

Chapter I

Introduction

“THE MAIN CONCERN OF A WRITER remains that of somehow creating the individual on the printed page, of catching the tones and accents of human speech, of setting down the conflicts of people who are as real to him as himself.”

-Long Drums and Cannons

Canadian Literature is a literary yield that cropped up out of a convergence of the two key literary traditions in the English language – British and American. It soon declared its nationalism and developed an independent tradition. An oft-quoted statement made by Robert Kroetsch in his article “A Canadian Issue” comments: “Canadian literature evolved directly from Victorian into Post-modern” (1). The Canadian literature is closely associated with the fiction of women writers. The feminist Canadian literature embodies a historical change socially in the lives and minds of women. Canadian feminism is primarily based on a patriarchal white, middle-class family life style. The women writers constructed fiction with a method of providing individual and collective empowerment.

Canadian Literature raises from the societal attitudes held in common, as well as from historical experiences and explanation models. Their cultural plurality inside the country fundamentally shaped the way Canadians define their political character and dimensions of their literature. Canadian Literature written in Canada began as a persistence of what was being produced in Great Britain and had to describe itself against the American tradition. It urbanized in the United States and ultimately progressed as an idiosyncratic literature. Canadian literature has often had to compact

with such difference in outlook, not just because many Canadian authors were born in different places and brought foreigners' anticipations with them, but also because popular attitudes often disseminated brands of Canada. Similar to the literature of every nation Canadian Literature is the subjective of its socio-political perspectives. As a result, a variety of genres were produced by the Canadian writers who were greatly influenced both geologically and traditionally with the existing cultures of both French and British. So, Canadian literature has come across a number of impediments in its growth like other colonial literatures. It took decades of struggle to get determined attempts to come into visibility in reflecting Canadian experience.

The recent works in Canada prolong to deal with the issues of social diversity and cultural difference that inform a diverse and complex population. These works tackle the tensions and convergences of French and English of north and south of native settlers. Canadian writing persists on analysing space and history; the ways territories are inhabited, argued, quarrelled and finally remained as the works of people's lives.

The first writings about Canada are narratives by the explorers and missionaries who visited the country in the 17th and 18th centuries and left awesome accounts of the country's immensity. The first aboriginal literary activity in English Canada appeared in the maritime colony of Nova Scotia in 1830s. Since Canada is a colony, a victim, an oppressed minority or exploited or a place from which a profit is made not by the people who live there, but the major profit is made in the centre of the empire. So, there are ethnic problems that were recognized as the colonial mentality, and the common traits found in Canadian literature include, humour, mild-anti-Americanism, multi-culturalism self-disapproval, self-evaluation and search for self-identity.

The Canadian literature is written in more than one language dazzling provincially multi-cultural society as it was the pod of British seed planted in American soil. The ethnic and cultural diversity are reflected in the literature of Canada. The Canadian literature also includes a nature frontier life in Canadian perspective and the position of Canada in the world. The main fascination of Canadian literature is written in English for the two main streams in the language i.e., British and America. Ever since British North American Colonies came together in 1867 to form the confederation, Canadian cultural nationalists like D'Arcy McGee significantly fought for the need of national literature. Canada is broadly professed into two predictable divisions, integrating the French and the British cultures that exist side by side with ongoing foreign influences. Therefore, Canadian literature is formed from two great literatures making it purely Canadian. After the arrival of the British in Canada a new kind of literature evolved and with the entry of missionaries, travelogues, memories and diaries got published.

In the late nineteenth century, English-Canadian apprehensions about Canadian identity and the want for typically Canadian stories resulted in the formation of a body of literature that attempted to describe Canadian nationhood and identity by portraying Canadian scenes, people, and situations. When English Canadians of the late nineteenth century wrote fiction, they decided on creating a sense of Canadian nationality by unfolding characteristics of the Canadian experience that they supposed were unique. Their writings were about the effects of transformation of both the Canadian wilderness and the Canadian resolution development upon British immigrants. Thus, they decorated the centrality of the land by particularizing Canadian individuals, out of these immigrants.

Nationalists who wrote fiction also emphasized heritage, a combination of historical experience and racial background, as a factor in Canadian national identity. Writers frequently used the language of race to discuss ideas about national identity in the late nineteenth century. English-Canadian authors developed their ideas about Canadian identity when they started writing about Canadian characters and Canadian places. In writing about the construction of a sense of imagined community among English-Canadian nationalists in the late nineteenth century, it made sense to focus on novels that included Canadian characters or settings.

J. G. Bourinot, in his work “Our Intellectual Strength and Weakness” comments: “inspired by Canadian sentiment, scenery or aspiration.”(18) The works of writers who were born in Canada yet left the country prior to young adulthood and never returned either in person or in fiction were not considered. Works of this description perhaps belong properly to the English-language mainstream rather than the specifically Canadian portion of this culture. On the contrary, writers who spent a significant portion of their life in Canada, even if it was not the land of their birth or upbringing, were often important figures in the creation of English-Canadian national identity. As Carole Gerson in her work “*A Purer Taste: The Writing and Reading of Fiction in English in Nineteenth-Century Canada*”, delineates:

“very few English-Canadian authors were engaged in writing in order to shock or dismay their contemporaries regardless of religious affiliation or regional background, English-Canadian authors displayed a general consensus about the characteristics that made Canada and Canadians unique” (133).

The intensive study of the fictional literature of late-nineteenth century Canada gives a unique insight into the world view of middle-class English Canadians. When writing fiction, authors are especially prone to reflecting the beliefs and assumptions

of their society. English-Canadian authors revealed their ideas about Canada and Canadians through their plots and characters and through direct authorial statements. The beliefs of English-Canadian nationalists of the nineteenth-century were reviewers' reactions to the stories that they claimed, failed to live up to the moral standards as they expected of Canada and Canadians.

Canadian novel began to acquire a place in the 1950s by the works of Robertson Davies, Mordecai Richler, Mavis Gallant and Sheila Watson. By 1960s, Canadian fiction occupied a place of its own and enlightened from the manacles of influence of other literatures. It is pre-occupied with culture, national identity and marked by a spirit of confidence. As various factors affected the territory of Canada from the colonial times, European Canadians were divided into two districts. English and French speaking populations coupled with large number of immigrants who spoke other languages proved to be troublesome towards a single national literature. Throughout the history it has an unusual trouble of demolished environment, because of its empty spaces, unknown rivers, lakes and islands. An imaginative sense of neighbourhood and harmony has become the character of Canadian literature.

