, Friedman and Ausmus thus reveals some of the problems and ambiguities caused by changes in English novel sequences. Because each critic confines himself only to those aspects of the novel sequence that he thinks representative and important, and emphasizes them as if these aspects are representative of the novel sequence in general, these studies reveal a common tendency. They try to connect the English novel sequence either to the "roman fleuve" or to the defined patterns or forms derived from selected novel sequences, and then to treat the sequence as a static rather than a dynamic genre. These problems coupled with an overall ambiguity in defining the English novel sequence consequently create confusion in critical discourse. Morris describes one kind of confusion: "For some critics the sequence novel is not really *a* novel at all, but a number of books loosely strung together. For others it is *a* novel, but at its most infirm, hobbling along, with history as a kind of telescoping crutch that can be lengthened or shortened at whim should the author's fancy or imagination give out" (xvii). But Morris himself takes no stand in this polemical discourse, stating:

The intention of this study is neither to anticipate nor counter such objections but to suggest that through a consistent (perhaps overly single-minded) preoccupation with a challenging motif--continuance and change--a sequence, in the same way as a novel, may be approached critically as an entity among equals while remaining *sui generis*. (xvii)

The key issue that Morris avoids is a formal one and related closely to the antecedent difficulty critics have in defining a novel¹⁴. If a sequence is regarded as a single extended novel, numerous formal problems inevitably arise. For one thing, there is only one beginning and one ending in a single novel (whether it is open or closed), but in a sequence every part is a novel in its own right so each has these two formal features. Take Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*, for instance. In the table of contents to the one-volume edition, the phrase "a novel" is included in each title, and this reminds his readers of the fact that each separate novel forms part of the entire work. For another, no matter how expanded and extended a novel can be in its content and length, and how open its ending becomes, it is still counted as one novel. On the contrary, no matter how much a sequence inherits the traits of a single novel and however closely each part is linked with others, it is impossible to reduce a sequence to a status of a novel. Nevertheless, the critical disagreement Morris is aware of indicates the unsettled situation within critical studies of the English novel sequence. There is no doubt that the ambiguity concerning what a novel sequence really is results both from the flexibility and the openness of its form and from the practice and experiment of the English novelists with the form.

Critical disagreements can be further noticed in the general terms introduced into studies of the novel sequence. In the passage just quoted, Morris uses "novel sequence" and "sequence novel" interchangeably. But to some critics these two terms stand for quite different types of novel. So far, five terms have been mentioned: "series", "multivalent novel", "multivolume novel", "sequence novel" and "novel sequence". If these terms are examined carefully, the differences in their denotations and connotations reveal different notions held by the critics. The term "sequence

¹⁴ Wallace Martin's *Recent Theories of Narrative* provides a very useful overview of the difficulties in defining "What is the novel" (39).

novel", for example, emphasizes "a novel" because the position of "sequence" indicates that it acts only as an adjective modifying "novel" and signifying the nature of the "novel". The term thus confuses a novel in a sequence with a sequence containing a number of novels as I have just discussed. The term "multivolume novel" involves a similar problem, as it also lays emphasis on "a novel". While synonymous with "sequence novel", it is more misleading because it can be mistaken as referring to a novel published in several parts or volumes like the serialized Victorian novels. The syntactical denotation of "novel sequence" indicates precisely the essential feature of a sequence composed of novels and thus distinguishes itself either from a sonnet sequence or from a melodic sequence. Michael K. Bequette, in his unpublished dissertation, "The British Novel Sequence: Theory of Structure and the Works of Arnold Bennett, Joyce Cary, and Lawrence Durrell" (1974), devotes a section to "terminology of the sequence" in which he offers more distinctions and terms and compares each of them to the term "novel sequence" (36-44). He concludes that "no other terms should carelessly be interchanged for this adequate term" (43). Following Bequette's argument, I adopt novel sequence for my discussion of both Robertson Davies's trilogies and some sequences by other novelists. I will also use "series" as a synonym for "novel sequence".

Further Evidence of Paradox in the Form and Concept of the Novel Sequence

Despite the disagreement and confusion about the novel sequence in critical studies, the attempts to define and theorize it do help to reveal, however provisionally, more about the nature of the novel sequence in a theoretical way. The two studies to be examined here, one by Elizabeth M. Kerr and one by Michael K. Bequette, are chosen in order to give contrasting perspectives even though they agree that the novel sequence is a distinctive genre, and to show further some problems in the form and concept of the novel sequence. In addition, the two studies are used to show how

impractical it is either to generalize this subgenre with a single definition or to evaluate a sequence by assessing the balance between its separate and unifying forces.

It is necessary to point out first that Kerr is one of the few critics who has studied the novel sequence extensively. She devotes her M. A. thesis (1937), doctoral dissertation (1941) and her *Bibliography of the Sequence Novel* (1950) to the novel sequence. She states in her dissertation that the "content and technique of the sequence novel warrant study of it as a separate genre" (9) and she insists in the introduction to the *Bibliography* that "it has been necessary to set up some criteria by which the genre may be recognized in its manifold forms" (3). In order to study the novel sequence "as a separate genre" and to "set up some criteria", Kerr provides her own definition of "sequence novel":

The term sequence novel is used to designate a series of closely related novels that were originally published as separate, complete novels but that as a series form an artistic whole, unified by structure and themes that involve more than the recurrence of the characters and some continuity of action. (*Bibliography* 3)

Despite the inadequacy of her term "sequence novel", Kerr's definition shows that she tries to specify the main features of the novel sequence, and to establish her standards for judging and evaluating such sequences. A comparison of this definition with an earlier one given in her dissertation becomes significant, as the later definition evidently reflects her changing concept and growing awareness of the "manifold forms" the novel sequence may possess. In her dissertation, Kerr insists only that the individual novels in a sequence should constitute "a larger unity in which the connection in subject matter is supplemented by evident artistic construction that effectively links the volumes to form a harmonious whole" (1). Kerr's earlier view about unity is ambiguous because of the evaluative words used, such as "evident artistic construction", "effectively" and "a harmonious whole". These are too vague and

subjective to give a clear idea of successful unity, as they can be interpreted in many different ways, depending on a reader's, or critic's critical views. The modifications made in her later definition, however, reveal the impossibility of constructing a single theory for the novel sequence. In her later definition, though more aware of the "manifold forms" of the novel sequence, Kerr lays great emphasis upon unity. It can, as she states, be achieved by "structure and themes that involve more than the recurrence of characters and some continuity of action". Such a generalization, as it turns out, can indeed cover the "manifold forms", as the two critical terms "structure" and "theme" may mean so many things simultaneously. Norman Friedman's brief description of the two critical terms illustrates the broad and manifold meanings that "structure" and "theme" can have:

Structure can mean anything that *form* means, but it can also mean a pattern of some kind, such as repetition and variation, statement and development and return, cumulative progression, any recurring theme, and the like.

Theme is one of those crucial but shifting terms in contemporary criticism which for the old-fashioned critic means message or moral, while for the New Critic it means total meaning or form. It can also refer variously to the basic problem, issue, or question embodied in the work (the relation of the individual to society, for example); any recurrence in the work, as in motif or leitmotif (the rain theme in *A Farewell to Arms*, for example); any pervasive element or factor (the theme of infection in *Bleak House*); and dominant subject matter or character type (the love theme, for example, or the woman theme); any aspect of content (the theme of religion or travel); or, as in Northrop Frye, the "meaning", "conceptual content", "idea" or "point" of the work. (56)

These passages have to be quoted at length because they demonstrate how complex are the meanings of these two terms. Kerr, like other critics, is unable to encompass in a definition, except in the most general terms, the variety of novel sequences.

In defining the novel sequence as having "manifold forms", Kerr, in fact, unwittingly reveals one of its most crucial features: the openness of the form to any variation or experiment. However, her requirement that a series of novels should be "closely related" makes her later definition still ambiguous. The infinite possibilities of how a group of novels can be related to each other in "structure" and "theme" make it difficult to judge to what extent those novels are considered "closely related". The ambiguity found in Kerr's definition can be illustrated by Faulkner's "Jefferson" novels¹⁵. Kerr includes them in her *Bibliography*, which indicates that they meet the conditions and requirements of her definition (20). However, even though the seven novels are all set in "Jefferson", a town in the fictional and imaginary Yoknapatawpha County, and though they all deal with a major theme--the moral, spiritual and social deterioration and corruption of the Southern Whites--and with the aftermath of the slave system in the United States at the turn of the century, no indication can be found that Faulkner wrote these novels intentionally as a sequence or had any inclination to ask his readers to read and treat them as a group after they were published. In fact, Michael Millgate insists that these novels do not form a sequence:

Considering the Yoknapatawpha material as a whole, it is impossible to pretend that Faulkner achieves or even attempts consistency and continuity.... Faulkner's novels and stories set in Yoknapatawpha County do demonstrate an overall unity; it is not, however, a unity which can be

¹⁵ These, at the time of Kerr's compilation, were *Sartoris* (1929); *The Sound and the Fury* (1929); *As I Lay Dying* (1930); *Sanctuary* (1931); *Light in August* (1932); *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) and *The Hamlet* (1940). This may be true for Kerr at the time of her writing, but Faulkner published more later.

adequately defined in chronological, geographical, or sociological terms, nor in the literary terms of expanded chronicle or linked sequencer [*sic*]; it is rather a unity of inspiration, of a single irradiating tragic-comic vision—a vision, indeed, which informs all of Faulkner's work, but which perhaps takes on a special intensity when focused on materials drawn from Faulkner's own corner of the world, his "own little postage stamp of native soil". (284-85)

Millgate's argument is valid because if one examines the interconnections among these seven novels one will find that, except for the setting and the general underlying theme, there is no consistent and recognizable sequence structure. Some characters do recur but only in a casual and sporadic way. In addition, each novel is too confined by its own plot and characters to give readers a sense of connection with the others when one reads them consecutively. Looking at Faulkner's "Jefferson" novels in this way, one can see that Kerr's inclusion of them in her *Bibliography* not only obscures her definition, but also reveals its vagueness. Despite the problems pointed out, Kerr's effort to establish the novel sequence as a genre at least makes it possible to look at the novel sequence even in "manifold forms" as a distinctive form or genre. In addition, her study draws special attention to the novels written in sequence and shows that the novel sequence can be treated collectively and differently.

As part of the on-going attempt to theorize the novel sequence, Michael K. Bequette's 1974 dissertation, "The British Novel Sequence: Theory of Structure and the Works of Arnold Bennett, Joyce Cary, and Lawrence Durrell", represents a different approach and a distinctive critical point of view. He disagrees explicitly with Kerr's term "sequence novel" and with those who consider a novel sequence "a novel": "What is commonly known as the sequence novel is not a novel at all" (1). Recognizing the crucial ambiguity in Kerr's study, Bequette tries to establish his own "theory of structure" on what appear to be formalist grounds and use it to determine the success or

failure of a novel sequence. His study is useful in providing an analysis not only of the complex coexisting relationship between unity and independence (or autonomy, in his term) of individual novels in a sequence, but, more importantly, of the paradoxical nature of the novel sequence form:

If unity can be considered a feature which requires each novel to give itself to a total effect, in a sense to become only a building of a larger structure, then autonomy appears to be the exact opposite, for it insists that each novel has an indestructible wholeness and integrity. Sequence unity tries to dissolve the basic autonomy of a novel and, conversely, autonomy detracts from the sense of fundamental belonging to a larger whole. The two war with each other. (54)

This passage makes it very clear that unity and autonomy are opposite forces and that there is always an inevitable tension between them. His analysis further suggests that the tension can not be resolved because "[e]very increase of one results in a decrease of the other" (55). His study thus leads to a profound recognition that the two opposite forces in a sequence are perpetually unbalanced by nature and a novelist can never achieve an absolute balance by keeping the individual novels both separate and unified equally. There is simply no middle ground because the separateness of the individual books will always affect their unity or vice versa. On the other hand, a reader's reading experience can also increase the imbalance of the two forces in a sequence. This is because every sequence novelist has to use "cutting" techniques like those in serialized novels to keep each book separate from the others (Iser, "Indeterminacy" 16). So the reader is faced with the task of "discovering links and working out how the narrative will bring the different elements together" (Iser, "Indeterminacy" 16). How the "gaps" between the individual novels are filled depends entirely on "the individual experience of the reader" (Iser, "Indeterminacy" 9). As every reader's reading experience is never the same, the reader's "realization" of the separateness and the

unity of a sequence inevitably remains unstable (Iser, *The Act of Reading* 69). Iser's analysis of the reader's involvement in reading a serialized novel both in "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response in Prose Fiction" (16-17) and in *The Act of Reading* (191-92) enables me to take into account the reader's role in realizing the two paradoxical forces in a sequence and in deciding which force overpowers the other and how to balance them in reading.

Despite his analysis and his awareness that "[a] precarious balance is the best [the novelist] can hope to attain, and such a balance is achieved only through compromising both positions" (55), Bequette contradicts himself by asserting: "When a balance of the two forces is achieved, the sequence is generally successful; when one or the other gains dominance, the sequence seems too fragmented or too much like a long single novel" (DA 4500). It is apparent that Bequette's requirement for a balance between unity and autonomy is directly in conflict with the paradoxical coexistence of the two opposite forces, as they inevitably oscillate from one to another. At this point, the word "balance" becomes both ambiguous and vague and has no practical meaning in the case of the novel sequence. Furthermore Bequette's theoretical approach becomes more problematic when he takes "balance" as the only measure for judging the success or failure of a sequence form. He insists that "the critic can make use of the idea of unity-autonomy balance as a means of studying and evaluating the sequence" (283). His judgments on Trollope, Cary, and Durrell's sequences reveal the main problems caused by his own "unity-balance" criterion.

Bequette's judgment of Trollope's Barsetshire sequence shows that his theoretical approach is too narrow and arbitrary to allow him to accept Trollope's way of creating a sequence or to regard the Barsetshire novels as a sequence. He concludes: "More than mere sequel novels, yet less than true sequences, Trollope's Barsetshire and Palliser novels are an interim form of the multiple novel" (24). He argues that these novels "possess features akin to the true sequence, yet do not achieve the 'greater

wholeness' when read collectively that is so essential to the successful sequence" (24). A brief examination of Trollope's creation of the Barsetshire sequence can easily challenge Bequette's argument and show that the sequence does achieve the "greater wholeness", as Hennedy's study, *Unity in Barsetshire*, demonstrates. Bequette's objection to the Barsetshire sequence thus reveals the limitation and rigidity of his "unity-autonomy balance" criterion which does not allow for the possibility of different kinds of unity.

So it is not surprising that, even though he acknowledges that "[c]ritics are much more uniformly satisfied with [Cary's] use of the sequence genre", Bequette still criticizes Cary's *First Trilogy* for its "weakness" in "character and action unity--and, to a lesser degree--in setting unity", all of which he considers "a serious flaw" (156, 176). Judging Cary's trilogy, Bequette asserts that the critics are wrong about Cary's work: "A careful consideration of Cary's work reveals certain deficiencies, especially in its dimensions of unity. Critics have been slow or reluctant to recognize these deficiencies because they have used no solid criteria of evaluation" (156). An examination of Cary's trilogy, in due course, will show that his three related stories display a unique way of integrating themselves and that the three novels are intentionally related in such a way that a "three-dimensional" effect can be achieved. Cary's trilogy structure not only counterposes Bequette's "balance" criterion, but, more importantly, illustrates that what matters in a sequence is not the balance between its unity and autonomy, but how they are unbalanced so that an author can create a distinctive sequence structure in which a certain unity can be recognized. Bequette's negative judgment on Cary's *First Trilogy* is a further indication that his theory is too rigid. As a result, his critical study of the novel sequence with his own "theory of structure" weakens, as seen in Cary's case, rather than enhances the appreciation of the uniqueness of an individual sequence structure.

Bequette's view of Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* further shows that there is a big gap between his "theory of structure" and the practice of the sequence novelists. It seems that he takes little consideration of a novelist's intention and creativeness. For instance, he criticizes the *Quartet* for "a different weakness" from the one he finds in Cary's trilogy: "In the *Quartet*, the author has perhaps been too effective in his blending and fusing of constituent parts; the tetralogy, in other words, achieves below minimum autonomy for each of its constituent novels" (217). This so called "weakness", however, is precisely what Durrell intends. It is because of his effective "blending and fusing" of the separate and individual narratives that the four novels can indeed be read as what Durrell desires, "a single work". Bequette's criticism of the "weakness" in *Quartet* illustrates that what he considers a weakness, according to his "balance" criterion, may not be a weakness at all, but what makes a sequence like the *Quartet* unique in its own right. I am not suggesting that a critic must always be guided by an author's stated intention nor that this has a privileged position in critical discussion; I am suggesting, however, that the intention should be taken at least into account.

Bequette's judgments on Trollope's, Cary's and Durrell's sequences suggest that the success or failure of a sequence cannot be decided merely by measuring the balance between its unity and autonomy. Doing so, a critic would find faults with every novel sequence, because no sequence can be absolutely balanced, as Bequette's analysis of the relationship between unity and autonomy shows. In fact, it could be argued that some sequences--Durrell's tetralogy for example--gain from the sort of imbalance Bequette criticizes. The problems seen in Bequette's theoretical study indicate again the impossibility of formalizing and finding a single theory because of "the curious tension between unity and autonomy which characterizes the novel sequence", as Bequette realizes in theory but fails to discern in practice. His study reveals in an indirect way that the novel sequence resists this kind of formulation and generalization. In the end

his study, like Kerr's, is valuable primarily for showing the critics' difficulty in establishing the theoretical status of the novel sequence.

Against the Norm of the "Roman Fleuve": the Practice and Experiment of the English Novelists and the Rise and the Development of the English Novel Sequence

The problems and confusions in the critical studies of the English novel sequence discussed above are only a few representative ones. It is impossible for me to mention, let alone discuss, others less central to this issue. Based on what I have examined, I want to argue further that the dynamics of the English novel sequence resist any attempt to impose a single definition or a critical view. This is because, in practice, sequence novelists often deliberately avoid or ignore any pattern or form created by others. The desire to create something original has been a dominant factor responsible for the diverse sequence structures, as well as for the lack of a constitutive set of conventions. My reading and study of some other English sequences for the purpose of a better understanding and appreciation of Davies's use of the trilogy form have convinced me that, because of the undefinable nature of the sequence form, the English novelists have been using it creatively and experimentally against the norm of the "roman fleuve". I now turn to discuss the practice and experiments of Trollope, Cary, Durrell and Waugh in order to show that each of them works out, with different intentions, stated or unstated, conscious or unconscious¹⁶, his own form which contributes something unique both to the diversity and versatility and to the rise and

¹⁶ My consideration of "intention" is based upon the premise that a literary text is an "intentional object" and its creation is "dominated and organized by the intentional act of imagining" (Loughlin, "Intention/intentionality" 556, 555). Because a novelist may or may not make a statement about his/her intention, but also because "intentions may form themselves as effortless and as unconsciously as beliefs which they resemble" I hold that all novel sequences are intentional creations (Bruce Aune, "Intention" 200). This premise will also be used in studying Davies's intention in the creation of his trilogies.

development of the English novel sequence. The reason I chose these four is that they show more awareness of their creative engagement with this particular form and openly discuss their methods for producing certain narrative and artistic effects in their sequences. My examination of Trollope, Cary and Durrell's sequences can also further clarify the problems of both Bequette's balance-oriented theory and judgements of these sequences. In addition, because there is evidence to suggest that the four authors have some direct or indirect influence on Davies's trilogies, as on different occasions he openly expressed his appreciation of their sequences, this discussion aims to illuminate Davies's inventive and often ingenious use of the trilogy form and the unusual effects his three trilogy structures produce.

Trollope is regarded as an innovator who "established the novel-sequence in English fiction" ("Trollope" *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* 5th ed.), and his Barsetshire sequence is referred to as one of the earliest written in English. Trollope himself once insinuated that Balzac had no influence on his use of the sequence form: "I am told that he [Balzac] was the man who intended that style of fiction in which I have attempted to work" (Super 224). His remark may have led Margaret Drabble to conclude: "His use of reappearing characters had been anticipated by Balzac (who uses them on an even grander scale), but there is no evidence that Trollope was in any way indebted to the French author" ("Trollope" *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* 5th ed.)¹⁷. The fact that Balzac's idea of writing the *Comédie Humaine* as a sequence of novels was inspired by Walter Scott's historical

¹⁷ Henry James also subtly suggests that Balzac had little influence on Trollope through his comment that Trollope is one of two authors (the other is Thackeray) in English literature who made "a little attempt to create a permanent stock, a standing fund, of characters" like Balzac's; he further remarks that Trollope's recurrent characters "are faint shadows of Balzac's extravagant thoroughness..." ("Honoré de Balzac" 67).

novels further suggests that the English novel sequence originated by Trollope had little affinity with the "roman fleuve" from its earliest appearance in English fiction¹⁸.

What makes the Barsetshire novels particularly interesting and useful for studying Davies's trilogies (especially the Salterton trilogy) is that Trollope's way of generating these six novels anticipates Davies's tentative approach to the sequence form.

Trollope's sequence was not originally planned as one and his idea of continuing and expanding the stories of Mr. Harding, his daughter Eleanor, his son-in-law Archdeacon Grantly and the new Bishop Proudie and his wife came after the first two novels, *The Warden* (1855) and *Barchester Towers* (1857), were well received. He explains the growth of the sequence in the introduction to its uniform edition of *The Chronicles of Barsetshire* (1879):

These tales were written by the Author, not one immediately after another,--not intended to be in any sequence one to another except in regard to the first two,--with an intention rather that there should be no such sequence, but that the stories should go forth to the public as being in all respects separate, the sequence being only in the Author's mind. (Vol. 13, *The Warden* n. pag.)

This passage suggests that Trollope, unlike Balzac, had not conceived a novel sequence nor a general structure for individual novels. Moreover, after creating two interlocked stories, he deliberately changed his strategy and wrote the last four Barsetshire novels as separate and individual stories. But because he was preoccupied with the imaginary place, Barsetshire, and a number of its inhabitants, or, in other words, because many or

¹⁸ Balzac writes in his "Introduction" to the *Comédie Humaine* that Scott "never thought of connecting his compositions in such a way as to form a complete history of which each chapter was a novel, and each novel the picture of a period. It was by discerning this lack of unity, which in no way detracts from the Scottish writer's greatness, that I perceived at once the scheme which would favor the execution of my purpose, and the possibility of executing it" (lvii).

even all of the elements may have been in his mind from the start, his preoccupation overpowers his conscious intention and results in a sequence not only in "the Author's mind" but in reality as well. Trollope then explains how the six novels form a sequence even though he intentionally tries to separate them:

I, the Author, had formed for myself so complete a picture of the locality, had acquired so accurate a knowledge of the cathedral town and the country in which I had placed the scene, and had become by a long-continued mental dwelling in it so intimate with sundry of its inhabitants, that to go back to it and write about it again and again had been one of the delights of my life. (Vol. 13, *The Warden* n. pag.)

By going back to the same setting and to the same group of people and by writing about them "again and again", he in fact creates sufficient intertextual connections to enable his readers to discern familiar and recurrent narrative elements and sustain their interest from one novel to the next.

Trollope is obviously very tactful about the experiment he made with the six Barsetshire novels. It is likely that, because the reading public's response to a novel is a measure of its financial success or failure and therefore a principal concern of a Victorian novelist, he did not want to arouse expectations of a series of linked and continuous stories in case he could not sustain his readers' interest. He admits he was afraid that he, too, would fail like others, because "few novels written in continuation, one to another, had been successful. Even Scott, even Thackeray, had failed to renew a great interest. Fielding and Dickens never ventured the attempt" (Vol. 13, *The Warden* n. pag.). Uncertain that he could "renew" his readers' interest, Trollope had to keep the sequence in his mind and to await his readers' reaction to his novels. Davies experienced a similar uncertainty, especially with his Salterton novels. His uncertainty was caused partly by his awareness that he was still inexperienced in writing a novel and partly by the confusion over the connections between the Salterton

novels caused by changes in publisher¹⁹. This will be elaborated later in the discussion of the Salterton trilogy.

The public recognition of the interconnections among the six Bassetshire novels and the enthusiasm and praise for such connections play a crucial role in finally making Trollope refer to them as a sequence. The reviews of the Bassetshire novels dispel Trollope's fear and uncertainty and assure him of his success in connecting these novels and creating a continuity with them. Soon after the publication of *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, an anonymous reviewer in the *Examiner*, while applauding the success of the last novel, praises especially the whole sequence: "Mr. Trollope crowns with this work his labour upon that series of Bassetshire Chronicles which is the best set of 'sequels' in our literature" (qtd in Smalley 279). More significantly, this reviewer perceives a structural analogy between the Greek trilogy and the Bassetshire sequence and urges the public to treat the six separate novels as a whole:

The Oresteia, and that old legend of the House of Oedipus, were complete stories, and thus the several plays of a Greek trilogy were but as volumes one, and two, and three of one grand fable. A chain of novels like Mr. Anthony Trollope's Bassetshire set is essentially a birth of our own time.... In justice to Mr. Trollope and to itself, the public should have these

¹⁹ Clarke, Irvin & Co. Ltd. published *Tempest-Tost* and *Leaven of Malice*. But due to the increasing disagreements between Davies and his publishers over the years, they refused to publish the third novel, *A Mixture of Frailties*. G. I. Clarke's letter to Davies is the evidence: "I am very sorry that, in spite of a good deal of correspondence and negotiation, we have not been able to reach agreement for the publication of A MIXTURE OF FRAILTIES, and felt obliged to decline it" (The National Archives of Canada, "Robertson Davies", Manuscript Group 30, D 362, Vol.45, File 18. Citations from the same source will be recorded as NA and followed first by volume and then file number). Macmillan issued the third novel, but made no mention of the connection between the new novel and the previous two, except the setting, Salterton, on its dust-jacket. In the U. S., Rinehart was replaced by Scribners after the first novel was published. Because of this change, most American reviewers mistook *Leaven of Malice* for Davies's first novel and *A Mixture of Frailties* the second, and therefore completely missed the trilogy structure.

Barsetshire novels extant, not only as detached works, but duly bound, lettered, and bought as a connected series. (279)

This review evidently gave Trollope confidence to claim, as an afterthought, that the six novels form a sequence²⁰. Thus the uniform edition of *The Chronicles of Barsetshire* became the manifestation and testimony of Trollope's success in creating an English novel sequence without being influenced by the "roman fleuve" and without a premeditated sequence structure. His experience also showed that whatever the author's intentions or even if he lacks any, readers' responses can constitute the novels into a sequence.

The examination of Trollope's experience of writing the Barsetshire sequence helps us to understand Davies's claim that none of his three trilogies was originally planned: "I don't [plan them], they just occur" (Sifton 13). Trollope's Barsetshire novels show that it is not necessary to plan a sequence in advance and it is possible for a novelist to create one story and then to continue and expand some of its elements either into a part or into a whole of a new novel. In other words, it is possible for a novelist to compose one narrative and then to use it as a matrix out of which later novels evolve. Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga* reinforces this theory. The Saga, like the Barsetshire sequence, was not planned from the outset, as Beach points out: "When he [Galsworthy] wrote 'The Man of Property' (published in 1906), he had not conceived the idea of the 'Forsyte Saga' as a whole" (246). The second novel in the trilogy, *In Chancery*, did not appear until fourteen years later and the trilogy was completed in 1921 with the publication of *To Let*. The success of both *The Chronicles of Barsetshire* and *The Forsyte Saga* results from the recurrence of certain narratological components which call forth readers' response and expectations and

²⁰ Trollope wrote to his publisher, George Smith, on 7 Dec. 1867, "I should like to see my novels touching Barchester published in a series" (Trollope, *Letters*, Vol. I, 405).

which enable them to group either the Barsetshire or Forsyte novels into a sequence. Like Trollope, Davies also relies on his readers' response to the interconnections he created and waits for them to recognize the trilogy structure, as the discussion of his trilogies will show.

Cary's experience of writing the *First Trilogy* forms a contrast to Trollope's. His trilogy is deliberately designed; more importantly, it breaks away from the trilogy pattern employed by Galsworthy in *The Forsyte Saga* and by Bennett in the Clayhanger trilogy, both of whom explore one family history against the backdrop of the social history of their time. Before Cary started his trilogy, he had already worked out a pattern in his mind: "This scheme was meant to be more like a triptych than a trilogy" (Hoffmann 432). Based on this "scheme", the three stories in the trilogy establish an unusual sequence structure described in the preface to the *First Trilogy*:

Though its three parts cover the same period of history, they are in different styles, about different people and have a very casual relation in form. But this was intended. What I set out to do was to show three people, living each in his own world by his own ideas, and relating his life and struggles, his triumphs and miseries in that world. They were to know each other and have some connection in the plot, but they would see completely different aspects of each other's character. (ix)

Cary makes it clear that his three novels "have a very casual relation in form" and he intentionally contrives this form. He achieves this effect by letting the protagonist of each novel tell his/her story which reveals the isolated but unique world each lives in: Sara Monday's kitchen, Wilcher's politics and confinement and Jimson's art and imagination. Using the first-person narrator in all three stories and making each narrator also a protagonist who interacts with the other two, Cary creates a form which adds a new dimension to the patterns seen in the earlier sequences.

Compared with earlier sequences, such as the Barseshire sequence, *The Forsyte Saga* and the Clayhanger trilogy, all of which achieve a structural unity through recurrent setting, character and a temporal continuity, Cary's is constructed in an unprecedented manner. This is mainly seen in the interrelationship among the three novels achieved through the figure of Sara Monday. Kinley Roby summarizes the unique unifying power that Cary assigns to her:

Sara Monday, the protagonist of *Herself Surprised*, is the central figure of the trilogy. Even when she is not on stage in the second and third volumes, her influence is felt through the minds of the two male protagonists. She is a fixed center and one of the principal axes on which the stories turn. (61)

Structurally, Sara is used as a binding force to link the other two novels. Her relationship with the other two protagonists, Wilcher in *To Be a Pilgrim* and Gulley Jimson in *The Horse's Mouth*, establishes a particular kind of character unity for the trilogy. Cary's structural use of Sara Monday offers an example for Davies whose character Dunstan Ramsay, the narrator and protagonist of *Fifth Business* and the narrator of the frame story of *World of Wonders*, has a similar function in uniting the Deptford novels. But Davies achieves a stronger unity of character than Cary by creating a transient but common world in which the three narrators/protagonists interact not only with each other but also with several other people who play an important part in bringing them together, such as Boy Staunton, Mary Dempster and Liesl. I will conduct a detailed discussion of this aspect in the chapter specially dealing with the Deptford trilogy.

Sara's involvement with the other two characters also creates a unity of action in Cary's trilogy. As Roby points out: "She is a steady point of reference for both Wilcher and Gulley Jimson, one to which they constantly return and from which they go out in their quest for knowledge and artistic expression" (66). Giles Mitchell's

discussion of Sara's relationship with the other two men further explains how Cary achieves the unusual unities of both character and action:

Sara is taken into the minds of both men as a reshaping force. To these two men she is not only flesh, wife, mistress--raw material, but also pattern.... To Wilcher she is for many years a companion and mistress, later she becomes for him the ancient design wrought by pilgrim spirits from Chaucer's Wife to Bunyan's Christian.... To Jimson she is for years mistress, wife, and the female of females, original woman. Later she becomes a symbol of universal being and the subject of his most ambitious painting. (23)

The interrelationship of the three stories formed through Sara Monday obviously cannot conform either to the tradition of the "roman fleuve" or to the trilogy patterns established by Galsworthy and Bennett. It shows that Cary has developed the English sequence form in a new direction.

Cary's preface to *First Trilogy* (1958), which was written fourteen years after the separate publication of the three novels, indicates that he is aware of the uniqueness of his trilogy's form and the criticisms of its structure. He states directly at the beginning of the preface: "It is complained of this trilogy that it is not a trilogy at all in the ordinary sense of the word" (ix). The complaints must have been caused by Cary's claim made after the three novels were reissued as a trilogy in the Carfax edition in 1951. When the novels were first published in 1941, 1942 and 1944 respectively, neither Cary nor his publisher gave any hint about the interconnections among them and so it was up to his readers to recognize the recurrent characters and events and to decide if they formed a sequence or not. In the Carfax edition, Cary attached to each book a "prefatory essay" announcing that *Herself Surprised* "is the first book of a trilogy" (7), *To Be a Pilgrim* is "the second of a three-piece" (7) and *The Horse's Mouth* is the "third and last of a set of three" (7). His prefaces thus set up readers'

expectations of a trilogy and subtly require them to read the three novels as a whole. Being accustomed to the conventional trilogy patterns as perceived in earlier trilogies, his readers would certainly have some difficulty in finding a clear continuity from one story to another and in accepting his claim that the three stories form a trilogy. Thus the complaints were unavoidable. Cary's preface to *First Trilogy* is evidently both a self-defense and a response to his readers' reaction to the trilogy structure he deliberately created, as he indirectly tells his readers and critics not to expect the patterns used in other trilogies, but to focus on how his intended design is executed. Mitchell justifies Cary's defense when he criticizes those who object to Cary's trilogy structure: "Those who have insisted that the three worlds of the novels in the first trilogy are so separate as to prevent a unified world from emerging have not fully considered Cary's interest in the isolation of the individual mind" (221). Mitchell could have added that it is not clear either from the practice or from the theory what a "trilogy ... in the ordinary sense of the word" is if one keeps in mind the openness and flexibility of the form.

Despite the complaints about his trilogy form, Cary was certain that he had succeeded in what he intended to create. He expresses his satisfaction in the preface: "I did achieve something of my own intention. My three characters did gain some three-dimensional depth from their contrasting views of themselves and each other" (xiii). What Cary has achieved in his trilogy, in a sense, cannot be achieved otherwise. It is the flexibility of the trilogy form, which can go beyond "the ordinary sense of the word", that enables him to portray three individuals whose lives interact with each other and who provide different versions of important events taking place in their lives. Cary's preface also touches a very important issue concerning novel sequences in general. He encountered some problems when he tried to create a balance between the separate, individual stories and the interconnections between them. As a result, he had

to change the focus of the trilogy in the process of writing from certain thematic subjects to the presentation of the lives of the three protagonists. Cary explains:

I found that if I allowed her [Sara] to talk about politics and art, she became less vivid as a character. She lost immediacy as a family woman. In such a problem, familiar to every writer, my rule is character first. So I sacrificed the politics, and so far lost the richness of contrast between the books.

So, too, I had to leave out most of Wilcher's ideas of art and Gulley's of politics. (xi; emphasis added)

The changes Cary made evidently had some unexpected consequences, which he thinks are "unexpected flaws" (Preface x). These "flaws", if examined carefully, reflect a very common and inevitable technical problem that every sequence novelist has to face, the problem arising from the coexistence of an individual novel's separateness and its interconnections to other novels in a sequence with often different emphasis in character or theme.

Ideally, each novel within a sequence like, for example, *The Horse's Mouth* or Davies's *The Manticore* is simultaneously both an individual and integral narrative that can be read on its own and a constitutive part of the intricate puzzle that is a trilogy or sequence. But in reality, because the interconnections always throw new light on a reader's reading experience, it is impossible for each narrative to be completely independent of the others. Balancing the opposing forces of individual novels often becomes more difficult if a novelist tries consciously to experiment with narrative techniques on a larger fictional canvas, as is seen in Cary's case. In *The Nature of Narrative*, Robert Scholes offers an explanation for the usual cause of such a problem: "Narrative art is the art of story-telling, and the more literate and sensitive a man is, the more he feels creative pressures which drive him to seek beauty or truth at the expense of fact. Narrative art is an art of compromise, in which gains are always

purchased at the expense of sacrifices" (256). Cary's preface shows that he does try to make some compromise in his trilogy by sacrificing the common subjects of politics and art so that he can focus on characterization and emphasize each character's individuality and idiosyncrasy. But the consequence of this sacrifice is the gain of the "three-dimensional" presentation of the three characters and the multiplicity of point of view, and the loss of the "richness of contrast between the books" or "the contrast or overlap of these worlds", as Cary realizes (Preface xiv). His experience suggests that no compromise can solve the problem of balancing two opposite forces and that any expectation of a balance such as is required by Bequette's theory in a sequence is unrealistic.

Cary's experiment with the trilogy form is one which Robertson Davies admires. Davies praises Cary's trilogies highly and shows a great interest in his way of constructing the two, both technically and thematically. The evidence can be found in his articles on Cary and Cary's trilogies. In "Joyce Cary's Novels" (1955) Davies refers to Cary as "a master of intellectual impersonation" (*Enthusiasms* 150). After commenting on Cary's comic presentation of his protagonists in the two trilogies, Davies states: "This is just the kind of thing I like, because it agrees with my view of life" (*Enthusiasms* 150). He especially expresses his appreciation of Cary's use of the first-person point of view technique, saying that "only in these novels of Cary's do I find anything comparable [to Browning's *The Ring and the Book*] in psychological insight, in power to create people and set them up on their own legs, bearing their own faults and their own greatness of spirit" (151). In "Greatness of Cary" (1960), Davies describes his reading of Cary's first trilogy as follows: "When we have finished a great comic creation, like Cary's trilogy, we feel a lightening of the spirit, a reaffirmation of the splendor and sacredness of life, no less than that which follows our reading of a great work of tragedy. It is a long way from a good laugh; it is a glory in the breast" (237). It is by no means a coincidence that Davies's Deptford trilogy shows some

resemblance to Cary's *First Trilogy*. It is also not surprising that Davies goes even further than Cary in experimenting with the trilogy form, as will be indicated at some length below.

Like Cary, Durrell intends to write a sequence from the outset and also experiments with the sequence form. Unlike Cary, however, Durrell consciously and openly challenges the traditional form of the "roman fleuve" by contriving his own form "based on the relativity proposition" of a scientific concept (*Balthazar* [7]). Durrell describes his pattern repeatedly, in the "Note" to the individual novels and in the preface to the one-volume edition of *The Alexandria Quartet*, in a scientific as well as metaphorical way: "Three sides of space and one of time constitute the soup-mix recipe of a continuum" (*Balthazar* [7]). In addition, he explicitly requires that his four novels in the quartet should "be read as a single work" and "be judged as a single work" (*Quartet* [9]; *Clea* [5]).

If the structure of the *Quartet* is examined in the light of Durrell's own statements, his effectiveness in making his four separate novels into "a single work" is very impressive. According to Durrell, the structure of the tetralogy, a four-dimensional continuum, is arranged like this: "The three first parts ... are to be deployed spatially (hence the use of 'sibling' not 'sequel') and are not linked in a serial form. They interlap, interweave, in a purely spatial relation. Time is stayed. The fourth part alone will represent time and be a true sequel" (*Balthazar* [7]). Durrell's explanation of the structure of the tetralogy makes it clear that the stories do not follow any sequence pattern previously seen in English fiction. The interconnections of the first three novels are built upon a coordinate, rather than a sequential, scheme. The formal principle of the organization is spatial rather than temporal. They work together to accumulate and at the same time unravel information about certain recurrent characters and events, such as Justine, her husband Nessim, Balthazar, Clea, Darley, Pursewarden and Scobie, and the spy business and the Palestine movement in which

these characters are directly or indirectly involved. They all play an important part in unifying the separate stories and in making the books depend upon one another to demystify the relationships among these people and to bring out the central issues the *Quartet* tries to convey. The relationship between the fourth novel and the previous three is also unusual, as it does not follow the story line directly from any of them. Durrell states clearly that the fourth novel, *Clea*, "is a sequel to *Justine*, *Balthazar*, and *Mountolive*" (*Clea* [5]). The story of *Clea* responds to the previous events and characters which have been repeatedly recounted in the three previous novels, and, simultaneously, continues releasing and adding more information about these events and characters. With the four novels connected this way, they can indeed be read as what Durrell calls "a single work". The effect produced by the relationship among the four novels, therefore, is a crucial testimony to Durrell's intentions.

If the *Quartet* is judged in the light of Alan W. Friedman's analysis of the narratological perspectives of character, space and time, Durrell's success in his innovations becomes even more apparent. Friedman writes:

The *Quartet* ... coils and recoils upon itself, continuously circling about unending layers of meaning that will not stay still, will not stay in place, never arriving at the still point of the turning world because, except in the heraldic universe of artistic creation, it does not exist. Characters no longer take a David Copperfield journey from Time A to Time B, but often "move" perpendicular to, or askew of, or in direct opposition to, the notion of chronological time. Objectively defined reality no longer determines the essence of personality; rather, as with the principle of indeterminacy, the viewer, by the very act of observation, alters and thereby creates what he observes. (*Lawrence Durrell* 179-80)

The passage illuminates Durrell's experiments with the "space-time" theory and how unconventionally the particular elements of character, space and time are manipulated.

It also shows that a novelist has nearly unlimited possibilities to experiment with narrative elements, and that the extent to which variations can be made in using the elements is immeasurable.

Durrell's practice with the sequence form introduces a further development in the English novel sequence. Unlike most of the English novelists who wrote sequences, Durrell purposely uses prefatory notes and "workpoints" attached to each novel to arouse his readers' expectations and curiosity about the unusual continuation of his stories. He announces the forthcoming quartet in the first novel, stating that *Justine* is "the first of a series" [9]. The appended "workpoints" which are sketches for the second novel serve to assure his readers of his promise of a series. In the note to the second novel, he provides in more detail his innovative design for "a four-decker novel whose form is based on the relativity proposition" and expresses explicitly his intention of "trying an experiment to see if we cannot discover a morphological form one might appropriately call 'classic'--for our time" (*Balthazar* 7). In this way his readers know at a very early stage what to expect from the author and to prepare themselves for the unconventional sequence structure they will encounter. Similarly, he uses "consequential data" and "workpoints" to advertise the links that the third novel will have with the previous two. The notes to *Mountolive* and *Clea* indicate that Durrell intends to further emphasize his "space-time" concept by referring the first three novels as "siblings" and the last as a "sequel". In his note to *Clea*, his comment on "the workpoints" provided at the end of this volume, which is also the end of the *Quartet*, highlights his intent to challenge the "roman fleuve" pattern and to experiment with the open and flexible sequence form: "Among the workpoints ... I have sketched a number of possible ways of continuing to deploy these characters and situations in further installments--but this is only to suggest that even if the series were extended indefinitely the result would never become a *roman fleuve* ... but would remain strictly part of the present word-continuum" [5]. His repeated statements about his intention and the

structure of the *Quartet* indicate that sequence novelists have become more conscious of the sequence form, more eager to challenge the conventions with which the reading public is familiar, more intent to reform the traditional pattern and more innovative in using narrative techniques to create a variety of interconnections within a group of novels. Durrell's explicit requirement that his tetralogy should be read and judged "as a single work" also shows that he is more confident of the success of his experiment and less worried than Cary, for example, about the balance between the unity of the sequence and the independence of the individual novels. The four Alexandria novels are so intertwined that it is almost impossible for each to stand on its own. Neither *Justine* or *Clea*, for instance, tells the full story of each character; a reader has to read all four to find out who they are and what roles they play in the whole intricate puzzle.

To some extent, Davies's Deptford trilogy's structure has some similarities to Durrell's although he dismissed any speculation about the influence of Durrell's style on his writing²¹. The similarities are mainly reflected in his use of the recurrent characters, Boy Staunton, Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim and Liesl (Liselotte Vitzlipützli), who create a similar kind of intertwining effect for the trilogy. The mystery of Staunton's sudden death--whether he committed suicide or was murdered by Eisengrim--is carried from one novel to the next and is not solved until the end of the third novel. A reader has to read all three stories to learn how Paul Dempster is transformed into Magnus Eisengrim, a world famous magician. In the same fashion, the reader has to follow Liesl from one book to another to discover why she is so ugly and why she always outwits the male characters. Even though Davies has never required that the Deptford novels be treated as one work, the tight connections made by

²¹ In an interview with R. Heatherington and G. Kampf in 1973, Davies says that "a modern writer whom I admire very much and who writes fascinatingly, I think, is Lawrence Durrell. He is a poet and he writes like a poet and it is a joy to read his novels, but I could no more write like that than I could fly to the moon. So I don't attempt it. All I can do is to try to get it all clear and put it down" (118)

the single plot based on the snowball incident and the interaction of these recurrent characters constitute a unified story.

Compared with other sequences, Evelyn Waugh's Sword of Honor trilogy (*Men at Arms*, 1952; *Officers and Gentlemen*, 1955; and *Unconditional Surrender* or *The End of Battle*, 1961) represents an exceptional case. His trilogy shows that a sequence structured in a certain way can indeed be read as a single work and, what is more, be converted into a long single-volume novel eliminating all the features of a trilogy. The unusual history of Waugh's trilogy suggest that the boundary of a novel and a sequence is not defined and a novelist is free to expand one story into several interlocked ones or to reduce certain features of a sequence and then transform it into a novel. Waugh's practice is partly responsible for the debate among critics, as Morris has pointed out, about whether a sequence is *a* novel or is composed of several novels. After the publication of the final book of the trilogy in 1961 and the one-volume reprinting as *The Sword of Honour Trilogy* in 1964, Waugh published a revised text in 1965, entitled *Sword of Honour*, that omitted the titles of the individual books and merged the endings and the beginnings of the directly connected novels so that it read as a continuous story mainly about Guy Crouchback. Waugh explains why he transformed the three novels into one:

The three books, of which this is a recension, appeared at intervals throughout a decade with the less than candid assurance (dictated by commercial interest) that each was to be regarded as a separate, independent work. It was unreasonable to expect the reader to keep in mind the various characters; still more to follow a continuous, continued plot. (*Sword of Honour* 9)

His explanation gives one the impression that he changed his mind after he completed the three novels and he made the recension simply for the reader's sake. Regardless of his true reasons for the recension, what makes it possible for him to convert the

"separate" and "independent" works into one is the trilogy pattern he created: "I sought to give a description of the Second World War as it was seen and experienced by a single, uncharacteristic Englishman, and to show its effect on him" (*Sword of Honour* 9). In other words, his three novels follow one another closely because they deal with the same theme of the War and mainly focus on one protagonist and his experience. To Waugh, the challenge is how to divide a single story into three parts while each part remains discrete (complete in itself) and preserves its own unity. Andrew Rutherford concisely describes how Waugh succeeded in achieving such a result: "Each novel records a distinct phase in the hero's emotional, spiritual, and military progress; each deals with a separate aspect and theatre of war; each forms (as Mr. Bradbury observes) 'a distinctive experience'" (129).

Waugh's creation of his trilogy further reflects the flexibility of the sequence form which a novelist can use at will. The alteration from *The Sword of Honour Trilogy* to the single-book *Sword of Honour* also indicates the indeterminacy of the boundary between a novel and a novel sequence and, at the same time, shows that a novelist has great freedom to alter the boundary. In the process of writing the trilogy, Waugh experienced some uncertainty about his original plan "to complete a trilogy of novels" announced on the dust jacket of the first novel. When the second novel was published, he declared that there would be no trilogy: "*Officers and Gentlemen* completes *Men at Arms*. I thought at first that the story would run into three volumes. I find that two will do the trick. I hope to follow the fortune of the characters through the whole of their war, but these first two books constitute a whole" (Dust-jacket, 1955). What matters to Waugh, as his explanation implies, is not whether there should be a trilogy or not, but whether the two novels form a unified sequence. To achieve this particular effect, he uses a prologue at the beginning of the first novel and an epilogue at the end of the second to make the two novels ostensibly and externally unified. Connected this way, even though the protagonist Guy Crouchback is still in

the middle of his army career and the war is not over at the end of the second novel the prologue and epilogue produce a sense of completeness. Evidently, the flexibility of the sequence form then allowed him to add one more volume, to carry out his original plan and fulfill his promise. Waugh has no difficulty in keeping the third novel both independent of and related to the previous volumes. He uses a "Synopsis of Preceding Volumes" to inform his readers of what has happened earlier to the main character, Guy Crouchback (*Unconditional Surrender* 1-4). A prologue and an epilogue are again used to indicate that the third novel is self-contained. Using both to create a unity, whether for the first two novels or for the third one, is Waugh's innovation. The feature, combined with an emphasis on three phases of the war and the protagonist's experience, produces a sense of separate and autonomous narrative structure in each part. Rutherford's comment on Waugh's creation of three novels out of a single story not only expresses his appreciation of such an experiment, but also confirms Waugh's success in dividing a single story into a trilogy: "The resulting sense of unity in diversity is so satisfying, aesthetically and thematically, that one is tempted to speculate on the unique felicity of tripartite division in complex works of art" (129).

The disappearance of the trilogy form in Waugh's revised one-volume *Sword of Honour*, on the other hand, illustrates that there is a tremendous difference between a single narrative told in one novel and the same story recounted in three self-contained and consecutive books. Although Waugh made almost no change in the content, the elimination of the overall trilogy structure disappointed his critics. By merging the ending of the second novel and the beginning of the third and by renumbering the chapters according to a one-volume numbering system, Waugh destroys any sign of the original trilogy arrangement. Reactions to Waugh's recension suggest that the trilogy form is artistically more satisfying than the one-volume version. William Cook's comment represents a generally held opinion:

To be fully appreciated, the narrative should be read as a unit; but to be understood as the final development of Waugh's art, the three novels are best examined separately. There is a time element separating them and there are in each novel distinctive qualities particularly of theme and tone that make a detailed analysis of each profitable. (238)

Giving consideration to other circumstances, Jeffrey Heath also explains why Waugh's trilogy is superior to his revised one-volume novel: "[T]he principles of consistency, aesthetic superiority, and, above all, historical accuracy, give us licence to value Waugh's first thoughts over his final revisions, especially since Waugh made those revisions when in rapidly deteriorating health" (278). These critics' preference for the trilogy version indicates that Waugh achieves more in the trilogy than he does with one novel. It also suggests that the trilogy form gives him more opportunity to display his artistic talent and technical skills on a larger novelistic canvas.

The employment and later suppression of the trilogy form in Waugh's writing represent an extremely unusual case in the study of both the novel and the sequence. Its uniqueness derives from the fact that his trilogy is purposely composed to deal with one single story and each volume in the trilogy is an indispensable part of the major character's experience. One may argue, therefore, that Waugh's trilogy blurs the boundary between a novel sequence and sequel novels, as his three volumes resemble a three-part sequel novel. Although the method that Waugh uses to keep each volume self-sufficient, as described by Rutherford, guarantees the trilogy structure, Waugh's revision certainly suppresses what the trilogy form has gained and thereby reveals how indeterminate and fragile the sequence form can be. In the same light, Waugh's practice with the trilogy form mirrors the flexible and undefinable form of the novel which has given rise to the extended form of the novel sequence.

The examination of the four novelists' experiments with the sequence form thus provides both an insight into different ways of constructing a novel sequence and a

brief survey of the rise and development of the English novel sequence. The works discussed, though all are called "sequences", demonstrate not only how they have deviated from the "roman fleuve", but also how different they are from each other. What differentiates Waugh's trilogy from Cary's, for example, as this discussion has shown, depends, in part, upon the narrative devices used to achieve the effect of interconnectedness between the constituent parts and also upon the emphasis each novelist places on certain aspects of his sequence. To be more specific, Cary relies heavily on the consciousness of first-person narrators in order to accentuate the characterization of the three protagonists living in their respective worlds and forming only limited perceptions of each other. Waugh, by comparison, tries to recapture World War II mainly through one character's experience. Therefore, the theme of war becomes both a unifying device and the focus of the trilogy. In view of these factors, it is easy to agree that Waugh's trilogy has almost no resemblance to Cary's, except in its basic three-part structure.

The brief survey of these novelists' works in the sequence form also establishes a vantage point for seeing that, while some of Davies's techniques are anticipated by the sequences discussed, every similarity, if examined carefully, is matched by differences. Like Trollope, Davies uses setting as a conspicuous, organizational device for the *Salterton* and *Deptford* trilogies. But his settings reflect the Canadian environment, both geographical and post-colonial, and serve to convey some typical Canadian themes. Like Cary, he uses the "first-person point of view" technique to manipulate the reader's response to the recurrent characters in the *Deptford* stories. However, Davies uses the method to achieve more than that because it becomes more intriguing in the second and the third novels. The intertwining effect the recurrent characters produce in the *Deptford* trilogy resembles that of Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*. But Davies's method has the effect of keeping the individual novels relatively more self-contained than Durrell's. The triptych pattern Cary establishes in his first trilogy finds

its counterpart in Davies's Cornish trilogy. Unlike Cary however, Davies uses the second novel, instead of the first, as the symbolic central panel, thus reversing the temporal order of the Cornish trilogy. It might also be argued that the role of Francis Cornish whose story is the backbone of the Cornish trilogy resembles Guy Crouchback's which is the essence of Waugh's trilogy. But this similarity can be easily dismissed because Davies relates Francis Cornish's story in an indirect, subtle and nonchronological way. A detailed discussion of the techniques Davies used to achieve his intentionally contrived effects will follow presently.

The differences pointed out are intended to call attention to a particularly important fact: Davies, as a Canadian novelist, created his works out of two sets of conventions, English and Canadian. Therefore, when examining the practice and experiment of the four novelists and the rise and development of the novel sequence, I take into account certain characteristics of Canadian sequences so as to show one of the major contributions Canadian novelists have made to the tradition of the sequence in general and to illuminate further the differences between Davies's practice and that of the four novelists. It has to be pointed out, however, that the study of the conventions of Canadian novel sequences is still an untouched critical area. This is mainly because, as Davies pointed out, Canada "has no literary background of her own" and as a young nation it "shares in the literatures of the lands from which its people came.... Canada sees a greater variety of literature in English than any other county in the world..." ("New Venture in Canadian Verse" 4; "Part One: The Northern Muse" 10). As a result, English novel sequences have had a direct influence on Canadian novelists, and English sequence conventions have overshadowed Canadian features. Moreover, Canadian novelists often turn to English sequences for models, and readers tend to compare Canadian sequences to English ones. Davies's case can be used to illustrate this point. Some evidence indicates that Davies had Trollope in mind when he wrote the *Salterton* novels. This is indicated in his article: "Kingston: A Mature Charm",

written before *Tempest-Tost* for *Maclean's*. It reads: "The people who do not know Kingston repeat a number of half-truths about it.... They say that it reminds them of *Cranford*, and the Barsetshire novels of Trollope..." (NA 34:8). Some hints can also be found in *Tempest-Tost*. His character Griselda Webster "greatly admired" Anthony Trollope's "slow, common-sense stories" and "staid, common-sense lovers", and felt she "was like the girls in Trollope" (46-47, 339). Davies himself insinuated that he used Trollope's writing as his standard. When asked by his publisher's wife, Mrs. Clarke, to rewrite certain passages to create "explicit love scenes" in *Leaven of Malice*, Davies refused the request by saying that "Trollope would not have gone farther than this, and Trollope knew his business" (Letter to R. W. W. Robertson, n. d. [likely late April, 1954], McMaster University Archives Box 104, File 4). Besides Davies, Mazo de la Roche and Hugh Hood can be introduced here to further illuminate the point. Both de la Roche's Jalna sequence and Hugh Hood's *New Age* series can find their direct counterparts in the English sequence. De la Roche's sequence, which deals with the Whiteoak family of three generations, is very much in form like an expanded version of John Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*. In his review of *Whiteoak Heritage* (1940), the seventh in the series, Davies regards the sequence in progress as "our own particular Canadian family saga" ("Cap and Bells" 4). After the sequence was completed years later, he even praises de la Roche for her creation of the Jalna books which he considers "the most protracted single feat of literary invention in the brief history of Canadian literature" ("Mazo de la Roche" 4). Hood, a late-starter among sequence writers (the first volume of his *New Age* series was published in 1975) consciously and conscientiously models his sequence on Powell's twelve-volume series and strives to "endow [Canada] with a great imperishable work of art" which can also be "good enough" to be compared with Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things of*

Past (Struthers, "Interview" 69, 85-86). So far eleven volumes have been published²².

