

Chapter II

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Hagar's Memory and the Continuum of Psychogeography in

The Stone Angel

The Stone Angel, published in the year 1964 is one of the famous works of Margaret Laurence set in the fictitious town of Manawaka. The novel is a realistic portrayal of the lowlands located in the western part of Canada during the 1930s. It is the first book that gave wide recognition for Laurence as a writer. It was also selected as one of the best books in Canada Reads edition, during the year 2002. In the year 2007, it was also adapted into a film under the same title directed by Kari Skogland. In a sequence of episodes, the novel tells the story of Hagar Shipley, a ninety-year-old woman who struggles to grapple with a life of inflexibility and failure. It is written in first-person narrative followed by a stream-of-consciousness technique, where the protagonist loses her control due to age-related factors.

The narratology is the ambivalence between the past and present in the life of the protagonist. The themes of pride and prejudice that arises from social class are repeated in the novel. Hagar, as a young girl refuses to astound her dying brother in the array of their mother. As a young woman, she marries Bram Shipley, a local farmer against her father's wish. She shows partiality towards her younger son, John. After Hagar's separation from her husband, John comes to live with her. However, he ultimately returns to his father. When John dies, Hagar does not cry, it is at this point, she transmutes into the position of a stone angel. Later, her elder son Marvin is shown to have been a good and loyal son all along, regardless of being his mother's favourite.

At the age of ninety, Hagar leaves her house and goes to the forest all alone. In the forest, she meets another wanderer. They share a very good conversation, where Hagar finally opens up her feelings. An outburst of hidden emotion comes out, and she finally sobbed. The next day the police and Marvin comes to rescue Hagar from there. In an episode of love and penitence, she admits that he is the better son.

Hagar Shipley is the central character of the novel. The story revolves around her life in the prairie town of Manawaka. The permanence of living in the town had invoked in her a sense of belonging towards her house. As a ninety-year-old woman, her physical ailments and mental problems often give her a feeling to look back on her yester years in Manawaka. Memory always plays a great role in framing the identity of the person. The episodes of life often frame the cognitive development of a person's identity.

Psychogeography is about the method of connecting to a space, the way it is constructed, and how the space created facilitates in shaping a person's self. The interconnectivity of the psyche and space is laboriously experienced in cities. The affiliation of geography and human mind is regularly seen in ancient cities like London and Paris, where the shields of antiquity are ample in their form and structure. In the "Psychogeography Quotes" it is stated that: "An age-old city is like a pond. With its colours and reflections. Its chills and murk. Its ferment, its sorcery, its hidden life" (Chappel).

A city is like a person with a lot of emotions. There will be mixed feelings and ups and downs, but in order to get into the heart of the city one should know its undisclosed elements. The art of going deeper into the centre of the town may take years. But for attaining its intrinsic elements, what an individual need is a sense of connection

and the urge to find the hidden aspects. It is the wanderer who by strolling through the cityscapes tries to weave and distinguish the elements he sees around. Thus, the elements witnessed by him get converted into different categories of culture and society.

Traversing via the town without a protection leaves us liable to private area intruders and traumatic friends who permit us to experience the ebbs and flows of the town's energy. People while entering a city starts walking within a particular domain. Later, when the eyes start to see the landscapes, a gradual involvement towards the natural environment is being created. The beauty of the land thus catches a person's attention. Then, the visual images are transported to their consciousness. The effect is generated in the form of social experience and identity. The images of the town captivated by an individual's eyes, instil in them a renewed outlook of the geographical - panorama and its spatial ambiance. The pivotal activities that occur during the phase of urban exploration alternate the way a person revel upon his acquainted environments. It may intensify the human thought by permitting to preserve a couple of opinions and layers of geographical map at the time when memory and experience collide.

A city is a granary of many historical and contemporary rudiments. It is replicated in its architecture and on the living conditions of people who reside in it. When they do not validate the situation, the burden of their past deeds is perceived on the events which have engraved themselves on the city's cognizance and physical structures. In the novel, the concept of psychogeography is comprehended in its thrived form. The prairie town of Manitoba and its landscape is unfolded in the text. Manawaka as a primary setting therefore delves well into the soul of the protagonist Hagar.