The experience of Canada is shown repeatedly in its literature because Canadian writers often highlight the effects of climate and geography of their people. Canada's position in the world overwhelmingly affects many Canadian writers as English Canadians are frequently being surrounded by the people and the culture of the United States. In 70s and 80s, Canadian writing was encouraged by resurgence of interest in literature and culture with a definition of Canadian identity that became a national fascination. So literary pioneers first sought to invoke and then gradually moved from the British and American influences and yearned to carve out their own national identity and forge a literary stance rooted in their own soil and imagination.

English Canadian writers wrote about the difficulties of the settlement process of British immigrants. The writers dealt with landscape as a central feature of the Canadian character: its natural extravagance, agricultural prospective, northern location, and adaptive approaches for Canadian men and women. They have also included the groups selected for inclusion in the imagined nationality like, Scottish, English, Irish, French and Indian. The acceptance of Canada's character as a nation of wasteland permitted and necessitated the English Canadians to embrace it as a part of their national character. One of the important aspects of the wilderness of the land was its ability to transform the people who inhabited it into stronger, manly, more heroic and overall superior men. Wilderness ability was seen as source of a unique Canadian national character, and there can be no more dramatic illustration of the diversity of Canadian experience at the turn of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The foremost Canadian novelists of the first half of the twentieth century are G. Frederick Philip Grove, Mazo de la Roche, and Hugh MacLenan. Grove's first book *Prairie Trails* was published in the year 1922. It was followed by another collection of essays "The Turn of the Year" based on his Manitoba experiences published in the year 1923. These books are distinguished by a choice of technique and a have power over language excellently suited to the suggestion of the climate, the scenery, and the uneven moods of the Manitoba prairie. A third collection of essays, "It Needs to Be Said" published in 1929, is a distillation of his speech and thought on culture and society. Grove is famous for his novels, which are frequently divided into the "Prairie novels" and the "Ontario novels." Two of the prairie novels—*Our Daily Bread* (1928) and *Fruits of the Earth* (1933)—can be portrayed with one of the Ontario novels, *Two Generations* (1939), as being novels of the soil. Grove portrays a self-seeking and dedicated protagonist who works hard unremittingly at taming the soil in order to

create the foundation of a new world which might serve as the breeding-place of a civilization to come.

Mazo de la Roche, Canadian author, whose famous work *Jalna* has been popular novel and was translated into many languages. Her first book in the series was published in 1927 that consists of 16 volumes and made Roche one of the most popular novelists. In 1902 Mazo de la Roche published her first story in *Munsey's Magazine*, but it was not until the death of her father that she devoted herself to writing. Her early novels were romantic novels were *Possession* (1923) and *Delight* (1926). *Jalna* (1927) brought her accomplishment when she was 48 years. Her work is well-regarded for its strong, optimistic characters and sense of place.

A famous novelist and an essayist, John. Hugh MacLennan, is best known as the first major English-speaking writer to describe Canada's national appeal. MacLennan was also an essayist. The best of his essays, which are collected in "The Other Side of Hugh MacLennan" published in 1978 have elicited more consistent critical admiration. In these essays, Hugh MacLennan ranges over a variety of subjects with a civilized mind, playful humour, warm compassion and sharp perception. English Canadian writing has taken its heredity as a restricted response to space, distance, local forms of speech and intonation. This phenomenon is succinctly represented by Hugh McLennan in *Writings*.

One of the most influential Canadian author, the Governor General's Award winner of 1951, Morley Callaghan's works are marked by the feelings of Roman Catholicism, with multifarious categorization and unclear management of love. His novels, *Strange Fugitive* (1928) *That Summer in Paris* (1963) *A Fine and Private Place* (1985) and the latest novel, *A Wild Old Man Down the Road* (1988) are some of the notable works. The writings of Desmond Pacey, Northrop Frye, and Eli-Mandel,

have induced a proliferation of literary responses in a variety of genres. They contributed to the emergence of another important period in the formulation of Canada's literary canon, changing the essential nature and spirit. The Canadian cultural phenomenon is archetypal of a wider North American or Western Context which illustrates the continent's theme of examination, resolution and expansion through a social imagination.

One finds that Canadian fiction follows approximately the same development as any other new nations since the late nineteenth century. It evolves from local humour through an early internationalism, historical romanticism, provincialism and realism, into a new nationalism of the early 1940's. The Canadian novel, however, begins to take off in the 1950's with Robertson Davies, Mordecai Richler, Mavis Gallant and Sheila Watson.

The Canadian novel takes a new dimension in the 1960's with the advent of women novelists who tend to write as more women than as patriots. Though separated by time and gender the women and the Canadian find, their ideas in common. Women and Canadian writers appear to share a necessary, self-defining challenge to the dominant traditions. Canadian women writers were occupied in a struggle with language and inherited conventions to find more sufficient ways of telling about women's experience, fighting their way out of silence to project more reliable images of how women feel and what they do through their protagonists. A close study of their novels reveal that the writers focus is so much on the inner world of emotion and deep feeling. The impact of feminist movements has generated more of poetic articulation of the inner tensions of women than social documentaries voicing the cause of women. The aim of women writing in Canada is to bring about remarkable changes in the lives of Canadian women and society. In order to bring gender equality in

Canadian society, they have improved women's life chances and have the sense that women can contribute to the building of a major peaceful caring world.

Formulating a program for social change requires such resources as time, money, and education. Not surprisingly, therefore, the "first wave" of the women's movement comprised highly educated professionals. A group of women with just that social profile established the Canadian Woman Suffrage Association in Toronto in 1883. By demonstrating, petitioning, and gaining the support of influential liberal-minded men, women won the right to vote federally in 1918, in all provinces and territories except Quebec and Northwest Territories by 1925. In Quebec, they won the right to vote by 1940 and in the Northwest Territories by 1951. Francis Marion Beynon, E. Cora Hind, and Nellie McClung, Lillian Beynon Thomas were pioneers in every sense of the word. They were deeply involved in the suffragette movement, pursuing the right to vote for women. They wrote a satirical play about the Conservative Roblin government entitled "Women's Parliament." The play, or burlesque, was first performed at the Walker Theatre in Winnipeg, and featured McClung as the Premier. The play raised both money and awareness for the suffragettes and enabled them to campaign against the government. Although not successful in defeating the Conservatives in the 1914 election, the Conservative government fell the following year due to the Legislative Building scandal, and in 1916 the newly elected Liberal government granted full suffrage to women in Manitoba, the first province in Canada to do so. These authors broke new ground in the labour market as well. They were employed in areas traditionally reserved for men. Hind ran her own typewriting bureau and became an agricultural reporter and crop predictor.