Despite the direct influence of English novel sequences, Canadian writers have contrived their own unusual features which distinguish their works from the English ones. My discussion focuses on only one of the most representative distinctions, the Canadian indigenous tradition. My reason is that this tradition alone can sufficiently show how Canadian novelists experiment with setting as one of the main recurrent elements. Their use of setting adds both a new dimension to the practice and experiments of sequence novelists in general and a new perspective to the development of the English novel sequence. In discussing the Canadian indigenous tradition, one has to keep in mind that using a specific and real region as setting is one of the characteristics of Canadian literature. Historically, Canada was once a Dominion within the British Empire and perceived as a part of a new world. It developed its literature under the influence of British literary achievements yet independent of them and away from the centre of European culture. Its own unique geographical and cultural environment inevitably has had a great impact on the "literary imagination" of Canadian fiction writers. Northrop Frye succinctly summarizes the close relationship between literature and the environment in Canada: "It is obvious that Canadian literature, whatever its inherent merits, is an indispensable aid to the knowledge of Canada. It records what the Canadian imagination has reacted to, and it tells us things about this environment that nothing else will tell us" ("Conclusion" 822). As such, the Canadian environment has often been the major source of inspiration and imagination for novelists as well as the central theme of their works. Robert R. Wilson points out the Canadian regional tradition in "National Frontiers and International Movements:

²² They are *The Swing in the Garden* (1975), *A New Athens* (1977), *Reservoir Ravine* (1979), *The Black and White Keys* (1982), *The Scenic Art* (1984), *The Motor Boys in Ottawa* (1986), *Tony's Book* (1988), *Property & Value* (1990), *Be Sure to Close Your Eyes* (1993), *Dead Men's Watches* (1995) and *Great Realizations* (1997).

Postmodernism in Canadian Literature": "Canadian literature falls into the categories constituted by its regions: there are great Maritime writers, great Quebecois writers, writers from Ontario, from the Prairies and from British Columbia.... Canadian writers both follow regional obsessions and also think of themselves as, primarily, regional..." (49).

Creating novels with a specific and recognizable region or landscape with which an author is familiar has been a dominant feature in Canadian fiction in general and in the novel sequence in particular. Some novelists, just to mention a few representative ones, such as Frederick Philip Grove, Margaret Laurence and Mordecai Richler, have "mapped out" their own geographical territories and write about them again and again in several novels (McPherson, "Fiction 1940-1960" 702). Their works create a strong and unique sense of place and the social mythology of a specific and identifiable setting at certain historical periods. Grove wrote five Prairie novels depicting the harsh and gloomy landscape in which the settlers were in constant conflict with a forbidding land and a forbidding climate in the 1920's and 30's²³. Influenced by Sinclair Ross's use of imaginary small Saskatchewan towns both in his first novel, *As For Me and My House* (1941), and in his short stories written before the novel and later collected in *The Lamp at Noon* (1968), Laurence created the fictional prairie town of Manawaka and its community and used them in five novels²⁴. The strong features of Manawaka and the

²³ They are *Settlers of the March* (1925), *A Search for America* (1927), *Our Daily Bread* (1928), *The Yoke of Life* (1930) and *Fruits of the Earth* (1933).

²⁴ They include *The Stone Angel* (1964), *A Jest of God* (1966), *The Fire-Dwellers* (1969), *A Bird in the House* (1970) and *The Diviners* (1974). Sinclair's influence is suggested in Laurence's introduction to *The Lamp at Noon*: "When I first read his extraordinary and moving novel, *As for Me and My House*, at about the age of eighteen, it had an enormous impact on me, for it seemed the only completely genuine one I had ever read about my own people, my own place, my own time" (7). She then particularly praises Sinclair's use of the setting: "Characteristically, and in keeping with his themes, Ross describes the land in strong, broad strokes, and I do not believe that anyone has ever given a better impressionistic view of the prairies" (8).

occasional and slight character connections between one novel and another have made some of Laurence's readers refer to them as the Manawaka sequence. Davies's Deptford, the main setting of his second trilogy, has even been compared with Laurence's Manawaka by some critics. John Lennox, for example, made a comparative study in his essay, "Manawaka and Deptford: Place and Voice", in which he points out that the two places "share in a material and moral commonwealth" (23). Richler, on the other hand, filled the Canadian literary map with the Jewish community of Montreal which is the setting of two novels, *Son of a Smaller Hero* (1955) and *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* (1959), parts of *St Urbain's Horseman* (1971), and the collection of short stories entitled *The Street* (1969). Davies has been very aware of this Canadian literary phenomenon. Long before he became a novelist himself, he made an insightful remark about the tradition: "There can be no novel which is true of all of Canada: we need regional novelists" ("Cap and Bells" 4).

Working in an indigenous tradition, the Canadian novelists differ from the English sequence writers mainly in their almost obsessive presentation of setting which seems to possess a spirit of its own and to become almost a literary character. More distinctively, they use setting to convey typical Canadian themes and experiences, such as survival, immigrant experience, national and individual identity, and national consciousness and individuation. In this way, each sequence contributes some traits to the overall portrait of the Canadian national character²⁵. A cursory glance at a few novel sequences will clarify the point. Lucy Maude Montgomery, the earliest sequence writer of this century, sets her six Anne Shirley novels and three Emily Byrd Starr

²⁵ Davies thinks that Douglas LePan's phrase, "Wild Hamlet with the features of Horatio" best describes the Canadian national character ("MacLennan's Rising Sun" 29).

stories in Prince Edward Island, both a fictional and an actual locality in Canada²⁶. "Green Gables", in which the heroine Anne Shirley grew up, and its surrounding neighbourhood have transformed the fictional locale into not only a national but also an international tourist spot that annually attracts thousands of visitors from all over the world. De la Roche's Jalna, an estate named after an Anglo-Indian military station to the east of Toronto in the early twentieth century, is another unforgettable fictional setting in Canadian fiction. The estate is the dwelling place of her Whiteoak characters and reappears in the sixteen novels which chronicle this English family's experiences in Canada²⁷.

Compared to these two women sequence writers who tended to romanticize their heroes and heroines as well as their environment, the later novelists become more aware of the unbending force of their environment and its influence on the development of their characters' sensibilities. A good example is Robert Kroetsch, the author of the "Out-West" triptych²⁸ (*The Words of My Roaring*, 1966; *The Studhorse Man*, 1969; and *Gone Indian*, 1973). In an interview he explicitly expresses his awareness of the Canadian indigenous tradition and his intent to experiment with the Alberta landscape

²⁶ The Anne Shirley sequence consists of *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), *Anne of Avonlea* (1909), *Anne of Island* (1915), *Anne's House of Dreams* (1917), *Anne of Winding Poplars* (1936) and *Anne of Ingleside* (1939). The Emily Byrd Starr trilogy includes *Emily of New Moon* (1923), *Emily Climbs* (1925) and *Emily's Quest* (1927).

²⁷ The Jalna novels are composed of *Jalna* (1927), *Whiteoaks of Jalna* (1929), *Finch's Fortune* (1931), *Master of Jalna* (1933), *Young Renny* (1935), *Whiteoak Harvest* (1936), *Whiteoak Heritage* (1940), *Wakefield's Course* (1941), *The Building of Jalna* (1944), *Return to Jalna* (1946), *Mary Wakefield* (1949), *Renny's Daughter* (1951), *Variable Winds in Jalna* (1954), *Whiteoak Brothers* (1954), *Centenary at Jalna* (1958) and *Morning at Jalna* (1960).

²⁸ Kroetsch regards his three novels as a "triptych" rather than a trilogy "because its connections are not narrative ones, they are of another sort: juxtaposition, repetition, contrast. The first volume is set in the '30's, the depression, the second volume is set at the end of the war, and the third will be contemporary" (Brown, "Interview" 2).

in "the imaginary Alberta towns Coulee Hill and Notikeewin and the surrounding countryside":

... I'm very much involved in the significance of landscape, especially my experience of Western landscape: the kind of undefined vastness of it with points of reference within that vastness.... The Western landscape is one without boundaries quite often. So you have the experience within a kind of chaos, yet you have to order it somehow to survive. I'm particularly interested in the kinds of orderings we do on that landscape. (Brown, "Interview" 2)

By creating three interrelated novels, Kroetsch has transformed his preoccupation with the western landscape into words voiced by his characters who are unaware that they are both trapped and wandering in that vast and unknown world. Their voices enable readers to realize that these characters are disoriented and displaced, and that their fate is conditioned by the land which still has traces of primordial remains. The individual experiences of his characters represent part of the Canadian national character.

Davies's portraits of Salterton, a small Ontario town modelled on the real city of Kingston, and of Deptford, which has a historical and geographical resemblance to Thamesville, Ontario, suggest that he too is preoccupied with the strong and unavoidable impact that the typical Canadian environment had upon the psyche of its people. In the Salterton and Deptford novels, he depicts the tightly knit small town communities he once lived in and recaptures in a fictional way how life is overpowered by the prevailing parochial and provincial mentality of the first half of the twentieth century. His comment on the role of Salterton indicates his awareness, his intention and his method: "... I hope to show how its particular nature made certain human beings behave in a certain way" (Roper, "Conversations" 32). But Davies's approach to the Canadian themes differs from that of other Canadian authors because he believes that Canadians are "often very much more complex, and many-coloured

psychologically" (Ramsay Cook 131). Therefore he creates characters who try to better themselves culturally and intellectually and to achieve various degrees of understanding of themselves and the communities from which they grew up. He endeavours to "record the bizarre and passionate life of the Canadian people" and to convey "some impression of the complexity of Canadian life" in these small towns (S. D. Cameron 34; Cook 132). His efforts in creating these novels have earned him a special place in Canadian fiction, as W. J. Keith's comment on his *Salterton* and *Deptford* trilogies indicates:

Davies has succeeded in tapping an imaginative spring in the human psyche that realism too often inhibits—especially in Canada.... Davies is no nationalist, but his views of Canadians as living "bizarre and passionate" lives under a veil of moderation and respectability not only extends the line of Canadian comedy ... but uses the national character as illustrative of a universal (Jungian) pattern of human behaviour. Davies thereby transcends the national to embrace the universal ... and so enlarges the Canadian literary tradition. (*Canadian Literature in English* 174)

If Davies's trilogies are approached in the light of the Canadian tradition, his use of setting can be seen as differing from the four English novelists just discussed.

Considering the conventions of the novel sequence as a whole, one would agree that they keep changing and increasing because novelists' practice and experiments with the sequence form keep interacting and developing, and that the study of the novel sequence will have to adjust its critical position according to individual works.

Alastair Fowler's study, *Kinds of Literature*, offers some explanations as to why it is impossible to define all aspects of a sequence as a genre:

When we assign a work to a generic type, we do not suppose that all its characteristic traits need be shared by every other embodiment of the type. In particular, new works in the genre may contribute additional

characteristics. In this way a literary genre changes with time, so that its boundaries cannot be defined by any single set of characteristics such would determine a class. (38)

Fowler's theory obviously touches the very core of the problem arising from such critical studies as those by Kerr and Bequette. Moreover, according to Fowler, the indefinability of the novel sequence "will be seen as a potential strength" that can lead to diversity and variability (42). This notion certainly helps to explain why the sequences by Trollope, Cary, Durrell and Waugh can be so different in authorial intention, in structure and in their use of narrative techniques. It is the "potential strength" of the indefinability, one may conclude, that gives a novelist nearly unlimited freedom to use the sequence form to create a sense of wholeness when the novels are read as a connected unit, and a sense of separateness when each novel is read alone.

Since the sequence form is prone to variation, since the concept of the novel sequence is indefinable, and since the controversy about the novel sequence seems irresolvable, the study of the novel sequence remains open to different approaches. In order to avoid the problems found in the critical studies discussed earlier, my study of Robertson Davies's trilogies will follow Fowler's advice when judging or evaluating each of them. Fowler lays stress on such qualities as "originality, definitiveness, elegance in variation" etc., and continues: "Excellence according to one may compensate for deficiency according to another, within the economy of genre. Thus vagueness about conventions of genre can be forgiven in a writer who is effectively innovative, or who easily excels in realizing some of the qualities of the form..." (275-76). As Fowler suggests, the study of the novel sequence has to treat each sequence as it is, and as what the author wants the work to be, rather than postulate what the sequence should be or what standards the work should meet. In this way, each sequence will be considered individually and judged in its own right. It is also useful to consider the creative innovation an author brings to a particular sequence form, such

as the trilogy. This principle coincides with P. M. Wetherill's idea of critical methods for textual criticism. Wetherill quotes J. Rousset's argument to support his own:

"Each work has its own particular form ... critical procedures can never be fixed if one accepts the need to leave the initiative with the work itself".

The work ... being finite, creates its own norms, and in many senses it is more important to study the way these norms are manipulated than to consider the extent to which they are deviations from "common practice".

(178)

Following this principle, my study of Davies's three trilogies will place emphasis on the unusualness of the structure of each trilogy and focus on the artistic and aesthetic effect each trilogy produces. With these considerations in mind, the next chapter will turn to Robertson Davies's view of the novel sequence and the evolution of his trilogies²⁹.

²⁹ Because the focus of my study is on Davies's creative use of the trilogy form and my method is to examine how he deliberately contrives each trilogy pattern, it seems necessary to clarify my critical position in using the term for this specific sequence form. So far I have mentioned many trilogies and shown briefly four patterns illustrated by Ausmus and the differences between one group of trilogies and another according to Alan Friedman's notion of "multivalent" and "multivolume" sequences. All these critical discussions not only call attention to the variations in the novel trilogy form but also show that what these trilogies share in common is the extrinsic structure and the physical features of three interconnected parts, and that the term "trilogy" applied to these sequences signifies no more than the denotative meaning of the word. In turn, the variations in the use of the trilogy form by these novelists reveal that the term, borrowed from Greek drama, has been used freely in the English novel sequence. The word "trilogy" was originally used with reference to the Greek dramatist Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.), who wrote tragedies in groups of three performed in Athens at the festival of Dionysus during the fifth century B.C. When used in Greek tragedy, the term was an "analogy to denote three plays connected in subject with each other ... to trace the whole course of [a] hereditary evil, and to follow the crime from its original commission down to the period of its final expiation", as seen in the Oresteian trilogy, the only extant ancient trilogy (Haigh 14). As such, the form was "flexible" and "could be treated in various ways. The connexion between the parts might be tightened or relaxed at will.... [They] might differ in respect of artistic completeness" (Haigh 15). Novel trilogies obviously retain the original principle of Greek trilogies. However, novel trilogies follow no rule concerning their subject matter nor the conventions of tragedy. The form offers a novelist more freedom to establish a desired relationship among three novels. In my discussion, the term trilogy refers only to three interrelated novels. Words such as "triad", "triplet" and "trptych" are used synonymously as long as the modifier "novel" is specified.

Chapter 2

Robertson Davies's Concept of the Novel Sequence and the Evolution of His Trilogies

Preliminary Issues Leading to the Examination of Davies's Concept of the Novel Sequence

Unlike most writers of the novel sequence, who usually inform their readers in one way or another¹ that some of their novels form sequences, Davies has provided little published information about the trilogy structures within his three groups of novels. No statement was given about the intertextual relationship among the Salterton novels either before or when they were published². Only in the third novel of both the Deptford and Cornish trilogies did Davies make known with a brief prefatory note that "*World of Wonders* is the last of the three linked novels" and "*The Lyre of Orpheus* is the third of a series of novels" (*World* n. pg.; *Lyre* n. pg.). The lack of a formal authorial confirmation and explanation of the existing larger narrative structure in each trilogy is in part responsible for readers' slow responses both to the overall narrative

¹ Some novelists (such as Cary, Durrell, Farrell, Galsworthy, Manning, Snow and Trollope, all mentioned in the previous chapter) inform readers that their novels form sequences either by means of a preface or an introduction, or by an author's note when their interrelated novels were published in collected editions. Arnold Bennett even announces his forthcoming Clayhanger trilogy in a footnote in the first novel. Others (such as Powell, Lessing and Hood) use an additional overall title in individual novels as an indicator of the continuity. Waugh uses dust jackets to serve the same purpose.

² It was not until 1979 when *A Mixture of Frailties* was reissued by Everest House, New York, that Davies provided an introduction to the new edition and confirmed that this novel "is the third in a trio of linked novels, all of which are associated with an imaginary Canadian city called Salterton" (N. pg.).

effect each trilogy structure produces and to Davies's ingenious use of this particular form.

Making the study of Davies's trilogies more complicated are his repeated remarks about his "linked" novels. They are puzzling, ambiguous and paradoxical and, even worse, contradict the generally held view that he deliberately chose the trilogy form as an artistic mode for his novel writing. His explanation of the development of the snowball story that constitutes the essence of the Deptford novels is a representative example. In the interview with Margaret Penman on 19 Oct. 1975, soon after the publication of *World of Wonders* at the beginning of October, Davies made a special point about his readers' speculation:

Well, you see I never planned it as a trilogy. It just came out that way, there was more story after *Fifth Business* was done than I had told and *The Manticore* continued it, and then it was obvious that something had to be said about Magnus and so I had a book about him. But I never really, truly planned it to be three volumes, you know, starting at the beginning and piecing out what was to go in each one. It was pretty obvious what was to go in each one but it was not a planned scheme³. (Penman 152-3)

The gist of his explanation is very clear: he did not have a preconceived idea that he would write three novels focussing upon one snowball incident and that the three would form a trilogy. Given this explanation, one cannot help but ask: why does Davies emphasize so much that his Deptford novels were not originally planned, if it supposedly does not matter to his readers' reading experience whether or not these novels were intended from the beginning to form a trilogy?

³ Davies gave a similar explanation on several other occasions: his speech to the Cosmos Club of Washington, D. C. in *One Half of Robertson Davies* (15-16), and his essay "The Deptford Trilogy in Retrospect" (7).

Even more puzzling is his general view of his three groups of linked novels. His view was explicitly expressed in the interview in the autumn of 1986 with Elisabeth Sifton, his editor at the Viking Press, New York, while he was still in the process of completing his ninth novel, *The Lyre of Orpheus*, the last in the third trilogy. He says:

My books come in threes, and though not really trilogies or series, they are linked by characters and a point of view. But they are tedious about chronology: *What's Bred in the Bone* leaps backward in time from *Rebel Angels*, and this third book--its name is *The Lyre of Orpheus*--moves forward in time. If I *planned* them, this would not happen, but I don't; they just occur⁴. (13)

Davies's view clearly contradicts his readers' perception that the novels constitute trilogies and seem to be consciously constructed as such. This remark invites one to ask: if all three groups of his novels "are linked by characters and a point of view", why does he still think they are "not really trilogies or series"? And if his novels were not originally and consciously projected, how did he make them "come in threes" and so unified that his readers can recognize their intertextual relations and read them like any other novel sequences? Moreover, considering the fact that his comments on his novels were made after two groups of them had been published as trilogies (*The Deptford Trilogy*, 1983; *The Salterton Trilogy*, 1986, the same year the interview took place⁵) and the third one was anticipated, one realizes that Davies is very concerned

⁴ Davies expressed the same opinion in "a progress report" to Sifton some time in 1984. In order to substantiate the point I am making, I provide appendices for repeated references. See the citation in the appendix (a).

⁵ As a matter of fact, the preparation for the publication of *The Salterton Trilogy* began much earlier, and Davies even offered "to write an introduction", according to his letter to Walter Rieman, a staff member of Curtis Brown, Ltd.: "Arrangements for the publication of the Salterton trilogy by Penguin seem to be progressing well and I had an encouraging talk with Peter Waldock by phone. Incidentally I would be very happy to have it generally available once again, and have suggested to Waldock that if Penguin wished it I would be glad to write an introduction putting the books in perspective" (29 Jan. 1979, NA 46:9).

with the temporal order of the three novels in a group and also with his intention. His attitude towards his trilogies suggests that he has some reservations about their generic classification and that he wants his reservations to be noticed. The questions arising from his repeated remarks about his trilogies thus require both an investigation and explanation of his intentionality and his concept of the novel sequence in general. Although he offered no further explanation of why his linked novels were "not really trilogies or series", nor by what standard he made such a judgment, his remarks suggest that he may have compared his works to the novel trilogy or sequence in general. An exploration of his notion of the novel sequence should help to explain his view of his own trilogies and why it differs from the views of his readers. This will in turn improve our understanding of his own way of using the trilogy form.

It is worth pointing out that some reviews seem to add to the enigma surrounding Davies's creation of these trilogies. D. O. Spettigue's review of *The Papers of Samuel Marchbanks* (1985) and *What's Bred in the Bone* (1985), for instance, insinuates that there is something inexplicable about Davies's creativity: "Davies functions in threes, no doubt for some occult reason that has not yet emerged" (7). Doubtless following Davies's own views on creativity, Spettigue seems to suggest that there is an aura of mystery about Davies's artistic talent and his inclination to write three interrelated novels. Such a suggestion, in effect, weaves a mystery around Davies's artistry. Judith Grant's review of *The Lyre of Orpheus*, entitled "Three Times Three", suggests that the number three has a particular attraction for Davies and plays a mystical role in his novel creation because "three times his fictions have grouped themselves in triads" (26). She then concludes that "three is still his magic number" (27). Neither Grant nor Spettigue offers any explanation or conjecture about why this specific number, three, has become a prominent feature of Davies's writing, or why he is interested in creating

interconnections among three rather than, say, four novels. In fact, if we keep in mind Davies's Jungian orientation since the 1960s, one would expect him to write tetralogies rather than trilogies, an interesting point ignored by his critics and reviewers⁶. As a result, these reviews, to some extent, obscure, rather than clarify, Davies's interest in the trilogy form and the importance of the form in his achievement as a trilogy novelist.

Nevertheless, their discussions contribute useful insight into Davies's use of the trilogy form, as Grant's comment further shows: "The trilogy has proved to be the form most congenial to Robertson Davies. Something about its rhythm and length suits him down to the ground" ("Three Times Three" 26). More importantly, her comment that Davies "says that he does not consciously set out to write novels in sets of three" invites readers to look at both his conscious and unconscious intentions in his creative process (26). Spettigue's observation that some of Davies's other writings also appear in groups of three sheds some light on Davies's increasing interest in the triplet format which anticipates its appearance in his novels. He points out: "There were the three Stratford books (in collaboration), the three Marchbanks books, [and] three volumes of essays/critical writings..." (7). Spettigue's recognition of the triad structure in the Marchbanks books in particular (*The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks*, 1947; *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks*, 1949; and *Samuel Marchbanks' Almanack*, 1967) is particularly useful because it suggests that, even when Davies was a journalist, he was already interested in experimenting with certain narrative elements to produce

⁶ According to Jung, "[T]he quaternity is an archetype of almost universal occurrence. It forms the logical basis for any whole judgment. If one wishes to pass such a judgment, it must have this fourfold aspect.... This is because the fourfold aspect is the minimum requirement for a complete judgment" (*The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Bollingen Series xx, vol. 11, [para. 246], 167, abbreviated as CW 11:246:167). The subsequent references to Jung's *Collected Works* are from the same edition and given in the same abbreviated form. Jung also writes: "The number three is not a natural expression for wholeness, since four represents the minimum number of determinants in a whole judgment" (CW 12:31:26).

interrelationships between materials. It is likely that inspired and encouraged by his journalist experience, he varied his methods of using recurrent narrative devices and of manipulating certain materials when creating three interrelated novels. I will discuss in detail the influence of the formation of the three Marchbanks books on Davies's use of the trilogy form in due course.

Davies's Concept of the Novel Sequence: A Long Novel and A Single Story

Davies never discussed the novel sequence in general. But as editor of the *Peterborough Examiner* and as book reviewer for the *Toronto Star* and *Saturday Night*, he wrote numerous essays and reviews that directly deal with novel sequences written by novelists such as Joyce Cary, C. P. Snow, Mervyn Peake and Evelyn Waugh. These writings implicitly reveal his ideas about the novel sequence. Therefore, a brief and chronological examination of these essays and reviews should illuminate his view of the novel sequence. It is not difficult to discover, in fact, that Davies has always regarded a novel sequence as one lengthy novel, despite the existence of individual books in the sequence. In "Joyce Cary's Novels" (1955), while praising Cary for his achievement as a writer of novel sequences, he states that Cary's "best efforts, since 1941, have been put into two *long novels*, each of which fills three volumes" (*Enthusiasms* 149, emphasis added). Davies's detailed discussion of Cary's *First Trilogy* in another essay, "The Greatness of Cary", elucidates his view that Cary's trilogy is essentially a long novel: "[E]ach book tells part of the story as it appeared to the narrator, with differences of emphasis and point of view which make them seem to be three stories, though in fact they are one" (*Voice* 235). The relationship Davies points out between the three separate books and the "one story" they tell indicates how he forms the idea that this trilogy is a long novel. Davies's further discussion of Cary's first trilogy suggests that the "one story" he perceives actually represents the central thematic meaning the three narratives generate and accumulate:

The trilogy is a triumphant exposition of the truth that we are all, unwittingly, playing supporting roles in each other's personal dramas. The tragic sense of life, the human predicament, the "sense of otherness"--all the sable generalities which are brought out to justify works which are aiming at tragedy and which so often succeed only in arriving at gloom--are all apparent in Cary's trilogy, but in its totality it is seen through a temperament which is serene, distinguished, and courageous, and so it emerges as great comedy. (*Voice* 235-36)

This passage shows that Davies's interpretation of Cary's trilogy centres upon the thematic issue: "the truth" of human relationships and of the "sable generalities" of human experience. Therefore, it is this "exposition of the truth" or the underlying thematic meaning the three narratives all convey that gives the trilogy, as Davies thinks, a "totality" and makes the three books tell one story and form "one" long novel.

Because Cary himself provides the "prefatory" essays for the Carfax edition (1951) of the separately published three books in the first trilogy, Davies, like the rest of Cary's readers, could easily learn that Cary's trilogies are carefully planned and designed to be related to each other. In the "prefatory essay" for *Herself Surprised* Cary specifically states: "This is the first book of a trilogy which was designed to show three characters, not only in themselves but as seen by each other. The object was to get a three dimensional depth and force of character" (7). In the equivalent preface to *To Be a Pilgrim*, Cary reminds his readers that the book is "the second of a three-piece that began with *Herself Surprised*" (7). For *The Horse's Mouth*, he writes that the book is the "third and last of a set of three" (7). It is very likely that Davies's notion of Cary's first trilogy is determined by Cary's designation of it as "a trilogy", a "three-piece" work or "a set of three", as Davies himself also refers to each of Cary's trilogies as a "three-decker novel" (*Enthusiasms* 149). Another piece of evidence may also support this interpretation. In his discussion of Cary's first trilogy, Davies expresses

his awareness of and even surprise at the loose connections between the third book *The Horse's Mouth* and the previous two: "When we consider the trilogy we are struck by the fact that Gulley Jimson, though vital to the lives of Sara Monday and Wilcher, has only the vaguest recollection of them" (*Voice* 237). The fact that his awareness did not stop him from regarding Cary's three novels as one story or a long novel suggests that Cary's prefaces guide Davies to respond to the individual novels as a sequence. In a sense, the prefaces function as generic pointers or indicators of the authorial intention that shapes Davies's as well as other readers' expectations and responses.

Davies's notion that a novel sequence is a lengthy novel is more obvious in his review of C. P. Snow's *The Affair* (1959), the eighth in the *Strangers and Brothers* sequence. In this review, entitled "C. P. Snow True Craftsman in Fiction" (1960), he refers to Snow's "projected" eleven-volume sequence as a "huge novel" and a "vast book" (28). His summary of Snow's sequence reveals what makes him view the sequence as a "huge novel": "His vast book is about the experience which come [*sic*] to his narrator, Lewis Eliot, during the course of a life which takes him from humble beginning to a distinguished legal career. Eliot's friendships, his love affairs and his professional life are all included in the series of volumes" (28). In this passage, Davies describes and outlines the main and general narrative structure of Snow's sequence, which at that point was still in progress. His summary indicates that his view is formed by the fact that the whole sequence relies heavily on the narrator Lewis Eliot. Eliot's personal life serves as the time frame for the sequence, and, as the principal recurrent character, he plays a dominating role in connecting "the series of volumes" by way of relating his own life-long experience and his observation of the experience of other people involved in his life.

It is probably Snow's intention to produce a series of books united by one narrator that leads Davies to perceive Snow's sequence in progress as a "huge novel" or "vast book". As a reviewer of two of Snow's books in the sequence, *The Masters*

(1951), the fourth volume, and *The Affair*, Davies could not miss the repeated information that Snow planned the sequence from the outset. For instance, Snow states in his note to *The Masters* that this novel is a part of "the whole sequence of Lewis Eliot novels" [vii]. In the note to *The Affair*, Snow refers to the Lewis Eliot novels as the "*Strangers and Brothers* sequence" (ii). In this novel, the publisher also attaches a note together with the list of the novels already published, emphasizing the link of this novel with the previous ones (i, ii). In the seventh book, *The Conscience of the Rich* (1958), again a note is provided separately by Snow and his publisher, each explaining from a different angle the whole design of "the Lewis Eliot sequence" (i) or "the *Strangers and Brothers* sequence" (vii). At the end of the fifth novel, *The New Men* (1954), the publisher announces that "this novel is approximately the half-way point in a novel-sequence of ten or eleven volumes. The entire sequence is the story of the experience of one man, Lewis Eliot; both his direct experience and that which he gains through others' lives..." [312]. Davies's review of *The Affair* shows that he has taken into account Snow's already established sequence pattern and publicized authorial intention because he specially points out that Snow's "huge novel *Strangers and Brothers* has now reached its eighth volume of a projected eleven" ("C. P. Snow" 28). Based on this analysis, one can conclude that it must be Snow's explicitly expressed intention that makes Davies regard the whole sequence as a "huge novel" or a "vast book" and summarize it as if it were already complete.

Davies's review of Snow's *The Affair*, in fact, reveals more about his perception of the novel sequence in general. In this review, he also mentions Lawrence Durrell's four Alexandria books (the one-volume edition of *The Alexandria Quartet* was not published until 1962) and Anthony Powell's twelve-novel sequence, *The Music of Time* (the original overall title), with only four volumes so far published. Viewing them as counterparts to Snow's sequence, he categorizes both as "long" novels (28).

Disregarding the radical differences between Durrell's tetralogy and the other two

sequences, Davies ignores the fact that Durrell's sequence structure is more sophisticated than either Snow's or Powell's⁷. The examination of Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet* in the previous chapter has demonstrated that he intentionally breaks away from "the time-saturated" sequence form derived from the French "roman fleuve", and establishes a pattern of his own based on "the relativity proposition" (*Quartet* [9]). But Durrell evidently retains one principle that is shared both by Snow and by Powell. He, too, expects his readers to read his four books as a whole. This is clear from the fact that he explains his overall design and intentions repeatedly in his notes to *Balthazar*, *Clea*, and *Alexandria Quartet*, and states specifically that his tetralogy is "intended to be judged as a single work" and "may be judged as a complete whole" (*Clea* [5]). Taking the novel sequences by Snow, Durrell and Powell as long novels, Davies shows his inclination to treat indiscriminately all novel sequences, if intentionally planned, as long novels, no matter how a sequence is constructed and how complicated its structure may be.

Davies's review of Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast trilogy in 1960 (*Titus Groan*, 1946; *Gormenghast*, 1950; *Titus Alone*, 1959) repeats his view. Once again, he emphasizes that Peake's trilogy is a "long novel" and a "long book" (*Enthusiasms* 195, 196). Yet his summary of Peake's trilogy shows that it is the plot the three books unfold continuously that makes him view the trilogy this way:

The plot is simple: Gormenghast is a huge and remote earldom ruled by the family of Groan; the Groans are ruled by complex, inherited ritual, and the days of the Earl and his family are lived in strict accordance with the orders of a master of ceremonies; change is unthinkable. To the scholarly seventy-sixth Count, Sepulchrave, and his bird-loving Countess, is born a

⁷ Powell also establishes from the beginning a sequence structure similar to that of Snow's, with one first-person narrator, Nicholas Jenkins, and for the most part a straightforward chronological order.

son, Titus. In time the child inherits his father's title and rebels against the circumstances of his life. At last he leaves Gormenghast behind him and goes out into the world, which he finds fully as arbitrary, as dominated by irrationality, as packed with eccentrics, as the family domain. In the end young Titus re-visits his home, only to leave it again, knowing that he will never be free of it in his heart. (195)

This passage has to be quoted at length in order to show how his summary of a novel sequence tends to reduce several combined narratives, each structurally complete, to a seemingly simple and conventionally continuous long novel. Based on this plot summary, anyone who has not read the trilogy or who does not know that Davies, in fact, offers a plot constructed out of three separate and self-contained volumes will no doubt form an impression that Peake's trilogy merely relates a single story. But the plot is not the only factor that makes Davies consider Peake's trilogy one long novel. As a reviewer of Peake's trilogy, it was impossible for Davies to miss Peake's intention implied in the three titles emphasizing the unity of the Titus-Gormenghast novels. Peake informs his readers immediately that *Titus Groan* is "part one" of "Gormenghast", the title of the second novel, as "part one" is printed right after the title page. The reappearance of the protagonist's name on the title page of *Titus Alone* offers itself as a link between this book and the previous two. Davies's criticism of Peake's trilogy also shows that Peake's overall design is an important part of his consideration: "Peake is not able to keep his invention at the highest pitch all through it" (*Enthusiasms* 195). The final singular "it" is important because his criticism suggests that his understanding of Peake's intention, revealed both through the three titles and a continuous plot, motivated him not only to see the three books as one long novel, but also to judge them as a single undertaking of the novelist.

Davies's review of Evelyn Waugh's war trilogy adds more evidence about his general notion of the novel sequence, as well as showing its consistency. In "Waugh at

the Top of His Form" (1962), Davies treats Waugh's "three war volumes" as one book (27). Like his other reviews already discussed, Davies again uses a summary of the three books to justify his view:

In the three war volumes [Waugh's] hero is Guy Crouchback, a dim Catholic gentleman who sees the principles which are the essence of life to him betrayed on every side by government and friends. He saw the war as a holy crusade until Russia became an ally of the democracies; after that it was a filthy mess in which the wicked triumphed. (27)

As the summary shows, Davies still focuses his attention on those intertextual narrative elements that produce a sense of continuity. In Waugh's case, the effect, as Davies's summary suggests, is achieved by his use of one protagonist for the whole trilogy and his sequentially chronological presentation of this protagonist's experience. There is no doubt that Davies is fully aware of Waugh's intention to complete a trilogy about the Second World War, and of the general trilogy structure because Waugh's intention is explicitly stated on the dust-jacket of the first volume, *Men at Arms*: "He [Waugh] hopes to complete a trilogy of novels, each complete in itself, recounting the phases of a long love affair, full of vicissitudes, between a civilian and the army." Davies himself evidently followed closely the publications of the three volumes: he reviewed the second volume, *Officers and Gentlemen* ("Elephantine Novels" 31-34), and "reread the two earlier volumes" before he wrote the review of the third novel and of the three as a whole ("Waugh at the Top of His Form" 27). It is most likely that the authorial intention and the general plot fully revealed on the dust-jacket of the first book, together with the interconnections created by the main character, Guy Crouchback, lead Davies to respond to Waugh's trilogy as relating one story.

Davies's concept remains unchanged after he himself completed two trilogies. In a lecture given in 1976, more than a decade after his review of Waugh's trilogy and a year after his completion of the Deptford trilogy, he discusses and compares the

attitude towards and depiction of evil in three novel sequences: Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time* and Waugh's *Sword of Honour* trilogy. Proust's sequence is classified as a "great novel of social life" (*One Half* 258). Powell's, already completed in twelve books, is still considered a "long novel" and then further emphasized as a "long, long book" (259, 260). Although Waugh's trilogy is described in a slightly different way, it is still treated as a single story of "one man's struggle against a world being enclosed in folly and sin, triviality and spiritual shoddiness" (261). The evidence given here further shows that Davies's notion of the novel sequence is consistent, if limited.

Differentiating His Trilogies From Other Novel Sequences: Individual Novels Versus One Long Novel

Davies's general concept of the novel sequence, revealed in his reviews and essays, makes it possible for us to compare it with his view of his own trilogies. This comparison should further illuminate the main issue raised at the beginning of this chapter: why Davies thinks his trilogies are "not really trilogies or series". An inclusive and careful review of Davies's other remarks about his own novels--made in interviews, essays and correspondence--will show that, contrary to his general view of the novel sequence, he has never regarded his own as long novels, but, instead, insisted that they are individual novels. His treatment of the three Salterton books is the most revealing evidence. Ever since the publication of the Salterton novels, Davies has always referred to them publicly as separate and independent novels. In the lengthy interview with Gordon Roper in 1968, for instance, Davies discusses the Salterton novels one by one as if there were no connection whatsoever between them (Roper, "Conversations" 6-61). In the interview with Donald Cameron in 1971, Davies refers to this trilogy simply as "the Salterton novels" or "the novels" (D. Cameron 32, 33). His explanation to Cameron about the writing of "the Salterton novels" further

indicates that he considers each novel as a separate entity: "One of the things I was interested in doing when I wrote these novels was to try and find out whether such novels about Canada were possible, because I don't know of any others that deal with Canadian situations in quite that way--and yet they *are* Canadian" (76).

Despite his awareness that the Salterton novels have been grouped as a trilogy by some reviewers and critics, and that "the Salterton trilogy" has been studied as a whole, Davies shows no inclination to treat the three as one long novel. The general title "the Salterton trilogy" was used as early as 1972 by Elspeth Buitenhuis/Cameron in her booklet on Davies (*Robertson Davies* 49). Davies evidently read the book because he made some critical comments on it⁸. Collecting reviews of his novels⁹, Davies had every opportunity to learn that his Salterton novels were regarded as a trilogy. Among them, Martha MacGregor's review (6 Jan. 1973) particularly calls attention to the existing Salterton trilogy: "Five of his novels are in print, three of which form a trilogy. *The Manticore* is the second book of another trilogy of which *Fifth Business* is the first of the series" (*New York Post* 35). Davies's letter to Patricia Morley (Feb. 23, 1976) in which he expresses his appreciation of her article, "Davies' Salterton Trilogy: Where the Myth Touches Us", suggests that not only does he accept this general title but also is pleased that she studied the three novels as a whole:

I have just received *Studies in Canadian Literature* with your article on the Salterton trilogy in it and I write to congratulate you on what I think is a very perceptive and interesting piece of work. I was particularly pleased that you stressed the fact that these three books are about very much the

⁸ In the interview with R. Heatherington and G. Kampf in April 1973, Davies told them: "There are a lot of things in [E. Buitenhuis's book] that I never said and don't agree with... (115). Later in his letter to Patricia Monk (9 Jan. 1976) he openly criticized the book for being "painfully superficial and inaccurate" (NA 79:31).

⁹ The clippings of reviews of Davies's eleven novels are kept in volumes 88, 89, 90 and 91 in Manuscript Group 30 D 362 at the National Archives of Canada.

same sort of essential theme as the later trilogy—a fact which has escaped virtually all the critics. (NA 79:30)

But in the interview with Bronwyn Drainie in 1979, Davies still refers to the Salterton trilogy only as "the first three novels" (178). Davies's comments on the Salterton novels thus show that he lays a strong emphasis on the individuality of each novel rather than on the interrelated and unifying effect these novels together produce, a striking contrast to his treatment of the other novel sequences he reviewed.

The same emphasis can be noticed in his comments on the Deptford trilogy. In the 1975 interview with Margaret Penman, who begins the interview by specifically reminding him that the three Deptford novels have been "called the Deptford Trilogy", he shows no sign of considering this trilogy as one novel, but only refers to it as "these novels" (150). Even when in retrospect he expresses explicitly his "agreement" with his readers' view that the three Deptford books form a trilogy, Davies still emphasizes only the self-contained nature of the individual books in this trilogy: "The novels of mine which have been most warmly received are the three last to appear; they are called *Fifth Business*, *The Manticore*, and *World of Wonders*. They are usually referred to as a trilogy, and I am quite in agreement with that..." (*One Half* 15). In "The Deptford Trilogy in Retrospect", he states firmly at the very beginning: "It was not my intention to write three novels about the story that forms the basis for what people now call the Deptford trilogy" (7). His specification of "three novels" indicates once again that he retains a distinctively different view of his linked novels from his view of sequences by other novelists.

It is important to note that in this statement Davies acknowledges that the three books share "the basis" of one story. Actually he is more frank about this fact in his letter to Patricia Monk (5 Feb. 1976) in which he tells her explicitly that these novels were created out of "one single story" (NA 79:31). Commenting on some reviewers' criticisms of *World of Wonders*, Davies explains to Monk: "A great many reviewers

take the line that it is not up to the level of the earlier books. I feel that this is because they do not consider it in the light of the earlier books—that they do not think of the three as making up *a single story*" (NA 79:31, emphasis added). Admitting that this trilogy deals with one single story, Davies unwittingly puts his linked novels in the same position as the sequences he discussed in his reviews and essays. This information makes it possible for us to see more clearly the differences in treatment between the other sequences and his own. His summary of the Deptford trilogy further invites us to see the contrast, particularly between his treatment of his own and Cary's first trilogy, as the two trilogies share a similar narrative structure:

The consequences of the snowball with the stone in it continue for sixty years, and do much to shape the lives of three men, and in a lesser way to influence the lives of many people whom they encounter. One man becomes a speculative scholar with a touch of the saint about him: one man lives a sensual, self-serving life and dies, at the age of seventy, because he is suddenly faced with the reality—or one of the realities—of what he is: the third man lives heroically, in the sense that his life is a struggle against severe odds, and achieves a queer kind of fame. (*One Half* 16-17)

The passage shows that, like Cary, Davies also explores the relationships of three characters and their "supporting roles in each other's personal dramas", with each book concentrating on one man only (*Voice* 235). However, in Cary's trilogy, the "one" story Davies perceives makes him take the three books as one long novel or a "three-decker novel" despite his awareness of the "differences of emphasis and point of view" in the three books and of the loose link between the third book and the previous two. By contrast, even though he acknowledges that his three Deptford books are derived from "one single story", Davies obviously does not regard his trilogy as one long novel. This is also true of the Cornish trilogy. Here, he explicitly states that the three novels "explore the life and influence of Francis Cornish" and *The Lyre of Orpheus* "is

the third part of a story", but still makes no claim that they form one long novel (*Orpheus* n. pg.; "For the Franklin Library" NA 56:51). This brief review of Davies's attitude towards his trilogies makes it evident that he insists on distinguishing his own trilogies from other sequences by regarding the others as long novels and each of his own as three individual novels. Whether this is a distinction without a difference will be discussed below.

Further Differentiations: "Not Precisely a Sequel", "Never Planned It As a Trilogy", "There Was No Planned Trilogy"

When reviewing Davies's comments on his trilogies, he repeatedly emphasizes two issues: one concerns the relation of the later novels to the previous ones in a trilogy, the relation which, as he describes, is "not precisely a sequel"; the other concerns the formation of the three trilogies, which are, as he asserts, "never planned". Analyzing these two statements carefully, I realize that they represent two aspects of the main difference he tries to draw attention to and they are the answer to why he never treats his own trilogies as long novels in the way he treats the sequences of other novelists. But because his view of the relation of his individual novels to each other is mainly expressed in private discussions with editors and friends, most readers are unaware that Davies has been consistently making these distinctions. A chronological look at a few selected and representative passages from his hitherto unpublished letters, together with his interviews and published material, will enable us to see the further differentiations he has made.

Although publicly Davies has always maintained that the novels in his trilogies are "linked", as his introduction to *A Mixture of Frailties* (the Everest edition) and the prefatory notes to *World of Wonders* and *The Lyre of Orpheus* indicate, his private discussions of the relation between the component parts suggest that he chooses the term "linked" rather than "sequel" to differentiate his novels from the neatly planned

sequences of others. Davies made this distinction as early as 1954 when he was writing the second Salterton novel, *Leaven of Malice*. He told John Johnson at E. P. S. Lewin & Partners (11 Jan. 1954): "At the moment I am at work finishing another novel which is *not precisely a sequel* to *Tempest-Tost* but includes some of the characters from it and has some of the same setting" (NA 47:8, emphasis added). The connection between these two Salterton books was mentioned again in his letter (5 July 1954) to W. H. Clarke, his Canadian publisher, when expressing his disappointment with the change of the American publisher: "Though I am not sorry to be done with Rinehart, I do not think it a happy circumstance that two books as nearly allied as *Tempest-Tost* and *Leaven of Malice* should appear by different publishers..." (NA 45:15). In this case, he uses "nearly allied" to differentiate the relation of the first two novels from that of what could be called "allied" sequel novels.

By the time he planned to write the second Deptford novel, *The Manticore*, Davies appeared to emphasize more deliberately the difference in the relation between his novels and those in the sequences he reviewed. In a letter to Josephine Rogers, Vice President of Curtis Brown, Ltd. (9 April 1970), he made a special point about the relation of the second novel to the first: "If I were to pursue my present plan, the new book would be, *not precisely a sequel*, but a book contingent upon *Fifth Business*" (NA 45:34, emphasis added). Writing to novelist Hugh MacLennan (13 Jan. 1971), Davies clarified the distinction: "The book [*The Manticore*] would not be a sequel--no hint of *The Bobbsey Twins at Long Island* being followed by *The Bobbsey Twins at Yellowstone Park*--but another aspect of a complex theme" (NA 47:23). The example Davies gives here suggests that the reason why *The Manticore* is "not precisely a sequel" is that it does not follow *Fifth Business* closely enough or in a chronological order. His explanation to Peter C. Newman (29 May, 1972) sheds further light on the kind of distinction he tries to make:

[*The Manticore*] is not precisely a sequel to *Fifth Business*, though it is about many of the same people. However, as the chief character of the book is Boy Staunton's son David, all of these people are seen from a different point of view, and sometimes the difference between David's understanding of an incident, and Dunstan Ramsay's, is very different. (NA 79:33)

Davies's announcement in the note to *World of Wonders* that the three Deptford books are "linked novels" suggests that he takes a step further from maintaining that his novels are "not precisely" sequels to specifying the kind of relation each component has to others. His private discussions of the Cornish novels show the same tendency. Explaining to his editor Elisabeth Sifton a cause of the difficulty in writing *The Rebel Angels* (13 Nov. 1980), he confided to her: "The book has given me more trouble than any book I have ever written and has left me feeling rather depleted. As you may guess when you read it, I have a sequel in mind, or rather not so much a sequel as a book that is linked with this one" (NA 52:28). It is important to note that in this letter, he not only specifies what is and what is not the relationship between *The Rebel Angels* and the next novel, but also confirms that he actually was planning, when creating the first Cornish novel, to write at least one more book to follow it. The information is also crucial because it sounds incongruous with his later remarks made in his "progress report" (1984) to Sifton and in the 1986 interview with her.

Taking into account that Davies pays close attention to what his reviewers say about his novels (his collection of the reviews is the evidence), we would expect that the positive responses to the interconnections between one novel and the other both in the Salterton and Deptford trilogies would have made him accept his readers' perception instead of contradicting it. When *Leaven of Malice* was published in Canada, almost all the reviewers called attention to the link in setting and character

between this book and *Tempest-Tost*¹⁰. Some applauded the interconnections, including Shelah Nolan who praised the novel for being "a worthy sequel to *Tempest-Tost*"¹¹ (4). Similarly, Canadian reviews of *A Mixture of Frailties* were very complimentary about the affiliation of the new novel with the previous two. Donald Stainsby, for example, made a specific comment on the effect of the three read jointly:

Robertson Davies has done it again. To old friends, *A Mixture of Frailties* is like a happy homecoming. It's a delight to once more become embroiled in the restrained lunacy of life in Salterton, the university town which Davies has created and peopled in previous books.

It isn't at all necessary to read *Tempest-Tost* and *Leaven of Malice* to enjoy this latest tale. But it certainly adds an extra twist to the knife now and again as Davies ever so genteelly strikes it into human pomposities, shortcomings and plain absurdities. (5)

Because *Tempest-Tost* and *Leaven of Malice* were published by different publishers in the United States, some American reviewers of the second and the third novels might have been unaware of the existence of the first¹². But when *A Mixture of Frailties* appeared, most, like the Canadian reviewers, enjoyed the interconnections very much, as Dan Wickenden's comment shows: "It is a pleasure to return, in the opening pages of this Canadian author's new book, to the university town of Salterton, and to

¹⁰ This may have been prompted by the information provided on the dust-jacket of *Leaven of Malice* which says: "*Leaven of Malice* is Robertson Davies' second novel. As in *Tempest-Tost*, the first, the locale of the story is Salterton, a Canadian provincial city, and some old friends from *Tempest-Tost* make their reappearance here."

¹¹ Claude Bissell also judged it as "a sequel" ("*Leaven of Malice*" 266). See also in the appendix (b) the reviews by Joan Walker and J. B. M. and an anonymous one in *TLS*.

¹² For example, Orville Prescott writes in his review of *Leaven of Malice*: "Salterton is much too amusing a place to be disposed of in only one book" (23). In their reviews of *A Mixture of Frailties*, both Milton Crane and Edmund Fuller think it Davies's second novel.

reencounter some of old friends..." (4). Like *Leaven of Malice, A Mixture of Frailties* was also regarded by some as "a sequel". For instance, William Du Bis pointed out that Davies's "new book begins as a kind of sequel" (17) and Hugh McPherson took it "as a sequel to *Leaven of Malice*" ("The Mask of Satire" 28).

When *The Manticore* was published, most reviewers, both Canadian and American, accepted it with enthusiasm as a sequel to *Fifth Business*. Alan Dawe's review, entitled "Still More to Be Said" represents one of them:

What greater pleasure can a reader have than discovering that a book he sincerely admired has a sequel he hadn't looked for? Such a discovery, with its concomitant pleasures, is now available for the many admirers of Rob Davies' *Fifth Business*. The sequel is *The Manticore* and it's just as satisfactory a reading experience as its predecessor, although different in certain ways. (35 A)

Edmund Fuller not only holds the same view but thinks that the two books "form one work": "It is a sequel to *Fifth Business*, and though it could be read by one who does not know the former book, our advice in such case is to combine that missed pleasure with the reading of *The Manticore*. They form one work" (6). Martha MacGregor even predicted that these two novels formed a part of a trilogy: "*The Manticore* is the second book of another trilogy, of which *Fifth Business* is the first in the series" (35). By the time *World of Wonders* came out, reviewers almost uniformly responded to it as the continuation of the previous two narratives and the conclusion of the Deptford trilogy. Some reviewers emphatically praised Davies for creating the later Deptford novels as sequels, pointing out that writing a sequel requires more skills in connecting the subsequent plots with the original novel. Bruce Cook voiced such an opinion in *The National Observer* (Britain) and regarded *The Manticore* as "one of the best":

Sequels are a risky business. It is not just the problem of working out the details so that the gears mesh smoothly from one book to the next—though

this may not always be easy. There is also the more considerable difficulty of competing with oneself, for that is what the author inevitably does when he follows up a book about one set of characters with another about the same set. Readers frame expectations and make presuppositions, and the novelist must somehow satisfy them. If he does not, he is said to have lost his inspiration--or, worse still, of having squeezed out one more just to cash in on the success of the earlier work. (23)

However, these encouraging reviews and the readers' acceptance of his Salterton and Deptford novels both as sequels and as trilogies did not make Davies change his view of his own linked novels.

The fact that Davies asserted his view more vehemently when he was writing the Cornish novels further suggests that he intended his readers to recognize the difference between his linked novels and sequences by other novelists. This is indicated by his comments to Douglas Gibson (27 Aug. 1984), his editor at Macmillan of Canada:

The book [*What's Bred in the Bone*], as I think you know, is linked with *RebAngs*, but is not a sequel, indeed the action is anterior to the first book and is the life of Francis Cornish, art connoisseur whose great collection set off the action in the first book. This is bad chronology, I know, but the fact is that I do not write trilogies, as neatly planned to follow in sequence: I write about group of characters, and their stories get mixed up and sometimes cause some awkwardness. I am not a Henry James worker in exquisite marquetry; my stuff is often very badly shaped. (NA 49:43)

It is unusual at this late date for Davies to deny writing trilogies, especially when he himself has regarded the Deptford novels as a trilogy. But his self-criticism of his novels for having a "bad chronology" or being "badly shaped" offers an indirect explanation of why he judged his novels in this way. In this context, chronology evidently is his primary consideration. He seems to imply that the novels in a sequence

have to follow a straightforward and close temporal order in their narratives to qualify as sequels¹³. It is thus understandable that because his novels, including the Salterton and Deptford ones, do not possess such an order (this will be illustrated in the discussion of each of the three trilogies), Davies refuses to take them as sequels or as forming a long novel. Furthermore, by saying that "I do not write trilogies, all neatly planned to follow in sequence", he succeeds in directing our attention to another aspect of the difference, that is, his novels are not intentionally or "neatly planned to follow in sequence". The comparison he made between his own "badly shaped" linked novels and "neatly planned" sequences of others suggests that Davies regards an authorial intention to create a sequence from the outset as being an indispensable prerequisite. He seems to believe that an author's conscious intention would guarantee a neatly planned sequential structure in which all parts are sequels and form a long novel.

Given Davies's self-criticism of his linked novels in this letter, and considering what he said in the interview with Sifton and in his correspondence, one may say that Davies does achieve his purpose of differentiating his linked novels from other novel sequences. He makes his point by treating his novels differently and by insisting that they are not trilogies or series. However, one has to realize that his remarks, though consistent, are misleading. For one thing, Davies's concept confuses two generically different kinds of novels: a long novel or single story formed by sequels, and a sequence composed of not necessarily chronologically interrelated novels (the confusion is a common phenomenon already discussed in the previous chapter). This confusion inevitably affects his judgment of the interconnections he deliberately made and leads

¹³ Davies's insistence that a novel sequence is simply a long novel or deals with one single story and its components are sequels and should follow a strictly chronological order is subject to the critical debate discussed in the previous chapter. In the context of my discussion, his concepts are used both as a mirror to reflect the distinctions he elaborates and as a means to explore his creative process and the evolution of his trilogies.

him to believe that his novels, though linked, are "not really trilogies or series". For another, he obviously overlooks the fact that readers judge a group of interrelated novels not by their neat planning or preconceived sequence structure, but by the interest an author arouses and the interactions he creates between books. Moreover readers are either ignorant of or often disregard authorial intention when reading a text and judging its intertextual relation to other books in a sequence. Davies's trilogies can best exemplify these two facts, as it is his readers who after recognizing the intertextual connections grouped his novels into trilogies.