A house is a physical space that accumulates multiple layers of inner wisdom. It is where spatial factors like corporal places, social practice, and conceptual meanings blend together in forming the spatial hybridity of culture. Gaston Bachelard, a French philosopher mentioned about the concept of living under a particular space in his book entitled *The Poetics of Space*. He opines that “our home is a container of our daydreams” (Bachelard 37). The bygone experiences and moments spent within the house help in shaping one’s life. The monotonous way of rationalising the events and attributing them to memory gets shaped in an individual’s house. The experiences attained and the memories formed thus lead to the formation of a cataleptic connection that drives between the past and present lives of every man who is part of a physical space.

At the beginning of the novel, the protagonist Hagar’s son Marvin informs her about his decision to sell their house and move to an apartment. He prefers to shift to a probably smaller space. Here the idea of shifting space goes in hand with the character of Marwin, who is the perfect example of a person’s adaptiveness. There is a firm connection between the size of an environment and the reaction of humans living in it. The sensuous enormity of a living environment sometimes makes it difficult for certain people to adjust to their day-to-day activities. The struggle of survival forces them to choose a comfortable space where they can live. Our innate responses to the physical structures and their dimensions are in one way the lessons we obtain from nature itself.

The growth of self-consciousness is a key development in which, distinctive human reactions to living environments are seen. Here Hagar responded to Marvin’s decision of selling the house by saying: “You’ll never sell this house, Marvin. It’s my house. It’s my house, Doris. Mine” (Laurence, SA 35). By making this statement Hagar is

entering into the world of geographical space. She is driven by the experiences of her past that she had in her house. Her way of observing things and the detailed description of the household items give her the title of an explorer or the flaneur of her daily life. So, the house in which she lived is the psychogeographical space of Hagar's life. Here, the pleasant relationship between an occupant and the abode is portrayed. The word 'mine' is indicative of the possession of Hagar as an occupant of her own home.

During the ancient days, people inhabited traditional methods of living like caverns and huts. But as years passed, they started constructing buildings for their own living purpose. Therefore, the structures or physical spaces became part of a person's survival. The affectivity towards a physical structure is sentient in its form. A sense of connectedness while living in a house gives rise to a variety of activities that aims at maintaining the proximity and approachability of matters related to it. The act of maintaining the house has unfolded several things like nurturing and enhancing the premises. A person's attachment to a house can be represented in two ways: The former is the direct way that concentrates on the internal aspects and the people who live within it. But the latter way of representing the attachment is based on the social value of the same. The direct affectivity towards the home is centered on the emotional discourse of an individual. Therefore, it is directly connected to the identity of a person.

So, here in the novel, the identity of Hagar and her house are interrelated, and is evident when she says: "I don't know it, and do not. I can think of only one thing- the house is mine. I bought it with the money. I worked for, in this city which has served as a kind of home ever since I left the prairies. Perhaps it is not home, as only the first of all can be true that, but it is mine and familiar" (Laurence, SA 36).

Hagar then says all the “shreds and remnants of the years are scattered through the house” (Laurence, *SA* 36) and it is visible in the “artefacts like lamps and vases, the needlepoint fire bench” (36), the heavy oak chair from Shipley’s place, the China cabinet and also the walnut sideboard from her father’s house. She then says there will not be any room to put all these things in a small apartment. Either these things have to be stored or sold. She could not leave all those things as it is. If those things are not present in the house or if it is not contained within her, the absence is intolerable. So here the personal aesthetic experiences of Hagar develop a sort of attachment to her own living space. In many cases, such attachments may be rooted in the possessions that we take with us as we move from place to place. Thus, the affectivity towards a physical structure is a continuous process that is formed upon individual experience.

Doris then gives a counterargument by mentioning that she is the one who takes care of the house. It is she who climbs up and down the stairs a hundred times a day and lugs the vacuum cleaner twice a week. This statement probably gives us a picture of another person who is rooted in the geographical spatiality of everyday life. Thus, the essence of self-consciousness is privileged upon the inner – view of seeing the world. The lens, through which things around the world are viewed based on their privacy, helps to demarcate different levels of space.