Francis Marion Beynon taught briefly but soon moved to Winnipeg where she worked at Eaton's in the advertising department. She was one of the first women to be employed in that field in the province. McClung was one of the first women to sit in a provincial legislature, being elected to the Alberta government in 1921. She was the first woman to be appointed to the board of governors of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the only woman to represent Canada at the League of Nations in 1938. Beynon advocated pacifism during the First World War, and Hind and McClung supported total abstinence from alcohol. Beynon ended up losing her position at the Grain Grower's Guide, and afterwards moved to New York, returning to Canada only once before her death. McClung, the mother of five children, was attacked for her involvement in public life. Photographers would hang about her house during the day in the attempt to catch a picture of her children appearing dirty or neglected. She had the dubious distinction of being burnt in effigy for her political ideas.

Beynon and Hind wrote for journals and newspapers and Beynon wrote the autobiographical *Aleta Day* in addition to her journalistic writing. So many people read and followed Hind's crop reports; they were used to establish the world price for wheat. McClung wrote fiction that was extremely popular during her lifetime. Her first novel *Sowing Seeds in Danny* (1908) was a great commercial success. In the end, however, McClung is less privileged for the literary worth of her writing than what she achieved by it politically or socially. Likewise, Beynon is more remembered for her political and moral rhetoric.

The slow progress established political front that led women to create this network of new organizations. Many "second-wave" feminists were deeply involved in the student movement of the 1960s and 1970s. They were shocked to discover that,

despite much rhetoric about liberation and equality; men controlled the student movement and often refused to allow feminist issues to become part of their agenda. To pursue their aims, they felt it was necessary to create new organizations run by women. This second generation of writers gathered the benefits of the work that Beynon, Hind, and McClung had done in achieving acknowledgment for the power and authority of women's writing. In contrast, Livesay, Lysenko, Ostenso, Roy, and Salverson established literary reputations based on the quality and strength of their fictional and poetic writing. The group as a whole received several prizes and honours. Winner of many literary distinctions in Canada and abroad, among them the Prix Femina in Paris and the Literary Guild of America Award in New York, Roy is considered one of Canada's pre-eminent writers in the French language. Ostenso won a prestigious American prize for her first novel *Wild Geese*.

Corresponding to the previous group of women writers, all applied their talents to non-fiction and journalistic writing in addition to their literary creations. Livesay wrote about post-war conditions for the Toronto Daily Star, Lysenko worked for the Globe and Mail and the Windsor Star, and Roy wrote articles for a number of magazines in both France and Canada. Four out of the five authors pursued higher education, a sign of both more liberated times as well as their ambition. They used education to further their goal in becoming self-sufficient in society and to enrich their writing. Livesay, received two degrees and two diplomas over her lifetime, a Master of Education, and a Secondary Teacher's Diploma.

Except for Ostenso, they were forced to rely on traditional occupations such as teaching and social work to support their writing; they wanted to change the society in which they lived. Journalism, an unconventional occupation for women, allowed Livesay, Lysenko, and Roy to promote their views on politics and social justice but

for Lysenko's life which changed dramatically by her inadvertent brush with communism. Manipulated by the people, who funded her sociological study of Ukrainian immigrants, Lysenko allowed her manuscript to be altered so that it seemed to promote communist ideals. The resulting publication caused her to be vilified by a large segment of the Ukrainian community that abhorred these socialist ideas and brought her under attack from many academics.

Moving and travel were two important themes in this group's work and both were often necessary for their writing. Ostenso chose to leave Canada altogether in order to make a living from her writing, while Livesay went to British Columbia, Lysenko to Ontario, and Roy to Québec. Salverson herself lived a nomadic existence, moving around the Prairies as a child and later as a woman married to a railway dispatcher. Additionally, Livesay travelled to France and Africa, and Roy lived in France. Yet, all were deeply influenced by their Prairie childhoods. Their experiences provided motivation, material, and language for their writing. Roy, for example, employed her experiences growing up in St-Boniface and teaching in rural Manitoba, for many of her novels and described her days as the most beautiful years of her life. In addition, the sacrifices and hardships of others that came to Canada as immigrants became a focus in many of the author's works. Being children of immigrants themselves, Lysenko, Ostenso, and Salverson were sensitized to challenge their parents had to overcome as new Canadians.

These second-generation authors favoured strong heroines even in their works of romantic popular fiction. *Wild Geese* by Ostenso, for instance, was ahead of its time in portraying the heroine's longing for sexual fulfilment. Judith, the central character, is described as resembling some fabled animal - a centaur, perhaps. The authors' own lives provided a model for their literature. Livesay's bisexuality and

Ostenso's adulterous relationship with her literary collaborator, Douglas Durkin, broke social taboos.

The women's movement operates at both the bottom level and within established political organizations to achieve its aims and it is internally differentiated. Liberal feminists believe that women can participate fully in society if they achieve equality of opportunity with men. They therefore promoted policies aimed at impartiality and the elimination of gender intolerance in the workplace. Radical feminists hold that male domination is rooted in the family. They supported free and safe contraception and abortion, an equitable division of domestic labour, and the like. Socialist feminists maintained that legal equality is not enough to ensure that women can contribute fully in society.

The Third Wave, Margaret Laurence and Adele Wiseman, both knew from an early age they wanted to be writers and both emerged at a time of cultural nationalism and the great flowering of Canadian literature and publishing. Although Wiseman did have other employment in the early stages of her career, both women were more focused on their writing than previous generations. Lennox, John, and Ruth Panofsky editors of "Selected Letters of Margaret Laurence and Adele Wiseman" commented an extraordinary and long-lived friendship of Laurence and Wiseman which is sufficiently documented their communication, published in 1997. Both authors were born in Manitoba in the twenties and were educated in the University of Manitoba. Their age of development was marked by the Great Depression and the Second World War. Laurence was overwhelmingly affected by the death of boys from Neepawa she had known and by the horror of the atomic bomb. Wiseman was especially affected by the threat of the holocaust to her culture and her family. They had social autonomous sympathies. In fact, they are said to have met at the Ukrainian Labour

Temple in Winnipeg's North End where they were trying to get newspaper work. Both the authors won the Beta Sigma Phi Award for their first novels. Eventually they received Governor General's Awards among other honours.