The issue of authorial intention raised indirectly and repeatedly by Davies himself needs some clarification. If one keeps in mind that, according to Jung's theory, an artistic creation is dependent upon either conscious or unconscious intentions, or both, it is easy to understand in a different way Davies's claim that he did not plan his novels to be trilogies--that they just occurred. Jung suggests that there are "two entirely different modes of creation", "introverted" and "extraverted", the former "characterized by the subject's assertion of his conscious intentions and aims against the demands of the object", the latter "by the subject's subordination to the demands which the object makes upon him" (CW 15:111:73). Jung also states: "Researchers have shown that there are all sorts of ways in which the conscious mind is not only influenced by the unconscious but actually guided by it" (CW 15:114:74). Jung's theory helps to explain why Davies's trilogies are intentional products despite his occasional denial that he does not write trilogies or that his novels are not really trilogies or series. In Davies's case, what is at issue is not whether or not he had made a plan, before starting the first novel, to write three linked novels and worked out what was to follow and how to continue from one narrative to the next, but his decision to borrow or reuse some of the material and narrative elements from the first book. In making intertextual connections, his intention was not only involved, but became part of his creative activity as well. An examination of the evolution of his trilogies will

illustrate that his intentions, conscious or unconscious, were involved in his creative process and should further clarify his misleading remarks.

The Evolution of Davies's Trilogies: From Uncertain and Tentative Novel Writing to Conscious and Deliberate Creation of Linked Novels

I begin this examination by looking first at the formation of the three Marchbanks books, *The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks* (1947), *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* (1949), and *Samuel Marchbanks' Almanack* (1967), the formation of which I believe has some direct as well as indirect influence not only on his novel writing, but, more specifically, on his use of the trilogy form in his novels. I will show that composing and compiling the material for these three books prepared him for the transition in his creative writing from a journalist to a trilogy novelist. Davies himself openly admits that his journalistic writing had a strong influence on the writing of his novels in one particular way: "I have always been grateful for my journalistic experience, which amounts to millions of words of writing, because it kept my technique in good muscular shape" (*One Half* 130). But the influence of his journalism is more extensive than Davies himself allows. In the three Marchbanks books we can see that he made a preliminary and tentative experiment first with recurrent fictional elements to create pieces which are coherent enough to be put together and read as a unified work; second with different narrative structures to make each book independent and at the same time linked to the other two by shared narrative elements. It is very likely that Davies's success in experimenting with the three Marchbanks books gave him inspiration and confidence to apply the same structural techniques to his first three novels. The Marchbanks books are therefore very useful for tracing Davies's development both in creating interrelated material and experiment with the triad format. The focus of this discussion is mainly on the formal influence of the Marchbanks books.

The material for the Marchbanks books was produced when Davies was the editor of the *Peterborough Examiner* (he became editor on 1 Mar. 1942). The name "Samuel Marchbanks" was first used as an alternative signature for his weekly book reviews. But from 13 November 1943, "The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks" appeared on the Saturday editorial page and became a weekly column filled with his seven-day diary-entries. "The Diary" column lasted for almost ten years excluding the summer months, and stopped in the spring of 1953. Between September 1949 and December 1950, Davies changed "The Diary" into "The Correspondence of Samuel Marchbanks" "written chiefly by Samuel Mbks but also containing letters written to him by a variety of people"¹⁴. It was when creating Marchbanks's diary that Davies was faced for the first time with the challenge of maintaining a stylistic and formal consistency and sustaining readers' interest both in Marchbanks's character and his point of view.

The effect of Marchbanks and his diary is two-fold. From a journalistic perspective, the fictional Marchbanks and his pseudo-diary give Davies "a freedom from the conventional restraints of book reviewing and civic-minded editorializing" (Peterman 17). In other words, Davies is able to use Marchbanks to voice his opinions without reserve on subjects which are otherwise not always suitable for him to express as an editor. Gordon Roper makes a particular comment on this particular effect: "Marchbanks' feelings and opinions are those of Robertson Davies--selected, transmuted, and dramatized as a verbal performance" ("Introduction" to *The Table Talk* xi). Davies himself describes this experience years later, explaining why he created Marchbanks's diary:

¹⁴ Davies told W. H. Clarke about the change in a letter of March 31, 1950. The letter is kept at the McMaster University Archives, Box 103, File 5, abbreviated as "McMaster 103:5". Henceforth sources from the same Archives will be given in the abbreviated way.

I think it is a portion of me which could not find expression in any other way, a portion of my discontent with the world as I see it about me. It also is a portion of Canada, there's an awful lot of Samuel Marchbanks in Canada and when you really get Canadians talking, you hear that sharp, judgmental, discontented voice, and I think that's real. (Gzowski 251)

Considered from the perspective of a potential novelist, Davies's creation of Marchbanks's diary enables him, even when working as a journalist, to begin both his search for an open and flexible form which suits his creative impulse and with which he can demonstrate his artistic imagination and creative talent. At the same time he is able to take advantage of the form to experiment and practice with the interaction between an individual entry as a separate piece and as a part of a sequence. Patricia Monk's comment on the reasons why Davies chose the diary form for the column highlights the significance of this experience:

The flexibility of the diary made it an obvious choice as the form of his presentation. As editor of the daily *Peterborough Examiner*, Davies may have had such practical considerations as keeping readers interested and saving time (because diary entries could, at least to a certain extent, be written up ahead when time offered).... Furthermore, on the artistic level, the same flexibility produces a medium extremely well suited for "experimental" writing. The diary offers the writer a loose or open form--one which is free of structural demands (such as plot) and of topic restrictions (such as a book-review column), but which has an intrinsic continuity in the identity of the diarist. (*Smaller Infinity* 28)

Looking at the Marchbanks column this way, one may say that "The Diary" gives Davies an opportunity to try fictional writing by working on voice and character and finding ways to sustain his readers' interest and anticipation both in the diarist and in what he has to say. To achieve such effects, Davies gives this pseudo and fictional

diarist the identity of a middle-aged bachelor who was born in a place called Skunk's Misery, lived in Marchbanks Towers and earned his living as a journalist. But what strikes readers most is the diarist's strong personality: outspoken, opinionated, humorous, irascible, curmudgeonly, flamboyant, idiosyncratic, and hypochondriacal. These characteristics are revealed through Marchbanks's observation of, comments on and reaction to current affairs. Thus Marchbanks left an impression of a full-blooded person on his contemporary readers and made them feel the closeness of his and their common concerns. Furthermore, as a diary is thought to be personal and private, the form itself can arouse readers' curiosity not only about the content of the diary but about the diarist's character and his likes and dislikes. Davies's success in keeping the column running week after week, year after year, owes much to his presentation of Marchbanks's self-revealing, often provoking, and intriguing personality. It is not surprising that Marchbanks was later regarded as "Davies' first major fictional character" (Monk, *Smaller Infinity* 37) or "Davies's proto-fictional hero" (Deveson 1137). Davies's creation of the continuity with the Marchbanks material anticipates his later experiments and practice with an enlarged fictional narrative structure that ultimately results in the trilogy form.

The transformation of the Marchbanks's diary (and correspondence) into three books prefigures the trilogy structure Davies later worked out with three groups of linked novels. Although *The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks* and *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks* are both composed of already published diary entries, and *Samuel Marchbanks' Almanack* contains in part some of "The Correspondence", Davies's selection and arrangement of the old journalistic writings into three books reflect his deliberate and elaborate design to make each book self-contained and simultaneously interrelated with the other two. *The Diary*, for example, is composed of 365 entries which are specially chosen and arranged to fit into an unspecified year in Marchbanks's life. In this way, *The Diary* is complete in terms of its own time cycle. Davies's letter

(7 March 1947) to W. H. Clarke reveals his special effort to transform the weekly diary pieces into a coherent yearly diary as a book:

Judging by the success that the *Diary* has had as a newspaper feature, and by the fact that the *Ottawa Citizen* [*sic*] has recently bought the right to publish it for a considerable sum (judged by Canadian syndicate standards) I think that it might have a pleasant success in book form, and as I have revised most of the matter which is in it, it is rather better now than when it appeared in the newspapers. (McMaster 103:5)

The success of *The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks* encouraged both its publisher and author to produce another Marchbanks book. This is suggested in "The Nature and Use of This Book", a disguised preface to *The Table Talk*, in which Davies openly admits through Marchbanks that he was "encouraged" "by the kindly reception" given to the *Diary* to offer another book (v). Davies himself appeared to be more confident when selecting and editing the contents for the second text, as his letter (21 Jan. 1949) to his editor R. W. W. Robertson shows:

I will let you have the manuscript of the new Marchbanks book as early in May as possible.... I should like to call the book *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks*, and arrange it in a manner which will make it possible to read it in small pieces like the *Diary*, without imitating the *Diary* form. (NA 81:8)

The letter makes it plain that, by the time he undertook the task of preparing the second book, Davies consciously intended to present a different kind of book from *The Diary*. His choice of the title suggests that he wanted to use Marchbanks's name to call his readers' attention to the compatible and interrelated relationship between this book and *The Diary*, since the readers would have been already familiar with the diarist/narrator of the previous book. What Davies achieves with his intended design is a unique structure which resembles a seven-course dinner and gives the book a specific form of

its own. To match this structure, Davies revised some of the diary entries and "expanded certain of these to include some form of address, usually sardonic, to a dinner guest" (Peterman 27). In addition, every entry in this book is captioned to highlight the gist of each monologue. Davies's concern about this second book evidently goes beyond its unity. He also wants readers of the second book to know that this book is directly linked with *The Diary*. To achieve this purpose, he tactfully uses the recurrent character/narrator Marchbanks to do the job. Anyone who reads Marchbanks's statement: "Encouraged, therefore, by the kindly reception which has been given to my *Diary*, which I published two years ago, I offer to the public these odds and ends from my *Table Talk*", will learn immediately that there is a book before this one by the same "author" and about the "author" (*The Table Talk* v). In this way, readers can easily associate the second book with the previous one simply on the basis of the same narrator. Had Marchbanks's name been changed in the second book, the obvious interconnections between the two books would have been lost.

Although *Marchbanks' Almanack* was not published until 1967, evidence shows that Davies was already considering adding one more book to the already existing Marchbanks series a few months after the publication of *The Table Talk*. On 31 March 1950, he wrote to W. H. Clarke tactfully asking him to consider "a third Marchbanks book":

Do you think that in the course of another couple of years there will be any place for a third Marchbanks book? I ask this not in the hope of extracting any promise from you, but merely because I find that the thought of a possible book influences the choice of subjects and the treatment of them when I am writing these pieces. (McMaster 103:5)

As the letter suggests, unlike the contents in the previous two books which are mainly composed of the pieces he wrote solely for the newspaper column, Davies proposed selecting subjects and writing about them both for the column and for the future third

book. Another piece of evidence further suggests that, immediately after he had completed *The Table Talk* and before he wrote this letter, Davies in fact already made some preparations for the third book by changing the Marchbanks column from "The Diary" into "The Correspondence of Samuel Marchbanks" in September 1949. According to the editor's "Report on Manuscript [of "The Correspondence of Samuel Marchbanks]" dated 8 Feb. 1952, Davies evidently used not only the material from "The Correspondence" but adopted the title for the book as well (McMaster 103:5). All this indicates that Davies carried out his proposed plan and deliberately designed a different form for the third book. Although this book went through many changes due to the publisher's objections to the title and the contents (see Grant's *Man of Myth*, 268-69), the completion of the *Almanack* manuscript¹⁵ suggests that he strove to make the third volume an independent book and used Marchbanks again to connect this book with the previous two. The result is that the three books form a triad.

It is worth pointing out that, because Davies wrote his first novel *Tempest-Tost* almost at the same time as planning to create one more Marchbanks book¹⁶, *Marchbanks's Almanack* shows a marked development in his creation of different narrative voices and plot-related continuity. This can be easily noticed by the on-going correspondence concerning the lawsuit that Marchbanks brought against his neighbour, Richard Dandiprat, for introducing a skunk into his car. The skunk case not only becomes a plot but also generates a chain of letters in the course of the book between

¹⁵ According to Davies's letter to Robertson dated 23 June 1953, the manuscript of the *Almanack* had by then been in his publisher's hands already: "I am sending you the additional material for the *Almanack*, I feel that it is all that can be introduced into the present material without making too much of a hodgepodge.... I hope that this additional material will bring the book up to what you and Mr. Clarke want it. I feel much better about the book now that I have completed this new stuff and I feel that it will be sufficient to give it much more the air of an *Almanack*" (NA 45: 15).

¹⁶ Davies began writing the first novel on "September 18 1950", and finished it in May 1951 (the manuscript "was delivered May 15 [1951]"), according to his note on the cover of *Tempest-Tost* notebook (NA 13:4).

several people involved in the case: Marchbanks and his lawyer, Marchbanks and the accused, and Marchbanks and the lawyer for the accused. Davies's creation of these characters' responses to the case and to each other provides different types of comic characters. To a certain extent, some of the characters and the complications surrounding the skunk lawsuit foreshadow the legal case caused by the false engagement notice in the second Salterton novel, *Leaven of Malice*. This suggests that Davies progressed rapidly during his creation of the pieces for both "The Correspondence" and the third Marchbanks book in manipulating narrative voices and establishing plots.

Despite the fact that *Marchbanks' Almanack* was rejected by his publishers in August 1953¹⁷, the manuscript evidence indicates that Davies has succeeded, without a preconceived plan, in working out a group of three books united externally by the first-person narrator, Marchbanks, and intrinsically by his self-revealing personality and outspoken and single-minded viewpoint. Considering the three together, one can see that, by creating a different narrative structure for each book, Davies can easily keep each independent of the others and that, once Marchbanks's persona is established, he can keep using it as a formal device both for the individual book and for the three as a unified group. The connections between the Marchbanks books thus make them the first triad in Davies's creative and fictional writing.

The examination of the formation of the Marchbanks triad, then, makes it possible for us to explore further how this triad form anticipates the trilogy structure Davies later created in the Salterton, Deptford, and Cornish novels and how his experience of working out the Marchbanks series influences the evolution of the three novel trilogies. The impact of the series on Davies's creative inspiration and artistic

¹⁷ Davies's note says, "August 13, 1953 Chatto [the British publisher] did not like *Almanack & CI* [Clarke & Irvin] backed out--phone calls" (NA 45:15).

imagination can be perceived mainly from two aspects. On the one hand, his practice in composing these quasi-fictional books prepared him technically for constructing a similar structure with three novels. He would have learned that there was no need to plan ahead what was to follow if he wanted to create a series, and that he could contrive a different structure for each book to let it stand by itself. He would also have realized that, if by using Marchbanks alone both as a character and narrator he could make sufficient connections uniting the three books, the possibilities of linking any two novels were unlimited. Furthermore, the success of the first two books undoubtedly had a psychological impact on him. This is made clear by his decision to try his hand at a novel, as he revealed to W. H. Clarke on 20 June 1950:

This is not the time, perhaps, to bother you with such a question but I have been thinking recently about writing a novel. I have a play worked out in considerable detail and the more I think about it the more it seems to me that it would do just as well as a novel. I have never tried to write a novel and do not know how it will work out. However, I am becoming a little discouraged with the difficulties of working with Canadian Little Theatre groups. I am actually appealing to you for advice in this matter: do you think that the success of the Marchbanks books has laid the sort of foundation upon which a novel could be rested? It would, I may say, be a light and amusing story, and my experience as a book reviewer tells me that light and amusing stories are rather uncommon at present. (McMaster 103:5)

Based on this letter, one can see that the success of the first two Marchbanks books plays an important part in his final decision to write a novel¹⁸, a decision which marks

¹⁸ Davies was in fact thinking about writing novels as early as 1947. Graham McInnis revealed this in *Saturday Night* on 26 April 1947, "If, by the age of 40, he has not achieved this aim [to have his plays produced in England], he says he will turn to novels" (15).

a turning-point in his creative career from a journalist and playwright into a novelist¹⁹. The letter also implies that the writing of the first novel will rely in part on the technical skills developed when organizing the material for the Marchbanks books²⁰. Based on this letter, one can perceive the subtle and far-reaching effect that the Marchbanks books had on Davies's further development and later achievement both as a novelist and as a trilogy writer. But at the time when he decided to write the first novel he was evidently full of uncertainty about his skill as a fiction writer, as his appeal to his publisher indicates. Understandably, this is because he was faced with the more challenging task of fabricating and presenting a continuous book length narrative with at least one plot, more than one character, and general themes.

As in the case of the first Marchbanks book, Davies initially had only one novel in mind, and as he revealed to Clarke, he wanted to turn the material for a play into a novel. The idea of writing a second novel came as an afterthought, a situation similar to that which resulted in second Marchbanks book. But in this case, the idea was prompted by the numerous revisions required by his publishers, both Canadian and British²¹, which Davies found difficult to undertake. At one point the publishers' objections made him not only uncertain but also doubtful about his capacity as a novelist, as his severe self-judgment of *Tempest-Tost* shows: "I am now firmly of the

¹⁹ Before he began *Tempest-Tost*, Davies had written nine plays: *The King Who Could Not Dream*; *Hope Deferred*; *Benoni* (later retitled *A Jig for the Gypsy*); *Overlaid*; *Eros at Breakfast*; *The Voice of the People*; *At the Gates of the Righteous*; *Fortune, My Foe*; *King Phoenix* and *At My Heart's Core*.

²⁰ Davies's experience as a playwright also had some direct or indirect influence on his novel writing. This will be dealt with in the discussion of the individual trilogies in the ensuing chapters.

²¹ In his letter to W. H. Clarke (28 July 1951), Davies enclosed a copy of his reply to Mr. Harold Raymond, the editor of the British company, who had a long list of objections. Davies argued about each objection and expressed his objection to further revisions: "Changes at this date are not easy ... my inner manufactory has stopped work on *Tempest-Tost*, and so far as I am concerned it is finished" (McMaster 103:5).

opinion that *Tempest-Tost* is the most ill-written and trivial piece of rubbish ever written by the hand of man" (Letter to Robertson, 11 May 1951, McMaster 104:11). Nevertheless Davies did not give up but persevered. His letter to Robertson written on June 11, a month after his dispirited remark about his first novel, contains some crucial information about the circumstances under which the idea of creating another novel was conceived: "I have made an honest try to patch up the novel in accord with Mr. Clarke's wishes, but as you will see, the outcome has been insignificant. I just cannot feel that more is needed. We discussed the possibility of a sequel or companion, and more light may be shed on the characters there" (McMaster 104:11). As the letter indicates, the second novel which was thought to be "a sequel or companion" to the first is needed in part as a compromise to clarify and supplement his presentation of some characters in the first novel so as to fulfill his publisher's "wishes". Viewed this way, Davies's engagement in creating the interconnections between the first two novels is intentional and shows that he made a conscious effort to achieve the promised effect: "more light may be shed on the characters" in *Tempest-Tost*.

From his character sketches for the second novel in his "Works in Progress" notebook, one can see that the characters in question are mainly Pearl Vambrace and Solly Bridgetower because Davies explicitly emphasizes the predicament each has with a parent as told in the previous story²². Davies's note suggests that he continued his practice of using characters to make a direct link between this novel and the previous one. However, the text of *Leaven of Malice* shows that he has developed his method of uniting two books by employing narrative elements other than character, which is the chief linking device in the Marchbanks books, and that he has created a more complex and subtle interrelation between the first two novels, both of which reinforce the

²² In order to give a full description of these two characters so that Davies's intent to make intertextual connections can be perceived more clearly, I put the passages in the appendix (c).

intertextual effect. He also seems determined to keep the plot of the second novel independent of the one in the first. All this suggests that he did not follow his original idea of writing "a sequel or companion" and also explains why he told John Johnson that the second novel was "not precisely a sequel".

A comment should be made here on Davies's idea of writing "a sequel or companion" to *Tempest-Tost*, revealed in his letter to Robertson, because this was the first time and at the earliest stage of his fiction writing that he showed an inclination to create linked novels, and also, as I have suggested, because he later used the term repeatedly to differentiate the relation between his linked novels and the sequences of other novelists. Keeping in mind that Davies had no previous experience of writing a sequel, his notion of "a sequel" could only be formed from his reading experience and his own imagination. When writing *Leaven of Malice*, he showed his awareness that he was not following the conventions of sequel novels which require principally a continuing plot and employment of the same central character(s) from one novel to the next, as his letter to Johnson indicates. It is likely that in the course of planning and writing the second novel, Davies changed his mind and decided to create a different relation for his interrelated novels²³. Such a relation gives him freedom both to reuse the narrative devices and contents and to create a different plot for each individual novel. In this way, the recurrent elements connect the two novels but the different plots separate one from the other. On the other hand, he need not make any promise

²³ According to his notes in "Works in Progress", the second novel was divided into six sections: "The Barber's Chair", "The Pink Buttock", "The Quatch Buttock", "The Brawn Buttock", "Or Any Buttock" and "That Fits All Buttocks" (NA 27:7). Davies abandoned the original outline, indicated by "No: drop the whole buttock device" (NA 27:7). Robertson's letter to Davies on 22 Jan. 1954 suggests that "*The Barber's Chair*" was the original title (McMaster 104:4). In his reply on 25 Jan., three days later, Davies told Robertson: "I have completely changed the plan of it and re-written quite a lot of it and its new name is *The Leaven of Malice*" (McMaster 104:4). It is not clear, however, whether the original idea of writing "a sequel or companion" was included in the change.

either to his publisher or his readers, so he can stop or continue using the recurrent sources at will with no obligation. As an inexperienced novelist, this method allows him to write tentatively and experimentally and gives him time to discover readers' responses and then to decide what to do next.

The information I have provided so far about the evolution of the first two Salterton novels should make it clear that, despite confusing the novel sequence with sequel novels, Davies intentionally and successfully binds these two stories by expanding and continuing the side-story of Pearl and Solly. Although Davies revealed little about his conception of the links between the third Salterton novel and the previous two, the continuation of the Pearl-Solly story which is used as the frame of the third novel suggests that he consciously carried on his practice with the same group of characters and the same setting and used them as easily recognizable signifiers of the interconnections. The fact that he set the main story about Monica Gall in England, away from the Salterton community, and let her activities take place there most of the time leads one to see that Davies experiments further not only with the structure of the third book but with the sequence form as well. All this will be examined in detail in the next chapter dealing specially with the structure of the Salterton trilogy.

One special point should be made here about the role of *A Mixture of Frailties* in Davies's further development both as a novelist and trilogy writer. In terms of the former, this book marks a subtle but important transition in his presentation of character. In the course of creating the stories about Salterton and its people, Davies gradually changed his focus from the life of the Canadian provincial community, particularly the cultural life, to its influence on the psychological growth of individuals. His characterization of the central figure, Monica Gall, suggests that Davies's Jungian orientation, beginning during his writing of *Leaven of Malice* and before *A Mixture of*

*Frailties*²⁴, found its way into the third novel, and Davies transformed his understanding of Jung's theory and of himself into Monica's struggle with the influence of a parochial family, education and society. Davies's letter to his friend Gordon Roper also suggests that even before starting the third novel, he was thinking of exploring the inner life of the heroine: "In my next novel, now a-brewing, I want to get into my Bathysphere and go as deep as I can; it is about a girl who is trying to rise above a sordid home background" (Grant, *Man of Myth* 355). His creation of Monica Gall thus anticipates his more psychologically presented narrators of the Deptford novels, Dunstan Ramsay, David Staunton and Magnus Eisengrim.

After *A Mixture of frailties*, Davies intentionally turned away from Salterton and the same group of characters, even though he knew he could continue inventing stories about them indefinitely. As he told Mrs. Lois Myna Karpf, a reader, "It is tempting to go on with the same characters and to explore their further adventures..." (5 July 1960, NA 48:45). His intent can be easily noted in two of his letters to his readers. Davies told W. H. Ferry on 26 Nov. 1958, shortly after the publication of the third Salterton novel: "I am delighted to hear that you enjoyed [*A Mixture of Frailties*] so much, and *Leaven of Malice* as well. I hope, as time goes on, to write other novels, perhaps not about the same characters but about aspects of Canadian life which I hope will continue to please you" (NA 80:26). The letter suggests that Davies, at that moment, tentatively considered discontinuing the Salterton sequence at the end of novel number three. By the time he wrote to Julius Marmur on 21 Sept. 1959, Davies was very positive about the termination of the Salterton stories: "I do not think, however, that there will be any more stories about Salterton for some time. The next time I write a novel it is going to

²⁴ According to Grant's *Man of Myth*, Davies started reading Jung with "*Modern Man in Search of a Soul* in 1953, followed by *The Practice of Psychotherapy* in 1954, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* in 1955 and *Symbols of Transformation* in 1956. After that he acquired and read the balance of the great Bollingen translation of Jung's works (1953-73) more or less as it was published" (350).

be about quite a different situation and a very different group of people, though the setting will be chiefly in Canada" (NA 80:27). This letter also implies that he had not started writing the next novel, but had already formed a definite idea about it. By 5 July 1960, Davies seemed to have made his plan for the next novel. This is implied in his letter to Mrs. Lois Myna Karpf, telling her that "the next novel that I shall write, which I do not expect to get to until well on in 1961, will be about a different group altogether, and a quite different sort of story" (NA 48:45). According to Davies, he started making notes for the next novel "not later than 1960"; it was eventually written in the late 1960's and published as *Fifth Business* in the fall of 1970 ("Retrospect" 7).

It has to be pointed out, however, that while Davies was preoccupied with the germ of a new novel, another idea also came up and he in fact planned to write about it as "FICTION NUMBER FOUR". In his "Works in Progress" notebook, Davies wrote under this heading: "On May 10, 1961 I lunched in London with Frederic Warberg, the publisher & we discussed the possibility of a bk which wd. be the memoirs of a butler: he challenged me to try it"²⁵ (NA 27:7). Based on the evidence of an undated typescript, "What the Butler Saw", I believe that Davies accepted the challenge and actually wrote the beginning of the fourth novel (NA 56:13). Although he did not continue after that, he still counted this as one of his fictional works and treated *Fifth Business* as "FICTION NUMBER FIVE" ("Works in Progress" NA 27:7). The fact that Davies created *Fifth Business* as a memoir and Dunstan Ramsay's experience including "Great War service" suggests that some of his hints and thoughts about "FICTION NUMBER FOUR" have been transformed and incorporated into *Fifth Business*. Therefore, no matter which one is considered the fourth novel after *A Mixture of Frailties*, one thing is clear: Davies was no longer interested in inventing

²⁵ See Davies's outline for the book in the appendix (d).

stories based on the already established Salterton world, but was eager to try something different.

This brief examination of the evolution of the Salterton trilogy should make clear that, as in the Marchbanks series, Davies's creative process began with an idea of writing one book only and then continued tentatively as he reused and expanded some elements from it. This process has become a pattern. His writing of the three Deptford novels not only highlights the pattern but also shows that he consciously and deliberately concluded the second sequence at the end of the third novel. Like both *The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks* and *Tempest-Tost*, Davies "had only one book in mind" when collecting thoughts and making notes for the new novel ("Retrospect" 7). His brief description of the germ of the new story and the "Possible Scheme of Construction" of the novel in his "Works in Progress" also shows that he was planning to write one novel only²⁶. Of the three sections planned, he realized only the third part which is narrated by Dunstan Ramsay, originally Andrew Robertson. What remained unused, the first section "on Man of Wealth" and the second "on the Conjuror", was expanded and developed into two more individual and interlocked novels. The information from the "Works in Progress" further helps to show that he was honest and earnest when repeatedly saying that the Deptford trilogy was not planned and he originally planned only one book. It also shows how, once the possibility of a sequel or two subsequent parts of a trilogy materialized, the interconnections could easily be made.

Having the experience of producing the Marchbanks series and the Salterton sequence, Davies probably realized that, with more to say about the other characters after *Fifth Business* was completed, he would have no difficulty in adding new material to and developing each of these two characters. But his uncertainty about readers'

²⁶ See Davies's outline of the novel in Grant's *Man of Myth*, 470-71.

responses to the new story prevented him from writing the second novel when the idea hit him. The idea for *The Manticore*²⁷ came even before *Fifth Business* was published in Oct. 1970. On 9 April 1970, Davies revealed to Josephine Rogers both his idea and his uncertainty:

Now that I have written one novel after a long period of writing academic books only, I find myself eager to write another.... If I were to pursue my present plan, the new book would be, not precisely a sequel, but a book contingent upon *Fifth Business*. The sensible thing is to wait and see how *Fifth Business* goes before doing anything more than make plans for another. (NA 45:34)

Despite his uncertainty, he had already made some plans and envisioned the intertextual relations he was going to create. For the obvious reason given in the letter he dared not pursue his plans. In his letter to Corlies Smith, his editor at Viking, written a few days later, on 14 April 1970, while confiding the same news, he particularly emphasized his concern about readers' responses and their importance to the fate of the second novel:

Its reception will very much influence my next work, for I am seriously considering a novel which is, in effect, a sequel to [*Fifth Business*], though not in the sense that one volume of *The Bobbsey Twins* is a sequel to another. However, there is no point in talking about sequels until the first book has shown whether it can stand on its own feet or not. (NA 52:53)

These two letters suggest that, like the first two Salterton novels, Davies wrote the first Deptford novel tentatively and with uncertainty. But he intentionally and deliberately

²⁷ The original title of *The Manticore* was *Son and Stranger* according to Ramsay Derry's "reading report" on the manuscript for Macmillan of Canada (11 March 1972, McMaster 247:9).

created links when inventing the second (as well as the third, though for a different reason in each case).

Readers' responses to *Fifth Business* were positive and encouraging in general. Peter Sypnowich's article in the *Toronto Daily Star* (22 Dec. 1970) offers a general survey of the responses of reviewers. He points out that "in Toronto, Davies' home town, the reviews were decidedly lukewarm. Toronto reviewers (including this one) found *Fifth Business* lacking in intensity and a bit too stagy" (28). But he admits that "the Toronto reviewers differed not only from American critics but from those in the rest of Canada, too. Reviewers in Vancouver, Edmonton, Windsor, Ottawa, Montreal and Fredericton all were unstinting in their praise for *Fifth Business*" (28). He then quotes some praises from the U. S. reviews: "[A] review in the *New York Times* had described it as 'a marvelously enigmatic novel ... elegantly written and driven by irresistible narrative force' and 'the *San Francisco Chronicle* has hailed *Fifth Business* as perhaps the best novel of the season, while *Book World*, the *Literary Supplement* of the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Washington Post*, has called it 'one of the best of this or any other season'" (28). He also predicts that the forthcoming reviews from other major U. S. newspapers and magazines "are bound to be generally favourable" (28). The reading public's responses are best reflected by a rapidly increasing demand for the novel, the demand which made the book a bestseller shortly after its publication. According to the *Toronto Daily Star*'s "National Bestsellers" list, *Fifth Business* took fourth place on 14 Nov. 1970, jumped to second on 12 Dec. and to first on 26 Dec. It remained No. 1 from 9 Jan. 1971 for five consecutive weeks and occupied the first and second places until 17 April 1971. Davies was both "surprised" and "pleased" by the reception of *Fifth Business* and told Sypnowich that "it has been more successful than I would have dared to hope it would be because I thought the theme was perhaps not one that would appeal as widely as it has done" (Sypnowich, "Toronto Author: Writers Shouldn't Write for Money" 59). All these positive responses evidently dispelled

Davies's uncertainty and inspired him to carry out immediately what he intended to do. This is made clear by his letter to Hugh MacLennan dated 13 Jan. 1971, in which he asked MacLennan for advice about the second novel:

... I would appreciate your advice about something relating to *Fifth Business* which is naggingly on my mind at present: I feel impelled to write another novel about the same characters, but from a quite different point of view--that of Edward Staunton, the son of Boy Staunton, who is said to have become a lawyer and a drunk. But I see this man as one of his father's principal victims, but a victim who in the end escapes his father's toils. He adored his father, and wanted to be like him, but for the obvious reason--that sons, in one way or another are impelled to live out the un-lived portion of their father's lives, and because Edward is a man of greater sensitivity than Boy--he could not do it. The book would not be a sequel--no hint of *The Bobbsey Twins at Long Island* being followed by *The Bobbsey Twins at Yellowstone Park*--but another aspect of a complex theme. How does a son face the reality of a dominant and successful father? I know something of this, for though my own father was no Boy Staunton (indeed, he detested such people) he was quite sufficiently dominant to have given my life a number of curious twists. So, although the book would be no more autobiographical than was *Fifth Business*, it would have a good lively imaginative springboard. Could you, some time, give me your opinion as a deeply experienced craftsman, and critic, and artist most of all, about such undertakings. (NA 47:23)

Davies's lengthy description of the second novel shows explicitly that he intentionally decided to write another book "relating" to *Fifth Business* shortly after its publication and that he had worked out the essential connections before actually writing the book.

His eagerness to create another novel based on what he has told in *Fifth Business* can be further noticed in his letter to Josephine Rogers on 5 May 1971 in which he told her: "I have the new book all planned and a beginning made. Am I right in supposing that it should follow *Fifth Business* pretty briskly in order that the earlier book should not have been forgotten? I am prepared to make heroic efforts if you think it necessary, but I do not want to kill myself needlessly" (NA 45:35). It is obvious from these two letters that Davies intended to link closely the first two Deptford novels.

It is necessary to add here that, while he deliberately played with recurrent narrative elements and with the sequence form, he also intentionally tried to make each novel independent of the other. The evidence is found in the *News from Macmillan*, where he was quoted as saying that *The Manticore* "is not really a sequel to *Fifth Business*, but yet has an association with it that cannot be avoided. I tried very hard to write it in such a way that it would be comprehensible to someone who had not read the earlier book" (n.d., McMaster 392:20)²⁸. Davies's particular explanation of the relation between the first two Deptford novels suggests that, like every sequence novelist, he consciously grappled with the paradoxical relationship between novels that need to be simultaneously independent and related.

Despite his later misleading remarks that his novels were "not really trilogies or series" and that he did not write trilogies, Davies voluntarily decided, without waiting to see the reception of *The Manticore*, to write one more novel dealing with some of the characters and events that have been familiar to his readers and, moreover, to complete a trilogy. In his note for "NOVEL NUMBER SEVEN", the date "Nov. 4: 1972" indicates that his decision was made two weeks after *The Manticore*'s publication on Oct. 20. The outline of the novel-- "The story of Paul Dempster, Faustus, Le

²⁸ Based on its announcement that *The Manticore* "will be published in Canada on 20 Oct. [1970]", Davies's remark must have been made sometime before that date.

Grand, Magnus Eisengrim: to complete trilogy of 5B & Manticore"--makes it clear that he finally decided to add one more novel to the already existing "snowball" series and make it, as an afterthought, a trilogy ("Works in Progress", NA 27:7). Two days later, Davies confided his decision to Gordon Roper and, at the same time, tried particularly to explain why he wanted to write the third novel as a part of a trilogy: "It was never my intention to write a trilogy, or even to write the second book. It just happened. The story ran on, and required to be told. I have answered all enquiries about a trilogy with an assured No up to this time. But I have changed my mind" (Grant, *Man of Myth* 505). Considering these two pieces of information together, one can perceive easily a new development in Davies's notion of his Deptford novels. For the first time, he used the term "trilogy" to describe the larger narrative structure that the three novels together would build and acknowledged that he had already worked out the structure. His letter to Roper also contains some additional information: it explains concisely how this trilogy evolved (although the third book had not been written), shows his awareness of readers' anticipation and eagerness for a trilogy, and emphasizes strongly that the trilogy was not intentionally planned, a point on which he later often insisted²⁹. All this suggests that Davies went through a creative process similar to the one involved in the writing of the Salterton novels, from tentative and uncertain novel writing to consciously projecting interaction between one novel and another in the group.

What is more significant, in the case of the Deptford trilogy, is that Davies took the initiative in proposing to his publishers, before completing the third volume, that the three Deptford novels could be issued as a trilogy. This is indicated in his letter to

²⁹ Compare the following to what Davies said in the letter to Roper: "I never planned it as a trilogy", "it was not a planned scheme" (Penman 152, 153); "I never meant to write a trilogy", "there was no planned trilogy" (*One Half* 15, 16); "It was not my intention to write ... the Deptford trilogy" ("Retrospect" 7).

Josephine Rogers (22 Nov. 1973): "I am pressing on with the third volume and see no reason to think that it will not be delivered to you on time. Did you get any response from Macmillans or Viking to my idea that they might hang on to surplus stock with a view to bringing out the book eventually as a trilogy?" (NA 45:46). His proposal indicates that he was more confident of making intertextual connections than he was when creating the Salterton novels and in his readers' acceptance of the trilogy structure he invented and developed. His letter to Rogers contains another message as well. It suggests that the third novel would be the end of this new sequence. Davies's letter to Elisabeth Sifton written in August 1976, less than a year after *World of Wonders* was published, confirms that he had concluded the Deptford sequence definitely because he was already preoccupied by a new germ for a book unrelated to the Deptford material. He revealed to Sifton that the subject of the new book would be "money, the love thereof and the rich comedy that ensues therefrom" and the setting would be "a university, because nowhere is money, and the greed for benefactions so great" (Grant, *Man of Myth* 529). The termination of the Deptford sequence with the third novel illustrates again Davies's preference for and interest in creating three interrelated novels. This last point can be reinforced by his direct and particular explanation of why he wrote three, not four, books in his reminiscence of the writing of the Deptford trilogy:

I had dealt with the three principal characters in the complex of events that was brought about by the unlucky flight of a snowball, and I had no more to say. Many people have asked me to write the story of one of the women who figures in the books, the millionairess Liesl Vitzliputzli, but I feel no impulse to do so. Too much explanation of such a character would be a great mistake, and besides, Liesl was not present when the story began, as were the three men. ("Retrospect" 10)

Despite his awareness that "[t]he temptation to continue is strong", he was determined "not to yield to it" but to retain the essential structure of the trilogy built upon the snowball incident and the three main figures involved in it ("Retrospect" 12). Davies's decision to end the sequence after the third novel allows us to see further his tendency in using the trilogy form and fondness, conscious or unconscious, for creating novels that are "not precisely sequels" in groups of three.

Readers' enthusiastic responses to the Deptford trilogy must have had some impact on Davies's creation of the Cornish novels. This is suggested by a new development in his creative process. Unlike the Salterton or Deptford novels which he decided to connect intertextually after the first novel was written, he was aware when preoccupied by ideas for the new novel that they "might just possibly turn out to be another trilogy", as he told Sifton in August 1976 (Grant, *Man of Myth* 529). But Davies did not make any elaborate plan or outline for all three novels at the outset, a procedure which most sequence novelists undertake, and of which he is well aware. Instead, he still carried on his own practice by reusing certain narrative elements and material from the first novel as a basis for the second, and then expanding and developing them as well as inventing a new main plot for them. What he told Sifton on 2 July 1980 about the writing of *The Rebel Angels* is an indication: "I had to decide whether to turn off the tap sharply and forever on the last page or leave a few strings dangling--which is what, in the end, I did" (Grant, *Man of Myth* 553). The reason for such a decision, as he revealed in this letter, is that he "was already plagued by ideas of a sequel" (Grant, *Man of Myth* 553). The information suggests that, even though Davies was thinking of writing a sequel to the novel he was composing, he did not have a clear clue about how to continue after it. Therefore, the second novel would have to rely on what the first story had established. The letter then leads one to perceive an essential difference between his writing of the first Cornish novel and of the first Salterton and Deptford novels. In the case of both the Salterton and Deptford trilogies,

the writing of a second novel linked with the first was optional. But in preparing for a sequel while he was still working on *The Rebel Angels*, Davies had already committed himself to write a second novel, whether or not he had a clear notion of its precise subject. His sense of commitment to write a linked novel can be noted in another letter to Sifton written a few months later (Nov. 13, 1980): "The book has given me more trouble than any book I have ever written and has left me feeling rather depleted. As you may guess when you read it, I have a sequel in mind, or rather not so much a sequel as a book that is linked with this one" (NA 52:28). This letter shows that Davies had changed his mind about writing a sequel proper, which would require a direct continuation of the stories of the characters presented in the first and a linear temporal order. His specification of the relation of the next novel to *The Rebel Angels* as "not so much a sequel" but as "linked" not only echoes his description of the "three linked" Deptford novels, but also implies that by writing a linked or non-sequel novel he would be free to build intertextual connections and to contrive a sequence structure of his own without the constraints of the conventions of sequel novels.

Davies's "NOTES FOR A SEQUEL" in his notebook for the Cornish novels can further substantiate not only that he had a sequel in mind when writing *The Rebel Angels*, but also that he actually made notes both for the second and for the third novels. Under this heading, he planned two sequels: "SEQUEL=history of Cornish family: documents--servant's memoir of gong-boy, buttons, & military servant=marriage in Canada=Aunt Viny as ma-in-law", and "sequel"="Blackmailer whom Parla[bane] turned in to police appears & wants money from the novel--he is Parla's illegitimate son & no good--a problem to Hollier" (112 b, c, NA 27:7). Based on the notes, one can easily tell that the first planned sequel underwent a great many changes and was transformed into the biography of Francis Cornish, and the second one was developed in the third novel. Right after his ideas of the two sequels, "Novel 3" appears on the verso of the same page followed by "funeral of Mamusia=a gypsy

funeral in Rosedale: Yerko accidentally burns down the house". The words "Novel 3" significantly and explicitly shows that Davies was planning the third novel while preparing notes for the second. In addition, his "Threads of Novel" can also help to illustrate what was involved in Davies's thinking when making "NOTES FOR A SEQUEL":

- (a) Marriage of Maria & Arthur: money dominates Maria as never before....
- (b) Darcourt a member of the arts-fostering trust A[rthur] & M[aria] set up: as is Hollier: & a Money-Man?
- (c) Darcourt to write Life of Francis Cornish for Univ. & Spook-- but how write a bio. honestly?
- (d) The tale of Kildonan--the Looner in the attic tended by Victoria Campbell & the servant who records his history on the Dict. recs.
- (e) Looner is Servant's son--begotten after a presentation at Court of Senator's dr.--he is a footman at the Cecil Hotel & as he is in livery with powdered hair, not afterward recognizable (The "Cornish" notebook, 119; NA 27:7)

Of the five threads, four are developed into parts of *What's Bred in the Bone*. The first one is used later in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. The other threads Davies invented are plainly for the third novel:

Arthur's mumps--leaves him sterile

But Maria has a child=Powell's?

vide 117 (c) [Any place for the play *The Evergreen Tree*?]

Arthur, the Magnanimous Cuckold=as in the revived opera of Purcell

wh^{ch} graduate musicologist finds & puts together for performance--but it

has no ending

Maria & Arthur provide the ending for Arthur's friendship--caritas--is the basis of their marriage--marriage goes deeper than formal fidelity--a bond of charity

Will Arthur love the child? If he can, but something depends on the child--not a tabula rasa--what does it inherit? (The "Cornish" notebook 118 verso; NA 27:7)

All these threads are used and expanded in the third novel. These notes indicate that, when working on the second novel, Davies had formed the essential outline of the third novel. In other words, he had worked out the interconnections between the last two novels in the trilogy even before the actual writing of *What's Bred in the Bone* began, even though he had not extricated the one from the other. The new development in his creative process suggests that, more than ever before, he was consciously planning a trilogy.

With the motivation to offer his readers a trilogy from the beginning and with the notes ready for the third book, Davies openly talked about the forthcoming trilogy--something he had never done before. He voluntarily informed his friends and editors while still completing *What's Bred in the Bone* that there would be a third novel to follow it and complete a trilogy. Davies's new attitude is explicitly reflected in his letters to Roper and Sifton. He told Roper on 13 Nov. 1984, "As you will have guessed, I am pushing on and have recently completed the next novel in what looks like another trilogy; it is called *What's Bred in the Bone...*" (Trent 1:1). He wrote to Roper again sometime before Christmas, reporting that he had "finished" *What's Bred in the Bone* and announcing assuredly: "There is to be still one more volume, exploring the marriage of Maria and Arthur, and although I have a vague notion of how it will go it is still shadowy..." (Trent 1:1). In his "progress report" to Sifton, probably also written before Christmas of 1984, Davies told her the same news, "I have finished *What's Bred in the Bone*, except for one more pernickety revision ... [you can] have it

early in 1985.... I sincerely hope that there will be a third book on the same theme, and that is hinted at in *What's Bred in the Bone*" (NA 52:32). When discussing Maria Theotoky during the interview with Michael Hulse (1986), Davies told him, "My dear friend, you wait for the third novel! You wait for the end of that trilogy" (260). All this evidence should dispel any questions about his intention to construct the third trilogy throughout his writing of the Cornish novels, even though he did not fully work out the trilogy structure in advance.

Other noticeable developments in Davies's attitude towards the Cornish trilogy should be considered here, too, because they help to further illuminate how he differentiates his trilogies from other sequences and how he tries to direct the attention of readers to the differences between his own way of creating a trilogy and the practices of other sequence novelists. If one keeps in mind that Davies's seemingly ambiguous remarks about his trilogies were made at the time when he openly expressed his intention to create the third trilogy, the developments become more significant to our study. While writing the Cornish novels, Davies displayed more awareness of both his creative process and his own tendency to create linked novels, rather than sequels, in groups of three. In the interview with Eva Seidner (19 Oct. 1987), when asked: "Do you know before you begin that it will take three books to work out a concept?", Davies's answer shows explicitly his self-awareness: "No, I don't. I start with one book, and if that one develops, there appears to be material which would go better in another book. And that happens a third time. I suppose if you were self-indulgent you could just go on ploughing around with the same group of characters for a long time" (8). The answer implicitly reiterates what he has been insisting: that he did not have a plan for the three novels when writing the first in each group. On the other hand, it emphasizes his own practice with the sequence form, practice that indeed distinguishes his way of constructing trilogies from that of most sequence novelists and makes him think that his three groups of novels are "not really trilogies or series". The fact that

Davies consciously chose not to indulge himself in "ploughing around with the same group of characters" beyond the third novel in the Salterton, Deptford, and Cornish novels suggests that he is inclined to and interested in creating only three linked books. What he wrote to his editors in "notes on editorial revisions to *The Lyre of Orpheus*" highlights this point: "I part with the book with some sadness, for I have grown fond of the people in this trilogy" (n. d. NA 56:50). Even his fondness, however, did not drive him to continue the Cornish stories.

Moreover, Davies appeared to be more positive and confident about his artistry when working on the Cornish novels. This is reflected in his letter to P. H. Knowlton, President of Curtis Brown, Ltd. (5 Sept. 1984):

Just a note to let you know that I have completed the novel--*What's Bred in the Bone*.... I know that you have advised me against novels which are either sequels or are linked with other novels, and I am afraid that this one goes against your advice as it is associated with some of the people who were in *The Rebel angels*. However, I hope that when you see it you will feel as I do, that a portion of the plot would be very suitable for a moving picture. (NA 46:20)

It is important to remember that writing a novel against the publisher's advice is a risky business because he has an absolute power to decide whether to accept or reject it. Obviously, Davies followed his own creative impulse rather than doing what the publisher advised him to do, and knowingly composed a novel linked with *Rebel Angels*. His decision and action indicate that his desire and inclination to write linked books was too strong to do otherwise. Something similar can also be observed from his explanation to his editors when criticized for his creation of the Wally Crottel plot:

I freely admit that the Wally Crottel business is somewhat lugged in. But as part of a trilogy I need it because it puts an end to the Parlabane story, and adds another grubby element to his distressing career. I do not want

the book to be concerned entirely with rich people and artists; Wally brings in a whiff of another life (like the Gravediggers in Hamlet) makes it clear that the Foundation has a host of minor concerns, apart from the big one of the opera. (NA 56:50)

What Davies has admitted here further confirms that he intentionally contrives links to develop a sense of continuity through this minor character. At this point, it becomes even clearer that all his ambiguous remarks about his trilogies serve to draw attention to his own way of creating three interrelated novels and to the differences between his trilogies and other sequences.

Brief mention should also be made here about the incomplete fourth trilogy. The interconnections between the two published novels, *Murther & Walking Spirits* (1991) and *The Cunning Man* (1994), mark Davies' departure from the Cornish sequence to engage in a new experiment with the trilogy form. As in the writing of the first Cornish novel, Davies was aware before finishing *Murther & Walking Spirits* that there would be another novel to continue some of the first story, and therefore deliberately contrived an ending which does not really bring the story to an end, an ending without closure. This is revealed in his letter to Janet Turnbull, his literary agent (24 Nov. 1990). He told her about the denouement of the novel which he had not finished: "It turns to Gil, Esme and Allard, and also Hugh McWearie, and seems to end the story, but it doesn't" (NA 58:12). He then informed her: "I think another novel will be needed to bringing the whole tale to a close, and I will write it after I have had a rest.... The second book, if anyone wants it, will be about the long-term effect of Gil's murder on the Sniffer, on Esme and on Hugh McWearie--the old theme of "Nothing is ended until all is ended" (NA 58:12). The fact that Davies used a new character, Jonathan Hullah, as the narrator and protagonist of the second novel indicates that he once again deliberately chose not to write a sequel which would have to follow closely the story of Gil's murder, but to create some continuity with the

secondary characters, such as Esme and McWearie, with the same setting, Toronto, and the continuing theme of history--personal, family and local. Although it is impossible to envision what the final trilogy structure would have been like without the third novel (Davies was in the process of writing it at the time of his death) and how different it would have been from the previous three trilogies, Davies's desire and readiness to write one more trilogy confirms his lifelong commitment to a form he had made his own.

In summary, this brief survey of the formation and development of Davies's three completed and one unfinished trilogies should clarify further the issues arising from his remarks about his interrelated novels. His discussions of the growth of the individual novels, especially the later two in each group, and of the affiliation of one with another enable us to see more clearly what differences there are between his linked novels and the sequences by other novelists, and to understand why he thinks that his linked novels are not really trilogies or series. His judgment of his three completed trilogies has been conditioned by his awareness that they were not neatly planned to be sequences, nor are they sequel novels. His view thus reflects his concern about prior authorial intention and chronological order, both of which he thinks are lacking in his own works. However, his repeated and consistent explanations of what he has done in creating the intertextual relations provide us with a better knowledge of his varying methods of producing a continuity with three linked novels. A careful examination of the trilogy structure in the *Salterton*, *Deptford* and *Cornish* novels in the ensuing three chapters will substantiate the thesis of this study that Davies used the trilogy form ingeniously and innovatively.

Chapter 3

The Salterton Trilogy:

The World of Salterton as a Collective Character

Although Davies had no preconceived idea of writing three intertextually related novels (*Tempest-Tost*, *Leaven of Malice* and *A Mixture of Frailties*) when embarking on a new career as a novelist, his preoccupation with Canadian cultural problems that he perceived through his experience as actor in and director of the Peterborough Little Theatre, as editor of the *Peterborough Examiner*, as a reviewer of *Saturday Night*, and as playwright made him purposefully fabricate the world of Salterton and transform his concerns into a thematic presentation of the characteristics of this tightly knit community¹. The world of Salterton, peopled with the recurrent characters who carry with them certain motifs from one novel to the next, becomes a collective character with which he produced a strong unifying effect and developed a trilogy as an afterthought. This is mainly achieved by his creation of Salterton (a fictionalized Canadian town modelled on Kingston, Ontario, where Davies once lived²) as a

¹ Davies depicts a community in which everybody knows everybody else's business. For instance, on the occasion of the June Ball, "the glory of Salterton's social year", the residents learn from the local newspaper not only the ladies who will be present at the great affair but also what costume each lady will wear (*Tempest-Tost* 264, 279-80), everybody knows about Solly because he is chasing after Griselda Webster, the daughter of one of few rich men in Salterton (*Leaven of Malice* 106), and the busybody, Miss Pottinger, can easily find out if an unmarried girl is a "hussy" or not. In this world the first candidate of the Bridgetower trust, Birgitta Hetmansen, can be disqualified because she is found to be no longer a virgin (*A Mixture of Frailties* 35).

² In an article, "Kingston: A Mature Charm", written for *Maclean's* and which "was rejected by Pierre Berton who thought it 'high-flown' and 'un-Canadian'", Davies relates that "I am not a native Kingstonian, but I have looked upon it as my home of twenty-five years" (1, NA 34:8).

common background (geographical, social and cultural) for all three stories, and, more significantly, as an embodiment both of old and new social and cultural traditions, manners and values and of conflicts among them. His repeated use of the same group of characters (such as Pearl Veronica and her father, Professor Vambrace, Solly and his mother, Mrs. Bridgetower, Humphrey Cobbler and his wife Molly and Miss Pottinger) in weaving each plot and his thematic presentation of them augment both the continuity and unity of the three novels. While the recurrence of the setting and the characters results in an easily recognizable continuity, the repeated motifs (such as art, artist, education, Eros and Thanatos), and his sustaining stylistic features, dramatic and comic, for example, lead readers to perceive some intrinsic connections which reinforce the unifying effect that setting and character create.

The fact that *Tempest-Tost*, *Leaven of Malice* and *A Mixture of Frailties* were grouped and referred to as the "Salterton novels" immediately after the publication of the third novel³ suggests that setting is the most conspicuous recurrent component of all. The reason why his readers responded immediately to the unity of setting is that his lengthy and detailed description of the city in *Tempest-Tost* made a strong impression on them (11-16)⁴. There he informs them not only of the city's historical background but also of its "abundant superficial charm" (11) represented by St. Michael's and St. Nicholas' cathedrals which "are in appearance so strongly characteristic of the faiths they embody" and "seem to admonish the city" (12), by "a handsome Court House", "one of his Majesty's largest and most forbidding prisons"

³ Hilda Kirkwood refers to Davies's first three novels as "the Salterton novels" in her review of *A Mixture of Frailties* (238), and Ivon Owen uses "the Salterton novels" as the title of his essay published in the same year as the third novel.