The perspective from which individuals view things may vary. Even in visual media and other forms of art, a product is created by considering the different dimensions from which it affects the observer. There are different levels of space that manifest human emotions. All the terrains of space may be individual in its form and structure. But, the source of intimacy that arises towards every medium is fully based on the self.

The levels of space can therefore be divided into peri-personal and extra-personal. In the novel, there is an instance where the egocentric persona of Hagar could distinguish between her peri-personal and extra-personal space.

When Hagar speaks about the day-to-day chores of her life, she thinks about the duties that she has performed. Luckily, she has not done anything except get things done in her own way. She remembers that it has been seventeen years since she has been living with Marvin and Doris. Her egoist persona forces her to think the same in an opposite manner like Marvin and Doris have lived in her house for seventeen years. Those years seemed to be a time span that lasted long for her. Here, the possession of home prompts her to consider the ones who live with her as the others. So, the first-person perspective is directly centered on Hagar. The process of being aware of the self and the factors affecting it always persuades a person to think and reflect in terms of precision.

When the cognizance of one's self, reaches its zenith, then the stance of observing things varies all of a sudden. The triggering of self-consciousness always enables an individual to inhabit a world beyond their dreams. While summoning with an out-of-body experience one may feel a sense of embodiment towards their living environment. This feeling exerts in individuals a thought as if they have shifted to a location beyond their body. In the novel when Marvin comments about taking Hagar to the Silver Threads Nursing Home she feels the same. In the opening section, Hagar is taken to Dr. Corby's clinic. There, an image of a flaneur can be seen through her perspective of observing things. The main quality attributed to a flaneur or the urban explorer is their capacity to view things in a detailed manner.

In the clinic, Hagar finds a painting. She vividly describes it and associates it with her own house Shipley Place. Franz Hessel has once said in the work titled *Spazieren in Berlin* that:

Flaneuring is a kind of reading of the street, in which human faces, shop fronts shop windows, café terraces, streetcars, automobiles, and trees become a wealth of equally valid letters of the alphabet that together result in words, sentences, and pages of an ever-new book. In order to engage in flânerie, one must not have anything too definite in mind. (Hessel)

The paintings that she finds in Dr. Corby's were hung on a "pallid grey wall" (Laurence, SA 42). Both are large in size. One had the image of a lake and thin polar trees where the blues and greens blended the sky and water. This reminded Hagar of a spring around the home where everything had a washed look and the first leaves the little openings before the ice melted. It is found that find a comparison has been done by Hagar with her old house. She says the Shipley place did not have a single picture when she first visited there. Over the years she managed to put a few, especially for the sake of her children. She considered it a bad thing to grow up in a house with no picture framed on the wall. It is the sign of how artefacts could stimulate a person's choice of having an abode according to his taste.

A house is an optimal choice for refining and fostering personal experiences. An individual's aesthetic experiences get rooted in the form of attachments to their personal space. In many cases, such attachments may be engrained in the possessions that a person carries from place to place. These kinds of connections occur with things like albums, photographs, and religious artefacts. These possessions act as a kind of link

between the past and the present life. Memory is also a course of experiences. It is how a person tries to adapt and accumulate their external environment and experiences. This includes the ability to recall past experiences and the process of consciously recognizing past experiences, information, habits, and skills. Memory is therefore a storehouse of events that one learns and retains from their experience. Any changes in the structure or the possibility of adapting to a new environment could easily validate the applicability of memory.

In the novel when Hagar visits Dr. Corby's clinic she is reminded of her past life in Shipley place. "I recall a steel engraving, entitled The Death of General Wolfe. Another was a coloured print of Holman Hunt I'd brought from the East I did admire so much the night and ladies swooning adoration, until one day I saw the coyness of the pair playing at passion, and in a fury, I dropped the picture" (Laurence, SA 82-83).

The tendency on moving towards the common, while making choices out of many is one of the most common habits found in individuals. The body send signals indicating the wrong selection, when a person makes a choice against his will. This is because of the conventional customs and behavioural patterns followed by him for years. There are few situations in which one may try to associate the limpidity of house with their memories. The linking of memory with that of an architectural space thus helps in the stratification of spatial geography. Memory can therefore be considered as a key element in promoting the luminosity of Psychogeography. The concept of memory while associating with time helps in the formation of an enhanced cultural experience.