Their early lives were strikingly different. Laurence was scarred by the deaths of both of her parents before she was ten, and by her forced move into the house of her autocratic grandfather. Wiseman's home life was enhanced and fed by biblical stories, folktales from the old country, her mother's doll making, and the accounts of Jewish harassment she heard from her family. Margaret was instantly attracted to Adele's large, confrontational, and warm family so much so that the Wiseman's became a second family to her and Adele a surrogate sister.

Wiseman achieved early critical and popular success in 1956 with her first novel *The Sacrifice* which also won the Governor General's award. It took Laurence a longer apprenticeship, marked by her African books, before she achieved similar approval with *The Stone Angel* in 1964 and then with the other novels in the Manawaka cycle. Laurence indeed became the best-known and most successful English-Canadian novelist of her generation. Both women travelled far from Manitoba, yet it can be argued that their most powerful writing lay in their Prairie story telling. Both were proud to call themselves Prairie writers. Each was personally affected by their childhood experiences, growing up in a small town for Laurence, growing up in the Jewish community in Winnipeg for Wiseman. Their individual ethnic heritages had a profound impact on their writing. Manawaka, the town featured in Laurence's Prairie novels. Wiseman's *Crackpot* is recognisably set in the North end of Winnipeg during the Great Depression, while *The Sacrifice* (1956) depicts the hardships endured by Jewish immigrants such as Wiseman's parents.

A Canadian author, Maria Ardizzi wrote and published in Italian. Two of her novels have been translated into English: *Made in Italy* and *Women and Lovers*. Maria J. Ardizzi was born Maria De Dominicis in 1931 in Leognano Teramo, Italy. After she completed her studies in Rome she moved to Toronto, Canada, with her husband in 1954. For many years she was involved with the Italian society in several cultural activities especially the printing of books and other material. She has been writing fiction in Italian for many years and has published short stories and articles in many newspapers and magazines. Her first novel deals with the memories of an old, physically paralysed woman as she renovates the story of her immigration to Canada. She undergoes the difficulties of regulating to life in North America, the death of her husband and children, and finally confinement to a wheelchair. The physical handicap has become a symbol for the condition of the immigrant woman. It is as if Ardizzi, with each consecutive volume, was releasing herself of the trouble of chronicling the immigrant experience and could focus more attention on using Italian in a way that was genuine to the knowledge in Canada.

Margaret Atwood is one of Canada's most successful and popular writers. She is also well known internationally in the USA, Europe, and Australia. Her second collection of poems, *The Circle Game* won the Governor General's Award for poetry in 1966 and her recent novel, *The Blind Assassin* won the Booker Prize in 2000. She began her career by publishing poetry. After *the Circle Game* she produced *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970), and *Procedures for the Underground* (1970) followed by *Power Politics* (1971). In the work *You Are Happy* (1974) she described the oppression of women and became a recognized feminist writer. Atwood discovered the general conflicts of Canada that divided it by two official languages and cultures. Atwood highlighted the ecological understanding of Canadian literature

and focused on Canadian literary characters as victims in her work *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*.

Dionne Brand is a prolific, cross-genre artist, with multiple forays in poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and film. Brand's work reflects her interest in the politics surrounding gender, sexuality, class, and race. Her writings often address the marginalization of women, especially African-Caribbean women and lesbians. For example, her book *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (2001) contains her assessment of the black African diaspora, including the status of diasporic blacks in Canada; in that sense the book is also in part an autobiography.

Maria Campbell is another famous writer of Canadian literature who is best known for her important memoir, *Half-breed* which originated a rebirth of aboriginal literature in Canada. Campbell suffered a number of difficulties to take be in charge of her own life and to help out her people. This journey of self-discovery is traced in *Half-breed* (1973), a moving account of a woman who struggled with poverty, alcoholism, drug addiction, sexual abuse and prostitution to reach thirty-three years of age and begin her healing process.

Marisa De Franceschi who was born in Italy came to Canada in 1948 and grew up in Windsor, Ontario. Her short stories, articles, and book reviews have appeared in a variety of Canadian publications including, *Canadian Author & Bookman*, *The Mystery Review*, *The Windsor Star*, and *Accenti Magazine*. Her work has appeared in a number of anthologies and she has twice been the recipient of the Okanagan Short Story Award. *Surface Tension* was her first novel. De Franceschi has been very energetic in the writing community in Windsor, Ontario, and has also served on the administrative Association of Italian-Canadian Writers from 2000 to 2004. She has

often travelled to the Friuli region of Italy where she was born. The unique language and culture of this province may be what gives her writing a particular viewpoint.

Dorothy Kathleen May Livesay was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in October 12, 1909. She moved in 1920 with her family to Toronto. Beginning in the late 1930s, she wrote extensively for newspapers and for the newly established CBC Radio, a practice she continued through her married life. From September to December 1946, for example, she was a post-war correspondent for the *Toronto Daily Star*, filing stories from England, France and Germany. In a career spanning over five decades, Livesay charted the major changes in the Canadian literary scene. Livesay was influenced by her parents and she was exposed to the modernist imagist poets in her teens, both through individual association with Canadian poets Louise Morey Bowman and W.W. Ross. Her contribution in the Canadian literary scene in the 1960s and 1970s was a continuation of these earlier political involvements, an interest once again reflected in her poetry of this period. Although she rejected the label of feminism, her writing at this time addressed topics such as female sexuality and social roles in a way that marks her work as congruent with feminist concerns.

Livesay was a tireless contributor to periodical publications throughout her life, but in the beginning of 1960s. She contributed to the rapidly increasing critical argument of Canadian literature through her writing as well as her attachment with numerous scholastic institutions and magazines. *Call My People Home* (1950)—about the exploitation of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War—and *The Documentaries* (1968) are examples of her own work in this genre. In the same layer, *Right Hand Left Hand* (1977), her remarkable autobiography about her life of activism in the 1930s, combines retrospective commentary with period photographs,

newspaper articles, poetry, drama, and unedited letters that emphasizes the integration of the individual history with social history.