⁴ Evidence shows that the passages describing Salterton were taken from Davies's article, "Kingston: A Mature Charm". He made some changes to the passages when using them in *Tempest-Tost*. The article also reveals that Davies had Trollope's Barsetshire in mind when writing about Kingston. See the selected two passages from the typescript in the appendix (e) for comparison with the text.

and by Waverley University, "a centre of learning which has dignity and, in its high moments, nobility" (13). Moreover, Davies subtly captures his readers' imagination with "the real character of Salterton" that is "beneath the surface, and beyond the powers of gush to disclose" (11). The "half-truths" about the place--it is "dreamy and old-world" and is "at anchor in the stream of time"--imply that people in Salterton want to keep the clock of history stopped and to remain unmoved by the advanced world outside. The outsiders' impression of Saltertonians' quaintness, "snobbishness" and "satisfying consciousness of past glories" helps readers to perceive that Salterton citizens are unaware that they isolate themselves from the outside world, that they look to the past instead of to the future and that they are quite complacent with their social and cultural environment.

It becomes more obvious in *Leaven of Malice* that Davies's Salterton, unlike Trollope's Barsetshire, for example, which is used as a geographical location indicating where the events in a series of novels take place, has a special designated function: it symbolizes "the real character" of the place⁵. His remark about his presentation of Salterton in the interview with Gordon Roper (1968) indicates that he intended to define "the real character of Salterton" in relation to its social and cultural tradition. Agreeing with what Roper said, "You have portrayed Salterton as a character, a complex character in *Tempest-Tost*", Davies further emphasized his intent: "Yes, I hope to show its particular nature made certain human beings behave in a certain way" (Roper, "Conversations" 32). Reading the description of the lawyers' chambers in the second novel, "that special architectural picturesqueness which is only to be found in Canada, and which is more easily found in Salterton than in newer Canadian cities" (76), one feels that Davies aims not only to evoke the same setting for the readers'

⁵ Readers have compared Davies's novels, particularly the Salterton ones, with Trollope's. See in the appendix (f) the comparison by Elizabeth Bowen, Annis Duff and Anthony Burgess.

imagination, but also to add other dimensions to "the real character of Salterton" revealed through the story of *Tempest-Tost*: isolation, stagnancy and backwardness. His further description of "the peculiar picturesqueness" indicates the point:

Now the peculiar quality of the picturesqueness does not lie in a superficial resemblance to the old world; it is, rather, a compound of colonialism, romanticism and sturdy defiance of taste; it is a fascinating and distinguished ugliness which is best observed in the light of Canadian November and December afternoons... But where they exist, and are appreciated, they suggest a quality which is rather that of Northern Europe--of Scandinavia and pre-revolutionary Russia--than of England or the U. S. A. It is in such houses as these that the characters in the plays of Ibsen had their being; it is in this light, and against these backgrounds of stained wood and etched glass that the people of Tchekov talked away their lives. And if the Canadian building be old enough, the perceptive eye may see faint ghosts from Pushkin and Lermontov moving through the halls.

(*Leaven* 76-77)

If one keeps in mind that the story of *Leaven of Malice* took place in 1955, according to the information that Pearl was born "in 1933" (51) and was "twenty-two" in the story (84), Davies's comparison of Salterton's physical and spiritual features to Scandinavia and to pre-revolutionary Russia, and his suggestion of similarities between its residents and the characters in the works of these nineteenth-century writers send a clear and strong message to his readers that social and cultural development and advancement were delayed in Salterton. This comparison also prepares his readers to encounter and re-encounter one of the main underlying thematic issues conveyed and suggested in all the three novels: the delayed cultural tradition in the world of Salterton has a strong impact on the lives of its people. This issue will be pursued presently.

Davies's creation of the St. Nicholas' Cathedral episode in *Leaven of Malice* indicates that he wants to use this particular and familiar site both as a unifying device and as a thematic agent to expose more about "the real character of Salterton". His description of the cathedral, one of the two attractive and distinctive cathedrals in Salterton first introduced in *Tempest-Tost*, not only refreshes the readers' memory of the building, but further highlights its solemn quality and seriousness: "St. Nicholas' Cathedral in Salterton is not one of your common Canadian cathedrals, in sham Gothic; it is a reproduction, on a much smaller scale, of St. Paul's, and it has a periwigged dignity of its own" (61). The episode, in which a Hallowe'en revelry led by the cathedral organist, Humphrey Cobbler, coincides with the appearance of the false engagement announcement in the local evening newspaper, makes St. Nicholas' church in some way directly involved in the main plot: according to the announcement, the wedding ceremony was to be held in the Cathedral and Cobbler was accused of being the man at the centre of the whole plot. As it turns out, St. Nicholas' Cathedral and all the characters associated with it serve to show a sharp contrast in the attitude toward the episode between, on the one hand, Humphrey Cobbler and the Dean, and, on the other, the old parishioners, such as Miss Pottinger and Matthew Snelgrove, all of whom are representative and influential Saltertonians. The contrast enables readers to have another glimpse at "the real character of Salterton".

In Cobbler's view (which is shared by the Dean), nothing is morally wrong with singing secular songs and dancing in the Cathedral, if the action is prompted by an appreciation of music. His view is supported by his argument: "Perhaps the cathedral is too serious.... It is the House of God, isn't it? How do we know that God likes his house to be damned dull? Nobody seems to think that God might like a good time, now and then" (*Leaven* 75). The fact that the Dean "agreed with half what Cobbler said" indicates that both men are open-minded and unconventional and both have a deep insight into music as a form of art which has its own values and significance. The

reaction of some parishioners, Snelgrove in particular, to Cobbler's involvement in the incident and to him as a person illustrates a puritanical, narrow-minded, rigid and self-righteous mentality. Davies's account of Snelgrove's hostility towards the Dean and Cobbler (because the Dean tried to defend Cobbler in every way) vividly shows the unhealthy aspects of the mentality or sensibility existing in the Salterton community. When Snelgrove found out that Cobbler was responsible for the disturbance in the cathedral, he took the opportunity to vent his continuing grudge against both the Dean and Cobbler. He warned the Dean that "Cobbler's character is such that it will one day bring disgrace upon this church, and if you insist upon defending him you may be seriously implicated" (70). He even forced the Dean to fire Cobbler as the organist: "I have said many times ... that we ought to get rid of that man [Cobbler]" (70). Considering his influence as a lawyer and the chancellor of the diocese, Snelgrove's "well-developed animosity" against and "anger" with the Dean and Cobbler are no longer personal matters, but represent the negative and latent malicious force within the Salterton world (67, 68). The groundless accusation Snelgrove brought against Cobbler for putting the false engagement notice in the newspaper shows explicitly that, instead of maintaining order in the society, he abuses his profession by creating disorder and a hostile atmosphere.

Using St. Nicholas' Cathedral and the cathedral episode in this way, Davies succeeds in creating a connection between the first two novels through setting, while at the same time associating the main theme of the second novel, "leaven of malice", with the general and continuing motif of the trilogy. Furthermore, the important role St. Nicholas' Cathedral plays in *Leaven of Malice* makes it easier for Davies to establish its structural function both for *A Mixture of Frailties* itself and for the three novels as a group. The third novel opens with a funeral scene in the Cathedral attended by the same group of characters already familiar to the readers of the previous book. Such a beginning calls immediate attention to the close connection between these two novels.

It is by no means a coincidence that the last scene of the novel is again set in the Cathedral in which its parishioners, including the recurrent characters and Monica, gather to attend the last Memorial Sermon on education requested by late Mrs. Bridgetower as the condition of her bequest to the Cathedral. The birth of her grandson early that morning had brought the Bridgetower Trust to an end and fulfilled every condition of her will. Undoubtedly, Davies intentionally invented such an ending so that he could tie the main plot about Monica Gall and her experience in England with the subplot about the recurrent characters' activities in carrying out Mrs. Bridgetower's will. In a way, the Cathedral functions to integrate the two plots into a congruent whole. The fact that Davies sent his heroine to England and Europe, away from Salterton, and let her be taught and trained by a group of professional artists suggests that he intended to use the outside world as a mirror to reflect the distinctive differences between England and Salterton in artistic standards and attitudes towards the education of an artist⁶. Introducing a new setting in the third novel for the purpose of comparing the well-established, highly aesthetic and rich culture of England with the colonial and meagre provincial cultural imagination of the people in Salterton, Davies identifies the problems that the delayed cultural tradition has caused, particularly to the mental growth of young people. Monica's struggle to overcome her narrow-minded provincial and religious upbringing mirrors this contrast. Considered in terms of the first three novels as a series, the ending of *A Mixture of Frailties*, containing the Dean's sermon on education, has a structurally thematic significance. It leads readers to feel positively about the future of the world of Salterton. Monica's rapid progress and achievement suggest that a proper education is the solution to the problems caused by

⁶ In the interview with Gordon Roper in 1968, Davies explained why he introduced a new setting in *A Mixture of Frailties*: "[W]hat I really wanted to do was to put the world of Salterton into perspective and compare it to another world which has very different values, with a notion of just talking about how Canadians regard the arts" ("Conversations" 40).

the delayed cultural tradition.

The strong sense of place that readers feel about Salterton when reading the three novels together owes much to Davies's thematic presentation of his characters, particularly the recurrent ones. Portrayed to represent different dimensions of the consequence of the delayed cultural tradition, they materialize "the real character of Salterton", act out and amplify this coherent and general theme which consolidates the trilogy structure. Having only one Salterton story in mind when trying his hand at the first novel, Davies used the social and cultural atmosphere established in *Tempest-Tost* to illuminate and develop in the later two novels thematic subjects concerning some cultural problems and their causes. In the interview with Silver Donald Cameron (1971), Davies acknowledged that he intentionally illustrated some peculiar qualities of Canadian colonial and provincial culture with his Salterton novels:

[W]hat is apparent in the Salterton novels is a Canadian cultural tradition, which I don't think gets the kind of attention in Canadian fiction that it might expect: a sort of delayed cultural tradition. About the period that I was working on the Salterton novels, just after the 1945 war, there were still people living in places like Salterton whose tradition was directly Edwardian, and who saw nothing wrong with that. They weren't even conscious that their ideas were not contemporary ... and they still hadn't grasped the fact that an entire new Canada had come into being, and that their sort of person was really almost dinosaur-like in its failure to fit into the modern scene. (S. D. Cameron 32)

His remark suggests that "a sort of delayed cultural tradition" is the core and the cause of the problems resulting in the provincial, parochial and backward outlook. This backwardness not only conditions the thinking and behaviour of the local people, but, even worse, hinders any cultural advancement.

Although the three novels share this general theme, Davies aims in each novel at presenting the characters' different perspectives and their involvement in each plot. In *Tempest-Tost*, he establishes the theme primarily by showing the cultural ignorance and incompetence of the members of the Salterton Little Theatre during their preparation for the production of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. The interpretation of the play by the members reveals limitations in their cultural upbringing, their provincial outlook and their complacency. Mrs. Forrester, the president of the Little Theatre, is one of the characters that Davies seems to have created to convey this theme. Her enthusiasm for the outdoor production of *The Tempest* has nothing to do with an artistic appreciation of this Shakespearean masterpiece, but is guided by her provincial ambition: "We are pioneering the pastoral in this part of the world" (70) because no other Little Theatre groups have done a pastoral, nor have they attempted Shakespeare (38). Yet her idea about "pastoral" reveals that she has no knowledge about this particular literary tradition, as she thinks that "the whole point of pastoral" is "to get away from all the artificiality of the theatre, and co-operate with the beauty of Nature" (60). Based on her own concept of "pastoral", she suggests that the first scene of *The Tempest* should be enacted "on a real ship in the lake" (67). Through Mrs. Forrester, Davies exposes both the group's ignorance of dramatic tradition and of Shakespeare's work and the barren cultural environment in which they are confined.

Hector Mackilwraith shares some of Mrs. Forrester's limitations. Although he is a university graduate and a school teacher, his knowledge of Shakespeare is limited to only three plays, *Julius Caesar*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Henry V*, all of which were regularly taught as part of the English curriculum in Ontario's high schools (64). Ironically, these plays are "lumped together" with Longfellow's "The Song of Hiawatha", Sir Walter Scott's "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" and Matthew Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum" (64). Moreover, he thinks that, although these works represent literature, they are "ambiguous and unsupported assertions by men of lax mind" (64).

Davies's description of Hector's increasing interest in Shakespeare and his difficulty in reading and understanding *The Tempest* best demonstrates his cultural ignorance and lack of imagination:

He found *The Tempest* somewhat baffling. He had supported the suggestion that the Little Theatre present a Shakespearean play, for he was strongly in favour of plays which were "worth while"; it was widely admitted that Shakespeare was worth while. But in what precise union of qualities this worthwhileness lay was unknown to him. His first encounter with *The Tempest* was like that of the man who bites a peach and breaks a tooth upon the stone. (65)

This passage can be taken as Davies's double-edged criticism of "delayed cultural tradition" in the world of Salterton. Hector's meagre knowledge of Shakespeare in particular and of literature in general indicates that the cause of such a limitation is an inadequate and provincial education and cultural malnutrition. It is thus not surprising to learn that Hector's reason for volunteering to play the role of Gonzalo has nothing to do with acting, nor with any artistic appreciation of the play, but with an intent to enrich his social life and have fun wearing "the costume" and "false whiskers" and to find an opportunity to see Griselda Webster with whom he is in love (50).

The interpretation of *The Tempest* by other amateur actors further enriches the thematic issue of cultural ignorance. Those who play courtiers, for example, ask the director Valentine if they can wear swords because they imagine it would be "pleasant and authentic" if they salute each other and parade with the swords on stage (192). Professor Vambrace, who plays the main role of Prospero, is shown to be, like everyone else in the group, incapable of grasping the significance of dramatizing this great literary work. Presenting himself as an artistic authority because of his learning (as a professor of classics), he does not realize that costumes and accoutrements are an important and necessary part of the dramatic effect. Instead, he argues, "In such a play

as *The Tempest* ... it was vital that the magnificence of the words should not be lessened by too great show of costumes and accoutrements" (189). He believes that he can perform his part of Prospero by just speaking the words and by "bringing the fullest power of his intellect to bear on the proper interpretation of his role" and thinks that the audience would be "perpetually distracted by shows of petty magnificence which had nothing to do with the play" (189). His idea of how to perform *The Tempest* exposes his limited knowledge of the basic dramatic principles and of dramatic effects that costume and accoutrements produce on the audience's imagination and appreciation of an artistic work.

The cultural ignorance of Salterton society is shown in other respects too. Davies's description of Mrs Forrester's "Taste", suggested by the interior decoration of her apartment, effectively shows the owner's poor artistic and creative imagination (34). The simplicity of "just two Notes of Colour" in her apartment, one given by "some red horses" in a picture and the other by "a deep green" bowl, with everything else colourless, suggests her impoverished aesthetic standards (35). Davies's supposition concerning people's positive reaction to Mrs Forrester's "Taste" implies that she is not alone in Salterton in lacking taste: "Many people would have sworn that only an interior decorator could have produced such an effect" (35). The supposed reaction of "many people" thus leads readers to sense that Mrs Forrester's provincial taste is no longer a personal matter, but is representative of the pathetic artistic taste and the cultural malnutrition of Salterton society.

Mrs Forrester's attitude towards education abroad reflects another issue relating to the general theme of "delayed cultural tradition". Davies uses Mrs Forrester's comment, "Education in England spoils so many Canadians.... There's a kind of nice simplicity about a Canadian that education abroad seems to destroy" (40), not only to expose her narrow-minded and provincial contentment and complacency with "simplicity", but also to exemplify an inbred resistance to advancement and a negative

attitude towards education in the more civilized and sophisticated European culture. Although the particular issue raised here is not fully dealt with, the introduction of this topic makes it possible for Davies to use it as a recurrent motif and to turn it into a main theme in *A Mixture of Frailties*--Monica Gall's education and training in Europe. It is in the third Salterton novel that Davies brings the issue to the fore and illustrates with Monica's story that this "nice simplicity" is in part the root of cultural ignorance and an obstacle to individual artistic development. "Simplicity" of this kind is therefore closely connected with cultural malnutrition and immaturity. The educational motif later becomes a means to build the thematic unity of the Salterton trilogy.

In *Leaven of Malice*, Davies illustrates another aspect of the "real character of Salterton", this time embodied by the two recurrent characters, Mrs Bridgetower and Miss Pottinger, together with two new characters, Mr Snelgrove, a lawyer and Chancellor of St. Nicholas' Cathedral, and Mr Shillito, a superannuated journalist on *The Bellman*. These characters belong to the old generation of Salterton society and each is presented, in a different way, as living in the past and as adhering to the old values and old way of thinking. Furthermore, their involvement in the plot serves to show that they are committed to the past and that their thinking has become a force that resists any change and progress and hinders the development and advancement of the young people surrounding them. Their activities in the novel enrich the general theme of the "delayed cultural tradition" in Salterton. Davies's characterization of Mrs Bridgetower and Miss Pottinger in *Leaven of Malice* indicates that these two characters are used to carry over one of the thematic issues touched slightly in *Tempest-Tost*. There these two characters give readers a clear impression that they are cast to represent those people in Canada "whose tradition was directly Edwardian, and who saw nothing wrong with that", and "who weren't even conscious that their ideas were not contemporary" (S. D. Cameron 32). Davies's portrait of Mrs Bridgetower in *Tempest-Tost* indicates clearly that she matches in every respect the kind of people that

he was critical about when he wrote the Salterton novels. The description of her dinner with her son Solly is one such example. She rigidly retains the dining rules that are out-of-date, insisting that Solly "wear at least a dark coat, and preferably a dark suit" (55). In addition, she requires a "suitable conversation" with the meal (55), which means that her son is not free to say anything he wants, and as a result there is a lack of communication between the mother and her son. The detailed description of Mrs Bridgetower's dinner, "the most ceremonious and ample dinner eaten that night in Salterton", enables readers not only to sense the irony but also to comprehend how old-fashioned she is, and, at the same time, to wonder why such a "ceremonious" dining custom still exists in Salterton in the middle of the twentieth century.

Davies's description of Mrs Bridgetower's life-long interest in some international political issues adds another touch to the thematic presentation of this character. Although she is well educated, she is unable to adapt to the changing times. Her dread of the "Yellow Peril" before World War I dominates her thinking of world affairs for the rest of her life (55). She regards every political change in the international scene as "a magnification of the old Yellow Peril" (55). Davies's summary of Mrs Bridgetower at the end of his description further shows that she is completely absorbed in the past: "She was growing old and set in her ways, and old perils and dreads were dearer to her than latter-day innovations" (56). In *Leaven of Malice*, the passages delineating Mrs Bridgetower's At Home, a long-gone custom, demonstrate in an explicit way that she lives in the past and holds on to dead traditions:

There are not many people now who keep up the custom of At Home days, but Mrs Solomon Bridgetower had retained her First Thursdays from that period, just before the First World War, when she had been a bride. Without being wealthy, she had a solid fortune, and it had protected her against changing customs; this made her a captain among those forces in Salterton which sought to resist social change, and every First Thursday a

few distinguished members of this brave rearguard were to be found in her drawing-room, taking tea. (171)

Davies's comment on Mrs Bridgetower's *At Home* reveals that she is not alone in trying to keep the past tradition alive and that she has supporters. What is more, these old guardians of the past have formed negative "forces" to "resist social change" and Mrs Bridgetower obviously plays a leading "captain" role in such forces.

The reappearance of Miss Pottinger in *Leaven of Malice* indicates that Davies intended to use her not just as a connection to the previous novel but to amplify the issue of "those forces in Salterton that sought to resist social change". Although she is a minor character and makes no direct contribution to the main plot of the story, Miss Pottinger plays a supporting role in exemplifying the problems that the old guardians of the past create in Salterton society. Her previous appearance in *Tempest-Tost*, though very late and brief, makes readers realize immediately that she lives in the past and is blind to all changes surrounding her. The information about her age, "considerably over eighty", her "old fashioned upbringing" and make-up techniques suggests that Miss Pottinger is a caricature created to embody the stultifying aspect of the past (322, 363). Therefore, it is not surprising to find her at Mrs Bridgetower's *At Home* in *Leaven of Malice*, and to learn that she is one of "a few distinguished members of this brave rearguard" in Salterton society. One feels that Davies is more emphatic about what Miss Pottinger represents thematically in the second novel. Every description of her suggests that she, like Mrs Bridgetower, is imprisoned in the past: "Miss Pottinger, in her advanced years, had yielded nothing to the spirit of the times; two world wars had beaten vainly against her sense of propriety ..." (66). The problem with Miss Pottinger is that her sense of propriety is built upon the outdated concept of "military honour, of good breeding and of Victorian Anglicanism" (65). Therefore, she is seen in constant conflict with the Dean of St. Nicholas' Cathedral and with Humphrey Cobbler, because both men do not conform to her standard of "propriety". Her grudge

against Cobbler (who is portrayed as representing everything that these old guardians dislike and refuse to accept, and as a force that might lead to cultural change and improvement) serves to illustrate that her resistance to change and progress can become a social malady. She disapproves of Cobbler's untidiness and the poor condition of his clothes, calls him behind his back "a gypsy golliwog" and, even worse, "wants to hang Mr Cobbler's hide on the fence" (75, 174). Unable to appreciate Cobbler's musical talent and artistic standards, she takes every opportunity to try to get rid of the organist from the Cathedral by associating him with unfounded accusations, as her friend Mrs Bridgetower reveals: "Puss Pottinger is absolutely insane about that organist at the Cathedral ... she won't rest until she has taken his position from him. She thinks he put that piece [the false engagement notice] in the paper" (187). The contrast between Miss Pottinger's attitude towards Cobbler and towards Bevill Higgin, a self-proclaimed teacher of elocution and singing and a malicious schemer, leads readers to see further why cultural tradition is so delayed in Salterton. Higgin's musical pretensions are so obvious when he plays the piano at Mrs Bridgetower's At Home that "some composers would have had trouble in recognizing their works" (180). However, Miss Pottinger thinks that Higgin is so wonderful that he "must succeed Humphrey Cobbler on the bench of St. Nicholas'" (181). Her choice is based on her preference for the old songs that Higgin sang for the ladies that took her back to the past, "a region of her being from which she had had no messages for many years" (180). Through Miss Pottinger's differing attitudes towards Higgin and Cobbler, Davies shows that the old guardians of the past can also be very oppressive and aggressive to those like Cobbler who challenge their old values and old social and cultural standards.

Matthew Snelgrove appears to belong to the same "forces" and is considered one of them by Mrs Bridgetower and Miss Pottinger in *Leaven of Malice*--he and Pottinger form an alliance in St. Nicholas', "bullying" the Dean and making situations difficult for Cobbler to work in (68). Mrs Bridgetower's trust in Snelgrove grows when she

learns that he "has interested himself" in the legal action against Cobbler, who he believes, put the false engagement announcement in the newspaper; as she tells Miss Pottinger, "I am sure that we can leave it in his capable hands" (172). It is understandable why these two ladies think so highly of Snelgrove. Davies's description of Snelgrove suggests that he is, too, one of the old-timers: although his "professional and personal character was being formed about the turn of the century", he acts and reacts like "the lawyer-squire of the eighteenth [century]" (81, 82). Readers are also told that he "had become the prisoner of a professional manner" and that "[f]or the practice of the law he had no particular intellectual endowment except an enthusiasm for the *status quo* and regret that most of the democratic legislation of the last century could not be removed from the statute books" (82). It is therefore not surprising that Snelgrove's hostility towards the Dean and Cobbler (because the Dean regards Cobbler as "an excellent musician" and "value[s] the cathedral organist highly") is similar to Miss Pottinger's: he is unable to accept both men's unconventional modern aesthetic values or to appreciate Cobbler's music, as he admits: "I know little about music, Mr Dean, and frankly I care little" (70, 71). Snelgrove's part in the story thus helps both to strengthen the general theme and to show the more negative "real character of Salterton".

Davies leads readers further to see that Snelgrove's profession as a lawyer has become the basis for his pretensions to power in society as a whole, encouraging him to indulge in defending the past and to make things as difficult as possible for those people like Cobbler, whom he personally dislikes. For example, part of his motivation to take Professor Vambrace's case against *The Bellman* for publishing the false engagement notice is prompted by his old notion, "Fine old families should not suffer affront in silence", as he has learned that Professor Vambrace is "related to a noble family in Ireland" (86). Snelgrove's character also shows that, in defending the "glorious past" against the "rampant democracy" of the present, he, as an individual,

becomes a part of the leaven of malice in Salterton (93). His maliciousness is exposed more fully in the scene in which the lawyers representing both parties are going to confront the person they accuse of a hoax at the newspaper editor's office. Without any solid evidence, Snelgrove charges Cobbler with playing a practical joke in putting the false engagement notice in *The Bellman*. He then humiliates both Cobbler and the Dean in front of the others by accusing the Dean: "You have, for several years, obstinately defended this man against those of us who understand his nature and his pernicious influence in the Cathedral" (292). This speech shows that he openly stands in opposition to the Dean who plays the role of a tolerant and benevolent Christian and whose open-mindedness and aesthetic values make it possible for Cobbler to put his artistic talent to good use. In this dramatic scene, Snelgrove's narrow-minded, provincial and puritanical stand suggests a potentially disruptive power that will give rise to disorder in the small world of Salterton. Using this character, Davies succeeds in presenting more evidence to reinforce the recurrent general theme.

Davies's characterization of the "Old Mess", Mr Shillito--a "seventy-eight years old" journalist who works for the Salterton *Evening Bellman* and whose writing style belongs to "the eighteenth century essayist", such as Addison and Steele--helps to highlight the thematic issue that Mrs Bridgetower, Miss Pottinger and Mr Snelgrove embody and to intensify the thematic unity between the first two novels (4, 11). The existence of such a journalist and of those who revel in his old-fashioned essay style and out-of-fashion petty subjects (such as walking sticks, snuff and toothpicks) invites readers to perceive from yet another angle how widespread the delayed cultural tradition has become in Salterton (27, 28). As his nickname "Old Mess" suggests, this old fellow has become troublesome to the younger journalists he works with because he tries to impose his old-fashioned ethics and working methods on them. The editor, Gloster Ridley, was annoyed and irritated by the Old Mess because "the old fellow was a bully; he was so keen in his appreciation of himself and his work that not to join him

became a form of discourtesy" (13). The fact that Shillito turns out to be at the root of the whole mess caused by the false engagement notice indicates that the negative "forces" such an old guardian of the past possesses can be very disruptive indeed. When Shillito admits that part of the problem was caused by his sponsorship of Higgin "to do the poor chap a bit of good" and by his "[l]oyalty to a fellow Britisher", one realizes that he is blind to Higgin's human and artistic limitations; to those like Ridley and Solly, however, Higgin's "[s]econd-rateness comes out of his pores like a fog" (309, 184). Because Higgin appealed to him as a fellow spirit, Shillito, like Salterton society as a whole, was eager to embrace anything or anyone that could remind them of the past, even momentarily. Although Shillito and Snelgrove have no structural function in the trilogy, what they symbolize in the second novel amplifies the general theme of delayed cultural tradition and so adds more significance to "the real character of Salterton", the general unifying device in building the trilogy structure.

Davies's way of relating the stories of Mrs Bridgetower, Miss Pottinger, Shillito and Snelgrove in the second novel leads readers to respond not just to what they do or say to others, but to the underlying thematic meanings their actions imply. They are shown to be so imprisoned "in a satisfactory consciousness of past glories" that they unwittingly fight desperately to preserve and retain what they hold to be dear to them (*Tempest-Tost* 13). In so doing, they become obstacles to cultural and social changes and developments. Presented in this way, these characters not only help to explain, in a subtle way, why people in Salterton live in "a sort of delayed cultural tradition", but also make it possible structurally for Davies to create incrementally a continuity, even a unity of character, theme and style of characterization between the first two novels. What these characters provide also enables him both to carry on with them the same general theme and various motifs and to experiment with a different narrative structure in the third novel so that a contrasting effect can be achieved in the readers' perception of the delayed cultural tradition.

In *A Mixture of Frailties*, Davies creates a different narrative structure: two sets of stories are set in motion by the late Mrs. Bridgetower's will to renew the general theme of the delayed cultural tradition and the presentation of "the real character" of Salterton. He uses all the recurrent characters from the previous novel (such as Solly, his wife Pearl Veronica, Miss Pottinger, the Dean of St. Nicholas' Cathedral, Cobbler and his wife and Snelgrove) to form a frame story set in Salterton. The central character, Monica Gall, a Saltertonian sent to England and Europe to be educated and trained as a professional singer, is at the heart of the main story. Davies uses the frame story to create a close link with *Leaven of Malice* and, at the same time, to illustrate through the work of the Bridgetower trustees the problems in Canadian culture. The main story taking place outside Salterton serves to form a contrast between two cultures: the provincial, second-rate and immature Canadian culture of that time and the sophisticated, mature and nourishing European culture, a contrast that throws new light on the general theme of "delayed cultural tradition" in Canada. More significantly, the main story brings to the fore the recurrent motifs such as art, artist, education (of an artist in this case) and Eros and Thanatos. In this way, the two sets of stories not only are closely affiliated, but together add the final block to the formation of the trilogy structure.

As a potential trilogy novelist, Davies displays his inventiveness in creating a strong intertextual effect with Mrs Bridgetower's will. By itself, the will symbolizes her "Dead Hand" and throws new light on her demonic character (25). In addition, it gives a final touch to Davies's thematic presentation of her and makes her role more prominent in establishing the unity of character and theme for the trilogy. The conditions of her will suggest that she wants to dominate and manipulate people to whom she is closely related even after her death because her posthumous maliciousness underlies every condition. The vindictive condition that her son and daughter-in-law produce a male heir or they will get nothing but one hundred dollars is obviously

intended to control the young couple's life, especially their sexual life, and to put a psychological pressure on their marriage which might strain or, even worse, destroy their relationship. The condition of her bequest to St. Nicholas' Cathedral is another sign of her manipulation with the "Dead Hand". The Dean has to give a Memorial Sermon on education every St. Nicholas' Day as long as the trust remains. But if Solly and Veronica do not produce a male child the cathedral will never get her bequest. In a subtle way, Davies makes readers realize that the death of Mrs Bridgetower does not mean the end of the conflict between the old and new traditions and values, and that the working of the "Dead Hand" of the past or the Thanatos spirit can still be felt in every way. With this character, Davies amplifies the profound negative effect that the delayed cultural tradition has on people's lives in Salterton.

Davies uses Mrs Bridgetower's attitude towards the arts, revealed in her will, to readdress several related motifs of the previous two books. Remembering the stipulation in her will, one realizes how hypocritical is her request that her money "be devoted to the education, or training, of some young woman resident in this city of Salterton, who is desirous of following a career in the arts" (16). Superficially, her will makes her appear generous and supportive of the arts. However, her seemingly good will is undermined by her own condition under which the Trust will be terminated if a male heir is born within a year of her death; in that case there will be no money for training or educating anyone in the arts (17). The interpretation of the condition of her will by her own son leads readers to realize that Mrs Bridgetower does not really care about the arts, nor the education of an artist, but uses her will as a pretext "to register a final protest against" (39) Solly's marriage to Veronica. The insight of Solly's friend Molly, Cobbler's wife, that the will is "a really revengeful will" (22) further helps readers to perceive the posthumous maliciousness of this old guardian of the past rather than her generosity or benevolence for advancing the arts and Canadian culture. Mrs Bridgetower's attitude towards the arts is further exposed and brought under attack in

Sir Benedict Domdaniel's comment on her and her Trust: "She sounds like a loony. This Trust of hers is silly" (137). Solly's later remark about the whole business of the Trust makes readers see more clearly that Mrs Bridgetower had no intention to support the advancement of the arts in Salterton: "My mother cared too much about having her own way; result--a remarkable artist gets her start ... an extraordinary opera gets its first production. Neither of them things Mother would have foreseen or desired, to be truthful. She just wanted to let us feel the weight of her hand" (367). To a certain extent, Solly's remark summarizes what Davies intends to show to his readers: Mrs Bridgetower's personality, her attitude toward the arts and the negative force of the past she represents. In this way Davies succeeds in achieving through Mrs Bridgetower several interconnections, direct and subtle, between the Salterton novels.

The reappearance in *A Mixture of Frailties* of Miss Pottinger, who is selected by Mrs Bridgetower in her will to be one of three executors, strengthens this character as a thematic link with previous two novels, and at the same time further reveals Mrs Bridgetower's intention in selecting one of the old guardians of the past to act for her in dealing with her estate. By letting Miss Pottinger play an important role in the Trust which finances Monica's training and education in England, and by allowing her to make decisions about how to spend the Trust money on Monica, Davies shows more about her backward, provincial and conservative way of thinking and acting and her oppressive, provincial attitude towards the arts in general, thus adding new content to the effect of the general theme. Miss Pottinger's workings as a trustee show that, as a defender of the past and of Mrs Bridgetower's spirit, she cannot help but act in a puritanical and short-sighted way and to become an obstacle to every decision made. For example, when the trustees try to select the applicant for Mrs Bridgetower's bounty, Miss Pottinger gets "great opportunities to reflect on the quality of the young people of today, and to compare them, much to their disfavour, with the young people she ha[s] known at the turn of the century" (33). When dealing with money matters,

she also compares costs "with some standard of expenditure adopted by herself in her youth, and now invalid" (26). She also exerts her provincial and conservative moral standard on judging the young woman who is the first candidate. The young woman's virginity becomes a requirement for qualifying as a beneficiary. When she finds out that the girl is no longer a virgin but a "hussy", Miss Pottinger forces the other trustees, by threatening to take the matter "to the courts", to dismiss her (35). Monica, too, is under her scrutiny: "[I]t was apparent to the X-ray eye of Miss Puss that the disqualification which had brought about the fall of Birgitta Hetmansen did not apply here" (45). Even when Monica is in London, Miss Pottinger makes inquiries in a letter to see if Monica has any male visitor and then suggests a "moral guardian" be appointed for her (129). The role this old lady plays in the Trust business not only enriches Davies's comic or even satirical mode of characterization, but more poignantly, his continuous thematic illustration of the delayed cultural tradition.

Through Miss Pottinger's negative reaction to the money spent on Monica's education and training in England and Europe, Davies invites his readers to consider further the provincial attitude towards the arts, which reinforces the thematic issue brought to the fore by Mrs Bridgetower's will. She opposes almost every suggestion or decision that some money should be forwarded to Monica. She insists, "We are instructed to educate the girl, not to debauch her" (263), and thinks that the money would corrupt Monica. She even tells the other trustees: "We're making a beggar on horseback of this girl" and "she'll ride to the Dee. Mark my words" (132). Therefore, when she learns how much *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* costs, she objects to the idea that the Trust should pay for the book and asks, "Can't she [Monica] learn from anything less than that?" (131). Her objections indicate that she doesn't understand very much about education, let alone the education of an artist, but insists on imposing her narrow-minded and limited understanding on others. She is seen in every way resisting any opportunity that will advance the education and achievements

of young people, and so eventually change Canadian cultural tradition. If Monica may be said to represent Canada's future, Miss Pottinger is the nearly dead hand of the past attempting to prevent her evolution. The consistency in Davies's thematic portrait of Miss Pottinger, together with Mrs Bridgetower, in *A Mixture of Frailties* enhances the unity both of character and of the education motif.

Although the central character Monica Gall has no obvious structural function for the formation of the trilogy, Davies's creation of her experience in England and Europe suggests that he intended to continue expressing his concern about cultural problems in Canada. But this time he showed the effect of the delayed cultural tradition and the provincial religion and values on the mental growth of individual young people. Monica serves to enact and accentuate several recurrent thematic issues⁷. In an indirect way, her story replenishes the already established thematic unity. By moving Monica away from Salterton to London, Davies creates an opportunity to show the problems from the point of view of outsiders, particularly those professional artists, such as the symbolically named Sir Benedict Domdaniel, who offers his professional and intellectual insight into and diagnosis of the cultural predicaments both in Monica as an individual and in Canada as a nation. After hearing the songs Monica sang and the

⁷ Davies himself discussed the "two principal themes" and described how they found their way into *A Mixture of Frailties*: "Its two principal themes have long troubled me, and I have had opportunities to observe them in action. The first of these themes is the transformation which takes place in anyone who becomes, even in a modest way, a true artist. It involves a stripping off of many trivial aspects of character, and a deepening and sometimes a discovery of dominant traits in the person who undertakes such a psychological adventure. The second theme is what happens to a Canadian who goes out into the world beyond Canada. He discovers how little his country means to the average person elsewhere, and this is bound to be a shock. He discovers what Canada means to him, and this may be a discovery of himself, as well. He may try to take on the characteristics of another nation, and in some cases this is a form of defeat. Or he may get rid of his provinciality (if that is what he has learned in Canada), and give something that is good in his Canadian heritage to the rest of the world. Certainly I did not write *A Mixture of Frailties* to illustrate these two themes. That is to say, I did not contrive the story to prove a point. The story came first, but because those two themes have engaged my attention for so long, they found their way into the book" ("Author's Comments", *Toronto Daily Star* 23 Aug. 1958: 26).

reasons why she liked singing and music, Domdaniel does what the Bridgetower Trust required and evaluates her voice and potential musical talent: "she sang a lot of trash" and "she really doesn't know a damned thing" about music and art (54, 55). He then pinpoints the cause of her problems: "I think this is the clue to the girl, a real natural talent has been overlaid by a stultifying home atmosphere and cultural malnutrition" and "the great thing that seems to be wrong with her, considered as a possible artist, is that she has lived for twenty years in circumstances which are not discouraging to art ... but in which art in any of its forms is not even guessed at" (54, 55). His remarks make it explicit that Monica's problem is not her own but reflects the problems in Canadian culture in general. Domdaniel's letter, written after Monica has been under his supervision for some time in England, represents his further diagnosis both of Monica's cultural ignorance (she has little knowledge of history and literature) and of her inadequate education in Canada because "she has virtually no general cultivation, and though she seems to have some imagination, she has nothing with which to nourish it" (130). Indirectly, Domdaniel blames Canadian cultural malnutrition for Monica's "biggest handicap" because she was brought up in a culture which could not nourish her artistic imagination even though she has some natural artistic talent (130). Domdaniel's criticism thus makes it possible for Davies to restate these thematic issues in a direct and authoritative way and to direct readers' attention to the thematic continuity these issues help to build among the three Salterton novels.

Davies also uses Domdaniel's analysis of Monica's problems to develop the Eros (love and life) and Thanatos (death) motif implied in the previous two novels and to give a thrust to the unifying theme of the delayed Canadian cultural tradition. During their first meeting after Monica's arrival in London, Domdaniel uses the figures of Eros and Thanatos to explain to Monica that they stand for two kinds of singers and also two kinds of living. He then leads Monica to understand that she has to break

away from the spell that the Thanatos kind of living has cast over her in order to become an Eros type of singer:

You're too full of a desire to please--not to please me, but to please your family, or your schoolteachers, or those people--the What's Its Name Trust--who are paying the shot for you. Those people never want you to have great ambitions or strong, consuming passions. They want you to be refined--which means predictable, stable, controlled, always choosing the smallest cake on the plate, never breaking wind audibly, being a good loser--in a word, dead. (107)

He even tells her explicitly that those people she grew up with are "crypto-Thanatossers": "You've obviously been in contact with a lot of these crypto-Thanatossers--probably educated by them, insofar as you have been educated at all" (108). What Domdaniel says helps Monica to initiate her transformation, or in his words, to "unbutton" herself "vocally and spiritually" (109). To readers, this is the first time that the nature of the delayed Canadian cultural tradition is explained so plainly and explicitly in terms of Eros and Thanatos. Domdaniel's insightful and direct comment on the motivation of Mrs Bridgetower's will and those "nice, refined, passionless living dead" Saltertonians makes both the repeated theme and the thematic interconnections more tangible.

Furthermore, Domdaniel's association of Monica's educational and cultural problems with Thanatos and his pungent criticism of those "nice, refined, passionless dead" Saltertonians invite readers to look back with a new perception at both Hector Mackilwraith's infatuation with Griselda Webster and his suicide attempt in *Tempest-Tost*, and the problem in the mother/son relationship between Solly and Mrs Bridgetower. In Hector's case, he lived and confined himself in his own little world created through his hard work and he denied his instinctive feelings, such as passion, by means of "the orderliness of his thinking" (49). The arousal of his strong passion

and hunger for love during his involvement in the preparation for the performance of *The Tempest* and his final decision to end his suffering from unrequited love through death show the working out of this Eros and Thanatos motif. Solly and Cobbler's remarks about why Hector attempted suicide subtly direct our attention to his living-dead condition. Cobbler points out that even though Hector is not yet over forty , "[s]piritually ... he's been seventy for years" (370). Solly thinks that two factors are responsible for his attempted suicide, "the logical outcome of his education and the sort of life he has led" (370). Their analysis thus anticipates Domdeniel's more critical analysis of Monica's educational deficiency and of her malnourished Canadian cultural background. Davies's own explanation in response to his editor's objection that Hector's "suicide is out of key with the book as a whole" confirms that the life and death motif was intended to underlie Hector's story:

Suicides happen when people meet a situation they cannot face, and that is what happened to Hector ... it is a suicide which was foredoomed to failure; it wasn't really in Hector's nature to kill himself, and in the end he is as safe as he can be.

Though his bark may not be lost

Yet it shall be tempest-tost.

Why do you suppose I chose that title? Originally I wanted a subtitle: "The Strange Love, Tragical Death and Glorious Resurrection of Hector Mackilwraith, B. A." Hector goes through an experience comparable to the mystical re-birth achieved by all great heroes; he has a tough time, he descends into hell, and he rises purified and renewed. (28 July [1951], McMaster 103: 5)

Davies uses Hector's story to imply that he is one of the victims of Thanatos as it manifests itself in the provincial, puritanical and stuffy cultural environment⁸.

It seems that Davies's creation of the story about Solly and his mother is also in part dominated, consciously or unconsciously, by his notion of the mythological meanings of Eros and Thanatos. In *Tempest-Tost* and *Leaven of Malice* in particular, Solly is presented as full of vitality, passion and desire for love. His mother is the opposite, imprisoned in the past and holding on to dying customs and values; she is seen in every way as a Thanatos figure: physically and spiritually she is dead. But it is in her relationship with her son that the Eros and Thanatos motif becomes most effective. Her fear that she will lose her son if he falls in love with a girl and her animosity against any girl she thinks Solly loves, serve to express the constant struggle between the forces of Eros and Thanatos. Like the dirty tricks she plays with her illness to fight against Solly's passion or love for anyone other than herself, the condition in her will that Solly and his wife produce a male child so that they can inherit her estate is her most vicious way of controlling her son's sexual life even after her death. What Molly Cobbler says to Solly and Veronica conveys the point: "You've got to consider the generation your mother belonged to. She wasn't a big friend of sex, you know. She undoubtedly thought it would dry up the organs of increase in you both" (*Mixture* 23). Reading the story about the struggle between Solly and his mother from one novel to the next in the light of the Eros and Thanatos motif, readers are made to realize that the spirit of Thanatos in the delayed cultural tradition has distorted not only individual lives but the life of many families as well (Pearl's family life is one other case in point). At the same time, both Hector, who is seen at the end of *Tempest-Tost* as a "resurrected" new person, and Solly, who is more mature psychologically and

⁸ In the 1968 interview with Roper, Davies also discussed why Hector acted the way he did. There he particularly emphasized the influence of the Canadian background and his upbringing on Hector's behaviour ("Conversations" 33-34).

free from the manipulation of his mother's Dead Hand at the end of *A Mixture of Frailties*, suggest that the force of Eros not only can overpower that of Thanatos in individual lives but will triumph in the world of Salterton eventually.

However, it is through Monica's transformation from a provincial and religious amateur singer of "trash" at the beginning into a promising professional soprano of a European standard at the end that Davies brings the struggle of the two forces into full view, the struggle which enables readers to perceive a coherent pattern in his characterization of several people in the previous two novels. Davies uses Monica's transformation to show that one important step that leads to her success in becoming an Eros type artist or a "sexual singer" is her conscious break with her provincial background and its narrow moral and cultural outlook (107). This is particularly implied in her sexual experience with Revelstoke, her music teacher. Her intangible feeling about her first sexual experience, initiated by Revelstoke, reveals a sign of an important change in her attitude towards her own religion:

She should feel evil, depraved--she knew it. But miraculously, at this moment when she should have stood in awe of her mother, and Pastor Beamis and the whole moral code of the Thirteeners, she felt, on the contrary, free of them, above and beyond them as though reunited with something which they sought to deny her. (182)

Her reflections indicate that, although she is aware that she has violated the moral code of the Thirteeners religion she was brought up with, Monica does not feel guilty; instead, she feels "free" from the moral restraints that her religious upbringing imposed on her. Her feeling itself, therefore, indicates that she is consciously divorcing herself from the constricting cultural tradition of her own past. The development in her sexual relationship with Revelstoke (she voluntarily becomes his mistress) further shows that she is willing to transgress the puritanically moral rules of her religion. Her insight into her past marks her further progress in her transformation:

Without having done so consciously, she had moved far from the Thirteener faith; the altered conditions of her life shoved it into the background, and when she thought of it at all, it was the crudities of its doctrine, the sweaty strenuities of Pastor Beamis, and the trashiness of its music which recurred to her. (233)

Monica's insight suggests that it is the change of cultural environment that makes it possible for her to become aware of and then consciously try to get rid of the nonsense that her Thanatos-like religion taught her and to strive to change herself into an Eros singer.

Monica's experience also gives Davies an opportunity to expand upon his notion, foreshadowed in *Tempest-Tost* and *Leaven of Malice*, about the differences between Canadian education and education in Europe and of the impact of European culture on a Canadian educated abroad. The education motif therefore adds more to the thematic interconnections between these novels. In the first novel, the issue of education abroad and the differences between those educated abroad and those educated in Canada are presented ironically through Mrs Forrester's remark about Solly. She thinks that Solly is "conceited" because he studied in Cambridge, England, for two years (*Tempest-Tost* 28, 40). She openly blames education abroad for the loss of the "nice simplicity" of those Canadians: "Lots of boys go through our Canadian universities and come out with the bloom still on them, but when they go abroad they always come home spoiled" (40).

In *Leaven of Malice*, the same issue is treated both comically and ironically through the description of the Yarrows (Norm and Dutchy), both of whom were educated and trained in Canadian universities. Davies's presentation of this couple is replete with hints of the inadequacy of their education. Readers sense Davies's irony immediately from the information about Dutchy who "had written an unusually good thesis, at the age of nineteen, on *Preparing the Parent for the Profession of*

Parenthood" (136). One cannot help but wonder how Dutchy could write on such a practical subject without herself being a parent. His introduction of Norm has the same effect (131-32). Though a Ph.D. in psychology, Norm "did not appear to belong to any special school of psychology. He frankly admitted that he relied upon his own commonsense, rather than theory, to guide him in dealing with people who seemed to need psychological assistance" (131). The scene in which Norm tries to use the Freudian Oedipus theory to make Professor Vambrace understand that his love for his daughter Pearl is abnormal shows dramatically and explicitly the deficiency in Norm's post-secondary education. Davies's description of Norm's thought during the meeting best illustrates the point:

Norm was by this time sick of the name of Oedipus. A horrible suspicion was rising in his mind that the Oedipus Complex, which he had for some time used as a convenient and limitless bin into which he dumped any problem involving possessive parents and dependent children, was a somewhat more restricted term than he had imagined. The chapter on Freudian psychology in his general textbook had not, after all, equipped him to deal with a tiresomely literal professor of classics who knew Oedipus at first hand, so to speak. Norm had received his training chiefly through general courses and for some interesting work which proved fairly conclusively that rats were unable to distinguish between squares, circles and triangles. (238)

The passage is an illustration of the consequence of the "nice simplicity" that Mrs Forrester advocated and of the incompetence of those educated in Canada. Using Monica's experience in Europe as a contrast, Davies subtly shows what is really lacking in Canadian education. In Monica's case, what is involved in her education is more than the technical training of her voice, improvement in her musical skill, an increase in her knowledge of literature and a cultural replenishment; it involves a

radical change in her provincial and religious outlook--what Mrs Forrester called "nice simplicity"--as well as self awareness of her limitation and deficiency. In this way, Davies successfully tightens the intrinsic thematic links between these novels, which contribute thematically to the growth of a trilogy structure.

It has to be pointed out that other recurrent characters, such as Humphrey Cobbler, Solly and Pearl/Veronica, also play an important role in developing the trilogy structure. Throughout the three novels, readers frequently meet these three characters and get to know them incrementally from one novel to the next. The fact that by the end of *Tempest-Tost* Cobbler and Solly have become very close friends and Cobbler has been Solly's confidant ever since suggests that Davies intended to use these two men to create a sense of continuity and to intensify the unity of character. Davies's positive presentation of Cobbler in all three novels indicates that, as Cobbler's untidiness in appearance and fondness for making mischief suggest, he represents all that the old guardians of the past in Salterton reject and resist. More importantly, a serious professional musician with high aesthetic standards, Cobbler is assigned the role of cultural mediator for diagnosing the problems of Salterton society from within. He is portrayed as insightful, clear-eyed and outspoken, and as knowing exactly where the problems of a "delayed cultural tradition" lie. The best example is seen in *A Mixture of Frailties*, where Cobbler tells Monica why she should not feel nervous about the audience at the Bridgetower Recital:

Salterton can't be your measure of success or failure; what you think are its standards are just the standards of childhood and provincialism.... These people out there are just provincial professors, and bankers, and wholesale druggists who want to be proud of you if you give them half a chance, but who will just as readily take any opportunity you give them to keep you down. (301)

What Cobbler says here is a clear statement of his awareness of and insight into Saltertonians' provincialism, particularly in their attitude towards the arts to which his work belongs and towards artists like himself. On the other hand, his statement embodies Davies's criticism of the "awful provinciality which still prevails in Canada about the arts" (Roper, "Conversations" 41). Cobbler's open-mindedness and nonconformist attitude represent an opposite to the "forces" of the old defenders of the past, such as Mrs Bridgetower who, as he points out, "symbolized all the forces that have been standing on my neck ever since I was old enough to have a mind of my own" (*Mixture* 25). It is his open-mindedness and his modern aesthetic values that enable him to recognize Monica's "most promising voice", even in the "perverse" songs she sings in the Thirteeners' Heart and Hope Gospel Quartet, and to recommend her to the Bridgetower Trust as a beneficiary (*Mixture* 38).

Cobbler is also central to the thematic unity of the Salterton trilogy because, through him, Davies is able to express his general concern with "the Canadian artist" and illustrate directly the predicament of the artist working within the "delayed cultural tradition" (Roper, "Conversations" 36). Cobbler's plight is partly revealed in his self-awareness of the negative reactions to his profession as Cathedral organist: "I am many reprehensible things, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, because I am unlike them [and treated as] the running sore of Salterton society" (*Leaven* 209). He is also aware, as he tells Solly: "Pottinger hates me with the one pure passion of her life; she's always trying to get my job away from me. I'm not her notion of a Cathedral organist" (*Mixture* 39). The objection of "a number of influential Cathedral parishioners", including Mr Snelgrove, to Cobbler being the Cathedral organist indicates that he has to work in a hostile atmosphere, to contend with those people in order to maintain his professional and aesthetic standards and to be strong and firm not to yield to the pressure of the force of Thanatos.

One more point should be made here about Cobbler's role in the evolution of the Salterton trilogy. The friendship between Solly and Cobbler as seen developing from one novel to the next becomes not only an important thread tying the three novels, but also a means to draw readers' attention to the mother/son motif. Davies creates several special occasions on which Solly confides to Cobbler his personal problems, particularly his unhappiness at home with his mother. In giving Solly his frank advice, Cobbler helps not only Solly but readers as well to gain some understanding of the cause of the problems, and at the same time, makes the mother/son motif more prominent. It is in this respect that Cobbler prefigures the Fifth Business role that Dunstan Ramsay and Liesl play in the Deptford trilogy and Simon Darcourt in the Cornish trilogy. Two particularly effective scenes are worth mentioning here to illustrate the point. During Solly's late night visit to the Cobblers in *Leaven of Malice*, the whole conversation between them is about Solly's plight aggravated by the false engagement notice. After Solly explains his situation and declares passionately, "I've got a mother, and that, God knows, is enough to warn me off the female sex for life. I don't want a wife, and I don't want my job, and I don't want Charles Heavysege", Cobbler lets Solly see the situation differently:

You are in a richly varied mess, true enough. But much as I like you, I am clear-eyed enough to see that it is the outward and visible reflection of the inward and invisible mess which is your soul. You think life has trapped you, do you? Well, my friend, everybody is trapped, more or less. The best thing you can hope for is to understand your trap and make terms with it, tooth by tooth.... You are the prisoner of circumstance, Bridgetower, and it is my considered view that you are not one of the tiny minority of mankind that can grapple with circumstance and give it a fall. (219)

Although Solly makes no immediate response to Cobbler, his later decision, as he tells Dr. Sengreen, to "be a creator of Amcan, not one of its embalmers", and his courage

to make his own decision to marry Pearl against his mother's strong will all indicate that he has taken Cobbler's advice to come to terms with his trapped situation. In a sense, Cobbler plays an important role in Solly's mental development throughout the three novels.

The Christmas dinner the Cobblers have with Solly and his wife Pearl (now called Veronica by her middle name), in *A Mixture of Frailties* is another scene in which Cobbler helps Solly to see the malignity of his mother's will and what she has done to him:

You really must grow up.... Your Mum told you that she loved you, and you believed her. She made your life a hell of dependency, and you put up with it because she played the invalid, and tyrannized over you with her weak heart. She beat off any girls you liked, until you got up enough gumption to marry Veronica--or Veronica got enough gumption to marry you.... What peace have you known since? She made you come here and live with her, and like a couple of chumps you did it. She let it be known as widely as possible that your marriage grieved her. (22)

Cobbler's analysis of Mrs Bridgetower's will succinctly and effectively reminds readers of Solly's difficult time at home with his sick mother described in the previous two novels, and thus throws more light on the distorted relationship between Solly and his mother and on this repeated motif. In this way, Cobbler's reappearance with Solly encourages readers to see the three novels as forming a connected trilogy.

Like the other recurrent characters, Solly and Pearl's role in forming the trilogy structure is too obvious to be missed. However, unlike the others, these two are given more weight in creating a easily recognizable temporal order and in establishing a continuity through the development of their relationship. Following these two characters, readers can easily perceive a Solly-Pearl thread throughout these novels. In *Tempest-Tost*, they are both involved in the production of *The Tempest* and Solly,

unable to get Griselda as his companion to the June Ball, asks Pearl instead; Mrs Bridgetower invites Pearl to dinner before the Ball, an occasion mentioned several times in the second novel. The established acquaintance between Solly and Pearl thus makes it possible for Davies to use the relationship to invent another story taking place four years later, but with a twist. They are dragged into an embarrassing situation by the false engagement notice published in the local newspaper. The news spreads fast that they are going to get married in a month, but few people notice that the wedding is set on a date which does not exist. The pressure both from the public and particularly from their families pushes them together and they decide to take the matter into their own hands. In the process, they tell each other about their unhappy lives at home, and consequently compassion for and understanding of each other lead to their final decision to turn the false engagement into a real one, against their parents' will. The beginning of *A Mixture of Frailties* makes it clear that Solly and Pearl/Veronica have been married for "six months" (4). Their union through marriage marks an explicit unity in several ways.