Alice Munro is a one of the very famous Canadian author who was highly acclaimed as a contemporary master of the short story. Between 1968 and the present she has published fifteen collections of short fiction. She is also well known for contributing short stories to such esteemed periodicals as *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, and *The Atlantic Monthly*. Munro has been lauded in Canada and awarded internationally with highest literary honours. She has garnered Canada's Governor General Award for English-language fiction three times, is a two-time winner of the Giller Prize, and was presented the U.S. National Arts Club Medal of Honor for Literature. She has won the W. H. Smith Literary Award in the U.K., and the National Book Critics Circle Award and the O. Henry Award for Continuing Achievement in Short Fiction in the U.S. In 2009 Munro won the Man Booker International Prize for her life-long body of work. In 2013 Munro was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, the first resident Canadian author to win this international honour. Frequent plots and themes in Munro's work include growing up female in small-town Ontario during the 40's and 50's, the tension between intellect and rural life, familial relationships, and sexuality. Her stories, as the title of her first published collection aptly suggests, are largely focused on the *Lives of Girls and Women*. Munro's work is characterized by humour, poignancy, and excellence.

The famous novel of Martha Ostenso, *Wild Geese* (1925), was applauded critically as the best-selling work of the author in the year 1930s and 1940s. In the year 1925, she received the Dodd, Mead and Company's Best Novel of the Year Award and the first novel-prize offered by the Pictorial Review. Her novel *O River, Remember* (1943) won a Literary Guild Choice Award. She is known as the founder

of “prairie realism” in literature due to her writing which was predisposed by her growing up on Manitoba and Minnesota farmlands. Ostenso's writing tends to centre on ordinary themes about the association between human beings and the land they work. Much of her work is set in Manitoba or Minnesota on farm land and touches upon elements of love and melodrama. In *A Man Had Tall Sons* (1958) the happiness of the story's main family is willingly sacrificed by the father for the success of the family farm; a similar theme also found in *Wild Geese*. The lives of two migrant families are outlined over multiple generations in Minnesota's Red River Valley are portrayed in her work *O River, Remember* (1945), and it won a Literary Guild Choice Award in the year 1943. *O River, Remember* is the next biggest success of Martha's work next to *Wild Geese*. Many of her other works have been reprinted and translated multiple times, including the biography *And They Shall Walk* (1943) which was co-written with Sister Elizabeth Kenny.

Sharon Pollock was born in 1936 in Fredericton, New Brunswick. She worked at the Playhouse Theatre in Fredericton doing some acting, and then moved to Calgary in 1966 with actor Michael Ball. She toured with the Prairie Players in 1966 and won a Dominion Drama Festival award for her performance in Ann Jellicoe's *The Knack*. She began writing her first play, *A Compulsory Option*, while expecting her sixth child; this unpublished play won an Alberta Culture playwriting competition in 1971 and premiered in 1972 at the New Play Centre in Vancouver. In 1976 Pollock worked at the University of Alberta as a playwriting instructor and returned to Calgary in 1988.

The Double Hook was Sheila Watson's best-known modernist novel. *The Double Hook* was published in 1959, and soon became an important work. The prose of Sheila Watson was published in a special number of the journal *Open Letter* in

1975, the year she retired from teaching. Her novel, *Deep Hollow Creek*, written in the 1930s was published in 1992.

The protagonists of Margaret Laurence are mystified according to the situations they face in their lives. The women have been undergoing mental agony in their life, which they try to get rid of it each and every time they experience it. Margaret's heroines in all the select novels are in the clutches of psychological suffering and they are portrayed as the victims of their own suffering. At certain point of time in their life, the protagonists understand that the time to reconsider their life and the way of their life. They yearn to come out of their depressions. Margaret Laurence gives her central characters a courage and make them act on the way they want so as to be content in their desperate minds. The theme of her works continues to explore the universal problems. The mystified protagonists transform into demystified heroines with their own confidence and courage. The energy they gain from their experiences help them to face the sufferings and to find solution.

Margaret Laurence's life story suggests a girl who was as normal as blueberry pie. She was born in 1926 in the small Manitoba town of Neepawa, 125 miles North West of Winnipeg. The town of Neepawa is different from the other small towns all across Canada only because of its setting in a Prairie Landscape. It resembled communities from Ontario to British Columbia. In the midst of inconceivable wilderness, the early settlers created their towns, often at random and declared their longing for order in the midst of chaos. They laid their town in a grid pattern either side of a central main street lined with the usual ugly collection of grocery, hardware and general stores, Chinese restaurant, commercial hotel, bakeshop, post office, newspaper office and gas station. The service of Mammon, churches and schools appeared in the residential areas which were divided for the substantial residences of

those who lived on the right side of the omnipresent railway tracks and for the shacks of the least respectable of the town. The people living in these communities were self-sufficient, inward-looking and conservative, turning their backs on the outside world which threatened to overwhelm them.

The inhabitants of the towns maintained an inflexible code of behaviour based on Puritanical Presbyterian moral values where cleanliness was next to godliness and sloth was not to be tolerated. Their lives were supposed to be lived according to innumerable clichés or aphorisms which hung in samplers on the walls of their homes and appeared in children's copybooks. Margaret Laurence used her childhood and adolescent experience of life in this small prairie town to create the imaginary Manawaka of her five Canadian novels. Manawaka is not Neepawa and this is Margaret Laurence herself out in her work entitled "*A Place to Stand on*" declares:

"Manawaka is not my home town of Neepawa it has elements of Neepawa especially in some of the descriptions of places such as the cemetery on the hill or the Wachakawa valley through which ran the small brown river which was the river of my childhood. In almost every way, however Manawaka is not so much any one prairie town as an amalgam of many prairie towns. Most of all, I like to think it is simply itself a town of the mind my own private world...(3)

Margaret Laurence's extraction is typically Canadian too. Her generation was still in contact with the pioneer days through grandparents who experienced some of the hardships and could recount the stories that their parents had told them of the opening up of much of Canada especially the West. Her maternal grandfather undertaker John Simpson was of Protestant Irish stock who arrived from County Tyrone in Ireland in 1850; lawyer John Wemyss her other grandfather, came from a

Lowland Scottish family. Margaret Laurence was the child of Robert Wemyss, a lawyer, and Verna Jean Simpson. Verna died when Margaret was four years old, and Robert, after an interval, married his late wife's sister, Margaret Campbell Simpson. He died when Peggy was ten. Her stepmother was a teacher and a librarian, was a great comfort in her childhood and encouraged her a lot. John Simpson is one of the leading inspirations in her young life and her maternal grandfather in whose home she and her stepmother lived were encouragers. In her book, *A Bird in the House* (1970), he is shown as an authoritarian. The collection of short stories which are interconnected is represented in her writing. Margaret Laurence works through remembrance, the traumas of the years between this move and her going away to college in Winnipeg in 1944.

Lorna Irvine in her article "Critical spaces: Margaret Laurence & Janet Frame" comments: "Margaret Laurence is a leading major contemporary postmodern author who is not easily separable from her fictional protagonists" (xix). She creates characters whose experiences, like Canadians, bear a measure of resemblance to her. James King in *The Life of Margaret Laurence* opines: "suffering the loss of her parents at a very young age, Laurence's loneliness and isolation in which she dwelt nearly all her life is apparent throughout her works" (xx). It also produces a widespread tone of despair in all of her works. She believes that the aspects of the texts she writes are fundamental elements of its structure of her sense of identity. Her parents' death when she was young marked both her literary and private life, as she was never able to remove herself from her childhood. Lorna Irvine opines "Laurence's despair, loneliness and insecurity, are an emphasis that produces monotony that relentlessly tracks her experience along a single and descending path" (11).

James King's comments: "Laurence is the most renowned writer in [the] Canadian literary history", the richness of Laurence's imagery, "the concreteness in her language," and "the attempt to make harmonies out of disparate elements of human experience" make her one of the most prominent writers in Canada and thus in the whole world" (xxii). Mark Cohen in his work "*Censorship in Canadian Literature*" explains: "Laurence, a writer dedicated to exploring human nature in all its various complexities," (88) as she is always able to express something that in fact everybody knows but can't express. Joan Coldwell in the work "Margaret Laurence", *Literature Criticism Series*, describes: "Laurence has also a distinctive Canadian voice though her concerns are of wider significance; they are deeply rooted in the local Canadian experience" (65).

Young Margaret early showed a talent for writing which her stepmother nurtured. Later she recalls how from the age of seven she would fill five cent scribbles with her stories. When she was twelve one of them called Pillars of the Nation in which she first used the name Manawaka won honourable mention in a contest in the Free Press. The same newspaper printed another entitled "*The Case of Blond Butcher*" in its Saturday section for young writers. While at Neepawa College from 1940 to 1944 she became editor of the school newspaper "*The Annals of the Black and Gold*" to which she also contributed poems and stories. Her stepmother Mrs. Wemyss found an opening for her own love of literature in helping to found and to run the Neepawa Public Library and in encouraging her step daughter to read widely.

In 1944, a scholarship made it possible for Laurence to leave Neepawa to attend United College Winnipeg. The leaving of her home town is later mirrored in *The Diviners* where Morag Gunn eagerly and impatiently boards the train which will

take her into the world beyond Manawaka. She imagines she is leaving her life there behind but as Margaret Laurence knows that everyone will carry the baggage of the past, which she later rifled to create the Manawaka world of her novels. Margaret left Neepawa in 1944 to join United College in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Here she met Jack Laurence, a hydraulic engineer, whom she married in 1947. Her first job was as a journalist. She wrote for *The Westerner*, a Communist newspaper, and the *Winnipeg Citizen*, a labour daily. In 1949, the Laurence's went to England, after that they went to British Somaliland where Jack Laurence worked on building dams. Peggy was deep into West African Literature and she first published her translation work of Somali prose and poetry, *A Tree for Poverty* in 1954.

Jack and Margaret Laurence travelled to Ghana with their two-month-old daughter, Jocelyn. Their second son, David, was born to them in 1955. The works of Laurence gained appreciation out of her African understanding. She won the 1961 Beta Sigma Phi Award for first novel, *This Side Jordan*, 1960, set on the Gold Coast. She was the first Canadian to win the award. She wrote three more books describing life in Somaliland from her experience there: a collection of short stories, *The Tomorrow Tamer*, in 1963, *A Prophet's Camel Bell*, in 1963, and *Long Drums and Cannons*, 1968, an academic study of Nigerian fiction and drama.

Margaret Laurence's interest was moving away from her African experience to a re-examination of her early years in a Canadian prairie town. She had been carrying in her head for some time a character that had presented her and demanded to be poured out. With the creation of Hagar of *The Stone Angel* Margaret Laurence laid the foundation for a literary reputation which grew with every one of the four subsequent titles. She herself doubted whether anyone would want to read about a ninety-year old woman facing death and forced to take a backward look at a life

which had been long, hard and in many ways disastrous. But the character would not go away. The public received the resulting story with astonishment and sympathetic recognition. At this time Jack and Margaret had come to realise that their interests were in conflict. He was constantly on the move, fulfilling contracts for engineering works all around the world doing those jobs that plainly needed doing. She wanted to get on with her writing, something such a nomadic existence made difficult. So in that year they separated amicably. Of her marriage, about which she declined to say very much, she did comment in her interview in *The Toronto Star*, “We had twelve great years of marriage and stayed married for twenty-two years. We'd try to patch things up, but of course the writing was part of it.”

The publication of *The Stone Angel* in 1964 established her as a fine writer for quite other reasons. By this time, she had found an elderly house, Elm cottage, in Penn, and had settled down in semi-rural England for what was to prove nearly ten years of solid originality. *The Stone Angel* was followed in 1966 by *A Jest of God*. During the dry period after the publication of *A Jest of God* she was interested in Nigerian writing and in Nigerian writers. Like Christopher Okigbo, Wale Soyinka and Chinua Achebe whom she met in London. This resulted in her being asked to write a critical study of this Literature. *Long Drums and Canons; Nigerian Novelists and Dramatists 1952-1966* came out in 1968. In 1969, *The Fire-Dwellers* was published and finally, in 1974, *The Diviners* was published. Early in the years in England she began to write the short stories which were to appear in 1970 as *A Bird of the House*. These were on her own admission an attempt to exorcise the ghost of her maternal grandfather, John Simpson, the autocratic, disagreeable old man whom she had hated as a child. In the writing she was able to re-live those years when he was such a powerful influence and take away the cutting edge of her hatred by coming to

recognise in adulthood that he was a man of his time, and, moreover, that she had inherited many of her own faults and virtues from him.

Mrs Laurence had written about Africa previously, she felt that it was important for Africans to write for and about themselves and about their past. She could identify that in her study of the writers. In her essay "*Ivory Tower or Grassroots: The Novelist as Socio-Political Being*" she describes: "Canadian writers, like African writers, have had to find our own voices and write out of what is truly ours, in the face of overwhelming cultural imperialism" (17). Between 1968 and 1974 Margaret Laurence had a rootless life travelling periodically to Canada where her fame had made her very much in demand as a writer-in-residence at Canadian universities summering in a cottage on the Otonabee River near Peterborough and still returning to Elm Cottage for lengthy periods. At last *The Fire-Dwellers* had been finished and *The Diviners* her last Manawaka novel was slowly taking shape during the summer withdrawals to her riverside sanctuary. The stories about Vanessa MacLeod who in reality is the young Margaret Wemyss were collected and published in a kind of novel in 1970 title *A Bird in the House* came from one of the stories in the collection.