But their unique contribution to the Salterton trilogy is to enact and reinforce the distorted parent/child relationship caused by the Thanatos mentality of the parents. Using these two young people, Davies shows that life in their families is deeply affected by the delayed or retarded cultural tradition. He demonstrates in Pearl's struggle with her father and Solly's with his mother how the dead hand of the past and tradition attempts to dominate and manipulate young people's lives and make them submissive to the old conventions. In presenting these two young people, Davies suggests that the conflict between possessive, dominant and selfish parents and powerless children is a struggle against another instance of the weight of the dead hand of tradition. Their triumph over their parents' possessiveness and manipulation and their noticeable growth in self-confidence and self-esteem leave readers an impression of a promising future after reading the whole Salterton sequence. It is implied that

Salterton, like the two young people, will triumph over the Thanatos spirit. To achieve this effect, Davies contrives three stages of their psychological development divided by the three novels. The lengthy description of Pearl's family life (160-64) followed by Solly's (164-69) in *Tempest-Tost* makes it clear that they are aware that life at home is suffocating, but are not yet strong enough to do anything to counteract the parental power. In Pearl's case, she can only wish that she will be freed "from the loneliness which that divided household had imposed upon her" (162). Solly is shown more desperate for "freedom" from his mother's clutch: "He needed a profession at which he could support himself. He needed the love and reassurance of someone other than his mother. He needed someone to whom he could talk, without reserve, about the humiliating thralldom which she had imposed upon him since his thirteenth year [when his father died suddenly]" (167).

In *Leaven of Malice*, both Pearl and Solly's situations at home are worsened by their parents' selfish and single-minded reaction to the false engagement notice. They pay no attention to their children's feelings and do not want any suggestion from the young people who are the real victims. Worse still, Pearl's father becomes so enraged and violent when he sees Pearl come out of Solly's car that "he cuff[s] her shrewdly on the ear" (166). It is in this most difficult and challenging situation that Davies lets Pearl and Solly display their growing courage and strength in dealing with their unreasonable and unyielding parents. Pearl can reason with her father without hesitation that if he is going to launch a lawsuit she will refuse to testify in court: "In law I'm not a child. I'm a grown woman. And I won't go to court and be made a fool of" (126). Against the spirit of his mother's "counter-action", Solly takes the matter into his own hands by discussing with Pearl their embarrassing case and how to deal with their parents' actions. Apart from their active role in finding a solution to the situation, both become willing to discuss their family problems with friends, Pearl with Norm Yarrow (135) and Solly with the Cobblers (206-220), and with each other (255-

56). Their decision at the end of the novel to get engaged against their parents' objections suggests that their strength has finally overpowered their parents' domination and manipulation and that they are ready to embark on a new life together.

Through Solly and Pearl/Veronica's joint battle against Mrs Bridgetower's Dead Hand in *A Mixture of Frailties*, Davies elevates the issue of distorted parent/child relationships and makes readers see that a parent's domination can go to extremes. On the other hand, the unusual conditions of Mrs. Bridgetower's will test both the young couple's strength to break the final "bondage" and their understanding of and love for each other (272). Veronica's late night meditation on the situation she and Solly have been forced into by the conditions of her mother-in-law's will provides a summary of the struggle they have undergone (269-73). Her perception of Mrs Bridgetower's demonic character enables her to stand by Solly and to help him see through the vicious purpose of the will. In the most humiliating and challenging situation, Pearl/Veronica is seen as being more confident about herself, more independent in her thinking and more insightful about the force of the Dead hand than Solly. But Solly's thought about the unusual circumstance of the birth of his son revealed during the Dean's last Memorial Sermon indicates that he, too, has understood his mother's unyielding and demonic spirit (373). His forgiveness of his mother's vengeful will and spirit suggests that he is willing to leave the past behind and to look forward to the future. The triumph of this young couple at the end of the trilogy certainly bespeaks their individual mental development, and at the same time, suggests that a better, healthier, nourishing and loving parent/child relationship will be established in Solly and Veronica's household and an improved social and cultural environment will outgrow the delayed cultural tradition in Salterton. In a structural way, the continuous story of these two

young people gives the Salterton sequence a closure with the birth of their son, a symbol of the defeat of the dead hand of the past and the beginning of a new life⁹.

The Salterton trilogy is also unified by Davies's use of dramatic comedy. Because he was still an active playwright when writing these novels, his experience as a playwright inevitably had some direct or indirect influence on his novel writing and therefore on his construction of the Salterton trilogy. W. J. Keith points out that "Davies's early experience in the world of the theatre, both as playwright and as actor, had a profound effect upon the novelist that he was later to become" (*A Sense of Style* 80). He then asserts: "His previous ... experience in drama was an undeniable asset to his qualifications as a novelist and in no sense a liability" (83). As Davies's serious creative writing began mainly with plays as early as 1943¹⁰ (*The King Who Could Not Dream* was the first), the influence on his novel writing is too extensive to be fully discussed here. The thematic interaction between his plays written in the 1940's and 50's and the Salterton novels became inevitable because of Davies's preoccupation with the lifelessness and aridity of Canadian culture. The plays set in Canada (such as *Overlaid*, *Hope Deferred*, *Eros at Breakfast* and *Fortune, My Foe*) share the same general theme with the Salterton trilogy. My examination focuses only on the structural effect that the adopted dramatic devices produced within these early novels.

While working on the Salterton novels in the 1950's, Davies also produced four plays--*At My Heart's Core* (1950), *A Masque of Aesop* (1952), *Hunting Stuart* (1955)

⁹ Patricia Monk's discussion of the "struggle for independent personal identity in Pearl and Solly" throughout the three novels from the point of view of the "Jungian psychologem of individuation" suggests a different way both of reading the story about these two characters and of perceiving the unity they help to create. See *The Smaller Infinity*, 55-59.

¹⁰ In 1940, Davies wrote a seven-page short story, entitled "Mr. Paganini Complies" and in 1942, he wrote Part I, II and III of an unfinished novel, *A Forest of Feathers*, containing seventy-three pages (NA 10:7, 27:6). Some details are given in Grant's *Man of Myth* (286-87).

and the scenario of "Phantasmata" (1957), which was completed in 1958 after he finished *A Mixture of Frailties* (it was published with a new title, *General Confession*, in 1972). These plays, Michael Peterman argues, "constitute [Davies's] most sustained achievement as a playwright" (56). The direct influence is indicated by the fact that his first novel, *Tempest-Tost*, was originally conceived as a play according to his letter to W. H. Clarke: "... I have been thinking recently about writing a novel. I have a play worked out in considerable detail and the more I think about it the more it seems to me that it would do just as well as a novel" (20 June 1950, McMaster 130:5). He later specifies the play as "a sort of light farce" (Roper, "Conversations" 19). If one compares his outline for the "Proposed Play" with that of the "PROJECTED NOVEL" one will be surprised to note that he made little change when the play was converted into his first novel¹¹ (NA 13:4). As a result, the novel becomes "a kind of play without theatre", as defined by Davies himself (Roper, "Conversations" 32). Conversely, the play *Love and Libel*, which was based on *Leaven of Malice*, indicates that there are sufficient dramatic elements in the novel to make the dramatization feasible. The fact that these novels are described as "comedies of manners" further indicates that dramatic features have become a recurrent stylistic indicator of the Salterton trilogy (Peterman 82). In his essay, "Padre Blazon or Old King Cole--Robertson Davies: Novelist or Playwright?", Frederick Radford also points out the dramatic effect that the Salterton novels produce, stating that "some of the most lively passages of Davies' novels show the dramatist's skill with dialogue and dramatic situation economically communicated" (13). He also writes, "The plots of *Tempest-Tost* and *Leaven of Malice* are those of comedy of manners crossed with romantic comedy ... [and] the plot of the frame story [of *A Mixture of Frailties*] is that of

¹¹ See Davies's outlines both for the "Proposed Play" and the "PROJECTED NOVEL" in the appendix (g).

romantic melodrama" (15).

The unifying effect achieved by dramatization can be observed in numerous scenes throughout the Salterton sequence. Davies's dramatic presentation of what happened inside Mrs Bridgetower's house is one such example. The house, like its owner, is a symbol of the Thanatos spirit. Divided by the boundary between her bedroom and Solly's attic, the house epitomizes the struggle between the Eros and Thanatos forces in Salterton. Moreover, through this setting, Davies repeatedly makes his readers visualize the struggle between the mother and the son (*Tempest-Tost* 53-61, 164-169; *Leaven* 181-189, 257-59). The At Home scene in the second novel shows not only the power of Mrs Bridgetower's Thanatos spirit but the force of the dead hand of the past surrounding her in Salterton. This scene vividly focalizes part of the real character of Salterton. The fact that the events in the frame story of the third novel take place most of the time in Mrs Bridgetower's house suggests that the house, embodying the dead spirit of Mrs Bridgetower, is a battle-field. Although she is dead, the struggle between the forces of Eros and Thanatos continues. The condition that Solly and his wife have to live in and maintain the house before they produce a male heir leads readers to realize that the house represents physical and spiritual shackles that prevent the young couple from gaining their independence. These dramatic episodes presented in Mrs Bridgetower's house become effective and efficient means for Davies to convey several recurrent thematic issues at the same time.

Brief mention should be made about Davies's use of the technique of repetition. In the three novels, certain pieces of information about the recurrent characters, Mrs Bridgetower, Pearl Veronica, Professor Vambrace and Cobbler, are repeated but with variations. The effect produced by this particular method is two-fold. On the one hand, the repeated information functions as a reminder of the direct link with the previous novel. For instance, Professor Vambrace's involvement in the Little Theatre is mentioned several times and his role as Prospero is specifically indicated (*Leaven* 38,

51, 117). In Pearl's case, the episode in which she was taken by Solly to the Military Ball when both worked with the Little Theatre is recalled (*Leaven* 117-8). Davies then has Solly mention the occasion again (*Leaven* 186). He also recalls Solly's "assistant director" role in *Tempest-Tost* through Pearl (*Leaven* 144). Mrs Bridgetower's education and her interest in the "Yellow Peril" is described in detail in *Tempest-Tost* (55-56) then again in *Leaven of Malice* (93-94). The passages that describe Pearl's unhappy family life and her overbearing father in *Tempest-Tost* (160-164) reappear in the second novel, but are changed slightly and mixed with Pearl's reflections (*Leaven* 113-117, 121-122). In *A Mixture of Frailties*, Pearl's family and the conflict between her parents because of their different religions is again briefly mentioned (270). Cobbler's untidy appearance and his frankness and outspokenness about music described in *Tempest-Tost* (181-185) are reintroduced in the later two novels. In *Leaven of Malice*, Cobbler's appearance and personality are given through Dean Knapp's eyes (71-76). Although his introduction of Cobbler is very brief in *A Mixture of Frailties*, Davies still focuses on Cobbler's appearance and on his insightful opinions about the thematic issues (7).

On the other hand, the variations in the repeated information make it possible for those who have no knowledge of the previous novel to read the later book as an independent and self-contained novel. It is very likely that, because Davies intentionally created the Salterton novels to be linked but not to be sequels, his method of repetition with variations enables him to keep each plot separate from and independent of the others. *Tempest-Tost* begins with the preparation of the outdoor production of *The Tempest* and ends with its first night performance; it covers one summer. The main character is Hector Mackilwaith. *Leaven of Malice* takes place four years after the events in *Tempest-Tost*, but it focuses on one isolated incident caused by a practical joke and it has its own central character, Gloster Ridley. The story begins with a false engagement notice, ends with a real one and lasts one week.

In *A Mixture of Frailties*, the self-containedness is achieved through the story of the central character, Monica Gall. As she is the beneficiary of the trust, the secondary plot that is about the Bridgetower Trust is interwoven with the main one. The temporally more complex and expansive story covers about four years from the death of Mrs Bridgetower at the beginning and the termination of the Trust because of the birth of her grandson at the end.

Although Davies had no preconceived idea of composing three interrelated novels, nor experience in constructing a trilogy structure, nevertheless, by using the same setting and same group of characters repeatedly to act out various motifs and the general theme and by means of dramatic and comic modes, he succeeds in creating an incremental and cumulative intertextual effect that makes it possible for his readers to appreciate the three novels as a coherent Salterton series. The increasingly positive and favourable responses to these novels, especially to the third one, and Davies's awareness of his developing skill in contriving intertextual material and in keeping individual novels relatively self-contained (demonstrated by these Salterton novels) encouraged him to decide to write about a different group of people and a different kind of story, to vary his methods and to try different techniques. There is no doubt that the Salterton trilogy prepared him both technically and psychologically to begin a new phase in his creative career with the three more tightly interwoven Deptford novels that "surprised" his readers (S. D. Cameron 33).

Chapter 4

The Deptford Trilogy:

The Intricacies of a Snowball

Before examining Davies's way of constructing the Deptford trilogy, I want to address a few related issues because they are crucial to the study of the more complex, more layered and more tightly woven trilogy structure formed by *Fifth Business*, *The Manticore* and *World of Wonders* than that by the Salterton novels. In the earlier discussion of the evolution of the Deptford trilogy, I have shown that, after the publication of *A Mixture of Frailties* in October, 1958, there was a long pause between Davies's decision to write a different kind of novel about a different set of people and his actual writing of *Fifth Business* in 1968-69¹. The pause undoubtedly gave him time to prepare notes for the new novel, to reflect and assimilate both what he had learned and achieved from creating the Salterton novels and his readers' response to them, and to decide his narrative strategy and tactics for the new novel. The new skill and confidence displayed in the Deptford novels owe much to this assimilation. The pause was also a period during which he shifted his allegiance from Sigmund Freud to C. G. Jung because he found the latter's writings "immensely stimulating, not in a galvanizing kind of way, but an expanding way. It makes the work much larger, more

¹ According to Davies's letter (2 Dec. 1968) to John Gray, President of Macmillan of Canada, he had written "the first 25,000 words" by that time: "I hope you will be interested to know that I am getting on with another novel and try to get a little time to work on it everyday. It will be very different from the ones which have preceded it, but not, I hope, less interesting. It is impossible at the moment to say precisely how long it will take to complete it because the intrusions of university work are so unexpected but I am glad to have written the first 25,000 words" (McMaster 90:5).

alive, more fascinating, and he does it, not by inventing it, but by exploring and revealing"² (Roper, "Conversations" 55). The shift results in another transition in Davies's creative career.

The noticeable differences Davies's readers immediately feel in the content and in the narrative structures, both of the individual novels and of the three as a whole, are due to his inclusion of Jungian ideas as the backbone of these narratives. Roper, for instance, identifies the Jungian elements and illustrates how the "form and substance" of *Fifth Business* are "overwhelming Jungian" ("Robertson Davies' *Fifth Business*" 33). He particularly points out:

These concepts of the shadow and of the anima helped Robertson Davies to shape his characters and their interaction in *Fifth Business*. The structure of the novel as a whole was shaped, I believe, by his interpretation of the concept at the heart of Jung's view of man--the concept of the growth of the individual personality towards wholeness, a process Jung called "individuation". (35)

Roper further suggests that "[the] grain of *Fifth Business* is ...that of modern myth" (36). In *The Manticore*, Jungian ideas come into the foreground as the novel "takes as its framework a Jungian analysis". Davies explained the framework in a letter to Nora Clark at Macmillan of Canada (2 May 1972):

² By 1968, Davies had openly expressed his preference for Jung's thinking over Freud's. In a speech, "The Conscience of the Writer", given to Glendon College in York University (1968), he explained why he took "the standpoint of C. G. Jung, rather than that of Sigmund Freud": "[Freud's] cast of mind was powerfully reductive. After the Freudian treatment most things look a little shabby--needlessly so. Jung's depth psychology, on the other hand, is much more aesthetic and humanistic in general tendency, and is not so Procrustean in its effect on artistic experience. The light it throws on matters of literature and on the temperament of the writer is extremely useful and revealing" (*One Half* 126). In the 1968 interview with Roper, Davies particularly emphasized his agreement with Jung's view of art and the artist ("conversations" 54). See also Grant's biographical information about why Davies made the shift and his progress during the 1960's and the early 1970's (*Man of Myth* 347-53, 461-68).

Freudian analysis is common enough in fiction, but I know of no book which deals with this process in terms of Jung's psychological ideas. I do not know whether there is any publicity value in putting forward the fact that *The Manticore* deals with some ideas that are still new to most of people on this continent. It would certainly give me pleasure if this were so, as I am sick to death of being typed as "an old-fashioned novelist".

(McMaster 247:9)

In "Psychology and Myth in *The Manticore*", Patricia Monk, while trying to show that Davies is ambivalent about the value of Jungian theory³, provides a useful exposition of the Jungian background to the novel and illustrates the stages of Jungian analysis that the narrator David Staunton undergoes. In her book, *The Smaller Infinity: The Jungian Self in the Novels of Robertson Davies*, Monk, arguing that "Jung's theories can be seen most clearly as the shaping power in the stuff of his fiction", explores Davies's affinity with Jungian thinking and his application and adaptation of Jungian ideas both in the Salterton and Deptford trilogies. Her exposition of the essential elements of Jungian theory, her analysis of the affiliation of the Deptford novels with it and her examination of the recurrent characters (the narrators of each book: Dunstan Ramsay, David Staunton and Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim, and Boy Staunton and Liesl) in its

³ Monk states: "My contention is that Davies, far from committing himself to Jungian theory in this novel, in fact, reveals a profound ambivalence about its value" (69). She then explains her argument that "the ambivalence of the author's attitude is made visible by the device of constantly undercutting the analytic process by means of the narrator's responses and criticism of it in the course of listening to his analyst's exposition of the theory and of undergoing that theory in practice" (71). W. J. Keith challenges Monk's argument, pointing out: "David Staunton's resistance to the method is standard and true to character.... Davies's own oblique glosses on the psychoanalytic method are to be found not in David's responses but in the biography that the novelist created for him. By emphasizing the process of David's treatment, Patricia Monk ignores most of the narrative detail in the book, but it is precisely here, where the Jungian terminology is absent, that we find Davies's insertion of indirect comments on the psychology upon which his novel is based" (*The Manticore: Psychology and Fictional Technique* 134).

light have made an important contribution both to the study of Jung's impact on Davies's Deptford novels and to the recognition of the intrinsic and ideological unity of the Deptford novels. Critical studies of Jungian elements employed in the Deptford novels have become commonplace since these books were published, various underlying recurrent Jungian elements have been pointed out and discussed, and their intertextual effects have been explored exhaustively⁴. Therefore, my examination of the structure of the Deptford trilogy will focus on other unifying devices and on the changes and improvement in the techniques Davies uses to construct the trilogy.

With the new creative stimulus provided by Jung, Davies undertakes a new direction in his fiction. In the previous trilogy, he was content to examine an outer reality, namely, general human behaviour in a particular historical period in Canada, more specifically social behaviour that was conditioned by a delayed cultural tradition. The characters are presented in the context of a specific socio-cultural environment (except Monica, with whom Davies explores a character's developing self-awareness of her environment and upbringing, and her transformation in Europe). In a word, the fictional Salterton community is treated as a collective character. In contrast, the Deptford novels show that he is more interested in exploring the inner reality of individuals, an individual's life in relation to others and what responsibility an

⁴ The following selected studies give a sense of various ways in which Jungian ideas have been transformed into the substance of the Deptford novels (in chronological order): Barry W. Urquhart, "Jungian Psychology in Robertson Davies' *Fifth Business* and *The Manticore: The Hero and His Quest*" (1975); Russell M. Brown & Donna A. Bennett, "Magnus Eisengrim: The Shadow of the Trickster in the Novels of Robertson Davies" (1976); Carole Gerson, "Dunstan Ramsay's Personal Mythology" (1977); Barry Wood, "Magic, Myth and Metaphor in Robertson Davies' *Fifth Business*" (1977); John Dean, "Magic and Mystery in Robertson Davies' Deptford Trilogy" (1978); Marilyn Chapman, "Female Archetypes in *Fifth Business*" (1979); Terry Goldie, "The Folkloric Background of Robertson Davies' Deptford Trilogy" (1980); Samuel L. Macey, "Time, Clockwork, and the Devil in Robertson Davies' Deptford Trilogy" (1980); and David Monaghan, "'People in Prominent Positions': A Study of the Public Figure in the Deptford Trilogy" (1980).

individual should take for his/her own behaviour or action towards others. Moreover, he becomes more adventurous in experimenting with various narrative elements as unifying devices and in creating intertextual relationships between the Deptford novels than he was with the Salterton ones. The same recurrent narrative elements, such as setting and character, for example, are used differently, as are various motifs, such as rebirth, renaming, the journey, anality, and sexual repression. A plot based on a mystery, and an autobiographical/biographical narrative both augment the interlocking structure.

Davies's use of setting in the Deptford trilogy marks a noticeable innovation. In the previous trilogy, Salterton is the place where the events in each of the three novels take place, with the exception that, in *A Mixture of Frailties*, some of Monica's actions are set in Europe, particularly in London. It also serves as the backdrop of the social and cultural conditions of a small Canadian town in the middle 1950's, and is used to explore certain cultural issues. In contrast, Davies uses two main settings in each Deptford novel--Deptford, in Ontario, Canada; and Sorgenfrei, near St. Gall, Switzerland--to establish and emphasize a particular kind of unity of place, because these settings are used not just as the physical and geographical locations where each narrator's activities take place, but to represent certain mental states of the three narrators. This is indicated by the names, both of which are potentially symbolic, suggesting some psychological dimensions. If we take the figurative meaning of "dept" or "depth" given in the OED: "a deep (i.e. secret, mysterious, unfathomable, etc.) region of thought, feeling, or being; the inmost, remote, or extreme part", and the general usage of "ford" as a verb, meaning to "wade through", we come to realize that linguistically and symbolically, Deptford can be associated with an individual's dealings with his own psyche. Whether or not Davies had the linguistic meaning of the name Deptford in mind when choosing it as a main setting, its narrative function is as symbolic and psychological as it is geographical.

In each novel, Davies uses Deptford to represent the narrator's past and to reflect the influence of the past on his psychological growth. He makes each narrator relate his childhood experience in Deptford and describe the working of its social, moral and religious atmosphere on his life. But to Ramsay and Eisengrim, Deptford is also personally associated with the snowball incident which acted like a catalyst and changed their lives. The beginning of *Fifth Business* indicates that Davies intended to establish a psychological connection between Ramsay's past with Deptford, the snowball incident, and the people involved in it. Letting Ramsay begin his memoir with a detailed description of why, where and how the snowball incident took place, and of its immediate consequences and long-lasting effect on his life, Davies succeeds in using the place and the incident to foreshadow a "lifelong" tangled relationship between the narrator Ramsay, who felt guilty and responsible for the victims of the snowball, and those who were directly involved in the incident: Boy Staunton, the thrower of the snowball; Mary Dempster, who was hit by the snowball on the head and became "simple" afterwards; and Paul Dempster, whose premature birth was its direct consequence (1, 20). This relationship is explored not only in *Fifth Business* itself, but also in the two subsequent novels that make up the trilogy, and its psychological consequences are not fully understood until the ending of *World of Wonders*.

Ramsay's repeated use of the word "lifelong", which appears twice within the first six lines of his memoir, calls the readers' attention to the consequences of the snowball incident as well as to the extent of its influence. His explanation to the Headmaster, to whom his memoir is addressed, further points to the importance of the incident both to his life and to the lives of those involved: "In making this report to you ... I have purposely begun with the birth of Paul Dempster, because this is the cause of so much that is to follow" (*Fifth* 6). The description of the meeting of the three Deptford men in the penultimate section of the novel (299-312) suggests that Davies uses Deptford and the snowball incident to further emphasize the profound influence of

this particular event on the lives of these three men. During the meeting, Ramsay reveals the story of the stone to Eisengrim and reminds Boy of the snowball incident, of the cause of Eisengrim's premature birth and of Eisengrim's mother's consequent insanity. Using Ramsay's memoir, Davies suggests that Deptford and the snowball incident have an unavoidable force that not only shapes these men's lives, but, more importantly, brings them together again after sixty years and forces each to see in his own way how the consequences of the snowball incident affect his life and the lives of other people.

Although, in *The Manticore*, Deptford appears only in David Staunton's recollection of his childhood, his association with the place establishes a sufficient connection with the previous novel. For David, Deptford is similarly an important part of his past, as in his "early years" he "spent long summers" there with his paternal grandparents, the Stauntons (72). The fact that David begins his childhood recollection with Deptford during his Jungian analysis further indicates Davies's intention to emphasize the psychological influence of the place, rather than its geographical significance. Like Ramsay, David has to "ford" that past experience in Deptford in order to recognize his own "Shadow" or dark side of his personality (71-88). The "new concept" David gains about himself as a child, with the help of Dr. von Haller, marks his first step towards "psychological wholeness" (83, 84).

Eisengrim's description of his family life in Deptford when he begins his life story, used as the subtext for the television film *Un Hommage à Robert-Houdin*, shows Davies still stressing the psychological impact of Deptford and the consequences of the snowball incident, this time upon the victim himself (*World 7*). Eisengrim's account of his troubled childhood, the product of his mother's madness and her embarrassing behaviour, not only extends and adds another layer to the story about him told by Ramsay in *Fifth Business*, but also illustrates, together with his recalled feelings of guilt, shame and desolation as a child, the compelling psychological influence that

Deptford and the snowball incident had on the people involved in it (*World* 22-3, 98-9). To Eisengrim, Deptford is also associated with something more abhorrent. It was in Deptford that Willard raped and abducted him when he was only ten years old. After that, he lost his identity as Paul Dempster and, like a parodic Christ, "descended into hell, and did not rise again for seven years" (*World* 15). Like the snowball incident to Ramsay, which became a dark secret affecting the rest of his life, Willard's rape and abduction were also something unspeakable, which had the effect of leading to his lifelong profession as a conjuror. The fact that Eisengrim is able to talk about this shameful and horrible experience indicates that, like Ramsay and David, he also has made some psychological progress in reevaluating his past.

The symbolic and psychological significance of Sorgenfrei is obvious from its literal meaning: "free of care". Sorgenfrei, a house owned by Liesl, is where each narrator's present actions take place, and where he interacts with other recurrent characters. At the same time, it is also associated with each narrator's present psychological state. At Sorgenfrei, each narrator is seen enacting the meaning of the German word by freeing himself from the burden of certain past experiences, and each achieves, in different ways, some self-understanding and self-realization. Although the name Sorgenfrei never appears in *Fifth Business*, Ramsay gives several clues about the house where he is living and writing his memoir. At the end of his memoir, he specifically calls attention to the geographical location of the house, by signing: "Sankt Gallen", the German form of St. Gall (314). He also reveals that he was invited after his heart attack by "L. V." to go to Switzerland and "join the Basso and the Brazen Head" (314). A reader can guess easily who L. V. is, as Ramsay has introduced Liesl's "absurd name", Liselotte Vitzliputzli, when describing his encounter with her and Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim in Mexico (248). Moreover, Ramsay's particular description of the house which is "among the mountains" and which "holds the truth behind many illusions" suggests that the serenity of the house has a

transcendental and magic quality which enables him to gain a vantage point for looking back at his life and realizing his "vital though never glorious role of Fifth Business" in several people's lives (9).

In *The Manticore*, the activities recorded in David's "Sorgenfrei Diary" take place mainly there, which makes a direct connection with *Fifth Business*. He encounters Ramsay and Liesl at St Gall after finishing the first part of his Jungian analysis (245). He is then invited to stay with them at Sorgenfrei (246-47). There, David discovers that Ramsay "has, it appears, come to Switzerland to recuperate himself after his heart attack, and seems likely to stay there" (253). This piece of information serves to clarify the very end of *Fifth Business*: the postcard Ramsay received and the place where his memoir is written. It is there, too, that David accomplishes an important stage of psychological healing and development: he finally learns how to "feel", in the Jungian sense, through the cave expedition with Liesl. In *World of Wonders*, Ramsay makes it clear that the three of them, he, Eisengrim and Liesl, have been living at Sorgenfrei (7). The particular reference to the house makes a direct connection with David's information, producing a sense of continuity between *The Manticore* and *World of Wonders*. At Sorgenfrei, Ramsay records Eisengrim's life story, hoping that, after he dies, the recorded document will replace the fictional autobiography he wrote, *Phantasmata: the Life and Adventures of Magnus Eisengrim* (*Fifth* 268-69, *Manticore* 257-58, *World* 19-20). At Sorgenfrei Eisengrim willingly reveals his shameful experience with Willard, as well as the hardships and fascination of life as a conjuror. Liesl's comments that "Eisengrim has come to the confessional moment in his life" and "[i]t's been impending for several months" suggest that, like Ramsay and David, he has undergone an inner journey to come to know about himself and about the other important people who influenced his life (*world* 15).

Because the crucial actions taking place at Sorgenfrei are mental rather than physical, the psychological dimension of the place can be perceived in several ways.

Ramsay's memoir, David Staunton's "Sorgenfrei Diary", and Eisengrim's life story are all autobiographical, and, to a certain extent, confessional. Each narrative is a psychological exploration of its narrator and represents his interpretation and understanding of his own life. Therefore, the three narratives suggest that Sorgenfrei makes it possible for each narrator to achieve this progress. The house becomes a place for the psychological healing of each narrator, for reconciliation, recollection and meditation, for opening his heart to others to give and receive human love, and, last of all, for understanding himself. Sorgenfrei can be perceived in another way, too. It is also an indicator of each narrator's journey, both physical and psychological⁵. Each moves away physically from Deptford and unites with the other two at Sorgenfrei. As each narrator begins his life story with the experience in Deptford and ends with the activities at Sorgenfrei, the place becomes the destination of his psychological journey. Each is seen at the end of his narrative able to look back at his past objectively and with new depth of insight. Most significantly, each comprehends better the roles other people played in his life and the part he played in their lives as well. The unusual functions of Deptford and Sorgenfrei not only create a strong unity of setting, but also invite readers to see Davies's inventive skill in using the element of setting in a symbolic and psychological way to construct an interwoven trilogy.

The interconnections created by the three recurrent characters, Ramsay, David and Eisengrim, mark another distinctive difference from the character links in the Salterton novels. The discussion of the Salterton trilogy has shown that Davies uses only secondary characters, such as Humphrey Cobbler, Solly, Pearl/Veronica, Mrs

⁵ Davies has commented on the journey theme in *Fifth Business*: "The theme of the novel also is somewhat chilling: the narrator undertakes a long spiritual journey of his own during much of which he is in the company of a friend from childhood days who remains to the end of his life a boy; in the end the pilgrim brings about an adult revenge on this perennial child" (Letter to Josephine Rogers, 13 Feb. 1970, NA 45:33).

Bridgetower and Miss Pottinger, to establish continuity. The central character of each novel--Hector Mackilwraith in *Tempest-Tost*, Gloster Ridley in *Leaven of Malice*, and Monica Gall in *A Mixture of Frailties*--never appears in the other two books, though Ridley is mentioned briefly once in *A Mixture of Frailties* (27). As a result, the central character plays a crucial role in keeping each novel separate and independent. In a reverse way, Davies uses the protagonist of each Deptford novel to construct an overlapping trilogy structure in which his actions take place in an intricate temporal order: proleptic, analeptic and synchronous. Ramsay was writing his memoir while David was undergoing the Jungian analysis; the last section of *Fifth Business* anticipates David and Eisengrim's explanation in the subsequent novels. The three narrators are present in all the novels, although David is mentioned only briefly in the last chapter of *World of Wonders*. Because Davies bases the three novels on the complex snowball incident, focuses in each on one of the three people associated with the event (Ramsay, Boy and Eisengrim), and deliberately contrives to use David to relate Boy Staunton's story, each narrator has direct contact with the other two and, therefore, their interaction makes the three narratives, to a certain degree, inseparable from each other.

Davies achieves this intertwining effect by letting David and Eisengrim, the narrators of the later two stories, retell some of the events already presented by Ramsay in *Fifth Business* from their own knowledge and perspectives. Even though David is a minor character in the first novel, Ramsay's information about him directs attention to the fact that, even as a boy, he already suffered psychologically from his parents' unhappy marriage. Ramsay's observation of his reactions to the tension between his parents and to his mother's unhappiness with his father thus prepares readers to meet David in the Jung Institute in Zürich when *The Manticore* begins, and to learn why he has to seek professional help from Jungian analysts shortly after his father's sudden death. David's version of events described by Ramsay, such as the doll episode (*Fifth* 213-4, *Manticore* 96-7), the quarrel of Boy and Leola on the Christmas day, following

the abdication of the former Prince of Wales, and Leola's suicide attempt (*Fifth* 218-22, *Manticore* 100-02), and her early death (*Fifth* 225-26, *Manticore* 108-09), not only become direct intertextual references, but also give readers the privilege of seeing the same events from different points of view and to know more than either narrator can. For example, from David's narrative, readers can tell that Ramsay never realized that, on that dreadful Christmas day, David actually saw him coming out of Leola's bedroom and heard Leola wailing and saying, "You don't love me" (*Fifth* 219, *Manticore* 100). David misinterpreted the scene and thought Ramsay had something to do with his parents' quarrel. Similarly, while Ramsay knew much about Boy's manipulations of other people's lives, he could have no knowledge of the blatancy of Boy's arrangement for David's first sexual experience with Boy's own mistress (*Manticore* 176-78). Readers are also led to apprehend that David knew nothing of the viciousness of his father as a boy or of the terrible consequences of the stone that he found in his dead father's mouth upon the lives of several people. The events recounted by David add another layer to the general trilogy structure and enable readers to gradually put the trilogy puzzle together.

Since he is a recurrent character, Ramsay's reappearance in David's narrative has an added significance. Our impression of Ramsay, based on his self-description and self-judgement, is modified by David's information about him as a history teacher from a student's point of view. David reveals that Ramsay was a "good" schoolmaster, but he was also "an oddity". His students had complicated feelings towards him: "the boys liked him and dreaded him and jeered at him" (*Manticore* 106). David's discussion of Ramsay with Dr. von Haller during the analysis highlights the psychological influence Ramsay had on his life, a role that Ramsay evidently did not realize. The analysis makes David eventually realize why Ramsay, as his parents' close friend, became "a much bigger figure" in his life (*Manticore* 105). David's description of Ramsay in *The Manticore* revitalizes Davies's presentation of Ramsay's character, and, at the same

time, invites his readers to see from a different perspective the Fifth Business role Ramsay played in David's life.

Because of Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim's special relationship with Ramsay, built upon Ramsay's feeling of guilt and his sense of responsibility for Paul's premature birth, he becomes one of the important figures in Ramsay's life. Ramsay's account of Paul's bleak life in Deptford and of his later encounters with Paul in the Tyrol (*Fifth* 165-71), in Mexico City (235-48), and in Toronto (299-312), where Paul worked as conjuror under different names (the last one is Magnus Eisengrim), provides readers with basic information about the narrator of the third Deptford book. So when both reappear in *World of Wonders*, with Ramsay as narrator of the whole novel in which Eisengrim's narrative is the main content, they make readers recognize immediately the connections between these two novels. Eisengrim's version, containing episodes already related in *Fifth Business*, enriches Ramsay's information, and, at the same time, casts new light on our understanding of the psychological influence on his life of the snowball incident, and of Ramsay and Boy Staunton.

Ramsay's role in *World of Wonders* indicates that Davies uses this recurrent protagonist as an important framing device to build the trilogy structure. As a familiar character from the previous two novels, Ramsay carries with him the knowledge of the fateful snowball incident, and also his special bond with Eisengrim formed in Deptford. Therefore, Ramsay's part in the third novel, which is really about Eisengrim, enables Davies to repeat certain references pertaining to the snowball incident and to Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim. In this way, Davies is able to readdress the central issue developed through the three novels: how each narrator comes to terms with his past and comes to understand the roles other people played in his life and the role he played in theirs. Considering the function of each narrator/protagonist in the formation of the Deptford trilogy, readers can in fact visualize a triptych structure, similar to Joyce Cary's first trilogy, mentioned in Chapter I, with *Fifth Business* as the central panel and

with the subsequent novels as side ones. The result provides three perspectives on the consequences of the snowball event and on the three people, Ramsay, Boy, and Eisengrim.

Davies's use of the secondary characters, Boy Staunton and Liesl, marks a further development in creating unity through character; as a result, the intertextual connections make the larger narrative of the Deptford sequence more intriguing and more engaging. The recurrence of these two further distinguishes the structure of the Deptford trilogy from that of the Salterton one. The roles that Boy and Liesl play in the three novels suggest that Davies deliberately creates them to represent the opposite forces in relation to the three narrators, and to constitute an antithetically thematic unity⁶. Presented as a negative character, Boy was obsessed with superficial perfection, creating different public personae, and with his maleness, using it as a means to exert his power to dominate and manipulate others. As his symbolic name suggests, Boy remained immature all his life, and his inner life was under-developed. Hideous by disfigured, Liesl is "a woman of formidable intelligence and intuition", in Ramsay's opinion (*Fifth* 251). Being androgynous, she provides the three men with love, compassion and friendship. Her Swiss identity and education endow her with open-mindedness and an intellectual side. Structurally, she is a necessary complement to Boy, undoing the damage he created for the three men. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss Boy's and Liesl's contribution to the trilogy structure in considerable detail.

⁶ In her essay, "Confessions of a Sorcerer's Apprentice", Patricia Monk also notices the opposite forces. Her emphasis is on "[t]he polarization of Boy as some sort of 'evil' force (disruptive, or destructive) and of Liesl as some sort of 'good' force (healing, or synthesizing)" (127). I do not agree with the first part of her argument that "structurally Boy is the centre which the other heroes (Ramsay, Eisengrim, and David Staunton) flee, and that Liesl is the other centre which they all seek..." (127). As I will show, Boy's special relationships with the three men make him a part of their lives. They cannot "flee" from him, either literally or metaphorically. Each of them has to confront this "shadow" figure, in Jungian sense, and to get to know Boy's influence on his inner life.

In the three novels, although Boy Staunton is observed, talked about, commented upon and judged by the three narrators, Davies does not let him tell his own story. Each narrator reveals certain aspects of Boy's character from his own point of view, and the three books together indirectly provide a full characterization of this secondary character. This is achieved by Davies's use of Boy's throwing of a snowball with a stone wrapped in it as "the basis" for the three narratives ("Retrospect" 7). This action establishes a special triangular relationship among Boy, Ramsay and Eisengrim. The father-son relationship between Boy and David not only connects David with the other two men, but also makes it possible for David to replace Boy in the triangular relationship after Boy's death, as is seen in the meeting at Sorgenfrei. Boy's relationship with Ramsay (lifelong friend and enemy), examined in *Fifth Business*, and his strong influence on his son, David, explored in *The Manticore*, make him an important subject in the first two novels. Although Eisengrim has very limited contact with Boy--they knew each other only when they were boys in Deptford, and met briefly about fifty years later just before Boy's sudden death--Boy's throwing of the snowball has made Eisengrim a victim and brought about endless sufferings ever since, both physical and psychological. In addition, the snowball incident not only results in his premature birth, but also determines the kind of life he has as a child. Moreover, since Boy's sudden death took place soon after Eisengrim and Boy left Ramsay's room, Ramsay and David consider Eisengrim a prime suspect. Thus their suspicion links Eisengrim with Boy even after his death. The question of the cause of his sudden death raised in *Fifth Business* and discussed in *The Manticore* and *World of Wonders* generates a reverberating puzzle which creates a sense of both mystery and suspense throughout the trilogy.

In addition to establishing the special relationship between each narrator and Boy Staunton, Davies invents various reasons why each narrator, when telling the story of his own life, has to deal with Boy. Ramsay makes it clear at the beginning of his

memoir that the snowball incident initiated by Boy and the subsequent premature birth of Paul became "the cause of so much" that has happened to him (*Fifth* 6). Ramsay has an implied reason as well. He wants to correct the public impression of Boy Staunton: the successful businessman and influential person in public affairs (Boy was appointed as Lieutenant-Governor of his province), and Ramsay's "lifelong friend" (7). He wants to show, with the example of the stone wrapped in the snowball, that behind the public persona lay a darker, more sinister self, which, unknown to the public, has disrupted his and several other people's lives, and that Boy is not just his lifelong friend, but "enemy" as well.

In *The Manticore*, David Staunton's reason for talking about his father during his analysis is more explicit than Ramsay's. The first chapter entitled "Why I Went to Zürich" makes it clear that it is Boy's sudden and unnatural death that evokes his awareness of the deteriorated father-son relationship, gives rise to the emergence of his repressed feelings about his father, and pushes him to the edge of a nervous breakdown. The last forces him to go to Zürich to seek help from Jungian psychiatrists. While believing strongly that his father was murdered, David also feels guilty about his father's death. His analysis of the circumstances under which he uncontrollably shouted "Who killed Boy Staunton?" during the magic show indicates his complicated feelings:

[David] Staunton had been under severe stress for several days; ... he had lost his father in a most grievous fashion, and ... he had undergone severe psychological harassment because of that loss; ... unusual responsibilities and burdens had been placed upon him; ... his last hope of regaining the trust and approval of his late father had been crushed. (58)

During the analysis, Doctor von Haller also explains the cause of his psychological problem: the clash between David and his father "gave so much edge to the guilt and remorse" he felt after his father died (232). However, because he does not want Boy

Staunton to tell his side of the story, Davies decides to make Boy the subject of *The Manticore*, and let Boy's son unveil what is behind Boy's public persona. Davies explained this in his already mentioned letter to Hugh MacLennan, and again in the interview with Margaret Penman (1975): "So I wrote *The Manticore* which is all about Boy Staunton but he isn't the principal character: it's the way he's reflected from his son" (153).

In *World of Wonders*, Boy Staunton appears mainly in the last chapter "Le Lit de Justice". In this chapter, Ramsay makes Eisengrim explain what exactly happened between Boy and Eisengrim after the two men left his room, the episode described in his memoir. He wants to get an exact answer to the question "Who killed Boy Staunton?" for his document about Eisengrim. He has his reason for bringing up the question: since Boy's death, he has suspected that either Eisengrim murdered Boy or gave Boy a "good push on a path that looked like suicide" (*World* 264). He also has reason to believe that Eisengrim "murdered" Boy because Boy was "the initiator" of most of the pain in Eisengrim's life (*World* 336). Eisengrim's explanation of Boy's realization of his own insolvable personal problems, such as his aging and declining sexual energy, resolves the mystery about the cause of Boy's death. For Eisengrim, as for Ramsay and David Staunton, Boy represents the "shadow" in his psyche. Through Boy, Davies succeeds in creating both a sequential narrative effect and a sense of underlying psychological unity in the trilogy as a whole.

Because Ramsay's relationship with Boy begins in childhood and ends only with Boy's sudden death at the age of seventy, and because Ramsay is a scholar and historian, he is able to provide a fuller and more analytical account of Boy's life from more perspectives (as a boy, teenager, young man, lover, husband, father, business man, politician and old man) than either David or Eisengrim; this account contains ample substance for the development of the subsequent two novels. In the process, he unwittingly reveals the Fifth Business role he played in Boy's life and Boy's role as

"lifelong friend and enemy" in his own life. According to Ramsay, he and Boy grew up together in Deptford and were "rivals" even as boys (*Fifth* 26). Both were in love with the same girl, Leola, from the same village, but it was Boy who later married her. Separated by their different experiences during the First World War, the two men met again when they were both students in the University of Toronto. From then on, Ramsay kept in close contact with Boy and Boy's family, and "enjoyed" his "role as Friend of the Family" (*Fifth* 178). He also received "financial advice" from Boy that helped him to accumulate his little fortune (*Fifth* 213). More significantly, he has been Boy's "confidant" for many years, knowing not only Boy's public life, but also his private life, in particular, Boy's sexual life in marriage and many illicit love affairs (278). Ramsay's knowledge of Boy thus lends credibility to the information about the negative aspects of Boy's character, the aspects which Davies uses both as the basis for the further illustration of Boy's psychologically destructive effect on other people and on himself, and as intertextual references to create thematic links between the Deptford novels.

Although he does not say much about Boy's early life in Deptford, Ramsay's detailed description of Boy's motivation for throwing the snowball and of his casual attitude towards the consequences of the incident captures the essence of Boy's personality. Wrapping a stone in the snowball purposely to hurt Ramsay, simply because his "new Christmas sled would not go as fast as [Ramsay's] old one", suggests not only Boy's "vindictive" nature, but also his desire to dominate and to express his sense of superiority over others in a boyish, but vicious, way (*Fifth* 1, 2). When Ramsay confronts him after the incident, Boy's "brazen-faced refusal to accept responsibility" for the consequences of his action indicates that he has no courage to face the truth, nor is he capable of doing so. The characteristics revealed through the snowball episode determine what kind of man Boy will become. As an older man, Ramsay is able to look back at Boy's childhood behaviour in a philosophical way: "A

boy is a man in miniature, and though he may sometimes exhibit notable virtue, as well as characteristics that seem to be charming because they are childlike, he is also schemer, self-seeker, traitor, Judas, crook, and villain—in short, a man" (*Fifth* 9). Ramsay's concept of the nature of a boy who is not immune to evil behaviour and human follies establishes a theme enabling readers to understand the profound psychological significance of Boy's single action not only in the first novel, but in the subsequent two novels as well. It prepares readers to view David and Eisengrim's recollection of their childhood experience in the same psychological vein.

Although Ramsay's information about Boy covers almost Boy's whole life, his narrative mainly emphasizes Boy's psychologically destructive impact on his wife, Leola, whose unhappiness leads to her attempted suicide and to her psychological decline. Ramsay's memoir suggests that two particular aspects of Boy's character are directly responsible for Leola's mental and emotional suffering. One is Boy's problem controlling his sexuality. Ramsay reveals that at the age of sixteen, Boy was caught "in the sexual act" with a Deptford girl, Mabel Heighington, who "was rumoured to have gone the limit with more than one boy" (*Fifth* 59, 41). Although Ramsay reports only one publicized sexual scandal involving Boy, some villagers' impression of Boy as "a young rip" suggests that he was already promiscuous in his sexual behaviour in his teens. Ramsay's comments on Boy's attitude towards sex when he was a married man indicate that Boy's problem has gone from bad to worse: "I have never known anyone in whose life sex played such a dominating part.... Sex was so much of the very grain of Boy's life that he noticed it no more than the air he breathed" (*Fifth* 213). Boy's own confession to Ramsay about "his philandering" and "his sexual needs" for women other than his wife shows explicitly his selfishness and unfaithfulness to his wife (*Fifth* 214). Ramsay's "observation of Boy's unwitting destruction of Leola" enables readers to associate her attempted suicide, prompted by her discovery of a love note from one of Boy's women and by Boy's declaration that he was not tied down by their marriage,

with Boy's selfishness and psychological brutality (*Fifth* 190, 218). Ramsay's information about the cause of the failure of Boy's marriage and Boy's obsession with sex becomes part of the foundation of *The Manticore* in which David, through Jungian analysis, further reveals Boy's psychological destruction of both Leola and David.

Ramsay's description allows readers to see another aspect of Boy's character which is not only harmful to others, but to Boy himself as well. Boy pursued a superficial and external perfection because, to him "the reality of life lay in external things" (*Fifth* 128). The best example Ramsay gives is that Boy himself chose the Prince of Wales as his ideal model and "coveted a suggestion of aristocracy in his appearance and bearing" (*Fifth* 125). Ironically, Boy's association with the Prince was only "the reception of a monogrammed Christmas card once a year" after his service as an aide-de-camp during the Prince's tour of Canada (*Fifth* 175). The example makes readers see more clearly this particular side of Boy's character because, as a historical figure, the Prince of Wales turned out to be a man who was pure appearance, pure persona; he represented style and chic without any substance and inner self. It is also worth adding here that the Prince of Wales had to abdicate because of his involvement in a sexual scandal. Modelling himself on the Prince of Wales, Boy, like the Prince, chose the path leading to his self-destruction, which is analyzed by Eisengrim in *World of Wonders*.

Because he forced Leola to strive for the same superficial and external perfection and imposed his unrealistic standards upon her, Boy destroyed her self-esteem and self-confidence. As Ramsay recalls, Boy tried to "make [Leola] into the perfect wife" by his standards, wanting her to "become the sort of sophisticated, cultivated, fashionable alert woman [he] wanted for a wife" (*Fifth* 176). Unable to realize either Leola's limitations or strengths, Boy even forced her to "acquire moral energy", believing that "social grace, wit, and an air of easy breeding would surely follow" after it (*Fifth* 179). The consequence of Boy's demand is, as Ramsay points out, that "[p]oor Leola did not

get better and better because she had no idea of what betterness was. She couldn't conceive what Boy wanted her to be" and eventually "faded" in her spirit and whole being (*Fifth* 180, 225)). Ramsay's memoir subtly suggests that the demand Boy imposed upon Leola to pursue a superficial perfection pushed her to self-denial and ultimately to an early death.

In his sixties, Boy Staunton was somewhat disillusioned with life but was still unable to cope with reality. His disillusionment began gradually after his second marriage with Denyse. Her ambition in politics--the desire to set Boy up as Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario--made him feel he was no longer in charge of his life. This feeling underlies his complaint to Ramsay:

I feel rotten. I've done just about everything I've ever planned to do, and everybody thinks I'm a success. And of course I have Denyse now to keep me up to the mark, which is lucky--damned lucky, and don't imagine I don't feel it. But sometimes I wish I could get into a car and drive away from the whole damned thing. (284)

Boy's speech here shows that he wants to escape from any situation if he can not control or dominate it. Ultimately, escape becomes his last means of expressing his defiance of reality. In light of this conversation, his later sudden death appears to be a fulfillment of his own wish. Although he is very vague about the real cause of Boy's sudden death, and only describes public speculation about its cause in his memoir, Ramsay's analysis of Boy's personality allows readers to perceive the self-destructiveness of Boy's character and the possibility of suicide in this case:

As a boy he had been something of a bully, a boaster, and certainly a bad loser. As he grew up he had learned to dissemble these characteristics, and to anyone who knew him less well than I it might have appeared that he had conquered them. But I have never thought that traits that are strong in childhood disappear; they may go underground or they may be transmuted

into something else, but they do not vanish; very often they make a vigorous appearance after the meridian of life has been passed. It is this, and not senility, that is the real second childhood.... And Boy Staunton had reached a point in life where he no longer tried to conceal his naked wish to dominate everybody and was angry and ugly when things went against him. (*Fifth* 284-85)

Ramsay's analysis makes it clear that Boy's personality has never changed, and when he realized that he could no longer dominate others, he used himself like the snowball with a stone in it to hurt others by killing himself in a grotesque way, with the stone in his mouth.

Ramsay's description of the meeting of the three Deptford men on the night of Boy's sudden death not only leads readers to have a last glimpse of Boy's character, but, more importantly, highlights Boy's lifelong problems. Ramsay reveals to Eisengrim in front of Boy that "Staunton and I robbed your mother of her sanity", and then presents them with the stone he has kept for sixty years, Boy's reaction to this revelation shows that he has no remorse for his action at all, as his response indicates: "I threw the snowball--at least you say so, and for argument's sake let that go--and you dodged it. It precipitated something which was probably going to happen anyhow" (*Fifth* 310). This response also shows that he is very defensive about his vicious behavior and is still unable to perceive the damage that he has caused to the Dempsters. His apology to Eisengrim bears the evidence: "I'm sorry if I was offensive to your mother, Dempster. But you know what boys are. Brutes, because they don't know any better" (*Fifth* 310). His sudden rage and his last words to Ramsay show that, unable to deny the fact revealed by Ramsay, he turns to countercharge Ramsay with jealousy (because he took Leola away from Ramsay and married her), trying to make Ramsay look like the guilty one instead of himself. In this climactic scene, readers are made to see that Boy still refuses to face and accept the truth the stone represents, to

recognize the dark side of his character, and to come to terms with his past. Considering Ramsay's version of Boy's story as a whole, one comes to realize that, although Boy lived a seemingly more fulfilled or complete life than Ramsay, he has never looked after his inner life and never attempted to know himself. When his life became the last thing he could control, he chose to end it as an escape from an impossible situation.

In *The Manticore*, David's revelation of Boy's character not only maintains readers' interest in him, but also invites them to view the kind of psychological damage Boy caused his son. Like the snowball incident that has haunted Ramsay's conscience for sixty years, Boy's sudden and unnatural death gives rise to David's sudden sense of guilt for turning against his father when Boy was alive. Because of his feeling of guilt and of his unawareness of his long repressed psychological problems in dealing with his father, David, at the beginning of Jungian analysis, tends to defend Boy and to portray him in a positive way. As his treatment goes on, however, David's image of his father changes, and, with the help of Dr. von Haller, he is able to see certain negative aspects of his father's character that he was formerly unable to perceive. What David reveals little by little about Boy in *The Manticore* not only adds new information to Boy's character, but also throws new light on David, the narrator, described briefly in *Fifth Business* as a boy (213-14, 222, 226) and as "a barrister and a drunk" (297). Because both Boy and David are recurrent characters, David's narrative concerning himself and his father creates a close link with Ramsay's.

The examination of the father-son relationship during David's Jungian analysis makes it possible for Davies to focus on and emphasize the psychological impact that Boy's character had on David in the intimate and domestic situations that Ramsay was unable to know. One example is David's account of his mother's unhappiness and the problems in his parents' marriage. David tells von Haller, "I knew my mother had not been happy for some years, and I supposed it was because she felt she had failed Father

in some way" (*Manticore* 109). His explanation about why his mother "had failed" his father indicates that he realizes that the problem arose from his father's unrealistic expectations: "He wanted a brilliant wife, and she tried to be one, but she wasn't cut out for it" (120). David recalls his father's advice to him on selecting a wife: "Never marry your childhood sweetheart ... the reasons that make you choose her will all turn into reasons why you should have rejected her" (120). He also recalls his own anger about this advice because it referred to Leola: "I thought it was a hell of a thing to say to a boy about his mother, and I thought it was an unforgivable thing to say about the woman who had been his wife" (121). In these recollections lie the beginnings of his disillusion with Boy.

Boy's sexual promiscuity also had a strong psychological impact on David. Although he never explicitly expresses his opinion about Boy's philandering, his remark to the analyst, "My father was extremely fond of women", leads readers to recall Boy's lifelong problem as revealed in Ramsay's memoir (*Manticore* 41). David's account of his youthful misunderstanding of his father's public "reputation as something called 'a swordsman'" provides readers with a new piece of information which suggests that Boy's notorious sexual activities have become public knowledge (*Manticore* 168). On the other hand, learning the real meaning of the word "swordsman" from Father Knopwood, David realized that he "had made a fool" of himself by applying the word proudly to his father in his conversations with others (*Manticore* 185). The knowledge that he was "a whoremaster's son" hurt him deeply and psychologically (*Manticore* 184). In addition to the psychological wound caused by his knowledge of his father's sexual promiscuity, Boy's manipulation of his first sexual experience with Boy's own mistress, Myrrha Martindale, produced further serious psychological damage in David. After he relates this experience, Dr. von Haller helps him to see that "this ceremony of initiation was arranged" by his father, and that the woman "had been party to a plan to manipulate" him (*Manticore* 176,

186). Because of his unwillingness to acknowledge his father's involvement in this traumatic experience, the doctor uses her question: "Is it not rather patronizing to arrange a first sexual encounter for one's son?" to force him to see how his father manipulated even his sexual life and how Boy gratified his own desire to dominate others no matter what or who was involved (*Manticore* 186).