In that same year Laurence published her first children's book *Jason's Quest* which she describes as a gift she received in 1967 during the period when *The Fire-Dwellers* was refusing to come out right. To entertain herself and settle down from the tension of the effort to get this novel finished she began to write a tale about a colony of moles she and her children had seen at work in the garden at Penna. The story accounts the stages in a passage undertaken by Jason a young mole from the underground city of Molanium. However, it is observed that some five years ahead to 1975 she also wrote another children's story, *The Olden Days Coat*, in a book truly

worthy of an author of her proficiency. It is a wonderfully produced and demonstrated slim volume which must appeal to any sensitive child. Two more books for children followed: *Six Darn Cows* which appeared in 1979 was meant as a child's own early reading book; *The Christmas Birthday Story* published in 1980 was a retelling of the nativity in slightly less simple Language for somewhat older readers. Both are attractively illustrated and produced but neither is outstanding.

In 1974, *The Diviners*, the novel, over which she had struggled for four years was published. The event marked the peak of her career. A selection of her occasional writing for magazines and newspapers was published in 1976 as *Heart of a Stranger*. It is a collection of uneven worth with some unimportant entries of strenuous joyfulness. In 1977, she received the Periodical Distributors Award for the mass paperback edition of *A Jest of God*. Up until her death in January 1987, she did not write another novel, though in the last few months of her life she was working with her daughter Jocelyn on her memoirs. The year *The Diviners* was published was another turning point in her life. She sold her English home and returned to live permanently in Canada. She did not return to live in the West where her roots were but bought a yellow brick house in Lakefield near Peterboroug. When Mrs Laurence set down the final sentence of *The Diviners*, Morag returned to the house to write the remaining private and fictional words and to set down the title. She publicly announced that she was finished with Manawaka and its women. This was considered to be her last novel. Laurence's had a diverse opinion when others began to blow her sideways for the position of First Lady of Canadian Literature. She struggled with alcoholism and depression and old insecurities. Finally, she was diagnosed with cancer. After living with the disease for some months, she took her own life at sixty years of age.

Lorna in “Critical spaces: Margaret Laurence & Janet Frame” comments: “Laurence is able to transform the regional into the universal, a marginal country into the world” (12). Clara Thomas in her work *The Manawaka Novels of Margaret Laurence* remarks: “In each of her works there is a movement from isolation towards order and meaning; “the exploration and revealing of an order that is there and is within the power of seeking men and women to apprehend”. Donald Cameron in his work *Conversations with Canadian Novelists* states : “Life, Laurence says, “is extraordinarily and in a way wonderfully formless, and yet the whole world, sort of examined minutely has got incredible form” (107). Joseph Campell in his work *The Hero with A Thousand Faces* comments: “She implies that though our security is temporarily threatened during the process of self-discovery, we are "awakened" to a “bolder, cleaner, more spacious, and fully human life” (8).

Margaret Laurence’s journey and exploration throughout the world arrived both in fiction and in real life to Neepawa. Manawaka in her fiction, her hometown, and the place she had known for the first time. In Laurence’s novels the characters are connected by the same circumstances, and these bring the protagonists of the novels back to their roots and the childhood days. Only here the characters come to an understanding of the past, present and the future. Clara Thomas comments: “Laurence said: “The return is not necessarily in the physical sense, but it really is a coming back in the mind, a coming to some kind of terms with your roots and your ancestors and, if you like, with your gods”. (78)

No town in Canadian literature has been consistently and extensively extolled as the Manakawa of Margaret Laurence. Clara Thomas in her essay *Towards Freedom: The Work of Margaret Laurence and Northrop Frye* states:

“Through five works of fiction, it has grown as a vividly realized, microcosmic world, acting as a setting for the dilemmas of its unique individuals and also exercising its own powerful dynamic on them. Manawaka is also specifically, historically, and geographically authentic, dense with objects and true to its place and its development through time”. (174).

The world built by Margaret Laurence in Manawaka belongs to women and men in general, but their peculiarities are Canadian. Placed in a small western town, her characters go to the outer world, but they carry Manawaka inside them, their limitations and inhibitions, and also their sense of roots, of their ancestors and of a past time which is still alive, not only their achievements, but also in their tragic errors: a yesterday rooted geographically and socially in a fixed point, alive in the memory of many Canadians. The characters appear briefly, but their roles are full of vitality, full of realism, history, personality, and personal experience. The experiences are so real that one often thinks they are taking place in one's own town. She is a feminist writer in the sense that she explores empathically, though critically, the search for responsibilities and opportunities by women in the twentieth century Canada. Laurence's intention was to penetrate into mind of her protagonists, see through their eyes, and treat them like real characters, not like fictional characters. The characters in Laurence's novels struggle to understand themselves in relation to the society.

Cambridge dictionary defines “Mystification” as the state of feeling very confused because of someone or something is impossible to understand. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary “Mystification” means to make somebody confused because they do not understand something.

Demystification is the removal of mystery, suspense or confusion surrounding a subject. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary "Demystification" is defined as to make a difficult subject clearer and easier to understand. The Cambridge dictionary defines "demystification" as to make something easier to understand. (407)

Chotiudompant in his essay "Decolonization and Demystification: One Hundred Years of Solitude and Nationhood" intends to discover how the interrelated problems of nationhood and national identity are treated in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's novel *Cien años de soledad* (One Hundred Years of Solitude). The two basic yet complex themes of practicality and past set against the background of Colombian history, it is also proposed to show how the author reinscribes the myth of nationhood and simultaneously demystifying the concept of national identity in this work.

Ghasemi and Hajizadeh in their article "Demystifying the Myth of Motherhood: Toni Morrison's Revision of African-American Mother Stereotypes" describes how black maternity has culturally and historically been mythologized and black mothers typecast. A pragmatic Morrison encounters the legitimacy of the ancient certification of black philosophy and specifically the role and implication of women in building this culture. Her review of the concept of the black maternity is a chief step toward revising the historical accounts regarding black motherhood which is just one more form of ill-treatment of the black woman.