With Dr. von Haller's help, David is finally able to pour out his resentment and admit that his father "was a manipulator" of others and himself, especially in his first sexual experience: "I had come to hate the fact that I had been initiated into the world of physical sex in something Father had stage-managed. It wasn't sex itself, but Father's proprietorial way with it, and with me.... It seemed like following in the swordsman's footsteps, and I wanted none of that" (*Manticore* 193, 228). What he admitted to von Haller indicates that he had chosen to be the opposite to his father, particularly in sexual conduct. It also provides an answer to the issue that the doctor tries to probe at the beginning of David's therapy, that is, why he "wouldn't marry" and "wouldn't have anything to do with women at all" (*Manticore* 41). His negative attitude towards marriage and women suggests that Boy's own sexual promiscuity and manipulation of his first sexual experience have made him repress any sexual desire for women ever since. David's slow and reluctant acknowledgement of the part his father played in the whole affair is also an indication that he has been traumatized by the aftermath of this experience. In other words, the denotative and connotative force of "swordsman" has changed David's life. Through the psychological exploration of the narrator's life, Davies succeeds further in showing that Boy, as a shadow figure in Jungian theory, is not only a destructive husband, but a destructive father as well. The change in David's image of Boy throughout the analysis becomes all the more convincing because what he has realized about his father goes against the grain of his original "hero-worship" of Boy (*Manticore* 168). Thus the father-figure depicted in David's narrative makes readers see not only more about the negative aspects of this

recurrent character, but also the harmful psychological influence he had, particularly on his son.

Although Boy Staunton only appears in the last chapter of *World of Wonders*, Eisengrim's explanation of why Boy committed suicide adds a final touch to Davies's presentation of Boy, linking this novel with the previous two and completing this aspect of the trilogy structure. Moreover, a set of expectations, created by Eisengrim's disappearance from Toronto after Boy's sudden death in *Fifth Business*, is fulfilled by Eisengrim's narrative. His memory of Staunton as a boy, though slight, reinforces the vicious side of Boy's character, revealed by Ramsay in *Fifth Business*. Eisengrim recalls an unforgettable childhood incident provoked by "the Rich Young Ruler" of Deptford: "I had stood at the window of our miserable house trying not to cry while Boy Staunton and his gang shouted 'Hoor!' as they passed on their way to school" (*World* 342). This example alone highlights Boy's malicious behaviour and dominant personality in his youth. Eisengrim's explanation of the cause of Boy's suicide also confirms Ramsay's observation that Boy, when getting older, finally saw reality, but was still unable to deal with it. Being the last and the only person with Boy before his sudden death, Eisengrim learned from Boy that he had realized that he would have no real political power as Lieutenant-Governor, an appointment that he tried so hard to obtain: "[H]e knew he was mistaken" in his view that "as Lieutenant-Governor he would really do some governing" (*World* 350). Ironically, a purely symbolic position of this kind is wholly appropriate for a man like Boy, whose self lacks character and is nearly pure persona.

Boy's confession to Eisengrim that his sex life "isn't the same" and "it's more reassurance than pleasure ... there's an element of humiliation about it" suggests that aging is another reality that Boy cannot cope with, and that he is still obsessed with youth and maleness (*World* 352). As Eisengrim observes during his brief meeting with Boy, Boy's realization of these realities leads him to "despair": in public life, he would

have no power to dominate or govern as Lieutenant-Governor, and in his private life, his sexual energy was noticeably decreasing (*World* 352). As Eisengrim further reveals, Boy, in his despair, makes the decision to abdicate just as his lifelong hero, the Prince of Wales, did years ago. Boy told Eisengrim: "[The Prince of Wales] had a profound effect on me. I learned a great deal from him. He was special ... he was truly a remarkable man. He showed it at the time of Abdication" (*World* 352). These words indicate that Boy mistakenly regarded the abdication of the Prince of Wales as a heroic action and that his state of mind before he took his own life was to follow the Prince's example by "abdicating" in turn. Boy's mention of the abdication of the Prince of Wales when he was making the decision to end his own life recaptures one of Boy's lifelong problems, analyzed by Ramsay in *Fifth Business*: to Boy, "the reality of life lay in external things". Eisengrim's comment on Boy's suicide confirms this view: "He was going to abdicate, like his hero before him. But unlike his Prince of Wales he didn't mean to live to face the world afterward" (*World* 354). Letting each narrator recount his interaction with Boy Staunton and his knowledge about Boy's character, Davies succeeds in presenting Boy from three different points of view. By emphasizing his part in the psychological development of each narrator, and by providing indirectly a lifelong story about this secondary figure, Davies achieves a sense of unity for the trilogy.

Liesl plays a similarly unusual role in developing the intertwining relationship among the Deptford novels. Although she does not appear until Chapter Five of *Fifth Business*, Davies achieves the unifying effect through Liesl's unusual and intimate relationships with Ramsay (as described in *Fifth Business* 267; in *The Manticore* 249; and in *World of Wonders* 7), with Eisengrim (in *World of Wonders* 7, 327-28), and through her friendship with David Staunton, established during David's stay at Sorgenfrei. Her personal relationships with each narrator and her direct association with Sorgenfrei make her a special structural element, a significant part of the complex

trilogy form. Juxtaposed with the role Boy played in the earlier lives of the three narrators, Liesl's role is to be Fifth Business in the later part of each man's life. She is a confidant and is willing to help each to understand his past. She also possesses a kind of wisdom and insight that all three men lack and that enable her to see the root of each man's problem, to show understanding and compassion, and to offer her love either in sexual relations or in friendship. More significantly, she is the one who acts "to bring about the Recognition" or "denouement" at the end of each novel (*Fifth*, "Epigraph" n. pg.).

Because she is highly educated and reads widely, particularly in psychology and philosophy, her command of Freud, Jung, and Adler enables her to diagnose each narrator's inner conflict and struggle with his experience in the outer world (*Manticore* 264). The "Magian World View" she obtained from the German philosopher Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) equips her with a deep insight into "the unfathomable wonder of the invisible world that existed side by side with a hard recognition of the roughness and cruelty and day-to-day demands of the tangible world" (*World* 323). Her intelligence and intuition, felt by the three men, make them willingly confide their secrets to her. Ramsay's explanation of why he revealed to Liesl, for the first time in his life, "things that had never before passed [his] lips" suggests Liesl's unusual quality:

In spite of her appearance, and the mistrust of her I felt deep within me, she was a woman who could draw out confidences, and I heard myself rattling on about Deptford, and the Dempsters, and Paul's premature birth, though I did not tell all I knew of that; I even told her about the sad business in the pit, and what came of it, and how Paul ran away; to my dismay I found that I had told her about Willie, about Surgeoner, and even about the Little Madonna. (*Fifth* 254)

David has an experience similar to Ramsay's and also describes Liesl's special ability to extract confidences: "Liesl has the ability to an extraordinary extent to worm things out of me. My temperament and professional training make me a man to whom things are told; somehow she makes me into a teller ... in five minutes [she] had me caught in a conversation of a kind I don't like but can't resist when Liesl creates it" (*Manticore* 263). Although Eisengrim does not make any comment on Liesl's confidante quality in *World of Wonders*, Davies calls his readers' attention to it through Ramsay's remark to Liesl: "You've always been a great one to urge other people to tell their most intimate secrets" (321-22). Despite the different circumstances, Eisengrim, like Ramsay and David, trusts Liesl and willingly confides his past painful experience to her when she tells him that she loves him. Liesl relates the circumstances:

[H]e told me about Willard, and his childhood, and said that he did not think that love in the usual sense was for him, because he had experienced it as a form of suffering and humiliation--a parody of sex--and he could not persuade himself to do to anyone else what had been done to him in a perverse and terrifying mode. (326)

At the same time, Eisengrim reveals to Liesl his deep and pure love for Milady (326). Liesl, therefore, is the first person in Eisengrim's life to know his "most intimate secrets".

In some ways, then, Liesl resembles the "ficelle", in Henry James's sense of the term: like Maria Gostrey in *The Ambassadors*, she serves as an ear for the hero's confessions, and "an enrolled, a direct, aid to lucidity" (Preface to *The Ambassadors* 372). But Davies's version of the "ficelle" character has an additional psychological function. Liesl's role is more aggressively therapeutic than Maria's. She possesses an inner power which enables her to see beyond each narrator's past experiences, and to help each to look inward for self-understanding. She is also analytical and straightforward, making each narrator review his life in a more penetrating way and

learn something about himself. For instance, after Ramsay reveals his past to her in *Fifth Business*, she points out that by repressing things he has been cruel to himself: "You have paid such a price, and you look like a man full of secrets—grim-mouthed and buttoned-up and hard-eyed and cruel, because you are cruel to yourself. It has done you good to tell what you know; you look much more human already" (255). She also helps Ramsay to see that his involvement with Mary Dempster has had some negative effect on his personal life: "You despise almost everybody except Paul's mother. No wonder she seems like a saint to you; you have made her carry the affection you should have spread among fifty people" (255). In an indirect way, Liesl makes Ramsay understand that, because of Mary Dempster, he was unable to form any continuing attachment to a woman. It is very likely her view that makes Ramsay analyze his "lifelong involvement with Mrs Dempster" and realize that "looking back on it now, I know I was in love with Mrs Dempster" (*Fifth* 1, 27). She makes Ramsay see further that, despite his intellectual and academic achievements, his life is not complete because he is burdened by his sense of guilt for the past snowball incident. She points out to him: "[T]here is a whole great piece of your life that is unlived, denied, set aside" and then urges him, "You should take a look at this side of your life you have not lived" (*Fifth* 265). She not only helps Ramsay to understand the influence of his past experience on his present life, but also guides him to explore the role he played in other people's lives. Ramsay's notion, "I have been cast by Fate and my own character for the vital though never glorious role of Fifth Business", is, as he reveals later, derived from Liesl's explanation. Her explanation of the role of Fifth Business and her question to Ramsay: "Who are you? Where do you fit into poetry and myth?" can be taken as the message for the whole trilogy, and as foreshadowing the thematic pattern in the subsequent two novels (*Fifth* 266). Ramsay's narrative suggests that it is Liesl who enables him to examine and judge his life in the light of this particular role (*Fifth* 266-7).

In David Staunton's case, Liesl acts as if she were a psycho-therapist. During David's stay at Sorgenfrei, she encourages him to complete the second part of his analysis by himself: "Why not go by yourself [on a tour of your inner labyrinth]?" (*Manticore* 263). She explains to him that, to begin the second part of his therapy, he needs to explore and experience "Feeling" himself: "It's a thing one experiences--feels, if you like. It's learning to know oneself as fully human. A kind of rebirth" (267). She further explains the process of "rebirth": "[I]t's more a re-entry and return from the womb of mankind. A fuller comprehension of one's humanity" (268). She also instructs David how to experience "Feeling": "Perhaps some large experience, or even a good, sharp shock, might put you on the track" (268). She even personally guides David to experience "a good, sharp shock" through the cave expedition, during which David experiences various feelings that he has never experienced before as he crawls through the tunnel (274-75). Afterwards, he does feel "renewed" and "reborn" (276). David's achievement suggests that Liesl's guidance helps him explore his inner self and undertake the second part of his psychological therapy by himself.

To Eisengrim, Liesl is more than a business partner, a financier, an artistic associate and a lover: she is, in many ways, his teacher. Eisengrim admits in his narrative, "I really had no education at all" (*Wonders* 305). To help him overcome his handicap, Liesl educates Eisengrim. Her particular role is indirectly revealed by Ramsay in *Fifth Business*. After he meets Paul Dempster in his new identity as Magnus Eisengrim, and accompanied by Liesl, Ramsay notices the transformation in Paul (236-37). He then finds out that she has played an important part in Paul's change: "He had virtually no education, though he could speak several languages, and one of the things Liesl had to teach him, as tactfully as possible, was not to talk out of his depth" (249). In *World of Wonders*, Ramsay not only repeats his knowledge about Liesl's important influence on Eisengrim's transformation, but further emphasizes her role as Eisengrim's educator:

So far as I knew, she had at some time met Magnus, admired him, befriended him, and financed him. They had toured the world together with their *Soirée of Illusions*, combining his art as a public performer with her skill as a technician, a contriver of magical apparatus, and her artistic taste, which was far beyond his own. If he was indeed the greatest conjuror of his time, or of any time, she was responsible for at least half of whatever had made him so. Moreover, she had educated him, insofar as he was formally educated, and had transformed him from a tough little carnie into someone who could put up a show of cultivation. (169-70)

The role Liesl plays in Eisengrim's, as well in Ramsay's and David's life, forms a sharp contrast to Boy's. While Boy causes psychological confusion and suffering to each narrator, Liesl helps each to clarify the perception of his past experience, to penetrate into the avoided and unrealized part of his life, to interpret his life in a more rational and insightful way, to heal himself by coming to terms with the past, and eventually to integrate his inner and outer selves.

A further opposition between Boy and Liesl illustrates the necessity of Davies's pairing these two characters in creating the trilogy structure. The stories of the three narrators reveal a common psychological problem relating to their repressed sexuality, which has something to do with Boy: Ramsay and Eisengrim's are indirectly caused by the snowball incident, and David's directly by Boy's manipulation of his first sexual experience. It is Liesl again who provides the healing power, personally making Ramsay and Eisengrim regain their maleness, as Ramsay's description of his first sexual experience with Liesl indicates: "With such a gargoyle! And yet never have I known such deep delight or such an aftermath of healing tenderness" (*Fifth* 267). What Liesl says to David at the end of their cave expedition after his shock and humiliation suggests that she offers to do the same for him as she did for Ramsay and Eisengrim:

... I think you have learned something, and if that is so, I'll do more than be your friend. I'll love you, Davey. I'll take you into my heart, and you shall take me into yours. I don't mean bed-love, though that might happen, if it seemed the right thing. I mean the love that gives all and takes all and knows no bargains. (*Manticore* 276)

Looking at Boy and Liesl's roles side by side and as a whole, one can see easily the thematic pattern formed by them and their crucial part in creating a continuity and unity for the trilogy. Boy's association with the three narrators through his single action of throwing a snowball, from which the trilogy is generated, and his sudden death discussed in all three novels make this character a double agent for creating a larger story within the three novels. Liesl's connection with Sorgenfrei, her interaction with these narrators, and her special mission to play the role of Fifth Business in their lives all reinforce the unity of character.

Davies's use of the narrative technique of the first-person point of view as a unifying vehicle represents one more development in his experimentation with the trilogy form. Each of the three novels in the Deptford trilogy is recounted by a first-person narrator who, while telling the story about himself, also provides information about other characters in the sequence, particularly Boy Staunton. Davies is evidently aware that his use of the first-person point of view technique in the Deptford novels marks one of his achievements as a novelist, as he comments on the difference between the narrative method used in this trilogy and the previous one: "[Y]ou see these [Deptford] novels are all written in the first person, somebody's talking all the time. The other [Salterton] novels were written in the third person. They were written by an author and that was the only way I could write at that time" (Penman 150). He also revealed in this interview that he decided to experiment with this particular narrative technique in response to the criticism by "one particular critic" that *Fifth Business* "was

very conventional" and that he "never attempted to experiment or anything of that sort" (Penman 153).

There is evidence to show that Davies has long been interested in this particular narrative technique. The following quotation indicates that he was strongly influenced by the method used by Robert Browning in his long poem *The Ring and the Book*, and by Joyce Cary in his two trilogies. Commenting on Cary's "intellectual impersonation", which Davies regards as "creation of a very high order", he says:

Indeed, I cannot think of anything which comes near it except Browning's great and somewhat neglected poem *The Ring and the Book*. There we have a story told to us by a variety of people, each from his own point of view, each stressing what he thinks important, and each bringing his own understanding of life and his own store of wisdom and egotism to the problem.... I became committed to it when I was sixteen and I have never been able to be objective about it. And only in these novels of Cary's do I find anything comparable in psychological insight, in power to create people and set them up on their own legs, bearing their own faults and their own greatness of spirit⁷. (Davies, *Enthusiasms* 150, 151)

⁷ Davies also expressed his appreciation of *The Ring and the Book* in a lecture given to the C. G. Jung Foundation in New York: "Reading Through Jung's Spectacles: a Consideration of Robert Browning's Poem *The Ring and the Book*" (later published in *Quadrant*). His comment on the dramatic monologues of the first-person narrator allows us to see the profound influence that Browning's poem had on Davies: "These 'dramatic monologues' ... are ingenious works of character drawing of the greatest psychological interest. Their dramatic quality is that of the inner world, rather than the outward life.... In other words, the action was psychological; it probes deeply, and exposes character through thoughts rather than through actions. The dramatic monologue, in which a single person speaks, revealing himself most when he seems to be talking about something else, and in revealing himself giving us a portrait of the person to whom he speaks, was Browning's particular invention, and he brought it to its highest pitch of perfection in *The Ring and the Book*" (11). Davies's three Deptford novels, to some extent, is the realization of Browning's famous lines in the poem: "Red, green and blue that whirl into white, / The variance now, the eventual unity, / Which make the miracle" (59).

The resemblance of the structure of the Deptford trilogy to that of Cary's first trilogy can also be taken as evidence that Cary's technique had some direct influence on Davies's use of the trilogy form. Davies explicitly expresses his awareness of Cary's technique in his review already discussed, pointing out particularly that Cary's three books concern "the relationship of three people" and "each book tells part of the story as it appeared to the narrator, with differences of emphasis and point of view which make them seem to be three stories, though in fact they are one" (Davies, *Voice* 235).

Like Cary's first trilogy, Davies's Deptford trilogy also deals primarily with the relationship of three people. Davies's own comments about their triangular relationship already quoted (*One Half* 16-17) shed further light on the structural similarities between his trilogy and Cary's. However, in using the first-person point of view, Davies goes beyond what Cary achieved with this technique. Davies's technical experiment can be noticed both in the individual novels, particularly in *The Manticore* and *World of Wonders*, and in the three as a whole. *The Manticore* shows that, although the novel is narrated by a first-person narrator and represents David's account of the process of the first part of his Jungian analysis, the way in which the text is rendered makes readers see things not only from David's point of view, but from Dr. von Haller's as well. Such evidence can be found most easily in the second section. In this section, David adds a brief explanation about the text he provides: "This is my Zürich Notebook, containing notes and summaries used by me in presenting my case to Dr. von Haller; also memoranda of her opinions and interpretations as I made them after my hours with her" (67). David's added note suggests that what he is going to tell is not just from his point of view, but contains von Haller's "opinions and interpretations" as well. Thus, though the novel's mode of narration is first person, it manages to include other narratives and viewpoints by embedding them within the dominant mode of narration.

For instance, when relating his first sexual experience with Mrs Martindale, initially David did not think anything was wrong with the whole affair, even though

Father Knopwood had pointed out to him a long time ago that "it was an arranged thing" by his father (*Manticore* 181). Von Haller's opinion that the woman "had been party to a plan to manipulate" him "in a certain direction", together with her question, "Is it not rather patronizing to arrange a first sexual encounter for one's son?" forces David to rethink the role his father played in this special experience, and also invites readers to see why he has difficulty in accepting the truth from Father Knopwood (*Manticore* 186). In many cases like this one, David unwittingly reveals his limitations in understanding and recognizing his father's defects and destructive character, limitations that are signs of the deeply traumatic effects that Boy had on David. Dr. von Haller's "opinions and interpretations" thus guide both David and readers to recognize these profound psychological effects. The advantage of using David to report what he told von Haller and what she said about him and other people, especially his father, is that readers are made aware that David is unable to look back at everything clearly because he has long repressed his rebellious attitude toward his father, and has been traumatized by certain past experiences, and therefore is reluctant to touch these painful areas in his past. As von Haller represents a professional authority, her "opinions and interpretations" make not only David see things differently, but they allow readers to perceive that Boy is the core of David's psychological problem. In this way, Davies succeeds in making Boy the subject of *The Manticore* even though he is not "the principal character" (Penman 153).

In *World of Wonders*, Davies's experiment with the first-person point of view goes even further. Apart from the double layer of the first-person narrative of the whole novel (Eisengrim's within Ramsay's), Davies also employs the film crew members, who, like Ramsay and Liesl, listen to Eisengrim's life story, then discuss and comment on it. In this way, the viewpoints of these listeners invite readers to see Eisengrim's experience not only from his perspective, but from other perspectives as well. One of the best examples is seen in the reaction to and interpretation of

Eisengrim's account of Willard's death. The debate among the listeners about whether Eisengrim was cruel by withholding death from Willard--because of the rape, sexual exploitation, and his suffering from working inside the automaton Abdullah as "Nobody" for seven years--offers different evaluations of his self-judgement (15, 137). Ingestree thinks that, because "people dramatize themselves when they have a chance", Eisengrim simply tried to make them "believe he played the demon in reality", since his "lifelong pose has been demonic" (150, 149). Lind, however, believes that Eisengrim "has done all he says he has done" (149).

Liesl offers her own interpretation and argues that the reason why Eisengrim admitted that he killed Willard is that "[t]he tragedy of Willard's death is the spirit in which Faustus LeGrand regarded it" (151). She thinks that in terms of the life and death of Willard, LeGrand/Eisengrim "is the necessary agent who brings Willard to the end", and he has nothing to blame himself for (151). Liesl's view prepares readers to anticipate "the necessary agent" role that Eisengrim played in Boy's death as revealed at the end of this novel. Ramsay gives his reason why he does not believe that Eisengrim kept Willard "as a sort of hateful pet, in order to jeer at him" (155). He explains to the other listeners: "Magnus has made it amply clear that he was brought up in a strict, unrelenting form of puritanism. In consequence he still blames himself whenever he can, and because he knows the dramatic quality of the role, he likes to play the villain" (155). The different opinions offered by these listeners thus give readers an opportunity to look at Eisengrim's self-judgement from various viewpoints, and, at the same time, remind readers that, since Eisengrim's life story is used as the subtext for the film, he is still acting and performing, even though he recounts his own experience. Inevitably, he may overact if he wants to emphasize certain experiences that he thinks more revealing, such as Willard's grotesque and slow death. Because Eisengrim's point of view is tinted by the idea of the subtext, the interpretations and comments of the listeners not only help Ramsay to set the record right so that he can

leave behind a "document" faithful to the life of Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim, but also assist readers in seeing how Eisengrim comes to terms with his past and to what extent he understands his inner self (19, 264, 337).

For the Deptford trilogy as a whole, the first-person point of view becomes a means of reinforcing the effect of the interrelatedness of the three books so that readers can easily feel that the three novels deal with one story. This effect is mainly produced by different interpretations of the cause of Boy's death, and the question "Who killed Boy Staunton?" that is raised in all the three novels. The question first appears in Ramsay's narrative in which he relates how, during Eisengrim's magic performance, "The Brazen Head of Friar Bacon", "somebody in the top balcony shouted out: 'Who killed Boy Staunton?'" (*Fifth* 313). His description invites reader to ask: who shouted the question and was Boy really "killed" by someone? In addition, Liesl's answer to the question through the Brazen Head makes the case of Boy's death an interesting and a complicated one: "He was killed by the usual cabal: by himself, first of all; by the woman he knew; by the woman he did not know; by the man who granted his inmost wish; and by the inevitable fifth, who was keeper of his conscience and keeper of the stone" (*Fifth* 313). Because the answer does not tell precisely who "killed" Boy, it is open to alternative interpretations and so becomes a paradigm of the very principle on which the trilogy is based. As such, the answer creates more mystery: it suggests not only that Boy committed suicide, but also that four other individuals are involved in his death. Ramsay says nothing about his view of the question, nor of the answer. Thus, the question shouted and the answer given make Boy's death still more of a mystery, and, at the end of *Fifth Business*, the mystery remains unsolved. The subsequent novels are, in a sense, elaborate fictional footnotes or explications of the last pages of *Fifth Business*.

The beginning of *The Manticore* suggests that it will be from David's point of view that readers will review the whole episode and learn David's version of the cause

of Boy's death. Explaining to the analyst why he came to Zürich to seek analysis, David reveals that he was the person who shouted the question. During his Jungian analysis, David repeatedly and firmly insists that Boy "was killed" or "murdered" (3, 9, 10, 251). At the same time, he is seen to be drawn into the mystery that Liesl's answer creates. David's belief that his father was murdered is challenged later by those of Ramsay, Liesl and Eisengrim after they meet at Sorgenfrei. The different interpretations David receives from each of them makes the case of Boy's death even more confusing, which further engages readers' interest in the mystery. Eisengrim explains to David that Boy killed himself because he expressed to Eisengrim his wish to die (259). But Eisengrim also admits that he was involved in Boy's death because he was the man "who granted [Boy's] inmost wish" and he "arranged it" to help Boy with "the realization of his wish" (259). Eisengrim's blunt acknowledgement that he "arranged" Boy's death then arouses both David's and the readers' suspicion about the nature of his involvement. Ramsay's explanation is also opposed to David's belief. He suggests that Boy must have killed himself (260). In addition, Ramsay does not agree with David's suspicion that Eisengrim hypnotized Boy and then sent him to his death. He points out to David, "[Y]ou must understand that nobody--not Eisengrim or anyone--can make a man do something under hypnotism that he has not some genuine inclination to do" (260).

However, it is the different viewpoints about "the woman he knew and the woman he did not know" that Davies uses to maintain the sense of mystery left at the end of *Fifth Business* and to sustain his readers' curiosity from one book to the next. Liesl tells David her view of the two women:

From what I know now, which is only what Ramsay has told me at one time or another, I would have said the woman he knew was your mother, and the woman he did not know was your stepmother. He felt guilty about

your mother, and the second time he married a woman who was far stronger than he had understood. (*Manticore* 256)

Ramsay, however, has a different notion about it, as he tells David, "I myself think 'the woman he knew and the woman he did not know' were the same woman--your mother" (260). Eisengrim adds more confusion to the answer by revealing to David: "But I will tell you something Liesl doesn't know, unless Ramsay has told her: 'the woman he did not know' was my mother. Yes, she had some part in it" (259). As David has no idea who Eisengrim's mother was, Eisengrim's explanation makes the cause of Boy's death more complicated than David expects. Presenting different views about the same issue concerning Boy's death, Davies not only creates a continuity between these two narratives, but also sustains readers' anticipation for the outcome of the puzzle.

In *World of Wonders*, Davies uses the question "Who killed Boy Staunton?" once again to present a different point of view, and, at the same time, to make direct connections with the previous two novels. This time it is Ramsay who raises the question in order to clear his suspicion and to get a definite answer for his "document" about Eisengrim. Because Eisengrim was the last and the only person with Boy before the latter's sudden death, his revelation about Boy's state of mind before Boy's death is crucial. His conclusion that Boy killed himself because he was influenced by the abdication of his model, the former Prince of Wales, but did not have the courage "to live to face the world afterward" not only reinforces Ramsay's judgement about Boy's character, conveyed in *Fifth Business*, but also enables readers to see a complete portrait of Boy Staunton depicted indirectly by the three narrators (*World* 354). As a result, the discussion of the cause of Boy's death in the last chapter of the third Deptford novel resolves the mystery and satisfies our curiosity, and therefore becomes a perfect means to bring the sequence to an end.

In examining Davies's innovative use of the narrative technique of first-person point of view as a unifying device, one notices that the technique works most effectively when a character or an issue described by Ramsay in his memoir is re-interpreted repeatedly by the other narrators. Presenting the same material from *Fifth Business* from different perspectives is a new method which Davies uses to build the structure of the Deptford trilogy. He uses *Fifth Business* as a matrix from which he develops the later two novels; as a result, each is directly and closely connected with the first one. Although Davies did not have a plan to write three novels connected by the snowball incident and by its consequences when he wrote *Fifth Business*, his method of using the material from *Fifth Business* as the basis for *The Manticore* and *World of Wonders* enables him to construct the later two books, to present events already described from different perspectives, and to create a new focus or dimension for each of the subsequent novels. The following examination of *The Manticore* and *World of Wonder* will illustrate what *Fifth Business* provides for the other two and what methods Davies employs to increase the effect of interrelatedness between *Fifth Business* and *The Manticore*, and between *Fifth Business* and *World of Wonders*.

One of these methods is to expand some of the information that Ramsay gives in his memoir or to fill in the gaps where Ramsay is unable to obtain sufficient first-hand information. In *The Manticore*, the evidence manifests itself in the first chapter, in which what David Staunton relates during his first few therapeutic sessions with Dr. von Haller is a direct expansion of passages from *Fifth Business*. These passages include the news about Boy's sudden death (296), brief descriptions of Boy's funeral (296-99) and the shouting episode leading to Ramsay's heart attack (312-13). At the beginning of *The Manticore*, David reveals that he shouted the question "Who killed Boy Staunton?" (1-3). Davies thus immediately establishes a close link between David's narrative and Ramsay's. Because the episode is described by the shouter himself, David is able to add more details to Ramsay's information, such as the reason

why he shouted the question and what had been troubling him (2). This more detailed and repeated description of the same episode suggests that Davies deliberately puts a different emphasis on it. While Ramsay reports his knowledge of the sensational effect that the question created and the puzzling answer Liesl gave, David is more concerned about his uncontrollable behaviour and the disordered mental state caused by the sudden death of his father. David's account of the same episode, therefore, not only strengthens the interconnections between the first two novels, but also reveals something about himself, his serious drinking and psychological problems, both of which lead the reader to anticipate some kind of explanation.

David's account of what exactly happened after the news of Boy's sudden death reached him provides more detailed first-hand information about the family dealings with Boy's death because he is a participant in most of the scenes. Such an expansion not only creates new interest for readers, but also throws new light on the same information given by Ramsay. Ramsay learned of the manner of Boy's death indirectly from the newspapers, and he was not involved in dealing with the affairs and business concerning Boy's death, but only attended the funeral and was asked by Denyse, Boy's second wife, to write an official biography. His information about what happened to Boy's family after Boy's death is second-hand and very sketchy. Since there are many things that Ramsay simply has no way of knowing, David's day by day account of his activities and interactions with others fills the gaps and offers a new perspective on things that Ramsay has already told.

One important thing Ramsay is unable to report is the actual death scene, of which David has first-hand information (*Manticore* 20). David's description enables readers to share his impression of Boy who, while alive, "was always such an elegant man" in appearance, but whose dead body was in a state of "terrible dishevelment", "covered with mud and oil and harbour filth" (21). Because David is also the one who found the stone in Boy's mouth, his information about the death scene and the manner

of Boy's death intensifies the mystery suggested by the question of "Who killed Boy Staunton?". With David's account of these scenes, Davies creates a strong sense of continuity in the Boy Staunton narrative. Moreover, David's account of his arguments and conflicts with his stepmother Denyse adds more to Ramsay's depiction of her, revealing her character from her stepson's point of view. In turn, anything David says about Denyse consolidates the interconnections this minor character creates. Because Ramsay had little direct contact with Denyse, and his information about her was obtained mainly through Boy, what he knows about her is her political career, her ambition to get the Lieutenant-Governor position for Boy, and how she became Boy's second wife (*Fifth* 275-280). David, however, provides readers with several concrete examples to show that Denyse's ambition has reached a ridiculous point, particularly in her handling of the affairs after Boy's death. She first wanted Boy to be given a state funeral regardless of the fact that Boy had not officially taken the position of Lieutenant-Governor (*Manticore* 26). She then attempted to take a death-mask of Boy, hoping that Boy's image could be kept forever (34). She also wanted an official biography written by Ramsay as well as a "monument" in order to promote an everlasting public image of Boy (48). David's general view of Denyse helps readers further to see her unpleasant character: "No sense of congruity; no sense of humour; no modesty. Just ostentation and gall working under the governance of a fashionable, belligerent, unappeasable ambition" (48).

In this novel, David also explains why he did not like Denyse even when Boy was alive. He fills in the background for Ramsay's terse statement: "Neither David nor Caroline liked Denyse" (*Fifth* 280). David's remark suggests that Denyse is, in some ways, responsible for Boy's death: "[S]he had made a fool of my father since first she met him, reduced his status before the public with her ridiculous, ignorant pretensions and stupidities" (*Manticore* 26). Therefore, he thinks she "destroyed" and "murdered" Boy "psychologically" (10). Liesl's explication that Denyse was "the woman [Boy] did

not know" because she "was far stronger than he had understood" supports David's opinion and so intensifies the role Denyse played in Boy's death (256). Davies's extended presentation of Denyse in *The Manticore* not only enables readers to understand why Boy expressed his wish to die, both to Ramsay and to Eisengrim (*Fifth* 284, *Manticore* 259), but also shows how carefully and elaborately he uses a minor character to strengthen the continuity and unity of the trilogy. What readers learn of Denyse's ambitious character from both Ramsay and David helps them to see the probability that Boy might have taken his life in order to escape from the pressure of her unrealistic ambitions for him, her unwanted manipulation, and from the unwelcome responsibilities of the upcoming official position. Denyse's reappearance in *The Manticore* has another unifying effect. When David reveals Denyse's view of him to von Haller, he unwittingly casts light on his own character: "I was a cheap mouthpiece for crooks of the worst kind, I was a known drunk, I had always resented my father's superiority and tried to thwart him whenever I could, I have said inexcusable things about her and spied on her" (26). Denyse's opinions of David confirm Ramsay's information that David was "a drunk" in *Fifth Business*, and, on the other hand, prepare readers for the reasons why David rebelled against Boy and why he feels guilty for Boy's death (*Fifth* 297). Because David is the narrator of *The Manticore*, Denyse's opinions substantiate Davies's presentation of this recurrent character and provide an opportunity for readers to see him differently, increasing their interest in his psychological condition and his reasoning.

The same method can be seen in *World of Wonders* where Davies expands pieces of information appearing in *Fifth Business* and supplements them with more details. To a certain degree, the frames of the three sections in *World of Wonders* are all built on Ramsay's original information about Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim, in particular, Paul's running away from Deptford and later Paul's working as a conjuror. Eisengrim's account of his life beginning with his disappearance from Deptford not

only clarifies most of the episodes described by Ramsay, but also leads readers to witness a completely different experience from what Ramsay reported in *Fifth Business*. The way in which the material of *Fifth Business* is applied to *World of Wonders* makes it possible for Davies to create one more Deptford novel. He continues his presentation of the consequences of the snowball incident by shifting the focus to its victim, Paul Dempster, and the exploration of issues concerning human relationships throughout the three novels.

By having Eisengrim begin his story with an explanation of how, on "August 30, 1918", he disappeared from Deptford (*Wonders* 21), Davies makes a direct connection with Ramsay's repeated information that Paul ran away with a circus (*Fifth* 121, 254, 305). Using Eisengrim's explanation of what exactly happened to him at the village fair in *World of Wonders*, Davies is able to give a twist both to Ramsay's information and to Eisengrim's own statement in *Fifth Business*, "I ran away with a circus" (305), and to create an opportunity to present the life of carnival people that Paul himself lived and witnessed. Such an expansion creates a new content, as well as a new interest, and brings the reader into the "World of Wonders". Eisengrim's account of the cause of his disappearance, his rape and abduction by Willard, gives new substance to Ramsay's story about Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim. In *Fifth Business*, Milo Papple's notion of Paul's running away probably represents the general view held by the people in Deptford: "Funny, it was the best thing Paul ever done, in a way, because every kid wants to run away with a circus, and it made him kind of a hero after he'd gone" (121). But Eisengrim's account in *World of Wonders* shows clearly that he did not choose to run away with the circus and that his disappearance meant not only the loss of his innocence and his identity as Paul Dempster, but his continuing struggle for survival as well (29).

It is evident that Davies uses Eisengrim's brief explanation to Ramsay and Boy Staunton when the three meet at Ramsay's school in *Fifth Business* as a sketch for the

first chapter of *World of Wonders*. In his explanation, Eisengrim tells the other two men how he got involved with Willard, and Willard's "two weaknesses—boys and morphia". In the process, he reveals vaguely that he was Willard's thing and Willard's creature and learned conjuring as a reward (*Fifth* 305). He also mentions Ramsay's encounter with him at the Tyrol under the banner of St. Vite, where Willard was shown as "*Le Solitaire des forêts*" (*Fifth* 306). When relating his experience, Eisengrim expresses no hostility toward Willard even though he acknowledges that Willard had him "in slavery" sexually; instead, he emphasizes his "loyalty to Willard" (*Fifth* 305). In *World of Wonders*, his detailed account of his seven-year servitude as Nobody working inside the automaton Abdullah and of Willard's sexual exploitation of him all those years presents a very different and horrifying picture. At the same time, however, his account presents a broad overview of his unusual and fascinating experiences, including not only his personal and professional relationship with Willard, but his interaction with other members in the World of Wonders as well (21-142). His narrative invites readers to perceive a subtle connection between little Paul's suffering and the consequences of Boy Staunton's single action of throwing a snowball.

Similarly, the episode in which Ramsay encounters Paul in the Tyrol is re-described by Eisengrim, because he can give his first-hand account of his own experiences there. Again, Davies not only broadens the episode from *Fifth Business*, but also presents it in a different version. In his memoir, Ramsay recounts what he heard from the Bearded Lady about Paul's relationship with Willard:

Faustus very properly acknowledges a debt of gratitude, for before *Le Solitaire* became so incapable that he was forced to adopt the undemanding role of *un solitaire*, he had his own show of which Faustus was a part, and Faustus regards *Le Solitaire* as his father in art, if you understand the professional expression. I think it was *Le Solitaire* who brought him home from America. (*Fifth* 170)

However, Eisengrim's account of the same episode reveals a different kind of relationship between the two. He tells his listeners: "By this time [when Willard worked as *Le Solitaire des forêts*] I thoroughly hated him" (*World* 144). His hatred arose from his realization of what Willard had done to him: "This confused old wreck had been my master, my oppressor, the man who let me live hungry and dirty, who used my body shamefully and never let me lift my head above the shame" (*World* 144). Eisengrim's description of his relationship with Willard reverses the impression Ramsay got from the Bearded Lady, and therefore sheds light on Eisengrim's ongoing suffering, both physical and mental, arising from his premature birth and his mother's madness, and also from Willard's sexual and professional exploitation. Using Eisengrim's story, Davies succeeds in strengthening the continuity of character and in emphasizing the recurrent motif of the snowball.

The second chapter of *World of Wonders* builds on the unanswered question Ramsay raises in *Fifth Business*. He noticed after his "re-encounter" with Paul in Mexico, "fifteen years" after the Tyrol meeting, that Paul not only had a new name, Magnus Eisengrim, different from Faustus LeGrand, but also had different and elegant acting manners, a beautiful costume and an impressive voice (*Fifth* 236). Because of their long separation from each other, Ramsay had no way of knowing what had caused Paul's transformation. His own question remains unanswered:

This was a novelty--a poetic magician who took himself seriously. It was certainly not the role in which I had expected to re-encounter Paul Dempster. But this was Paul, without a doubt, so self-assured, so polished, so utterly unlike the circus conjurer with the moustache and beard and shabby clothes whom I had met in *Le grand Cirque forain de St Vite* more than fifteen years before, that it was some time before I could be sure it was he. How had he come by this new self, and where had he acquired this tasteful, beautiful entertainment? (236-37)

A gap is left here and the readers' aroused curiosity about the transformation of Paul Dempster/Faustus LeGrand is not satisfied. Eisengrim's narrative in the second chapter indirectly answers Ramsay's question, and his account of how he became Sir John's double explains the changes Ramsay noticed. He reveals that, in order to become Sir John's double, he went through a "long apprenticeship" which was "another servitude, much more dangerous and potentially ruinous, but far removed from the squalor of [his] experience with Willard", during which he learned not only how to move on stage exactly like Sir John (an experienced actor), but also how to become Sir John in every way off stage (*World* 191). Eisengrim makes it clear that to achieve this goal, he "had to be born again physically", the process which transformed him (*World* 202). His rebirth recalls Ramsay's rebirth after the battle at Passchendaele in *Fifth Business* and David's during the cave expedition in *The Manticore*, which suggests a repeated pattern Davies uses in his depiction of each narrator/protagonist.

Liesl's narrative, inserted in Eisengrim's subtext (*World* 316-331), serves to explain indirectly what transformed Eisengrim. In addition, it reveals how she and Eisengrim met and became lovers and business partners, how the name Magnus Eisengrim was chosen to replace Faustus LeGrand, and how they transformed one another through understanding and love. Her information supplements Eisengrim's explanation, and, at the same time, reveals the part she played in his transformation and in his success as a conjuror. Davies also uses her revelation to respond directly to Ramsay's vague reference to her and to her contribution to Eisengrim's improvement as an artist given in *Fifth Business*:

I soon found out why Liesl dominated the company. First, she was the backer, and the finance of the whole thing rested either on her money or money she had guaranteed. She was a Swiss, and the company buzz was that she came of a family that owned one of the big watch firms. Second, she was a brilliant mechanic; her huge hands did wonders with involved

springs, releases and displacements, escapements and levers, however tiny they might be. She was a good artificer too; she made the Brazen Head out of some light plastic so that it was an arresting object; nothing in Eisengrim's show was tawdry or untouched by her exacting taste. But unlike many good craftsmen, she could see beyond what she was making to its effect when in use. (253)

Liesl's narrative not only confirms Ramsay's information, but also provides readers with more about her family background and about how she gained her skill from Eisengrim, whom she calls her "great master" (*World* 324). In the process, it gives readers an opportunity to know more about her person, particularly about the disease that left her with a deformed appearance, the ugliness of which is described both by Ramsay (*Fifth* 240-41) and by David (*Manticore* 245), and about her familiarity with philosophy and the psychology of Freud, Jung and Adler.

In addition to his method of reusing and expanding the material from *Fifth Business* to develop the subsequent novels, Davies also uses repetition, combined with the first-person point of view, to make direct and clear interconnections. As the earlier discussion has shown, certain important events that involve all the main characters, such as the question, "Who killed Boy Staunton?", and the answer voiced by Liesl for the Brazen Head, are used repeatedly in all three novels so that a continuity and wholeness are created. In the later two, however, repetition is used to call attention to various sides of Boy Staunton's character and the effects and consequences of the snowball incident. In *The Manticore*, two events described in *Fifth Business* can be used to illustrate the point. Both Ramsay and David describe the episode in which Boy was furious to see little David playing with a doll (*Fifth* 213, *Manticore* 96-97), and the eventful Christmas day following the abdication of the Prince of Wales, during which Boy and Leola quarreled in front of Ramsay and their children, and Leola later attempted suicide (*Fifth* 216-221, *Manticore* 99-102). Because Ramsay is only a family

friend to the Stauntons, he is unable to know both how much David was aware of what was going on between Boy and Leola and how David reacted to these two events. David's recollection enables readers to perceive the traumatic effect they had upon his psyche. For instance, describing the doll episode, David tells von Haller: "I was desolate" afterward (97). He also stresses the powerful impact of the second event: "Christmas of that year brought one of the great upheavals that influenced my life" (100). Because David was only a child when the two events occurred, his views on his father's conduct have certain limitations. These limitations appear most clearly in his account to Dr. von Haller of the second event: "I never really understood Father's relationship with the Prince of Wales" and "[m]y Father and mother had some sort of dreadful quarrel, and he left the house" (*Fifth* 100). In such cases, a reading of the previous novel becomes necessary because an isolated reading of *The Manticore* would miss this point. Though *Fifth Business* comes first in narrative time and publication, its information supplements David's. Ramsay's earlier description of the same events in *Fifth Business* helps readers to detect David's ignorance and limitations in understanding his father, and to see the damaging influence that Boy's conduct had on David.

The last chapter in *World of Wonders* is full of references to *Fifth Business*. The most noticeable repetitions include: the episode of the meeting of the three Deptford men before Boy's sudden death; the snowball incident; the question, "Who killed Boy Staunton?" and the answer Liesl offers. The most significant repetition is the snowball incident, because *Fifth Business* begins with it and the whole trilogy develops from it. Bringing up the incident again and again in the last chapter of *World of Wonders* (337, 341), which is also the end of the trilogy, Davies brings to the foreground this unifying element so that he can combine it with other recurrent elements and tighten the interconnections between *World of Wonders* and *Fifth Business*. On the other hand, by repeatedly mentioning the snowball incident, Davies also creates an opportunity to

present Eisengrim's view about its influence on his life. While Ramsay thinks that Boy is guilty and responsible for what has happened to Eisengrim, Eisengrim feels grateful for Boy's action:

The means may have been a little rough, but the result is entirely to my taste. If he hadn't hit my mother on the head with that snowball--having hidden a rock in it, which was dirty play--I might now be what my father was: a Baptist parson in a small town. I have had my ups and downs, and the downs were very far down indeed, but I am now a celebrity in a limited way, and I am a master of a craft, which is a better thing by far.... Who gave me my start? Boy Staunton! (*World* 341)

In Eisengrim's view, Boy's snowball made it possible for him to become what he is and to get his living by doing what he most enjoys. His view thus not only forms a contrast to Ramsay's, but also offers an alternative way of perceiving and interpreting the consequences of the same event.

In this last chapter, Eisengrim's view of his mother is also repeatedly emphasized. In *Fifth Business*, Eisengrim expresses, on two occasions, his view that his mother was a madwoman, and that her madness was caused by his birth (170, 306). While repeating the same view in *World of Wonders*, Eisengrim gives more details about the suffering and pain he experienced because of her (22-23, 98-99, 342). His repeated mention of his mad mother and his consistent view of the connection between his birth and her madness are central to Davies's presentation of the consequences of the snowball incident and its influence on the lives of its victims. Like the other repetitions, Eisengrim's information about his mother becomes a continuing element, strengthening the structure of the Deptford trilogy which is fundamentally built upon the snowball incident and its consequences. On the other hand, his view of Mary Dempster further undermines Ramsay's theory about her as a saint in *Fifth Business* (both Padre Blazon and Liesl have tried to make Ramsay see that she was simply a

madwoman) and brings Ramsay's notion back to reality. The repetition with variation, in this case, invites readers to rethink Ramsay's narrative, to reevaluate his life experience, and to look back at the first novel with new understanding. Thus repetition becomes a way of getting readers involved in integrating different versions and layers of information into a coherent larger narrative and in recognizing the trilogy structure in the process.

The Deptford trilogy also shows that the device of suspense increases the intensity of interrelations among these novels. One of these concerns the already discussed circumstances around "Who killed Boy Staunton?" Another instance occurs at the end of *Fifth Business*. The disappearance from his bookshelf of the stone that Ramsay has kept for sixty years raises the question: who took the stone? Ramsay seems to suggest that Eisengrim took it because Eisengrim, before leaving the room with Boy, made an "odd remark": "I have everything I need" (312). Ramsay's hint arouses a suspicion that Eisengrim might have killed Boy and put the stone in Boy's mouth. The suspicion aroused leads readers to question Eisengrim's motivation for murdering Boy Staunton. However, no unambiguous answer is offered at the end of *Fifth Business*; thus the novel ends without closure. Ramsay's implied suspicion is further augmented in *The Manticore* by David Staunton's question: "Had [Eisengrim] hypnotized Father and sent him to death? And if so, why?" (260). As the question was raised after Eisengrim told David that Boy wished to die and that he "arranged it", the ambiguity created by Eisengrim arouses suspicion not only in David but in readers as well. As with the ambiguities left unresolved in *Fifth Business*, the suspicion attached to Eisengrim remains in readers' minds at the end of *The Manticore*. Like the previous novel, *The Manticore* ends without closure. In *World of Wonders*, Ramsay voices his suspicion openly when he hears Eisengrim, in the middle of his narrative, mentioning Boy Staunton: "Magnus had mentioned Boy Staunton, the Canadian tycoon, and also my lifelong friend, whom I was pretty sure Magnus had murdered. Or, if not murdered,

had given a good push on a path that looked like suicide" (264). In this way, Davies not only renews the suspense left at the end of *Fifth Business* and *The Manticore*, but also uses it as a direct connecting agent to link the third novel with the previous two.

On the other hand, the appearance of Ramsay's suspicion in the middle of Eisengrim's narrative makes it possible for Davies to manipulate readers' anticipation and to shift in the last chapter from Eisengrim's life story back to the episode described in *Fifth Business*, in which Eisengrim met Boy at Ramsay's school. It is in this last chapter that Eisengrim clears up Ramsay's suspicion, as well as our own, by informing Ramsay that it was Boy who took the stone (*World* 342). His further explanation of how the stone got into Boy's mouth and his analysis of why Boy took his own life finally dissipate the suspicion that both Ramsay and David hold, satisfy our anticipation, and give a sense of closure to the trilogy as a whole. At this point, it is worth pointing out that the fact that the first two novels have endings without closure and that each is sufficiently open-ended to require a successor to "end" it suggests that, even though Davies initially did not plan to write a trilogy, the suspense made it easier for him either to intensify or to resolve the mystery, and to produce a continuity. Davies's use of suspense to create open endings augments the structural unifying effect.

The study of his way of constructing the Deptford trilogy has so far illustrated that Davies developed a set of new methods to build a trilogy structure distinctively different from that of the Salterton trilogy; these include conflicting points of view, manipulating readers' anticipation and curiosity with suspense, using the material of the first novel as the matrix from which the later two are derived, and ending without closure. In using *Fifth Business* as the matrix, Davies expands, supplements and repeats the original references to create direct and recognizable interconnections through character and plot between the first novel and the second, and between the first and the third. As such, the three novels do not follow a sequential chronological order. The study has also shown that, even when he uses recurrent elements like setting and

character, as he did in the Salterton trilogy, Davies's method has changed. He uses more settings and makes them not only represent the locales where events take place, but, more importantly, associates them directly with the psychological development of the three narrators. He also uses the central character of each novel as a recurrent element to enlarge the single story the trilogy unfolds, that is, the consequences of the snowball incident and its influence on the lives of these central characters. His secondary characters, Boy Staunton and Liesl, powerfully reinforce the unity of character and theme.

It has to be pointed out that, despite the varieties of unity the Deptford trilogy achieves, some critics still have problems in appreciating the trilogy structure Davies creates. Patricia Monk, for example, subtly and indirectly criticizes the "apparently tangential relationship" between *The Manticore* and *World of Wonders*: "So tangential does the relationship ... appear that I began by wondering if this trilogy was going to have four parts..." ("Confession of a Sorcerer's Apprentice" 120). She seems to suggest that the loose connection between the later two novels undermines or calls into question the trilogy structure. James Neufeld, one of the few people to have made a special study of the trilogy structure in the Deptford novels ("Structural Unity in 'The Deptford Trilogy'"), openly criticizes the form:

They do not ... tell a continuing story in orderly, chronological sequence. Instead, they indulge in a considerable amount of doubling-back, commenting on a single event, like Boy Staunton's death, from various point of view. Furthermore, the emphasis on David Staunton and his story in *The Manticore* throws the entire trilogy slightly out of focus. (68)

He then argues: "Davies has suggested a neat symmetry to the organization of his material by using the trilogy structure, but has perversely refused to develop that material with the obvious neatness the structure implies" (68-69). Neufeld's criticism shows that he has some preconceived expectations of what a trilogy structure should be,

and, therefore, cannot accept Davies's variation. I would suggest that what he criticizes as a perverse refusal to create a "neat" structure is a central, distinctive, and successful feature of Davies's design.

Davies's own remarks about his creation of the Deptford trilogy certainly point in this direction. In his letter to Gordon Roper written right after he finished the first draft of *World of Wonders*, Davies expresses his concern about the trilogy structure:

I finished the novel this morning, and I wish I knew what to make of it. It has been uncommonly tough chewing, because as you know I never intended a trilogy, and so had made no preparation for pulling three books into a unity; attempting to do this without violent warping, or recourse to such passages as ... "As my reader will recall, from our earlier volumes" ... nor yet chewing the old cabbage twice and even thrice, has been tedious in the extreme. But I think I have managed somehow, if not well, and have even managed a surprise or two. (Grant, *Man of Myth* 511)

Readers' responses to *World of Wonders* and to the three Deptford novels as a trilogy confirm that Davies has done more than just manage to pull the three books together. The various powerful and unusual kinds of unities indicate not only of his efforts to create a different trilogy structure both from his own Salterton trilogy and from Cary's first trilogy, but of his inventiveness in using narrative techniques to work out unusual intertextual effects. His positive feeling about the completed trilogy, developed as an afterthought, and his awareness of the "surprise or two" he had for his readers suggest that he was quite confident of his artistry as a trilogy novelist. Moreover, the Deptford novels show that he was eager to engage in experimentation with various narrative techniques to create a different kind of trilogy structure and to vary his methods to explore other possible ways of using the trilogy form. There is no doubt that the success of the Deptford trilogy encouraged Davies to decide to create one more trilogy when he began gathering notes for a new novel. His experience of contriving and

constructing the Salterton and Deptford trilogies provided him with confidence and skills, both of which enabled him to commit himself to writing a trilogy from the outset in the Cornish novels.

Chapter 5

The Cornish Trilogy:

The Shadow of Francis Cornish

One would think that, having created two trilogies and achieved a great success with the Deptford trilogy (he became an internationally renowned novelist after its publication), Davies could have easily and economically repeated the earlier trilogy patterns (as Cary and Galsworthy did) when committing himself to writing a new trilogy. The fact that the Cornish novels (*The Rebel Angels*, *What's Bred in the Bone* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*) form two trilogy patterns, one linear, the other triptych-like, and both different from the previous ones, reveals his continued experimentation with narrative techniques in order to produce diverse intertextual interest and effects. In addition, the intellectual, academic and artistic worlds of the Cornish novels illuminate a new dimension in Davies's fiction writing. In a letter to Frederick W. Gerstell (a reader), Davies expressed his awareness of the change of emphasis in the Cornish novels: "[The Salterton novels] are quite a different sort of thing from the Deptford books which, in turn, are different from *The Rebel Angels* and the books which I hope will follow it; I seem to undergo changes of emphasis every ten years or so" (16 Mar. 1982, NA 47:43). This information is important in that it indirectly explains why the structure of the Cornish trilogy differs from that of the Salterton and the Deptford trilogies, and, at the same time, invites readers to wonder what led to the change from exploring the inner conflicts of individuals in the Deptford novels to presenting intellectual and academic activities in a university in *The Rebel Angels* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*, in the art world in *What's Bred in the Bone* and in the world of opera in *The Lyre of Orpheus*.

Keeping in mind that Davies had been the Master of Massey College and a professor of English and drama at the University of Toronto since the early 1960's, one is not surprised to discover that this experience has found its way into *The Rebel Angels* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*¹. Both novels are peopled with professors and students, and deal with issues relating directly to the academic community. Moreover, the settings are based on Massey College and Trinity College in the University of Toronto, with which he was associated. His concept of a university, perception of what goes on in this particular world, and insight into the behaviour of those preoccupied by the pursuit of knowledge become dominant themes in *The Rebel Angels*. The fact that Davies himself became the subject of Judith S. Grant's biography, while he was beginning the Cornish sequence, also had profound repercussions on the way he organized the new trilogy, especially Simon Darcourt's problems in writing the biography of Francis Cornish. However, his interest in the artistic challenge of biography goes back at least to 1953, when he wrote:

Biography, which seems on the face of it to be a kind of writing within the scope of any industrious, judicious author, is in fact one of the most difficult of all forms of authorship; to write one's own life, or that of another man, well, requires qualities which are rarely found except in creative writers of the first rank; yet a biography cannot be creative; the plot has been fixed by fate and any coloring or suppressing is sure to be found out sooner or later. "Graphy: Bio- and Autbio-" 30)

¹ It is typical of Davies to make use of his own experiences and knowledge as sources for his fiction. He insists, "All fiction is to a great extent autobiographical because you can't write about anything you haven't either experienced or at least watched or had some contact with" (*Coles Booktalk* 4). Autobiographical references permeate his previous two trilogies. For instance, *Tempest-Tost* was based on his experience as director and actor in the Peterborough Little Theatre, while Gloster Ridley's activities in *Leaven of Malice* are derived from Davies's own experiences as editor of *The Peterborough Examiner*.

In both *What's Bred in the Bone* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*, Davies illustrates his views concerning the human limitations of a biographer. Similarly, he transforms his lifelong enthusiasm for theatre and opera, involvement in the Stratford Festival of Ontario, and his writing of two librettos between 1981 and 1983 for the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus into the substance of the third novel². If we consider also that Davies wrote the Cornish novels in his sixties and seventies, the main subjects of each novel—lost knowledge, Old Master paintings, Arthurian legend and nineteenth century opera--indicate that the aging Davies became acutely interested in the power of the past to influence the life of the present. The three novels give him an opportunity to display his lifelong arcane learning and wisdom in these areas of interest³.

The Cornish trilogy shows a double-pattern which Davies carefully constructs so as to accommodate a broad variety of subjects and emphasize certain issues from different perspectives. As a result, the recurrent subjects themselves become a dominant and thematic unifying force. In his review of *The Lyre of Orpheus* (1988), W. J. Keith, examining the three novels as a group, notices that ideas and motifs are repeatedly used in the three novels ("Robertson Davies and the Cornish Trilogy" 141). He argues that "the Cornish trilogy is clearly a different kind of fiction from its predecessors" because "Davies has extended the boundaries of fiction to take in subjects that, in the clear-cut divisions of an earlier world, were more exclusively the preserve of non-fiction discourse" (141, 144). Keith's observation directs our attention not only to the development in Davies's skill as a fiction writer, but also to one of the crucial

² The recently published *Happy Alchemy* (Oct. 1997), a compilation of essays on various forms of theatre (seven on opera) throws new light on the background of *The Lyre of Orpheus*, and includes the text of one libretto, *Children of the Moon*.

³ The three chapters (14-16) about the Cornish Novels in Grant's *Man of Myth* provide more details about why the emphasis of his creative writing changed after the Deptford trilogy and how Davies's personal experiences were incorporated into the three novels.

changes in his way of constructing the third trilogy. Davies achieves this particular structural effect by varying his methods of using the narrative elements of character and setting. My examination of the Cornish trilogy will focus primarily on these two elements, by illustrating the differences between the structure of the Cornish trilogy and that of the previous two trilogies. In addition, I will explore the coherent thematic ideas that give a distinctive freshness to the Cornish trilogy.

Reading the Cornish novels as a group, one notices that, in contrast with the previous trilogies, these novels have no common setting. Davies uses different locales to emphasize particular thematic issues in the individual novels. The story of *The Rebel Angels* takes place in a fictionalized University of Toronto. This setting enables him to deal with intellectual issues and to create a fictive world with academic characters rooted in a university environment. These characters, especially the two first-person narrators, Maria Magdalena Theotoky, a graduate student, and Simon Darcourt, a priest-professor, as well as Maria's supervisor, Clement Hollier, are seen, on the one hand, to be isolated and single-minded individuals separated from the rest of mankind by their intellectual ambitions and scholarly pursuits, and on the other, to be ordinary human beings subject to human oddities and frailties. By creating two parallel narratives, Davies provides a double perspective on the university world. The setting also becomes a fitting place for him to experiment with "the novel of ideas"⁴ or "the organizing form of a symposium ... in the ancient Greek sense" (Keith, "The Not-So-Divine Comedy" 136). Maria's conversations with Parlabane over their meals and the Guest Nights described by Darcourt are conspicuous examples of his adaptations of the literary symposium.

⁴ James Mulvihill's essay, "*The Rebel Angels: Robertson Davies and the Novel of Ideas*", is an illuminating study of the first Cornish novel in the light of this minor literary tradition. His observation that "it is the ideas that these characters utter that determine who they are, what they do, even what happens to them" succinctly describes the new feature of Davies's character presentation (182).

Because *What's Bred in the Bone* is mainly about the life of Francis Cornish, and more specifically, about how he becomes a artist, art expert and collector, the setting in this novel changes with the life journey of the protagonist. The four main places-- Blairlogie, Toronto, England, and the castle of Dūsterstein in Bavaria--mark the different stages both of his physical journey and the development of his skill and temperament as an artist. More significantly, they serve to emphasize environmental influences on his emotional and intellectual growth. Blairlogie is not just the place where he was born and spent his childhood but where his early experiences became the shaping power of his temperament and his artistic sensibility, a notion that Davies had already explored in the Deptford novels. Francis's student life in Toronto, first at Colborne College and then at the University of Toronto, marks a period during which his imagination develops under the influence of the Grail legend. His fascination with the Grail legend eventually leads him to search for answers in Old Master paintings and ultimately to find his vocation as an artist. His association with the University of Toronto creates a link between this novel and the previous one, and the reference helps to explain why the university becomes one of his beneficiaries in *The Rebel Angels*.

The English setting serves to reflect two important changes in Francis's life. His love for his cousin Ismay is not requited, and his brief marriage with her turns him into a cuckold. Her elopement destroys his romantic illusions about love and marriage. In his second year at Oxford, his conversations with Saraceni, "the greatest restorer of pictures in the world", deepen his interest in and understanding of Old Master paintings, both their style and their religious and mythical content (221). The appearance of Saraceni in Francis's life at this point determines not only Francis's vocation as an artist, but also his choice of the artistic mode for his future creative works. Above all, his visits to Cornwall in general and Tintagel in particular bring him into physical contact with the world of Arthurian legend. This is motif which becomes a dominant element in the subsequent novel.

In a symbolic way, the Canadian and English settings prepare Francis for his vocation as an artist, as well as for the discovery of his personal myth at the castle of Dusterstein. It is at Dusterstein that he works as Saraceni's assistant, learning different Old Master techniques from him while restoring old German paintings. In the process, Francis's artistic skills are refined, while, at the same time, he gains a better understanding of the Old Masters' inner vision, a decisive step in his spiritual and artistic development. It is in this sense that the German setting represents the destination of Francis's quest. There, he paints in the style of the Old Master the portrait of the dwarf, whose dead body he had sketched when he was a boy. The compassion for the dwarf reflected in his painting indicates his growing understanding of the influence of his childhood. The painting of his self-portrait, *The Marriage at Cana*, suggests that he has finally found his own inner vision, which enables him to use his brush to express his understanding of the influence of other people on his own life. Davies uses *The Marriage at Cana* to suggest that the environmental influences bred in one's bone will come out in one way or another. The description of the painting makes it clear that the physical settings are transformed into Francis's inner landscape which serves as the background of his picture. On the right panel of the painting, for example, the "markedly desolate" background with its "rabble of children with twisted, ugly, hungry faces" who "are concentrated on one of their number who is gouging the eye from a cat with a sharp stone" is clearly based on Francis's experiences in the playground of his childhood school, Carlyle Rural, where he witnessed how "boys blew up frogs and tortured cats" (392, 120). Moreover, the portraits in the painting, all based on the people involved in Francis's life, bear witness to Davies's idea that what was bred in Francis's bone comes out in the form of a painting which Francis regards as his own "myth" (359). Painting thus becomes another way of discovering one's own myth, a favourite theme of Davies and a recurrent motif from the Deptford trilogy onwards.

In *The Lyre of Orpheus*, the penthouse where Maria and Arthur Cornish live and where the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone* takes place becomes the central setting. First of all, the penthouse functions as headquarters for the Cornish Foundation. There, as Chairman of the Foundation, Arthur Cornish conducts his business meetings with its members, discussing the Foundation's ambitious project of sponsoring Hulda Schnackenberg, a Ph.D. candidate in music, to complete the unfinished opera, *Arthur of Britain, or The Magnanimous Cuckold*, by the nineteenth-century composer E. T. A. Hoffmann, and then, if Hulda's work proves satisfactory, putting the opera on stage. Also at the penthouse Darcourt discusses with Maria and Arthur the progress of his search for facts for his book about Francis Cornish, the first project of the Foundation which he started in the previous novel. Davies is able to use the penthouse to bring together several threads, to show what is involved in such creative undertakings as completing Hoffmann's unfinished opera (including constructing the notes and the libretto), staging the opera, and writing Francis's biography.

More significantly, the penthouse is presented as a place where the Arthurian legend is symbolically enacted by the members of the Foundation. The institutions of the Round Table, the Platter of Plenty and the Arthurian dinner all indicate that the Foundation led by Arthur Cornish tries to recapture the spirit of the legend. The subsequent adultery of Arthur's wife Maria with his best friend Geraint Powell, taking place at the penthouse, creates a triangular relationship among these three characters, similar to that of the three main legendary characters in the opera: King Arthur, his wife Guenevere and his friend Lancelot. The implied association of the penthouse with King Arthur's court makes it possible for Davies to convey his belief that great myths, like the Arthurian myth, repeat themselves, and are never far from present day life: everyone in the modern world is reliving the great myths in contemporary form, an idea that neither Jung nor Frye would have found surprising, and a subject that "has

been a perennial favourite of Davies: the relation of individual lives to the great myths of our cultural inheritance" (Keith, "Robertson Davies" 144). By using the element of setting in this symbolic way, Davies succeeds in keeping the individual novels in this trilogy more independent of each other and more self-sufficient than the Deptford novels, and, at the same time, in multiplying the richness of various underlying ideas that unite the Cornish novels thematically.

Davies's ways of using the recurrent characters are decidedly different from his earlier methods. For one thing, the recurrent characters, instead of merely illustrating idiosyncrasies of individual, are used to "represent certain types or attitudes or intellectual positions", as Keith points out, to voice different ideas ("Robertson Davies" 143). For another, they are used to create two kinds of sequential patterns. Maria, Darcourt and Arthur move from one novel to the next and engage in various events initiated by Francis Cornish, creating a linear and chronological order. Bringing Francis to the foreground in the main story of the second novel, Davies establishes a triptych form: Francis alone occupies the central part, with a narrative time anterior both to *The Rebel Angels* and to *The Lyre of Orpheus*. In this way, the recurrent characters are made to work out a stronger intertextual effect to compensate the trilogy structure for the missing unity of setting.

Although Maria, Darcourt and Arthur appear immediately at the beginning of both the second and the third novels, their function in *What's Bred in the Bone* is noticeably unusual. Unlike the recurrent characters in the frame story of *A Mixture of Frailties*, such as Solly, Pearl and Cobbler, who are also involved in the main plot centered upon Monica Gall, the three characters in *What's Bred in the Bone* are not engaged in the main story at all, but used only in the frame story which begins and ends the novel. Reading the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone*, one realizes that Davies uses these three characters for two purposes. First, he creates a conversation among them in order to arouse readers' curiosity about Francis Cornish, the subject of

the main story. From their conversation, readers learn that Arthur suddenly and arbitrarily decides that Darcourt should stop writing Francis Cornish's biography because of Darcourt's suspicions that Francis "faked some Old Master drawings he left to the National Gallery" and that Francis was a "homosexual" (3, 4). Such suspicions, as Arthur argues, would cause a scandal if they appeared in the book, jeopardizing the reputation of the Cornish family and the family business in the Canadian financial world. Darcourt's frustration with the book, caused by his realization that, despite "eighteen months" of research, he still does not have "enough facts", intensifies readers' curiosity (4). Added to their problems is the fact that none of them knows much about Francis. As Francis's biographer, Darcourt has to admit: "I simply don't know who he was" (5). Similarly Francis's nephew Arthur observes: "I didn't really know him" (5). To Maria, Francis is a total stranger, since she "never knew him at all. Never saw him" (5). By itself, their conversation creates a sense of mystery surrounding Francis, whose death, wealth, and surprisingly large collections of books, paintings and manuscripts have no clear explanation in *The Rebel Angels*. At the same time, the conversation gives readers the impression that it is impossible for Darcourt to get to know everything he wants for the biography. The characters' ignorance thus creates a narrative gap or absence that the remainder of the novel will have to fill.

Another use of the conversation between Maria and Darcourt is to introduce two supernatural beings into the narrative so that Francis's life can be unfolded by them, instead of by the author as the third-person narrator. Their conversation about "the Angel of Biography" or "The Lesser Zadkiel", and Francis's daimon, "Maimas", is used as a means to prepare readers for the appearance of these two supernatural beings (15, 18). In this conversation, Davies lets Maria and Darcourt to evoke the two spirits and explain their powers. Their evocation begins when Maria tells Darcourt: "Now, if you could just get the ear of the Lesser Zadkiel and ... Maimas ... you'd have all you want about Francis Cornish" (18). The appearance of the two spirits at the end of the

conversation, "who had been drawn by the sound of their own names to listen to what was going on", thus enables Davies to use them to solve the mystery about Francis Cornish and to give a seemingly authentic, authoritative and complete version of his biography (18). The method indicates Davies's innovative and idiosyncratic use of the third-person narrative technique.

Because the frame story consists only of a conversation at the beginning, and a few words exchanged between Maria and Arthur at the end, neither figure shows any character development. Moreover, Davies's introduction of Maria, Arthur and Darcourt is very brief. Because he seems to expect that his readers have read *The Rebel Angels*, he does not feel the need to repeat the information available there. The part these recurrent characters play in the frame story suggests that so far as *What's Bred in the Bone* is concerned, their reappearance is purely for the purpose of making a transition from *The Rebel Angels*, a story about life in a university, to *What's Bred in the Bone*, a story about the life of an artist. Such a transition enables Davies to suggest some continuity between the two novels, even though the main story about Francis's life is independent of both the frame story and *The Rebel Angels*, and, at the same time, to shift the focus from issues concerning the university to biography, the main thematic subject of the frame story. Davies's method here indicates that he is now more at ease with the trilogy structure and more inventive in using character to create connections.

The interconnection created by Francis Cornish represents one of the most distinctive and important variations in Davies's way of using character to link three novels. Interestingly, some similarities can be noticed between Davies's use of Francis here and of Boy Staunton in the Deptford trilogy, as both characters are employed to establish the main plot of each trilogy. Boy Staunton, described by Ramsay, David and Eisengrim, forms a larger story for the Deptford trilogy; the three Cornish novels are created to "explore the life and influence of Francis Cornish", as Davies himself states

(*The Lyre of Orpheus* prefatory note). Furthermore, in the Deptford trilogy, he uses three novels to present the consequences of Boy Staunton's throwing the snowball for the characters involved, directly or indirectly. Like the snowball incident, Francis Cornish's death at the beginning of *The Rebel Angels* sets in motion a series of actions that become the main interest of the three Cornish novels. However, unlike Staunton, who has a personal and direct influence on Ramsay, David and Eisengrim, Francis is a shadowy figure who had only limited personal contact before his death with two of the main recurrent characters, Darcourt and Arthur Cornish. Therefore, his existence in *The Rebel Angels*, the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone*, and *The Lyre of Orpheus* is felt through what he leaves behind, namely his "collections of pictures, books and manuscripts" and an enormous amount of money (*Rebel* 16). The Cornish trilogy shows that Davies deliberately uses Francis's legacy--the Gryphius manuscript containing Rabelais's *Stratagems* and the music manuscript of an incomplete opera left by E. T. A. Hoffmann, together with his money--as an agent to activate several events and to show the consequences and effects that the legacy produces. Moreover, like the snowball, Francis's legacy provides Davies with opportunities to create different occasions suitable for him to express various ideas about the university, biography, painting and opera, for example. A careful examination of how Davies uses this shadowy figure to build the triptych pattern, and how the thematic unity is generated from his legacy should further illustrate Davies's inventiveness in using the narrative element of character.

In *The Rebel Angels*, Davies uses Francis Cornish to foreshadow the frame of the trilogy structure. The beginning of the novel arouses readers' anticipation of an explanation of this character, whose death becomes big news on the first day of the new term on campus. The expectations of the two narrators, Maria and Darcourt, suggested at the beginning of their respective narratives, that something is going to happen to them because of the death, give readers an impression that these two characters have

some association with the deceased. Readers soon find out that one of Francis Cornish's manuscripts will contribute to a turning point in Maria's academic career. Although she does not know Francis at all, Maria is told by her thesis supervisor, Clem Hollier:

[O]ne of those manuscripts will be the making of you, and will be quite useful to me, I hope. As soon as we can get our hands on it you will begin your serious work--the work that will put you several rungs up the scholarly ladder. That manuscript will be the guts of your thesis, and it won't be some mouldy, pawed-over old rag of the kind most students have to put up with. It could be a small bombshell in Renaissance studies. (3-4)

The passage implies that she will get directly involved in one of the actions initiated by Francis's manuscript. The opening of Maria's narrative also reveals that, because of this promised and expected manuscript, Hollier, wanting her to be "near" him, gives her permission to work in his office as his research assistant (3). This arrangement, as it turns out, represents Davies's means of developing Maria's story through her direct interactions with other characters: Hollier, Parlabane and Darcourt within a university environment; Mamusia and Yerko within a family and Gypsy tradition; and Arthur Cornish. The relationship with Arthur will lead to friendship and later to a marriage in which the Gryphius manuscript will be her wedding present.

With Maria's association with the manuscript established, Davies uses her narrative to show life in the microcosm of a university from a graduate student's perspective and through her personal dealings with and observations of her professors. Readers learn from her, a relative outsider, about her life as a graduate student, about the concerns of intellectuals with their academic achievements and ambitions and the supposedly selfless pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, and about their human frailties and foibles, all of which are revealed mainly by her description of Hollier and Parlabane. Because Francis's manuscript pushes her closer to Hollier in their student-

professor relationship, she is able to provide first-hand information about him as representative of a type of professor who embodies some of Davies's ideas about the nature of university life. Her information that Hollier is one of few scholars who strives to find answers from "the Filth Therapy of the Middle Ages, and of ancient times, and of the East" makes it easier for readers to understand not only why he is interested in the scientific research by Professor Ozias Froats on human feces and in the Gypsy "*Bomari*", a secret method for reviving the quality of old string instruments, but also why he is so eager and anxious to get the Gryphius manuscript (82, 148-9).

Through Maria, Davies shows another side of Hollier. As a private man dealing with personal affairs, he is not always as rational and clear-minded as he is with his scholarly work. Again, Davies uses Francis's manuscript as a medium to reveal one of the common problems among scholars. He seems to suggest that a scholar's obsession with his research sometimes causes an imbalance between his public and private selves. This is implied in Maria's comment on Hollier's increasing obsession with the Gryphius manuscript and his deepening anger with his rival, Urquhart McVarish, whom Hollier believes stole the manuscript from Francis for his own use:

Now and then, in the talks I had with him about my work, he said something that was so illuminating that I was confirmed in my conviction that he was a great teacher, an inspirer, an opener of new paths. But his obsession with the Gryphius MSS and the things he said about them and about Urquhart McVarish seemed to come from another man; an obsessed, silly, vain man. (276)

Through Maria's point of view, Davies shows that Francis's manuscript acts like a catalyst bringing out some important aspects of Hollier's character. As a professor, he is ambitious and seriously devoted to his research. As a private man, however, he sometimes loses self-control in his passion and emotion (the sofa episode that Maria recalls again and again is one example). Davies seems to suggest that scholars like

Hollier need to balance the two parts of themselves and to recognize their frailties and failings.

Maria's description of her numerous conversations with Parlabane, in Hollier's office and in restaurants, provides readers with an unusual type of intellectual, paradoxically both brilliant in learning and evil in behaviour. Davies purposely uses Parlabane's self-revealed life story to exemplify a worse case of imbalance between the two kinds of knowledge (of scholarship and of oneself); in the end the imbalance results in his degradation. By having Parlabane retrieve the manuscript from McVarish in a criminal way, Davies succeeds not only in presenting the evil side of Parlabane, but also in highlighting the involvement of all these characters in the plot created by a single item of Francis's legacy. The effect intensifies this shadowy character's influence.

Darcourt makes it clear that he is directly involved in Francis's affairs, since he was appointed in Francis's will as one of the "executors" together with Hollier and McVarish (16). Davies contrives this opportunity so that Darcourt can report to readers not only the progress made in their dealings with Francis's massive collections of books, manuscripts and pictures, but also his other activities in the university. In this way, Darcourt's narrative provides a broader worldly view than Maria's of life in a university. This effect is achieved by the other roles that Darcourt is assigned to play, both academic and nonacademic, and by his wide experience. What makes Darcourt more suitable and qualified than Maria to enlighten readers about the university is that he is also the writer of *The New Aubrey*, a project inspired by Ellerman's suggestion on the same day Darcourt heard of Francis's death (13). Darcourt has since become "enthusiastic" about it and has decided to write *The New Aubrey* as "a proper university project" and as "a tribute" to his university (86, 87). At the same time, he has decided to "recapture" the "energy of [John Aubrey's] curiosity, his determination to find out whatever he could about people who interested him" (86). With this project in mind,

Darcourt consciously makes use of every opportunity to collect information for his writing, especially the opportunity provided by his involvement as one of Francis's executors. Through Darcourt's contacts with a variety of people, Davies enlarges readers' perception of the university and highlights this main subject.

Darcourt's curiosity leads him to look among his fellow professors for "the true eccentric, the man who stands apart from the fashionable scholarship of his day and who may be the begetter of notable scholarship in the future" (47). Working with Hollier and McVarish, he realizes that Francis Cornish gave him a "special opportunity" to study these two scholars, both of whom he has "cause to believe" are such eccentrics (47). They reveal themselves to him when each is invited to choose as a gift "something for themselves, provided it was not already named as a bequest" (160). Hollier is true to his obsession with the wisdom of the past by choosing Gesner's *Historia Animalium*. McVarish, a more "spectacular" eccentric, by choosing the bronze Venus because it reminds him of Maria, reveals that he is perversely obsessed with anything related to sex (47). Darcourt's description of McVarish's reactions to some pornographic pictures among Francis's collections further reveals his sexual perversity: "McVarish whooped and frisked about [the pictures] until I feared he might have an orgasm, right there amid the dust ... During that first week he insisted again and again on returning to that room ... to gloat over these things" (23). His observation of McVarish thus prepares readers for Parlabane's revelation of the fantasized sexual game McVarish played with him, adding more to Davies's presentation of some eccentricities in the academic community. Parlabane's explanation about the return of the Gryphius manuscript highlights both the consequence of Francis's legacy and McVarish's character. McVarish is not only a sexual pervert but also a liar and a thief. Through Francis Cornish and his Gryphius manuscript plot, Davies succeeds in uniting the two narratives in the first novel and in establishing a foundation for the trilogy structure.

The opening of *What's Bred in the Bone*, like that of *The Rebel Angels*, informs readers that a new event is unfolding. At the same time, the connection of this event with the Cornish legacy gives a sense of continuity. The money Francis left has led to the establishment of "the Cornish Foundation for Promotion of the Arts and Humane Scholarship", and its "first act" is to produce a biography of Francis (2, 7). Readers learn that Darcourt was commissioned by Arthur and Maria to undertake this project "nearly two years ago" (6). Moreover, the obituary about Francis, published in "the *London Times*", reminds readers of this recurrent but shadowy character from the previous novel (7). All these intertextual references create curiosity about Francis's character. Although the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone* is created for the purpose of shifting the focus from the university to biography and of introducing the supernatural beings into the narrative so that they can take over the task of relating Francis's life and offer from above an omniscient version of Francis's biography, the issues raised during the conversations, first among Arthur, Maria and Darcourt, and then between Maria and Darcourt, reflect Davies's own concerns about biography. Himself the subject of a biography, Davies transmutes his own reservations into a discussion of this specific subject among the three recurrent characters⁵. It is also worth recalling that biographies and autobiographies are recurrent and central concerns in the Deptford trilogy (Ramsay insists he sets the record right about himself and about Eisengrim), as noted earlier.

The problems that Darcourt encounters in his research on Francis invite readers to perceive several important issues involved in writing a biography of someone who is

⁵ Davies's letter to his friend Gordon Roper, written when he had just started working on *What's Bred in the Bone* (10 Jan. 1983), indicates his deep concern about the issue: "What [Judith] Grant is doing to me has brought sharply to my attention things I know have been influential in my life of which no record exists, or can possibly exist, and which I would not dream of telling her. If I am being biographed [*sic*], I might as well watch the process with an author's eye" (Trent 1:1).

already dead. One point is that a biographer, no matter how thorough his/her research, cannot discover everything about the subject. Darcourt's frustration with his own research implies just this: "I have been busy on this biography for eighteen months and I'm not getting anywhere.... I can't go on. I simply can't get enough facts" (4). Despite his eighteen months' research, and the "verifiable facts" he has got, he realizes that what he has discovered fails to add up to the man he knew (5). Davies also uses Darcourt's difficulty to call his readers' attention to the fact that some information may mislead or, even worse, damage the reputation of the subject of the biography. This issue is hinted at by Darcourt's own awareness: "But I can't get the facts I want for my book, and some of the things I have not quite uncovered would make a book which ... would cause a scandal" (7). His suspicions, arising from his search for facts in Europe, could indeed "cause a scandal" about Francis: for example, Francis might be a faker of Old Master paintings and he might have been a homosexual. The questions Darcourt himself raises during the conversation suggest that there are things that will remain concealed forever:

But what I want is what lies behind it. How did Francis get into such company? What was it in his character that disposed him to that part of the art world, instead of keeping his skirts clear like Berenson, or Clark? How did a rich amateur--which is what he was, to begin with--get mixed up with such shabby types? (12)

Clearly, he thinks that the answers to his questions are crucial for presenting the truth about Francis in the biography. However, readers come to realize that no one but Francis himself or his Daimon could give the kind of answers Darcourt is seeking.

The conversation between Darcourt and Maria raises one other important issue concerning biography. Maria's question, "But are the childhood years so important?" (14), and Darcourt's answer, "They are the matrix from which a life grows", stress the key role of childhood in the development of character:

Childhood! That's the key. Not the only key, but the first key to the mystery of a human creature. Who brought him up, and what were they and what did they believe that stamped the child so that those beliefs stuck in his mind long after he thought he had rejected them? Schools--schools, Maria.... Well--what were the schools of Blairlogie? Francis was never out of the place until he was fifteen. Those were the schools that marked him. (16-7)

What Darcourt wants to know about Francis is obviously essential for his biography. His explanation thus makes it possible for Davies to state his belief in the importance of childhood (a belief already demonstrated in the Deptford trilogy), and to emphasize the extreme difficulty for any biographer in discovering the full truth about another person's childhood.

Darcourt's attitude towards his own writing of Francis's biography and his criticisms of other biographers are suggestive of Davies's own concerns. Darcourt's determination to "speak truth", "to do a first-rate job" and to "write a really good book. Not just a trustworthy book but a book people will like to read", shows not only his own goals as a biographer, but Davies's probable view of the ideal goals of every biographer (11, 12, 17). The problems Darcourt identifies in realizing these goals indicate Davies's awareness of the general deficiencies in many examples of this genre. Darcourt's criticism about some "cheap writers" who write "with lots of spicy innuendo to make a trumpery book", and also about "the indecency of so many biographers" who simply "fake" facts, suggests that some biographies cannot be trusted at all (12, 17). The issues concerning biography raised and discussed in the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone* thus show that it is Francis Cornish as the subject of Darcourt's biography who gives Davies an opportunity to express his concern about and notion of biography in general. Moreover, Darcourt's criticism about faking in biography and his concern about whether Francis faked some Old Master drawings underlie a recurrent thematic

issue. This preoccupation is also hinted at in *The Rebel Angels* with the restoration of string instruments by Maria's mother Mamusia and her uncle Yerko, and is raised again in the main story by Francis who questions again and again whether the restoration of the old German pictures he and Saraceni were engaged in was faking (295, 302). This recurrent motif will be discussed in more detail in due course.

Although the subject matter the recurrent characters discuss in the frame story has no direct connection with that of the previous novel, the characters themselves suggest the link, and Francis makes the interconnections more tangible.

The beginning of *The Lyre of Orpheus* suggests that Davies uses Francis's legacy once again to call his readers' attention to the intertextual connections with the previous novel; readers are informed that the Cornish Foundation has ambitiously embarked upon a new project, which is bigger than Francis's biography and in which more people are involved. At the same time, readers realize that, like the Gryphius manuscript in *The Rebel Angels*, another of Francis's manuscripts is the cause of the event. This time it is an incomplete musical manuscript which Hulda Schnakenburg chooses as the basis of her Ph.D. thesis. Her task is to "flesh out and complete the manuscript notes" but "in a manner congruous with the operatic conventions of Hoffmann's day and for such an orchestra as he would have known" (6). The Foundation, taking a great risk, decides to use Francis's money to sponsor Hulda's project. Here, Davies uses Francis's legacy--his manuscript and money--to arouse the ambitions of both Hulda and the members of the Cornish Foundation. He also uses it to discuss new ideas pertaining to opera, and to readdress and emphasize certain coherent ideas of the whole trilogy, such as the importance of the past, the authenticity of an artistic creation and myth, either personal or historical. Within the framework created by Francis's legacy, Davies is able to suggest connections among all these various activities (completing, rehearsing and staging the opera, writing the libretto and the biography of Francis).

Like the complications caused by Francis's Gryphius manuscript in the life of several characters in *The Rebel Angels*, similar complications created by the Hoffmann manuscript become the main interest of *The Lyre of Orpheus*. Darcourt's reflections on what has happened since the Foundation embarked upon the opera project invite readers to see the direct consequence of Francis's legacy:

What a muddle of concerns had been set in action by Hulda Schnakenburg's apparently innocent desire to piece out some manuscript notes of music, in order that she might gain the doctorate in her studies that could lead to a place in the world of her art! Arthur's desire to escape his world of business and figure in the world of art as an intellectual and patron; Geraint Powell's opportunist scheme to launch himself as a director of opera on an imaginative level ... the uprooting of Maria, who was trying to balance her obligations as the wife of a very rich man, bound by the conventionalities of such a fate, against her inclination to become a scholar and get away from her Gypsy heritage; and of course that baby, still an unknown factor, though a living creature, who would never have come into being if Hulda, snooping through some musical manuscripts, had not come upon the skeleton of *Arthur of Britain, or The Magnanimous Cuckold*. (298-99)

His comment on the ambitions of Hulda, Arthur, Powell and Maria, and on the causes and the consequences of their ambition, stimulated by Francis's money and his manuscript, not only reminds readers that Francis's legacy is at the centre of the complicated situation, but also shows the complex fate that Francis's money and his manuscript have entailed on these characters, who enact in daily life the main roles seen in the opera, and whose actions become a parody of the Arthurian myth.

Although the main action of *The Lyre of Orpheus* concerns the completion and production of Hoffmann's opera, underlying it is something more profound and more complicated than the activities brought about by the opera project. Behind the

presentation of the bustling activities, Davies subtly conveys his notion that human history or experience is a great myth⁶. This is a recurrent subject which Ramsay tries to decipher through his saint-hunting, David Staunton tries to explore during his Jungian analysis, and Francis Cornish expresses symbolically in his painting, *The Marriage at Cana*. In this particular case, the myth presented in the opera of *Arthur of Britain, or The Magnanimous Cuckold* repeats itself and is embodied in the lives of Arthur, Maria and Powell⁷. Davies's view is voiced by Darcourt who uses the metaphor of wax and stamp to explain the relationship between myth and an individual's destiny: "It's been said since--well, at least since Ovid. He says somewhere--in the *Metamorphoses*, I think--that the great truths of life are the wax, and all we can do is to stamp it with different forms. But the wax is the same forever"

⁶ Davies expressed his views that myths are closely related to our daily life on several occasions. In "The Conscience of the Writer" (1968), for example, he states that "myth and fairy-tales are nothing less than the distilled truth about what we call 'real life'" (*One Half* 131). In the interview with Gordon Roper (1968), Davies says: "I very strongly believe, and not as a kind of fancy notion, that life has a strong mythic and fairy tale quality. And people don't recognize that they are living out myths or mythic patterns or archetypal situations" ("Conversations" 34). He further explains: "The thing about myths ... is that they seem to us to move naturally and inevitably, however strange and extraordinary they may seem. They're really the way things are. After all, we are human beings, and not creatures of infinite possibilities. And you do live much as other people have done in the past" ("Conversations" 35). His view is voiced by Dr. von Haller when she explains to David Staunton why he dreamed of the manticore that he had never "heard of": "It is because great myths are not invented stories but objectivizations of images and situations that lie very deep in the human spirit..." (*Manticore* 158).

⁷ Considering the fact that Davies has always regarded his novels as "romances, not as realistic tales at all" because "there is far more truth possible through romance than there is through a sort of gritting, realistic piece, of which we get a sickening amount nowadays", one is not surprised to perceive that the Arthurian legend is used as a mirror to the triangular relationship among these three characters (Seidner, 8). If we keep in mind Frye's notion of the connection between romance and myth, "Romance, the kernel of fable, begins an upward journey toward man's recovery of what he projects as a sacred myth" and "[t]he end of fable, as the total body of verbal imagination that man constructs, brings us back to the beginning of myth...", we are able to see how appropriate it is that this theme (myth and history) should be dealt with in a novel with a strong element of romance (*The Secular Scripture* 183, 184).

(146). He further explains, "And that's the truth that underlies all myth.... If we are true to the great myth, we can give it what form we choose. The myth--the wax--does not change" (146). To emphasize this concept, Davies makes Darcourt repeat the metaphor, but in a more comprehensible way: "History is never dead, because it keeps on repeating itself, though never in quite the same words or on quite the same scale.... The wax of human experience is always the same. It is we who put our own stamp on it" (171).

Davies then exemplifies this notion with three characters, Arthur Cornish, Maria and Powell. He uses the adultery of Arthur's wife with his best friend, committed under an illusion, to present a modern version of the Arthurian myth⁸. Powell, enchanted by Malory's Arthurian legend, particularly by the power of deception in it, put on Arthur Cornish's Arthurian dressing gown, went to Maria's room in the middle of the night and had sex with her (272). Maria, deceived by the Arthurian dressing gown Powell wore, mistook Powell for her husband, even though part of her was aware that it was not Arthur who was making love to her (250). The consequence of this act is that Maria became pregnant by Powell. Davies uses Darcourt's response to Maria's explanation about what has happened between her and Powell to bring the theme to the fore: "It's a story that roams back through the ages, and it's a story that doesn't grow old" (250). The parallel Darcourt sees in the relationship of Arthur Cornish, Maria and Powell and that of King Arthur, Guenevere and Lancelot further leads readers to see how the Arthurian myth is enacted by the three young people:

⁸ It is worth pointing out that Davies conflates two plots from the Arthurian legend, both involving adultery: Uther's adultery with the wife of his enemy, the duke of Cornwall, and Lancelot's with the wife of his feudal lord and best friend Arthur. Davies is thus suggesting, in a Jungian way, a parallel between the traditional story of Arthur's begetting by his mother's (unwitting) adultery with her enemy (disguised as the duke) and the traditional story of Arthur's betrayal by his wife with his ally and friend. Therefore, Davies's character Geraint Powell is parallel to both Uther and Lancelot, and Arthur Cornish to both the duke of Cornwall and King Arthur.

Can it be true, thought Darcourt, that I am sitting in this grand penthouse on a Sunday evening eating cold roasted chicken and salad with three figures from Arthurian legend? These people working out, in such terms as modernity dictates, the great myth of the betrayed king, the enchantress queen, and the brilliant adventurer?

Does the analogy hold? (307)

The similarities he perceives between these characters and the mythic figures who are their counterparts become answers to his own questions about the analogy, and, at the same time, invite readers to see the connection between the myth of human experience and the reality. Like King Arthur, Arthur Cornish (his first name is by no means a coincidence in this context) also attempts "to advance into an Elite of Achievement"; while King Arthur "tried to extend the reach of civilization by demanding that his knights ... should embrace the concept of chivalry ... [n]ot just power, but the intelligent, unselfish use of power to make a better world", Arthur Cornish "wants to be an intellectual, and to advance civilization by the use of his power, which is his money; or rather, the money of the late Francis Cornish.... Surely that is an attempt, and a very respectable attempt..." (307). The comparison makes the relevance of the myth of Arthur more comprehensible. Darcourt leads readers to see how Maria's situation resembles that of the mythic, or more accurately legendary, Queen Guenevere. Like Guenevere, whose adultery with Lancelot "brought great grief to King Arthur" (308), Maria, by her unfaithfulness, also causes great pain to her husband, as is revealed in his meeting with Darcourt (225-26). Like Guenevere, Maria is also "a discontented wife, an ambitious woman of a fretful spirit" (308). In Powell's case, Darcourt thinks that "it was Powell's fate that had drawn him to seduce his friend's wife ... with the complicity of Maria's fate, just as Lancelot had seduced, or been seduced by, Guenevere" (309). The analogy Darcourt draws thus enables readers

to see not only where the myth lies in the lives of these three characters, but also how people actually live in the mythic patterns that are reflected in human history.

Davies's presentation of the three characters' attitude towards the adultery emphasizes the importance for individuals of seeing their own myths, of understanding and accepting them so that they can be dealt with in a rational way, and harmony can be achieved, both within the self and among others who are involved. Darcourt's advice to Arthur, when the latter was upset by his knowledge of his wife's infidelity and his best friend's betrayal, makes the point: "[Y]ou take a hint from this opera that has brought about the whole thing, and decide to be the Magnanimous Cuckold. And what that may lead to, God only knows, but in the tale of Great Arthur of Britain it has led to something that has fed the best of mankind for centuries" (232). Maria's explanation to Darcourt indicates that she, like Darcourt, understands and accepts the myth she reincarnates. Agreeing with Powell's argument, Maria admits to Darcourt: "We are deceived because we will our own deception. It is somehow necessary to us. It is an aspect of fate" (248). As her conversation with Darcourt shows, it is Maria's understanding of her myth that makes her refuse to accept from Darcourt's account of her infidelity to Arthur and to decide to have Powell's child (244-50). Powell's account to Darcourt of his remorse and attempted suicide shows that he is more understanding and more ready to accept the working of the Arthurian myth than either Darcourt or Maria, because he associates the cause of his downfall directly with the Arthurian myth:

It's this opera. Sim. You can't pretend a thing like that is just a stage-piece. It's a huge influence.... This opera has brought me back to Malory, and Maria--whom I truly love as a friend and not as a man desires a woman--is none the less a real Malory-woman. So free, so direct, so simple, and yet so great in spirit and so enchanting. (271)

Powell's realization of his brief experience of "an Arthurian madness--the madness of Lancelot" further shows that he recognizes the parallel between his role in the triangle relationship and that of Lancelot in the relationship among the three legendary figures (268). His readiness to accept the mythic pattern, however unrealistic it may seem, makes it much easier for readers to see the profound influence of the Arthurian myth on the human psyche, and how, indeed, the essence of the myth, or the "wax", remains the same, while individual people live out different versions of the same myth.

The ending of *The Lyre of Orpheus* brings the entire issue into full focus. In the conversation with Arthur and Maria at the very end of the novel, Darcourt's question to Arthur is a clear indication of this: "Haven't you seen your own myth in all that opera business? Your myth, and Maria's myth, and Powell's myth? A fine myth, and as an observer I must say you all carried it through with style" (471). What Darcourt says here serves as a brief summary of the whole point Davies tries to make with the opera, that is, recognition, understanding and acceptance of myths in daily life is necessary both for the characters and for readers. The importance of such acceptance is voiced by Dr. Dahl-Soot: "[M]ythic truth sets you free to do a lot of very practical things" (202-3). It is worth pointing out that this view of myth contributes significantly to the formation of the thematic trilogy structure. Davies establishes the motif in *The Rebel Angels*, where it appears as a metaphor in Parlabane's words, that "a tree has a bottom as well as a top, a root as well as a crown" (197). His explanation of the metaphor refers back to the human myths from which our lives derive:

What is the root of man? All sorts of things that nourish his visible part, but the deepest root of all, the tap-root, is that child he once was.... That is the root which goes deepest because it is reaching downward toward the ancestors.... But the root does not go back to those old stuffed shirts with white wigs whose portraits people display so proudly, but to our unseen

depths--which means the messy stuff of life from which the real creation and achievement takes its nourishment. (198)

However, unlike Maria, Arthur, Darcourt and Francis, Parlabane understands the subject but can only apply it to himself in theory or in a philosophical way, as his self-analysis indicates:

I have told you that the crown of my tree is a scepticism that leaves nothing untouched but the wonder of God. But I have a root, to nourish my crown, and as usual the root is the contrary of the crown--the crown upside down, in the dark instead of in the light, working toward the depths instead of straining upward to the heights. (203)

His murder of McVarish and his own suicide indicate that he fails to look at his own myth in a realistic rather than theoretical manner, and to accept his failures in his life experience. Like the older Boy Staunton, Parlabane chooses suicide as the only way of expressing his awareness of his myth in reality. By contrast, the myth motif illustrated by Francis's *The Marriage at Cana*, already mentioned, and by Maria, Arthur and Powell, produces a subtle thematic unifying effect for the three novels. The discussion of Davies's use of the recurrent character Francis Cornish in these novels should make it clear that by creating the actions set in motion by his legacy Davies is able to deal with different subjects in the individual novels. At the same time, he is able to treat certain themes from different perspectives so that a strong thematic unity can be perceived by his readers when they read the three as a group.

It can be argued that the intertextual links, which Darcourt himself creates, play an equally important role in constituting the Cornish trilogy. The fact that some people refer to these novels as the "Darcourt trilogy" suggests that his frequent reappearances in all the three novels are prominent enough to make readers respond to the continuity and unity he creates. Readers' responses to Darcourt's role in forming the third trilogy suggest Davies's inventiveness in using character to establish a trilogy structure with

variations. One notices easily that Darcourt is the only character who is involved in most of the important activities taking place in each Cornish novel. He is also the one who voices the ideas that represent Davies's own, as we know them from his essays, interviews and other novels, such as those about the university and scholarship in *The Rebel Angels*, about biography in the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone* and about myth in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. Viewed in this way, Darcourt carries a weight almost equal to Francis's in the trilogy and he is repeatedly involved in matters related to Francis and his legacy, and in all the plots that Francis's legacy generates. Looking at the role of Darcourt and of Francis side by side, one feels that Darcourt is most often in the foreground of the narrative, while Francis is in the background. As a result, Darcourt reinforces the unity of character which is strong enough to sustain the trilogy form in the absence of unity of setting.

A brief summary of Darcourt's activities in the three novels will illustrate his unifying force and clarify my point. In *The Rebel Angels*, he is one of the executors of Francis's will. In *What's Bred in the Bone*, he is one of the directors of the newly established Cornish Foundation, and also becomes Francis's biographer. In *The Lyre of Orpheus*, a new role is added when he becomes the librettist of the opera, *Arthur of Britain*, sponsored by the Cornish Foundation. In addition, he is the only figure in the trilogy who has either direct contact with, or at least the opportunity to observe, every character present in each novel, except in the main story of *What's Bred in the Bone*. Working as one of the executors in *The Rebel Angels*, he deals and interacts with the other executors, Hollier, McVarish and Arthur. As Maria's professor, he has a brief crush on her and wisely chooses to be her Platonic lover, who frequently reminds readers of his pure love for her in the subsequent novels, particularly in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. As an old acquaintance, the renegade monk Parlabane turns to Darcourt for financial help and for advice about his novel in process. Darcourt's curiosity drives him to visit Ozias Froats, a science professor, and to investigate Froats's unusual

research on human feces. The Christmas dinner at Maria's home gives him an opportunity to meet the two Gypsies, Maria's mother Mamusia and her uncle Yerko. As the vice-warden at Ploughwright College⁹, he meets every guest present at the Guest Nights. In this capacity, he has the opportunity to become Fifth Business figure who knows the secrets of some of the other characters (Hollier's confession about his sexual misconduct towards Maria, Parlabane's own judgment about his novel *Be Not Another* and his murder of McVarish and his own suicide). His contacts with, or observation of, all the other characters in this novel make it possible for Davies to provide a fuller description of the activities in the university from Darcourt's point of view, and also to weave the two parallel narratives into one strand.

In the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone*, the conversation Darcourt has with Arthur and Maria shows that he has become a very close friend to the Cornishes. Later in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, this close relationship leads, when the Cornishes' marriage is in crisis, both parties to confide their troubled feelings to him and to seek his advice. The discussion among them about the problems Darcourt encounters in his writing of Francis's biography enables Davies to use the frame story to serve as prelude to the main one. Darcourt is even mentioned occasionally by the two supernatural beings in the main story as a reminder of the links between the frame story and the main one. In *The Lyre of Orpheus*, he is present on almost all occasions and works busily and selflessly with people who are involved with the Cornish Foundation and its opera project. He not only deals with the members of the Foundation, but also with anyone who is directly or indirectly associated with the opera. Acting like a secretary of the Foundation, he has to explain the opera project to the Dean of the Graduate Faculty of Music. He also participates in the interview with Hulda's parents. Chosen

⁹ Ploughwright College, a fictional name for Massey College, has an anecdotal reference to its founder, Vincent Massey, whose family business (the Massey-Harris Company) used to manufacture ploughs and tractors.

to write the libretto, he works with Hulda, as well as with her supervisor, Dr. Dahl-Soot. His presence during rehearsals allows him to observe the working of another group of characters: the stage manager, the designer and the singers. His visits to Mamusia and Yerko, first with Maria and then with Dr. Dahl-Soot, for the purpose of getting Mamusia's "slant" on the opera business, make the two outsiders share the same concern about the opera (37). The "claque" that Mamusia and Yerko organize becomes their contribution to the success of the première of the opera (442, 445). Darcourt's own adventure in search of facts for his book about Francis Cornish leads him to meet yet another group of characters: Princess Amalie, and her husband Prince Max, and Mr Thresher, a friend, art dealer and expert. He also deals with or meets other people, like Charlotte Cornish, the Cranes, Wally Crottel (who claims to be Parlabane's illegitimate son) and his lawyer. Darcourt is also the one who entertains the critics of the opera. By associating Darcourt with other characters and by presenting him in almost all scenes in the third novel, Davies creates a novel dealing with groups of characters rather than with one central character. The fact that Darcourt's involvement in the opera project and his contacts with others are intertwined with his adventure in search of information about Francis's past and about Francis's painting, *The Marriage at Cana*, indicates that Davies is using Darcourt to hold all the events together and to create harmony in the whole story.

In examining Davies's use of Darcourt, one other important role emerges. To a great extent, Darcourt becomes Davies's mouthpiece. Davies uses him to emphasize some thematic issues in the individual novels, and to synthesize them in order to create a thematic unity. In *The Rebel Angels*, as a professor and one of the narrators, Darcourt becomes a seemingly fitting and reliable first-person narrator, because of his own experience in and his first-hand knowledge of the educational institution. The evidence emerges clearly from Darcourt's elaborate meditation on the most important driving forces of a university: :

Energy and curiosity are the lifeblood of universities; the desire to find out, to uncover, to dig deeper, to puzzle out obscurities, is the spirit of the university, and it is a channelling of that unrelenting curiosity that holds mankind together. As for energy, only those who have never tried it for a week or two can suppose that the pursuit of knowledge does not demand a strength and determination, a resolve not to be beaten, that is a special kind of energy, and those who lack it or have it only in small store will never be scholars or teachers, because real teaching demands energy as well. To instruct calls for energy, and to remain almost silent, but watchful and helpful, while students instruct themselves, calls for even greater energy. To see someone fall (which will teach him not to fall again) when a word from you would keep him on his feet but ignorant of an important danger, is one of the tasks of the teacher that calls for special energy, because holding in is more demanding than crying out. (86-7)

Given the fact that Davies, while writing *The Rebel Angels*, was himself a professor and Master of Massey College, one cannot help but feel that this long passage is an indirect expression of his understanding of and insight into the university, and a kind of tribute to the university he worked for. In a similar way as we have seen, making Darcourt the biographer of Francis Cornish in *What's Bred in the Bone* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*, Davies is able to express his own concern about biography in general, at a time when he was himself the subject.

Creating Darcourt's role as a librettist in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, Davies is able to reiterate and discuss directly one of the underlying thematic issues of the previous two novels. The issue concerns the judgement of an artistic creation--whether a creation is original and authentic or otherwise. In each of the Cornish novels, this issue is raised in one way or another. Davies seems to suggest that any artistic creation is, in fact, a "pastiche", and that the fine line is often blurred between an original work and a fake.

It is the motivation of an artist that helps to determine the status of any work in question. The conversation between Darcourt and Dr. Dahl-Soot about a work of art reveals both the issue and Davies's view, that a "pastiche", to some degree, is inevitable. Dr. Dahl-Soot's remark implies this view: "All artists are children of Hermes, the Arch-Crook" (237). Darcourt's explanation to Dr. Dahl-Soot about his method of creating the libretto for the opera of *Arthur of Britain* exemplifies how a "pastiche" is created:

If you had to prepare this libretto, who would you rob? A poet, of course, but not a very well-known poet. And he would have to be a poet contemporaneous with Hoffmann, and a fellow-spirit, or the work would ring false. And amid the work of that poet you would have to interpose a lot of stuff in the same spirit, because nobody wrote a libretto about King Arthur that is lying around, waiting for such an occasion as this. And the result would be [pastiche]. (238)

His later confession about what he himself does with the unspecified poet's work reiterates Davies's implied views: "I am exploiting a poet to produce this stuff. The arias, and the long bits, are all his--with some tinkering, I admit. Only the *recitativo* passages are mine..." (303). The debate between Darcourt and Dr. Dahl-Soot about whether he is a "crook" by "stealing something" from the unspecified poet leads readers to see the issue more clearly (238, 237). Darcourt's challenge to her accusation, "What would you say if I accused you of stealing musical ideas?" brings readers' attention directly to the problem of making a judgement on such a creation as his libretto. Dr. Dahl-Soot's reason for denying such an accusation indirectly states the principle on which a judgement should be made:

I would deny it indignantly ... many musicians borrow and adapt ideas, and usually they come out so that only a very subtle critic can see what has happened. Because what one borrows goes through one's own creative

stomach and comes out something quite different. You know the old story about Handel? Somebody accused him of stealing an idea from another composer and he shrugged and said, "Yes, but what did he do with it?"

What is theft and what is influence, or homage? (237)

Dr. Dahl-Soot's response suggests that it is a common practice in music for artists to borrow either from each other, or from the past, ideas, materials or techniques, and combine them with their own creation, but the principle of such creations is that what is borrowed has to undergo a transformation and to be turned into something "quite different" and something of the artist's own. Through Dr. Dahl-Soot, Davies implies that this practice has also been carried on in literature: "Some critic said there were not more than nine plots in all literature" (240)¹⁰.

The on-going debate Darcourt has with Arthur and other characters about whether or not Francis's painting *The Marriage at Cana* is a fake raises the same issue, this time with respect to a painting. Darcourt's argument that Francis's painting is not a fake, despite the fact that he "painted it in a sixteen-century style, on an authentic old triptych, with paints that defied any of the tests that had been used", suggests that, in painting, the artist's moral conscience is the primary consideration when there is some

¹⁰ In the interview with H. J. Kirchloff, Davies explicitly states: "That's one of things I try to say in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. There aren't a lot of plots in life. But there are infinite variations on each one" (C1). This is certainly true of his own novels. The preparation and the première of *The Tempest* in *Tempest-Tost* anticipates the similar process of the opera in *The Lyre of Orpheus*; the Bridgetower trust which sends Monica to Europe to be trained into an opera singer foreshadows the Cornish Foundation which sponsors the completion and the performance of Hoffmann's unfinished opera. Such examples are too numerous to be all mentioned here. I have pointed out various echoes from the previous novels, particularly from the Deptford trilogy in discussing these Cornish books. Davies's view of "pastiche", in fact, coincides with Bakhtin's theory of "intertextuality", a term introduced by Julia Kristeva in her presentation of Bakhtin. Bakhtin holds that no utterance or discourse is devoid of the intertextual dimension, because "every extra-artistic prose discourse—in any of its forms, quotidian, rhetorical, scholarly—cannot fail to be oriented toward the 'already uttered,' the 'already known,' the 'common opinion' and so forth" (*The Dialogic Imagination* 297).

doubt about the authenticity of the artist's work (465). Darcourt's argument best illustrates the principle used for judging such a controversial artistic creation:

It was never intended to deceive. There is not a scrap of evidence that Francis Cornish ever attempted to sell it, or show it, or gain any sort of worldly advantage from it. It was a picture of wholly personal importance, in which he was setting down and balancing off the most significant elements in his own life, and doing it in the only way he knew, which was by painting. By organizing what he wanted to look at in the form and style that was most personal to him. That is not faking¹¹. (347)

His argument is built upon the examination of Francis's intention in imitating the Old Master style. The opinion he expresses here also indicates that he has refined his earlier position at the beginning of *What's Bred in the Bone*, in which he suspects that Francis "faked some Old Master drawings" (3).

In a similar way, Darcourt's brief comment on Mamusia's and Yerko's creative work of fabricating string-instruments is used by Davies to indicate what real imposture is. Darcourt's reference to Mamusia as "a fiddle-faker who gloried in her witty impostures" (*Orpheus* 31) recalls Maria's knowledge of her mother's and her uncle's "romantic deceptions" in fabricating "fine ambiguous instruments" and then selling them as authentic (*Rebel* 207). His reference not only makes a direct connection between the third novel and the first, concerning the moral conscience of Mamusia and

¹¹ Davies's view that the moral conscience of an artist is a primary measure of the authenticity of the artist's work is also implied in Saraceni's remark in *What's Bred in the Bone* about Francis's fear that *The Marriage at Cana* would be identified as a fake: "You did not paint to deceive, you signed nobody else's name to it, and you did not yourself send it to England" (326). Saraceni's remark invites readers to compare Francis's painting with the real faker Jean-Paul Letztpfennig who "offered [his] picture for sale as a genuine van Eyck, and with it ... offered a tale about its origins" which proved to be "untrue" (353). It thus becomes clear that Davies uses Darcourt to repeat and elaborate the idea about the principles for judging the authenticity of an artistic creation, such as Darcourt's libretto and Francis's painting.