Chavoshian in the article "Demystifying the Myth of the White Authenticity in Contemporary Afro-American Literature: The Anagnorisis of the "Sameness" of the "Other" analysis the early Afro-American writers and theorists such as Wheatley, DuBois, Hughes, Wright, and Ellison as one of their toughest efforts for confrontation and freedom, persevered on the idea of a black identity based on some folklores of pure ethnic and traditional origins. These thinkers believed that the ideas of a shared

community and national consciousness enabled the Africans to liberate themselves from cultural suppression. More recent post-colonial writers like Gates, Morrison, seem to put into question the very prospect of such a turmoil.

Kumar in “Demystifying the traditional myths: a critical insight into Githa Hariharan’s *The Thousand Faces of Night*”, describes India as a land of tradition and culture. Myths play an essential part in distribution and spreading of tradition and culture from generation to generation. Women writers especially the post-modernist not only look beyond the problems of love, sex and marriage but purposely approved ‘myth’ as an approach to challenge the defined notions of ‘woman’. The women writers try to review the power involved in these folklores and determine the dark and mysterious side of these tools of literature. *The Thousand Faces of Night* the novel of Githa Hariharan who is influential in Supreme Court’s judgment on Guardianship Act in 1999, consumes the other feature of these myths that contains gender dynamics.

Anjana in her research work “New aesthetics of political fiction: a study of the strategies of demystification in the novels of Salman Rushdie, O V Vijayan and Shashi Tharoor” explores the union of politics and human experience. The novels Rushdie’s *Midnight s Children*, Vijayan s *The Saga of Dharmapuri* and Tharoor s *The Great Indian Novel* represent a discrete form of political thoughts in agreement to the inconsistencies of existing in an oppressive organization. Each author pays his own exceptional skill in defining the practice more intensely felt than it has ever been before. These three novelists provide new magnitudes to the understanding of the twentieth-century Indian society.

Even though, attention has been given to some of the major aspects of Margaret Laurence’s novels such as images, visions, language, narrative designs, duality, alienation, subjectivity, feminism are dealt with, the subject matter of

Demystification in Margaret Laurence's novels has not been outlined and observed. Subsequently, this study significantly examines the demystification of the major woman protagonists in the present after a rhythm of despair in their past.

The object of this thesis is to emphasize the main aspects of the demystification in Laurence's novels, and to establish the thesis that Laurence's women are exceptional that they are the victims of their own past. The thesis also attempts an understanding of the strategies adopted by the protagonists to demystify. Within the limited angle available for expounding the thesis, this thematic study confines itself to four of her major novels.

Chapter II entitled *The Stone Angel* is a reflection of the despair faced by of women in a patriarchal, capitalistic, consumerist society. Hagar Shipley displaces patriarchal models by reconciling her complicity in these models with her resistance to their powers. The story of Hagar Shipley is told in the first person and covers the three weeks before her death, but in these weeks, long flashbacks portray scenes of Hagar's life in sequential order. She is a stereotype, an unlikely heroine, certainly not one who would seem to attract the sympathy of the reader. Hagar does, however, attract the reader; the genuineness of her portrayal makes her believable because of her total honesty, and the reader empathizes with her plight, which she finally recognizes as self-made. Her voice, even in her old age, is still strong, wilful, and vital, and the development of her self-awareness and self-knowledge is gripping.

Chapter III considers *A Jest of God* as a novel that is concerned with problems of adaptability of the protagonist Rachel. Survival continues to be the basic theme and the attempt of the individual to survive with some dignity, tilting the load of excess baggage that everyone carries, until the moment of death. The themes of incompleteness of human relationships resulting in loneliness, the ambivalence

between human relationships, are presented in the work. Laurence manage to re-enact Rachel Cameron's scared responses through the first-person point of view around her and her self-mocking assessments of her responses; she is frightened even of herself. Her fear about her own responses to ordinary life keeps her in a state near hysteria.

Chapter IV examines *The Fire Dwellers*, where Margaret Laurence displays the development of female sexuality. Her portrayal of trouble-torn life of Stacey MacAindra, a housewife and mother of four, nearly forty, dwelling in the fires until her children need her no more. The protagonist of the novel, Stacey MacAindra, is Rachel Cameron's sister. She is a middle-class contemporary housewife in Manawaka, anxious over all the possible and impossible perils waiting for her and her family. Laurence's narrative technique is more complex in *The Fire-Dwellers* than in any of her earlier works. The first-person narration is disjointed by a variety of interruptions such as Stacey's inner voices, snatches of Stacey's memories. At times, she is absorbed so entirely on her inner voice that she feels a physical jolt when external reality breaks into her inner fantasies.

Chapter V is *The Diviners*, Morag Gunn being raised in a small Manitoba town, working on a local newspaper, marrying a professional man, separating, becoming a novelist, living for stretches in Vancouver and Britain. The title, *The Diviners*, refers explicitly to gifted individuals, artists such as Morag who contribute to a greater understanding of life, as well as to her friend, Royland, true water diviner. Indeed, Morag discovers that many of her acquaintances are, in some way, themselves diviners. At the end of the book, when Royland tells Morag he has lost the gift of divining, *The Diviners* is the longest and the most tightly structured of Laurence's novels; it has three long parts framed by a prologue and an epilogue. The plot is commonplace; Morag spends a summer worrying about her eighteen-year-old

daughter Pique, who has gone west to find herself. In this action, Morag is only an observer, as all mothers must be in such situations.

The concluding Chapter VI, attempts to focus on the rhythm of despair and the way of demystification. The woman portrayed by Laurence is in the process of emerging. The unique feature is the essential awareness that women have long been experiencing and the feeling that it is time for each and every one of them to return to the roots is the way of demystifying. Margaret's female protagonists in all these four novels are identical in nature, they are the victims of their own thoughts and they realise that it's time for them to rethink and act is the way they come out of their miseries. Margaret Laurence gives the protagonists a chance to act on the way they really wanted to be and take a deep breath after satisfying their desperate minds along the roots. Presenting her characters as beings caught between the determinism of history and their free will, as individuals who are torn between body and spirit, fact and illusion, Laurence represents life as a series of internal crises. Through the development of her protagonists, Laurence celebrates even the crises as she celebrates her protagonists' progress. The search for self involves both the liberation from and the embracing of the past. The themes continue to be of enormous consequence in the modern world, Laurence's works explore problems that have universal appeal, a fact that goes far to explain her tremendous popularity.