Yerko, but also becomes part of Davies's scheme to highlight this delicate thematic issue. Darcourt makes it clear that, because Mamusia and Yerko lack moral conscience and intentionally deceive people, their works, no matter how creative, are impostures:

[They] palm[ed] off instruments that were made of scraps and bits of ruined fiddles, pieced out with portions of [their own] manufacture, on people who accepted them as genuine ancient instruments. Madame Laoutaro and Yerko were not crooks in the ordinary way; it was simply that they had no moral sense at all in such matters. (*Orpheus* 31)

Although his remark about Mamusia and Yerko's faking is very brief, the issue raised here illustrates how carefully Davies contrives to make thematic connections, even with such minor characters and with seemingly unimportant details. Looking at Darcourt's role in the three novels as a whole, one realizes that Davies juxtaposes Darcourt's function to Francis's. If Francis's legacy works like an undercurrent running through the three novels, creating various plots, Darcourt's activity and participation in all of the events are the result of the working of this undercurrent. Combining Darcourt's function with Francis's, Davies creates very powerful unities of character, plot, ideas, and creative modes (writing a novel, a biography, a libretto, completing an unfinished opera, painting, and fabricating/reviving string-instruments).

It is important to add here that, because Davies wrote the Cornish novels as "novels of ideas", the recurrent motif of the quest for something belonging to the past becomes a means for an aging Davies to express his concern about the survival of art and the human knowledge of the past. Reading the Cornish trilogy, one receives a clear message, that where knowledge, wisdom, artistic mode, music or myth are concerned, the past is important to the present. Presenting in each Cornish novel a different kind of quest for something belonging to the past, he repeatedly stresses his view of the importance of the past, and, at the same time, unites the three novels on this basis. Davies's belief that the past, whether personal or historical, is very

important to the present, is expressed explicitly in one of his early essays. In "A New Vision of the Present" in the section "From the Well of the Past" in *A Voice from the Attic* (1960), he explains why the past is important to the present: "If it is true, as the Jungians maintain, that much of the past, remoter even than our personal memory, lives on in the psyche, do we not do well to explore and cultivate this sense of the past, with a view to enrich our understanding of the present?" (146). He then asserts that "wisdom is no more likely to be confined to the remote, the primordial past, than to the age in which we live. To sup the water of even a century past may bring a change of vision which is greatly revealing" (146). His belief is restated years later (1986): "I feel the past is full of very rich treasures, which tend to get covered over with the passage of time, and that we must dig them up again" (Van Biema, 88). His notion of the past is transformed into a dominant thematic element, which is emphasized in different ways and to different degrees in each novel. In *The Rebel Angels*, the subject of the past is raised directly by Maria and Hollier who echo Davies's view. Maria's description of Hollier's notion, that the past and the present are closely connected, resembles Davies's argument based on the Jungian viewpoint: "[Hollier] says that people don't by any means all live in what we call the present; the psychic structure of modern man lurches and yaws over a span of at least ten thousand years" (32). Hollier's own explanation to Mamusia about why he wants to know "more Gypsy riddles" reiterates Davies's assertion expressed in his essay, but in a more straightforward way: "You must tell me more Gypsy riddles, Madame ... for me such things are like a wonderful long look into the far past. And everything that can be recovered from the past throws light on our time, and guides us toward the future" (221). Using Hollier's belief in the importance of the past and his reason for trying to know the past, Davies establishes this dominant quest motif for the whole trilogy.

The quest motif is developed through Davies's presentation of Hollier and "Ozy" Froats, as both scholars pursue their quest for something directly relating to the past.

Hollier focuses his research on "the Filth Therapy of the Middle Ages, and of ancient times, and of the East", and Froats "hopes to discover something that is of worth" from human excrement (82)¹². Through Hollier's awareness of their "kinship", Davies makes readers see that both scholars have the same goal of searching for the knowledge of the past (82). The comparison Hollier makes between their search and the ancient alchemists' "long quest for the Stone"¹³ guides readers further to see not only the quest theme, but also the nature of these two professors' related quests: "It's astonishingly similar to alchemy in basic principle--the recognition of what is of worth in that which is scorned by the unseeing. The alchemist's long quest for the Stone, and the biblical stone which the builders refused becoming the headstone of the corner" (82). Hollier's association of Froats's study with the quest of an alchemist not only emphasizes the significance of Froats's research, but also reiterates the importance of the influence of past ideas on today's thinking: "But I am inclined to think of Ozy as a latter-day alchemist; he seeks the all-conquering Stone of the Philosophers exactly where they said it must be sought, in the commonest, most neglected, most despised" (157). The quest for the knowledge of the past is further suggested in the presentation of Maria.

¹² Filth and excrement are also recurrent images in the Deptford trilogy, though the context in which they occur is very different from the present one. Ramsay, during World War I, "lived in trenches, in dung-coloured mud into which dung and every filthiness had been trodden", and experienced a symbolic death in this condition (*Fifth* 76-77). David Staunton underwent enemas when he was a boy, for the sake of internal cleanness; during his cave crawling with Liesl, he had to endure the stench and filthiness of his own excrement, and felt reborn afterwards. Paul Dempster lived in the most appallingly filthy condition (descended into hell, in his own words) after being raped and abducted by Willard, the experience leading to his eventual transformation (or rebirth) into Magnus Eisengrim. The same imagery used in the Cornish trilogy evidently has a new dimension.

¹³ The stone is another recurring image from the Deptford trilogy, in which the stone wrapped in the snowball by Boy Staunton causes a series of consequences. In an indirect way, Ramsay, David and Eisengrim's quest for self-understanding and for freedom from the burden of the past is initiated by Boy's stone. But in their case, they all want to get rid of the stone, the symbol of their past.

Her narrative shows that she is making a quest similar to that of Hollier and Froats. Focusing her Ph. D. thesis on Rabelais who "is one of the great misunderstood figures of the Reformation" and who "dug with the same foot as ... Erasmus"(10), Maria is seen plunging herself into the study of "Renaissance European Culture" and "New Testament Greek" in order to "get some notion of what Rabelais's intellectual background was" (35, 30). Her ambition revealed to Parlabane in one of their conversations indicates that she is conscious of her pursuit for something lost in the past: "I might just manage to push away a cloud or two from what people are like now, by discovering what they've been at some time past" (29). Maria's motto taken from Paracelsus, an alchemist of Rabelais's time, "The striving for wisdom is the second paradise of the world", expresses not only her belief that learning from ancient wise men will lead one to "the second paradise", but Davies's view about the significance of knowing the past as well.

This quest motif, established in *The Rebel Angels*, takes on a different meaning in the main story of *What's Bred in the Bone*. It emerges when Francis is seen pursuing his vocation as an artist and searching for a personal artistic mode. To draw readers' attention to the recurring quest motif, Davies uses Francis's Daimon, Maimas, to state this theme by pointing out that it is necessary for Francis to go through a spiritual and psychological quest "for the unity of the masculine and the feminine in himself", or, in other words, a quest for "the Mystical Marriage" of his own soul (124). Francis's quest to understand his Anima, in Jungian terms, as David Staunton's in *The Manticore*, is initiated by his longing to know the physical features of the female sex when he approached puberty, as Maimas's comment on Francis's penchant for dressing up and posing as a girl indicates: "This was the beginning of the search for the Mystical Marriage, which is one of the great quests, and as usual the quest was longer and more important than the eventual discovery" (124). Davies also uses Maimas's comment to suggest that Francis's psychological quest is essential not only to the development of

his artistic temperament, but also to the search for his artistic mode. As Maimas points out, without "the Mystical Marriage" of his soul, "he would have been useless in his future life as an artist and as a man who understood art" (124). In presenting Francis's quest for his vocation as an artist and for his artistic mode, Davies also suggests that the quest could not have been accomplished without the guidance and help of Saraceni, his father in art. It is Saraceni who makes Francis understand that, because the art of the Renaissance combines the exploration of the outer world with that of the inner world, Old Master paintings become expressions of the artists' "inner vision" (227, 333). Such inner visions cannot be trapped by time and possess both mythical and religious significance (259-62). It is also Saraceni who urges Francis, "[Y]ou must find your inner vision", "[f]ind your legend. Find your personal myth"¹⁴ (227). He also warns Francis, "[D]on't try to fake the modern manner if it isn't right for you" (227). Clearly, Saraceni's explanation and advice to Francis play a crucial part in speeding up Francis's quest and in guiding him towards the Old Master style. Maimas reveals that, despite the fact that Francis "wished to follow" Old Masters, and spent "countless hours copying master paintings, analysing master techniques", he "did not trust these whispers from the past until he met Tancred Saraceni" (220). Saraceni's direct question to Francis, "But why go to such pain to work in the Renaissance style?"

¹⁴ Saraceni's advice to Francis sounds like an echo of Liesl's to Ramsay in *Fifth Business*. Liesl points out to Ramsay that "every man has a devil.... You must get to know your personal devil. You must even get to know his father, the Old Devil.... Why don't you shake hands with your devil..." (266). Both Saraceni and Liesl's notion of personal legend, or personal myth, or personal devil reflects Davies's own preoccupation with it. In the interview with Tom Harpur, Davies states: "I think it is absolutely necessary for a man to recognize and accept the evil in himself. If he does that he is in a position to make the evil work in a different way; the charges of psychological energy involved can be re-directed in not necessary good paths, but at least in understood paths" (137). He then explains what he means by evil or devil: "The devil seems to me to be not the commonplace symbol of evil but the symbol of unconsciousness, of unknowing, of acting without knowing of what you're intending to do.... The devil is the unexamined side of life; it's unexamined but it's certainly not powerless" (137-38).

indicates that Saraceni makes Francis think hard about his choice of the Old Master style (237). Francis's answer shows that he has found what he has been searching for: "[The Renaissance style] seems to me to be capable of saying so much that can't be said--or I should say that can't be said by me--in a contemporary manner" (238). His spiritual journey is not completed until he paints *The Marriage at Cana*.

Davies then uses Francis's painting to show that Francis's quest is, in essence, another example of searching for something belonging to the past. In Francis's case, it is the manner as well as the matter of the Old Masters that gives him the artistic inspiration and the power to create *The Marriage at Cana*. Saraceni's comment on the painting makes it clear that Francis finally finds his inner vision, his legend and his personal myth, just like the Old Masters before him: "You have found a reality that is not part of the chronological present. Your here and now are not of our time. You seem not to be trapped, as most of us are, in the psychological world of today" (361). Saraceni's interpretation of the two dominant figures occupying the central panel of the triptych suggests that Francis also fulfills his psychological quest for the "Mystical Marriage" of his own soul: "Look at it; the Bride and Groom look like brother and sister because they are the male and female elements of a single soul, which it was one of the higher aims of alchemy to unite" (395). Associating the union of the male and the female elements of a single soul with alchemy and identifying Francis as the "Alchemical Master" (347), Saraceni makes readers see in a symbolic way that Francis, like an alchemist, transforms the "base elements" of his personal experience and his understanding of his own life into something mythical and religious that becomes timeless, allegorical and impersonal (398). Davies also uses Saraceni's explanation of alchemy to emphasize directly the view of the importance of the past to the present. In this case, it is the "great technical skill" of the Old Masters that Francis has acquired that enables him to succeed in both his quests, psychological and artistic, and to achieve such an alchemical effect in *The Marriage at Cana*, as Saraceni points out:

You may not have a scholar's understanding of alchemy, but plainly you have lived alchemy; transformation of base elements and some sort of union of important elements has worked alchemically in your life. But you do know painting as a great technical skill, and such skills arouse splendid things in their possessors. (398)

Saraceni's association of Francis's painting with alchemy and of Francis with alchemists not only suggests the nature of both Francis's quests, but also establishes a direct link with the alchemical search in which both Hollier and Froats are engaged. Therefore, despite the diversity of the three characters' pursuits, the alchemical nature of their quests produces an interrelated effect, reinforcing the thematic unity of the first two novels.

In *The Lyre of Orpheus*, Davies conveys the same motif with two kinds of adventures in which two groups of characters try to recapture something that relates to the past. In addition, he makes the motif more easily recognizable than it is in the previous two novels. It seems that Davies deliberately tries to direct his readers' attention to this recurrent motif in the opening of the third novel. His dramatic description of the meeting of the members of the Cornish Foundation makes readers see clearly that two kinds of adventures are set into motion. The Foundation has decided to "stir the pot and raise some hell" by supporting Hulda's ambition to complete Hoffmann's unfinished opera, and by taking the risk of putting the opera on stage according to nineteenth-century operatic conventions (4). The decision itself indicates that the Foundation is going to take a risk with the money left by Francis. To Hulda and the group of artists, the completion and production of the opera are also an adventure, as both tasks require them to learn and recapture the operatic spirit of Hoffmann's day and to follow the operatic conventions of more than a century ago (Hoffmann died in 1822). In other words, they have to search for the operatic conventions that have been gradually abandoned over a century and a half. In the same

fashion, Davies makes his readers realize almost immediately that the members of the Foundation are trying to recapture the spirit of the Arthurian legend. Maria's mental comparison of Arthur Cornish with King Arthur during the meeting provides readers with the first explicit reference to the motif: "[S]he knew that Arthur could be a great bully when he wanted something, and he wanted passionately to be a vaunting, imaginative, daring patron. He is a bully just as I suppose King Arthur was a bully when he insisted to the Knights of the Round Table that he was no more than the first among equals..." (5). Powell's conscious association of Arthur Cornish with King Arthur and of the opera project with Arthurian quest casts more light on the quest motif. Powell insists that "Arthur's determination that the Foundation should take an unusual and intuitive path was truly Arthurian" (15).

The quest motif finally comes to the fore when the characters themselves realize that what they are doing with Hoffmann's opera involves a quest. Arthur Cornish reminds the members of the Foundation that the opera project "is an adventure" (203). Maria's notion of their adventure brings Davies's quest motif to full light: "A Quest. A real Arthurian Quest.... A Quest in search of something lost in the past" (203). In this way, the motif that underlies the previous two novels becomes fully visible in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. The connection Hollier perceives earlier between the opera project and alchemy invites readers to perceive not only the nature of their quest, but also the relatedness of their quest to those made by the characters, such as Hollier, Froats and Francis, in the previous two novels. Hollier points out to the other members that "if you get that [opera] out of an authentic nineteenth-century stage piece, you'll be alchemists indeed" (148). The analogy makes it clear that what the Foundation and the artists are doing is by nature similar to both the research of Hollier and Froats, and to Francis's painting. Dr. Dahl-Soot's words, "We are alchemists", not only support Hollier's view, but also further secure the conceptual interconnections among the three Cornish novels, created by the association of each quest with alchemy.

The discussion of the recurrent quest motif shows that, although the quest that the characters in each novel undertake has a different goal, the essence of each quest is analogous to that of alchemy in which a transformation occurs. Davies's presentation of the quest motif in each novel emphasizes that it is the characters' understanding of the past--the knowledge or wisdom of the past; an artistic mode of the past; the operative conventions and myth of the past--that reveals the effect of the alchemical transmutation. Thus, by using the motif of alchemy, he manages to unite the three novels thematically. At the same time, his view that the past is very important to the present is reiterated and emphasized with several examples. It is worth pointing out here that Davies is perhaps the only modern novelist to take alchemy seriously (it is likely Jung's work on alchemy that influences him). He expresses this view not only in his novels, but in his public speeches. He tells his audience at the University of Calgary (1975):

You see, for the whole of my adult life I have been interested in alchemy.... Alchemists are usually remembered today as men who attempted to turn base metal into gold. That was not all they did, as I shall shortly explain, but that is all that is remembered now, except by a few people like myself. The scandalous thing is not that they failed, but that sometimes they succeeded. I have done it myself. I am, as you know, an author, and for forty years I have transmuted stories I write, which several Canadian critics regard as very base metal indeed, into a modest but welcome quantity of gold. (*One Half* 55-56)

In cases like this one, Davies's preoccupation with certain ideas contributes ideologically to the thematic unity.

It is worth mentioning here that the dominant quest theme embedded in the three Cornish novels has given rise to some different reactions among Davies's commentators. Linda Lamont-Stewart, representing those who disagree with Davies's

views, argues that "although Davies' stories have a contemporary setting, they seem far less interested in 'our' time than in earlier eras--the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the early Romantic Period. The truth that Davies' fictions seek to reveal is not ... to be found within the 'modern' world" (280). Because "throughout the Cornish Trilogy all things modern are disparaged and dismissed", she regards his theme as being "anti-modernist" and "dangerous" (280, 281, 290). D. O. Spettigue, who understands the controversy about Davies's approach to the past in the first two Cornish novels, argues:

Davies has not scorned modern subjects, but through psychology, hagiography, religion, astrology, alchemy, a lifelong study of the principles of metaphor in art and cultures generally, he has found his own manner and myth, and if to adhere to these seems to some to be old hat, so be it--the hat will wear that much better in the long run. (134)

The critics' responses to Davies's attitude towards the past and the present suggest that the unifying thematic effect is strong and distinctive enough to make them react in different ways. Lamont-Stewart's criticism, though unjust, recognizes that the recurrent quest motif for something belonging to the past involves and expresses Davies's own views on these matters.

Examining the structure of the Cornish trilogy, we also notice that the three Cornish novels form a very different relationship among themselves from that found either in the Salterton or the Deptford novels. In the Salterton trilogy, the three novels follow one another in chronological order, and form a linear and continuous pattern. In addition, each novel is a part of Davies's presentation of the theme of the belated cultural situation in Salterton. Only when the three novels are read as a whole can the reader get a clear sense of this general theme. In the Deptford trilogy, Davies uses the first novel as a matrix from which the later two novels derive. Thus, the later two novels each form an intertwining relationship with the first one. In this pattern, the two interwoven novels, *Fifth Business* and *The Manticore*, and *Fifth Business* and

World of Wonders, depend on each other for information, clarification and illumination. However, in the Cornish trilogy, the two patterns, particularly the triptych one, require a special reading order of these novels. In this pattern, the main story of *What's Bred in the Bone* becomes the center of the information about Francis Cornish, information which throws new light on readers' understanding of this character, indirectly presented in *The Rebel Angels*, and also of other characters, who had personal contact with him. With the knowledge of *What's Bred in the Bone*, readers can see more clearly in *The Lyre of Orpheus* not only what Darcourt misses in his biography of Francis Cornish, but also what a biographer can do in such an undertaking. Unlike the relationships between the individual novels in Davies's other patterns, the middle novel in the Cornish trilogy is the key for readers' better understanding of the first and the last novels, because it is independent of the other two, and chronologically it is anterior to both *The Rebel Angels* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*.

Looking back at *The Rebel Angels* after reading *What's Bred in the Bone*, one notices that the information about Francis provided by Darcourt is scanty and inaccurate, and some of it needs further explanation. Darcourt's description of his relationship with Francis is one such example: "I had liked Cornish. We shared an enthusiasm for ancient music, and I had advised him about some purchases of manuscripts in that area.... He was an eccentric, and I think his sexual tastes were out of the common. He had some rum friends, one of whom was Urquhart McVarish" (*Rebel* 15). Here, Darcourt doesn't explain how he got to know Francis and formed opinions about his eccentricity and sexual preferences. Similarly, Darcourt never tells readers why the three professors were appointed as the executors. What is more, Darcourt himself obviously has problems in understanding why McVarish was chosen. His question: "But McVarish--why him?" is never answered (15). It seems that Davies is aware that he did not provide enough concrete information about Francis and that he

left most of the references to Francis unexplained in *The Rebel Angels*. Reading *What's Bred in the Bone*, particularly the part describing Francis's life in Toronto, following his return from England after World War II, one feels that Davies deliberately creates this part as an explanation as well as clarification of his indirect presentation of Francis in the previous book. The most obvious evidence is found in Daimon Maimas's description of Francis's relationship with the three professors and why they are selected as the executors:

Extensive and curious knowledge of European life during the few centuries that most appealed to him established a kinship between Francis and Professor Clement Hollier, who sought historical truths in what many historians chose to overlook. Professor the Reverend Simon Darcourt (the splendour of his title amused Francis) became a great friend because he and Francis were fellow enthusiasts for rare books, manuscripts, old calligraphy, caricatures, and a ragbag of half a dozen other things about which he was not always deeply informed, but that came within the net of his swelling collections. It was Darcourt who revived Francis's sleeping love of music--better music than had ever been known to Mary-Ben [his great aunt]--and they were often seen at concerts together. (428)

This specific explanation about the friendship between Francis and the two professors invites readers to see that their friendship is established on their shared interest in some specific subjects, mainly intellectual and artistic, and, at the same time, that Darcourt evidently is not aware that Francis cherished his friendship greatly, regarding him as "a great friend". This passage also throws light on readers' perception of Darcourt's character as presented both in *The Rebel Angels* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*. Although he is a theology professor and a priest, he obviously has a variety of interests in things outside his academic field. Throughout the trilogy, he is seen engaged in several creative activities: his private project of writing *The New Aubrey*, his writing of

Francis's biography and the libretto for *Arthur of Britain*. The reference to Darcourt thus helps readers not only to see his potential capabilities, but also to understand where his creative energy comes from. This information thus tightens the relationship between Francis and the other characters, particularly Darcourt, as well as the link between the first two novels

Francis's relationship with McVarish is also clarified by Maimas's narrative, which offers more intertextual references that help the readers' understanding of McVarish's character. Darcourt thinks in his narrative that McVarish is one of Francis's "rum" friends (*Rebel* 15). Maimas makes it plain that Francis was attracted to McVarish for a very different reason: "[McVarish's] appeal to Francis ... was that in [McVarish] there was something of the Mercurial spirit he felt so strongly in himself, though he kept it hidden, whereas McVarish let it rip, and boasted, and lied and cheated, with a vigour Francis found amusing and refreshing" (*What's* 429). What Francis found "amusing and refreshing" in McVarish obviously annoys and irritates Darcourt. But Francis's perception of McVarish reinforces Darcourt's view about McVarish's character. In explaining Francis's relationship with McVarish, Maimas also reveals McVarish's "Mercurial trait of thievery" which adds more to Davies's presentation of McVarish's dishonesty, deceitfulness and selfishness in the previous novel (*What's* 429). The explanations provided in *What's Bred in the Bone* concerning Francis and other characters presented in *The Rebel Angels* amplify the interconnections between the main story of *What's Bred in the Bone* and the previous novel.

The relationship between the main story of *What's Bred in the Bone* and *The Lyre of Orpheus* is also an unusual one. In the former, Davies allows his readers to get to know beforehand everything Darcourt wants for his biography of Francis Cornish in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. In this way, Davies creates interest not so much in the subject on which Darcourt is writing as in the biographer himself. It seems that Davies wants to deal with the issue under discussion in the frame story of *What's Bred in the Bone*: how

far a biographer's research can go and how much truth the biographer can dig out about the subject. With the knowledge of who and what Francis Cornish is, readers are made to watch with amazement how determined Darcourt is to get as much information as he can about Francis, whether by proper means or by criminal deeds. However, despite his endeavour and seriousness about the factual basis of his work, there are many things he simply can never find out. For instance, even though he had a meeting with Charlotte Cornish, he never realizes that she is not Francis's daughter at all, let alone that Francis was cuckolded by his wife Ismay. Darcourt's efforts to identify the figures in Francis's painting *The Marriage at Cana* and to interpret the painting's meaning can be taken as Davies's way of conveying his own notion that "biography has to rely heavily on some evidence but a great deal on speculation" (*Lyre* 107). Remembering Francis's life from *What's Bred in the Bone*, readers can tell that Darcourt, based on the information collected through his research, makes some correct speculations about Francis's painting. He is right, for example, about Francis's motivation for painting the picture:

That picture is the most important of his conclusions. It represents what he thought most important in his life, the influences, the cross-currents, the tapestry.... In that picture Francis was making up his soul, as surely as if he had been some reflective hermit, or cloistered monk. What you see in the picture is the whole matter of Francis, as he saw it himself. (*Lyre* 339)

His interpretation is very close to Maimas's description in *What's Bred in the Bone* that the painting is "the myth of Francis Cornish" (359). It also echoes what Saraceni says to Francis about the painting: "You have made up your soul in that picture" (398). Although Darcourt is also right about the portraits in the painting, "All the portraits in *The Marriage* are judgements on people Francis knew, and they are the judgements of a man who had been rudely booted out of a youthful romanticism into a finely

compassionate realism", he can never identify all of them, nor discover the influences these people had on Francis (*Lyre* 340).

One of the most important figures that Darcourt can never identify is Ruth Nibsmith because there is "[n]o sign of her anywhere, either as a photograph or as a sketch" (*What's* 320). Darcourt will never know that, to Francis, Ruth was "the greatest comfort he had ever known", because she offered him true love, and that Ruth's sudden death in one of the bombings in London during World War II had caused him to "shut the door on love", living a bachelor life ever since (*What's* 367). Nor can Darcourt discover that Ruth is the person who worked out Francis's horoscope and helped Francis to understand the influences of several important figures in his life, such as his "Dream Girl" (*What's* 306), two "false" mothers (one his great aunt and the other his grandfather's cook, Victoria), the coachman Zadok who is "like a father" to him (*What's* 309, 310), and Francis Cornish the First who is very "influential" and has given him "a great compassion for miserable and dispossessed" (*What's* 309). The fact that they all appear in Francis's painting indicates that Ruth's interpretation is transmuted into his understanding of the influences that these people, including Ruth, had on him. Another important figure that Darcourt can only regard as a mystery is Francis the First. Although he is convinced, based on the sketches and the "marble marker" in the Catholic cemetery in Blairlogie (*Lyre* 325), that Francis the First is Francis's brother, Darcourt will never find out that the Looner exerted the most powerful influence on Francis, particularly on his "artistic sensibility" (*What's* 147). The decision Darcourt, Arthur and Maria made that "the sketches which identified the grotesque angel as Francis the First should not be shown" in the Francis Cornish Memorial Gallery indicates that Francis the First will remain a mystery forever (*Lyre* 468).

This examination of the triptych pattern shows that, to understand the character of Francis Cornish, it would be ideal if readers read the second book first. Similarly, to

fully appreciate Davies's presentation of Darcourt as a biographer in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, readers need to have the knowledge of Francis's story. The dependence of the first and the third novels on the second, the middle one, resembles the triptych format used by Francis in his painting, *The Marriage at Cana*¹⁵. Standing in the middle and manipulating the information needed for the first and the third novels, the main story about Francis acts as if it were the central panel. The best reading of the three novels would be like looking at the triptych from the middle outwards. In this way, the unity achieved through this pattern strengthens the unity created by the linear one. The double unifying effect produced by the two patterns indicates that Davies makes some special efforts to sustain as well as reinforce the unity of the trilogy when, in contrast either to the Salterton or the Deptford trilogy, the setting can no longer contribute anything to the trilogy structure.

Because of Davies's increasing emphasis on thematic issues, the Cornish trilogy has drawn mixed responses from his critics. Ian Munro, in his essay on the Cornish trilogy, concisely points to the central argument among the critics:

There is a tendency among critics of Canadian literature to consider Robertson Davies as a sort of literary anachronism, a traditionalist determined to preserve a late nineteenth century perspective in his writing.... This opinion of Davies is widespread; he is seen primarily as a popular old-fashioned writer, cranking out entertaining yet conventional

¹⁵ Ian Munro, in his essay, "The Liar of Orpheus: Framing Devices and Narrative Structure in Robertson Davies' Cornish Trilogy", also mentions the triptych format which the three novels resemble. He argues that "the trilogy is mimetic of 'The Marriage at Cana'; it is structured as a triptych, with the side panels (*The Rebel Angels* and *The Lyre of Orpheus*) acting as supplements to the focal panel (*What's Bred in the Bone*), thus allowing a reading from the middle outwards, examining the formal relationships among the three novels" (258). The problem with Munro's argument is that he gives no explanation about why he thinks the trilogy "is structured as a triptych", nor evidence to show how Davies designs these novels to form a triptych.

novels which display not only a Victorian morality but also a Victorian transparency of literary motive. (257-8)

Linda Lamont-Stewart represents one such critic when she asserts explicitly that the Cornish books "are not modernist or postmodernist novels; they are traditional and conservative in form" (282). George Woodcock's essay, "A Cycle Completed: The Nine Novels of Robertson Davies" (1990), expresses a similar view, but he phrases the argument in a slightly different way, asserting that Davies "has been far less experimental than other writers we do not regard as particularly avant gardist" and "he has little formal originality, little of the power of imaginative transfiguration" (36, 37). After examining the Cornish novels, he develops this argument further: "In denying the importance of originality and contemporaneity [Davies] is in fact guarding his own territory, for he is neither a strikingly original novelist, nor, in the sense of representing any avant garde, a notably contemporary writer" (48).

Countering these criticisms, Munro argues: "When one analyzes the techniques and devices through which Davies constructs his work, a different writer emerges, one whose writing thrives on the ambivalence and incompleteness which characterize the postmodern text" (258). His analysis of the Cornish trilogy is a detailed demonstration of his point. Keith's view also justifies Davies's achievement as reflected particularly in the Cornish trilogy. He states: "If I am right in seeing the argument of the Cornish trilogy as a veiled discussion of the novelist's own artistic questionings, then, however 'old-fashioned' he may be in one respect, he is in the vanguard of post-modernism in his emphasis on self-conscious artifice, in providing a text which is a reflective/reflexive mirror of its own intellectual principles" (145). Therefore, he thinks that Davies's work ultimately "eludes all categories, whether they originate at the traditional or the 'advanced' ends of the literary-critical spectrum" (145). Given the fact that Davies has been very interested in Rabelais, and that his novels, especially the Cornish ones, are replete with rich Rabelaisian carnivalesque scenes, imagery, and

spirit¹⁶, one would agree that he is in vanguard of exploring and reviving the lost tradition of one of the "great creators of European literature" (Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* 1). It is when writing in a Rabelaisian vein that Davies displays his creative strength and originality. Because "Rabelais is the least popular, the least understood and appreciated", according to Bakhtin, Davies and his novels may be regarded as ahead of his time.

This detailed examination of Davies's way of constructing the Cornish trilogy should make clear that it is in writing three interrelated novels that he demonstrates his self-conscious experimentation both with novelistic elements and techniques, and his inventiveness in creating a larger narrative. Moreover, the various ideas raised, discussed, and emphasized in these novels not only give the trilogy a new intellectual and ideological vein, but also represent Davies's attempt to make a personal statement about his own creative principle. His descriptions of his characters' creative activities--Parlabane's writing of *Be Not Another* (the title itself is a statement), Francis's painting of his own myth in the Old Master style, Hulda's completion of Hoffmann's opera in the nineteenth-century tradition, and Darcourt's writing of the biography--all serve to reflect his own sources of imagination, creative impulse and originality, and justify his own artistry. By using the trilogy form to deal with and emphasize issues that represent timeless human concerns, Davies succeeds in letting his readers see his own vision and his understanding of the continuities between today's world and the past. From this perspective, his novels defy such labels as "old-fashioned" or "anti-

¹⁶ In an interview with Diana Cooper-Clark (1986), Davies states, "A favourite writer of mine is François Rabelais" (103). Judith Grant provides some information about Davies's affinity with Rabelais in *Man of Myth* 535-37. Barbara Godard's essay "World of Wonders: Robertson Davies' Carnival" is a detailed study of Davies's novels from *Tempest-Tost* to *The Rebel Angels* based on Bakhtin's view expressed in *Rabelais and His World*.

modern"¹⁷. Like his artist character, Francis Cornish, he too finds his artistic expression in a tradition "that is not part of the chronological present" and is not "trapped" in the psychological world of today (*What's* 361).

¹⁷ Davies has been very firm in dealing with the criticism of him for being "old-fashioned". He tells his friend Gordon Roper that "[critics] get so cross because I will not play by their rules..." (2 Sep. 1986, Trent 1:1). He tells Diana Cooper-Clark in the interview: "Sometimes I get crabby when people say I'm an old-fashioned novelist. I say 'old-fashioned, to hell. Look at [Gabriel García] Márquez.' He writes in the nineteenth-century vein and he's as fresh as tomorrow" (113).

Conclusion

Robertson Davies is remarkable as a trilogy writer not just because his entire fictional work consists of sequences, but also because in each trilogy he contrives a different structure to integrate three novels into a group. This constant experiment with different kinds of trilogy structure is his unique contribution to this subgenre. The differences in structure among his three completed trilogies show that he takes advantage of the flexibility and openness of this form and uses it innovatively. Read in sequence, the three completed trilogies also show the evolution of his ability to construct different larger narrative structures. Because the Salterton novels were written during the transition in his career from journalist and playwright to novelist, this trilogy represents his first tentative engagement with both the novel form and the sequence structure. Inexperienced in writing a novel at that time, he was more concerned with his success in fabricating a single story and with readers' response to the plot in the individual novels than with their reaction to the interconnections between these novels. Therefore it is understandable that he creates each plot independent of the others and depends mainly on the recurrent characters, setting, and his comic and dramatic style to establish a conservative linear structure with a relatively simple temporal order. Reading the three as a group, readers accumulate information about the events taking place in the same static socio-cultural environment and grasp the overall narrative effect by perceiving the thematic meanings the recurrent characters embody.

The three Deptford novels mark a breakthrough in Davies creative skill both as a fiction writer and as a trilogy novelist. He creates an unusual trilogy pattern, built upon one complex snowball plot, to present the inner life of the recurrent characters. By using the first novel as the matrix of the later two, he establishes an inseparable

relationship between the first and the second and between the first and the third, the relationship similar to the one between Ramsay and David Staunton, and between Ramsay and Eisengrim. Realizing that he could not use all the material in *Fifth Business*, and that he had more to say about Boy Staunton and Paul Dempster/Magnus Eisengrim, Davies contrives various ways of maintaining his readers' curiosity and anticipation. The pleasure of reading these novels comes from our participation in solving the puzzle of Boy's death, in recognizing narrative gaps and in reconstructing connections between the recurrent characters' activities. It also comes from our perceiving, from different perspectives, the profound consequences and influences of the snowball incident on the characters. The two patterns in the Cornish trilogy lead us to see Davies's developing skill in working out the larger structure, and in manipulating the readers' reading experience. Creating the second novel as the source of information about the shadowy recurrent character, Francis Cornish, Davies is more at ease playing with the openness of the trilogy form, experimenting with narrative temporal order, and expressing more openly, through the characters, his concerns and ideas, particularly about artistic and intellectual issues. The variety and complexity of the trilogy structures represented by the Deptford and the Cornish trilogies not only call attention to his development as a trilogy writer, but also suggest that he is more formally inventive and innovative than most sequence novelists.

Looking at the three completed and the incomplete trilogies as a whole, we now understand why Davies has been very fond of the trilogy form and has used it constantly. The form allows him to reiterate and emphasize certain themes and to achieve intertextual narrative effects. The three Salterton novels make it possible for him to transform his concern with problems in Canadian culture into a thematic presentation of Salterton (its people and its socio-cultural environment) as a collective character, which invites readers to look at the effect of the belated, provincial Canadian

cultural tradition in the 1950's. Using the Deptford novels, he manages, with Jungian theory, to deal with the human psyche through Ramsay, David and Eisengrim. They jointly exemplify and emphasize the necessity for an individual to recognize the archetypes in his personal life and to achieve self-understanding, or individuation in Jungian terms. The Cornish novels enable Davies to offer his readers a "feast" of ideas. Though different in subjects (learning, scholarship, painting, opera and myth, for example), the ideas all point to the pervasiveness of the past within the present, and to the roots of our cultural heritage, traced back to the Renaissance or the Middle Ages. The three novels together emphasize the importance of recognizing and understanding the influences from the past on today's life and on an individual's enlightenment. The two novels in the incomplete trilogy, *Murder and Walking Spirits* and *The Cunning Man*, show Davies turning his focus to history: the family history of the Gilmartins, the history of Toronto and the personal history of the narrator, Jonathan Hullah. The repetition of this subject suggests that he intended to use more than one novel to develop a new emphasis, as he did in the previous trilogies.

The Deptford, the Cornish and the incomplete trilogies show that the form enables Davies to experiment with narrative elements and techniques on a flexible larger fictional canvas. The Deptford novels reveal his experimentation particularly with the first-person narrative. The variation of the technique, from Ramsay's single first-person narrative to David Staunton's, accompanied by the third-person (Dr. von Haller) narrative, and to the multiple first-person narratives (Ingestree and Liesl's within Eisengrim's, which is within Ramsay's), not only allows readers to see the recurrent characters from different viewpoints, but also represents his artistic imagination and skill in sustaining readers' interest in the three narrators' interrelated personal stories. In the Cornish novels, Davies varies his ways of using both the first-person and the third-person narrative modes. The "Chinese box" effect of the first-

person narrative in *World of Wonders* is replaced by a parallel form in *The Rebel Angels*, so that the two narratives provide readers with a broad impression of university life. Rather than relating Francis's life with a conventional third-person narrator in *What's Bred in the Bone*, he uses two supernatural beings to accomplish the task, whose narrative serves as a mirror to show the limitations of a biographer and to reveal the incompleteness of man-made biographies, such as the one written by Darcourt in the subsequent novel. The incorporation of Hoffmann's narrative in *The Lyre of Orpheus* reveals that Davies has varied the function of the subtext. In *World of Wonders*, Eisengrim's "subtext" is the main content of the novel, while Hoffmann's, placed at the end of each chapter (except the last) in a separate and italicized section, serves as a fictional footnote for readers to learn about the composer, and to understand why the other characters make such a fuss about his unfinished opera. Hoffmann's comments on the characters involved in his opera and on their activities highlight certain issues raised in the main text. In addition, Davies uses Hoffmann's narrative to increase the atmosphere of the romance of the third novel, in which illusions and the myth of the Arthurian legend are mingled with reality, and the opera has a magic power to evoke the dead composer's spirit from the Limbo. Using a walking spirit/ghost as the narrator of *Murder and Walking Spirits*, Davies continues his experiment with first-person narrative. Such a narrator enables him to tell a family history of several generations in a fascinating way. The variations in his uses of the first-person and the third-person narrative technique reveal his continuous experiment with this specific element to create unusual narrative effects.

Considering his development as a trilogy novelist, one perceives that, although each trilogy represents a new direction and dimension in his fiction writing, Davies seems to find thematic inspirations from the ideas already dealt with in the previous novels. To some extent, each trilogy prepares for the change in direction and

dimension in the subsequent trilogy. For instance, the story of Monica Gall's transformation in *A Mixture of Frailties* anticipates his psychological presentation of Ramsay, David and Eisengrim in the Deptford trilogy. Ramsay's autobiographical account of his life in *Fifth Business* is parodied by Parlabane's autobiographical novel, *Be Not Another*, in *The Rebel Angels*. The faked autobiography/biography of Eisengrim written by Ramsay, described in the Deptford novels, is counterposed by Darcourt's effort to write the life of Francis Cornish. The themes of sexual repression and of the middle age crisis, suggested in his presentation of Hector Mackilwraith in *Tempest-Tost*, become the salient recurrent issues both in the Deptford and the Cornish trilogies. Ramsay, David and Eisengrim exemplify different versions of the problem and different ways of dealing with it. With Darcourt, Hollier and Parlabane (all in their middle forties), Davies presents three different results. Darcourt realizes that he is infatuated with Maria and understands what he wants from her; this understanding leads him to love her still, but in a Platonic fashion. Hollier is seen still blind to his emotional imbalance in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, and Parlabane's suicide suggests that he refuses to face his own problems and finds his solution in death. The journey motif, established in *A Mixture of Frailties* and enacted by Monica, becomes a key unifying thematic element of the subsequent trilogies. In the Deptford novels, each narrator undergoes, both physically and psychologically, a journey similar to Monica's. The physical one brings the three narrators together, creating a unity of character. The psychological journey is represented by each narrator's understanding of his inner self. In the Cornish novels, Davies uses the journey motif again, but for an ideological purpose. His characters' pursuit of knowledge of the past, whether scholarship, painting or operatic conventions, suggests timeless and continuing human activities, conscious or unconscious. Many echoes from the previous novels reverberate in the two novels of the incomplete trilogy. For instance, Hullah attended Colborne College

with his two lifelong friends, Brocky Gilmartine and Charlie Iredale, the college that both Boy and David Staunton attended and where Ramsay taught as a history teacher for forty-five years. The mention of Ramsay in *The Cunning Man* further indicates Davies's tendency to reuse ideas or characters in his later novels. Iredale's obsession with the idea that Father Hobbes is a saint recalls Ramsay's effort to confirm that Mary Dempster is a fool saint. The reappearance of these issues (and many more) from trilogy to trilogy leads us to see the coherence in Davies's fiction writing and his development into an impressive novelist of ideas.

In writing novels in sequence, Davies, like other sequence writers, is faced with one of the technical problems that the sequence form itself generates, that is, how to keep the individual novels self-sufficient and independent of others, while the interconnections bind all the novels together. His three completed trilogies show that the more tightly the three novels are interrelated, the less independent the individual novels become. Because each Salterton novel centres upon one self-contained plot and one central character, who has nothing to do with the other plots, they are better balanced than the Deptford and the Cornish novels. The tighter, intertwining relationship between *Fifth Business* and *The Manticore*, and between *Fifth Business* and *World of Wonders* makes both the second and the third novels less independent than the Salterton ones. Each of the later Deptford novels relies on the first for information, clarification and illumination. For instance, Eisengrim's identification of his mother as "the woman [Boy Staunton] did not know" in *The Manticore* (259) cannot be fully understood without a familiarity with the first novel. Similarly, it will remain a puzzle why she causes so much trouble to her family and is described in the town as a "whore", if readers read *World of Wonders* as an independent novel. Readers will have a similar problem with the individual Cornish novels because both *The Rebel Angels* and *The Lyre of Orpheus* depend on the main story of *What's Bred in the Bone* for

explanations. No one can fully understand why Francis Cornish has such a massive collection of books, manuscripts and paintings without reading *What's Bred in the Bone*; reading *The Lyre of Orpheus* alone, one will never find out why Francis the First is deformed, nor realize the significance of Francis's painting the *Marriage at Cana*, and the influences that all the figures in the painting had on his life. Because he intentionally creates the Deptford and the Cornish novels as "linked", rather than as sequels, Davies works out interconnections that are complex enough to invite readers to read his "linked" novels as a group. The pleasure that the three novels in each trilogy offer to readers' reading experience and the curiosity that the intertextual interests and effects provoke in readers are precisely what a trilogy novelist like Davies desires.

Appendices

(a). Letter to Elisabeth Sifton (no date):

A progress report: I have finished *What's Bred in the Bone*, except for one more pernickety revision ... have it early in 1985.... It follows *The Rebel Angels* and though it is complete in itself, it has to do a few tricks to clue in characters that move in both books. I sincerely hope that there will be a third book on the same theme, and that is hinted at in WBB. This bothers my agent, Perry Knowlton, for he says people don't like trilogies, and they are hard to sell to the movies. I have evidence that at least quite a few people do like trilogies.... I see Perry's point, but I can't help it: **my books come in threes, and though not really trilogies or series (*What Katy Did in the Bear Cave*, *What Katy Did at College*, etc.) they are linked by characters and a point of view. But they are tedious about chronology: *What's Bred in Bone* leaps backward in time from *The Rebel Angels* and the third book (which I think of calling *The Magnanimous Cuckold*) moves forward in time. If I planned them this would not happen, but I don't: they just occur.** (The National Archives of Canada, "Robertson Davies", Manuscript Group 30 D 362, Vol. 52, File 32, abbreviated as NA 52:32. Sources from the National Archives will hereafter be given in abbreviated form, followed first by the volume then by the file number. The highlighted part is almost the same as the passage in the interview.)

(b). Reviews of *Leaven of Malice*:

In her review, Joan Walker writes: "A collection of endearing characters, several of whom made their first appearance in *Tempest-Tost*, are used in the amiable intricacies of a Canadian small-town plot" (*The Globe and Mail*, 2 Oct. 1954: 35). The *TLS*'s review is both more informative and complimentary: "In *Tempest-Tost* Mr. Robertson Davies showed that he possessed a delightful gift of dry humour, a sharp eye

for oddity of character that never slipped into caricature, and the ability to make as slight and insubstantial a subject as an amateur performance of *The Tempest* reflect a much wider range of human knowledge. In *Leaven of Malice* he does the same again, with almost the same cast of characters and with much the same success" (11 March 1955: 145). J. B. M. (the full name is not given) joins the praise: "In this second 'full dress' novel by Mr. Davies, he takes us back to the Canadian city of Salterton.... Several of the principal characters will be familiar to those who have read Mr. Davies' previous novel.... It is a delight to meet them again..." (*Cornwall Standard-Freeholder*, 2 Oct. 1954: 10).

(c). Davies's sketches of the two main recurrent characters for the second Salterton novel in his "Works in Progress" notebook:

PEARL VAMBRACE as in T. T. but is now a qualified librarian and in Waverley Lib.--she is shy than before & has daydreams in which she imagines herself the singer in gramophone records & the heroine in films, yet hates this in herself & is sure it destroys her critical faculty--"lacks the courage of her neurosis" & seeks to conform to other people's standards of what she shd be (chiefly her father's)....

Solomon Bridgetower--now a lecturer in English at Waverley--cd. have had a better job but cd. not leave his mother--on the way to becoming a drunk but not because he has the disposition to be an alcoholic but because he feels he ought to have a vice of some sort--exuberance of youth restrained growing sour within him.... (14, 15, NA 27:7)

(d). Davies's outline for "FICTION NUMBER FOUR" in his "Works in Progress":

Name: Thomas Poel--1879-1957

born: 1879

a Buttons or gong-boy at 14--1893

a footman at 18--1897

a Valet at 28--1907

Great War service--1914-18

demobbed & out of service--1918-21

a butler at 44--1921

retires at 70--1949

Writes bk: dies at 78--1957

bk written for grandson, who arranges to have it published:

grandson 21 in 1961: born in 1940: Poel's son, a solicitor, born 1907, therefore 33 when son born (69, NA 27:7)

(e). The original passages from "Kingston: A Mature Charm", used in *Tempest-Tost* (11):

It is possible to become very sentimental about cities, and among Canadian cities Kingston, like Quebec and Halifax, affords unusual opportunities for gush. People who are only able to see its surface, or who have not chosen to look beneath its surface, may be excused for gushing, for Kingston has an abundant superficial charm. But the real character of the city is well beneath the surface, and beyond the power of gush to disclose.

....

The people who do not know Kingston repeat a number of half-truths about it. They call it dreamy and old-world; they say that it is at anchor in the stream of time. They say that it is still regretful for those years between 1841 and 1844 when it was the capital of United Canada. They say that it is the place where Anglican clergymen go when they die. They say that it reminds them of Cranford, and the Barseshire novels of Trollope, and they say that Jane Austen would have rejoice in some of its inhabitants. But this is nonsense, as every real Kingstonian knows (1-2).

(f). Readers' observations of the similarities between Davies's novels and Trollope's:

In her review of *Leaven of Malice*, Elizabeth Bowen writes: "To call Robertson Davies ... the Canadian Anthony Trollope might be too much. Not, that is, too much praise; but it might be considered a misnomer. Mr. Davies's novel has, all the same, a convincing, solid, satisfying build-up, reminiscent of the Victorian master's" (*Tatler* 9 Mar. 1955: 464). Annis Duff told Davies on 26 Oct. 1955: "Maybe you won't be pleased to hear that [*Leaven of Malice*] reminds me of Trollope's better efforts. You use fewer words to say more, it's true, and there's a crispness to your style that he lacked. But it gives me the same feeling of having lived in a real place among thoroughly understood people. I doubt you'll run to a Salterton series like his Barchester books. It's a good thing to leave your readers wondering what happened next; that, to my mind, is one of the marks of a really good novel" (NA 78:21). Looking back at Davies's novels, Anthony Burgess concludes: "I have read all of Davies, and, with the informed reader's tendency to look for affinities, have seen in him something of an Anthony Trollope--that is to say, a novelist who wants to build a large world peopled by a host of three-dimensional characters. Trollope was a creator who let the same world spill over from one novel to another, and in the trilogies--the Salterton and the Deptford--Davies has succeeded in building a wholly Canadian world that puts out assured feelers to Europe" ("Nobel Sentiments", *Saturday Night*, Dec. 1987: 16).

(g). The outline for the "Proposed Play":

A Shakespeare play is to be performed by some amateurs, out-of-doors, in a large garden owned by a Senator? The background of the play is rehearsal and performance.

The mainplot: a member of the cast is a highschool teacher, a bachelor whose life has been a success by his standards; he is now 40-45. He becomes infatuated with a girl in the play who is now 18-20, just out of a private school and eager to try her attractions. She pays no attention to him, except for a word or two & a general flirtatiousness. As the production goes on his jealousy and torment grow until he finds

her kissing a young man. He then tries to kill himself, but his suicide is ineffective and is hushed up, though some people know about it.

Possible Cast

Hector M. The schoolteacher

Griselda F. The Girl-daughter of the house

F. The Producer (B)--professional, hired for work=is also confidant of teacher

F. The Teacher's Mother? or the Old Woman Who Makes up?

M. The Producer's Assistant (Cambridge, recorders, etc, designs)

M. The Young Man=soldier

F. President Someone to Be Teacher's Confidant(f?) also president of drama club

Fred F. A Child (f) of tech of house--v. High Church-?

Major Pye M. A Technical Man (L. Hughes)

M. A Gardener

SubPlot = that Asst. producer falls in love with producer, though much younger,& thinks wd. be perfect team--his knowledge & her "flair"- otherwise condemned to academic job as schlmstr. (1, NA 13:4)

The outline for the "PROJECTED NOVEL":

The Life, Pathetic Love, Tragical Death and Joyous Resurrection of Hector

Mackilwraith, B. A. Tempest-Tost

1 As You Like It

Theme: Twelfth Night is to be performed out-of-doors in a large garden owned by the father of Griselda & Fredegonde; he is a Senator. The director to be a former inhabitant of the town who is now a director in the U.S.

A member of the cast is Hector Mackilwraith, a high school teacher, formerly treasurer but eager to act. He becomes infatuated with Griselda. His jealousy & torment grow until he attempts suicide, but it is failure and is hushed up.

The assistant director falls in love with the director, who is more than ten years older than he—offers his academic training to be allied to her "flair"; otherwise he will probably end up as a schoolmaster. (7-8, NA 13:4)

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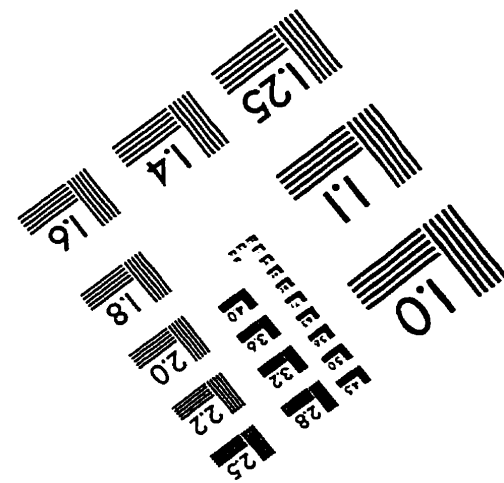
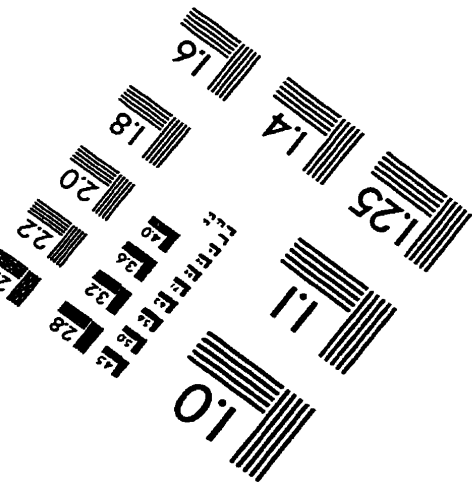
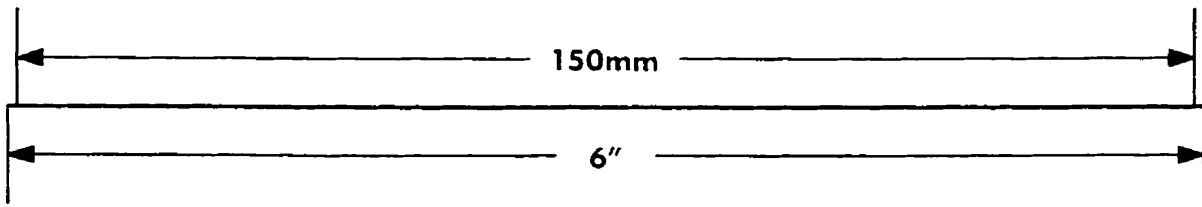
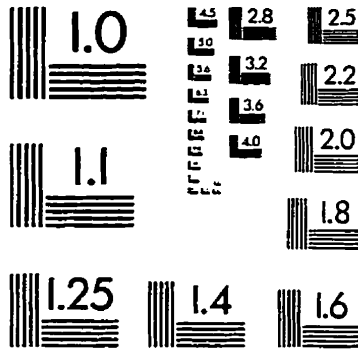
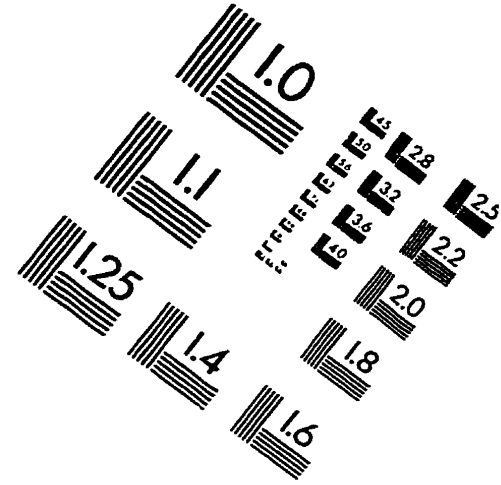
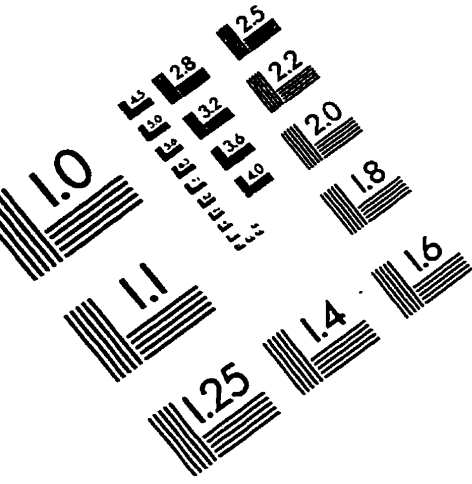
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