A shift in space is the primary function of gravitating one's self with their personal memory. Doris asks Hagar to go with them for a long drive to the countryside.

She sat in the backseat bundling around with a set of pillows to get a secure feeling. She was pleased on going for a drive. The climate was pretty good. During the journey, Hagar was observing the serenity of nature. This quality of observance is another tagline of a perfect flaneur. “The mountains are so clear, the near ones sharp and blue as ice or jay feathers, the further ones fading to cloudy purple, the ghosts of mountains” (Laurence, SA 93). The vigilant nature of an observer of a geographical space is a representation of various sociological elements. It includes the investigative and artistic development that contributes in unveiling the marginalised aspects of the cityscapes. A Flaneur is therefore like a detective in tracing the hidden elements of a city.

The flaneur as a city observer records the city images, its cultural and socio-economic growth, and interactions of the social beings. He is a person who resides within the cityscapes and combines the elements observed and transforms into. Charles Baudelaire`s emphasis on the flaneur`s incognito collectively offers the factors of that which Benjamin refers to as the dialectic of flaneuring. On one hand a person feels that he is part of a geographical space and at the same time he can uncover the hidden aspects of the same. A flaneur is therefore like the two sides of the same coin. Modern urban life always necessitates the requirement of living in proximity to strangers.

Untangling the intricate relationships between the urban environments required a deep understanding of the day-to-day activities that people living in cities undertake as part of their lives. Those who lived in cities show great attachments towards nature. The act of enjoying the beauty of nature is a kind of distressing or releasing urban pathogens. While going for a drive with Marvin and Doris, Hagar felt the same. Everything looked green to her. She gazed on the marvel fields and on the alder`s

aquamarine. She lived all her life in the city. So, such a drive gave her an experience of transition from the toxic urban setting to that peaceful countryside experience.

The basic structure of the house helps an individual in delighting their senses by maintaining a connection between the structure and inner self. The effectiveness between a man and a house in a two-way manner stimuli it in becoming a sign of architectural response. The force behind such architectural response is ultimately the attachment that develops after living in the space for years. Therefore, migrating or shifting to a new space offers less chance of responsiveness. Hagar's long journey ends in front of a black iron gate. She wondered why Marvin was driving through this open gate. Suddenly a wrought-up iron-lettered board caught her eyes.

As quoted in the novel: "SILVER THREADS she asked Marvin where we are going? Then with a sigh he said: It's all right. Out of anxiety Hagar told Marvin that she will not go there. She says: I want to go home" (Laurence, SA 95). Here she experienced a sudden shift in her space which she felt uncomfortable. Her son and daughter-in-law had planned to take her to Silver Threads nursing home. For a person like Hagar who had a deep-rooted attachment to the home could not tolerate this.

The evolving nature of time often necessitates changes in every phase of the world. It is applicable to all areas of life including geographical space. Therefore, a change in the existing circumstances is unnatural for a person who has been living in an intra-personal urban space for years. Colin Ellard suggests in *Places of the Heart* that:

Our biological heritage, and the style of living for which much of our mental machinery is adapted, involved living among small groups of individuals, mostly kin, and in groups of fewer than one hundred people whose appearance, personalities, and habits we knew well. (Collard 136)

In the novel what we see is Hagar who had been living with her family for years in her own home. So, the Silver Threads nursing home is a place of anxiety for her. Hagar and her family were welcomed by the matron. She told her to have a look at the place and to comment on how she felt about it. The matron added that there are many people like Hagar who are prejudiced about pleasant things. As soon as, she is reminded about her own house again, a random of thoughts comes to her mind regarding the house. Here also a difficulty to adapt to a new environment is witnessed. Whenever Hagar visits a space, a detailed description of things she observes is narrated. She beautifully describes it too.

The architecture or appearance of the building plays a very important role in connecting a person's psychology and aesthetic experience. Human beings are remarkably lithe in terms of their lifestyle. They can adapt to very different kinds of environmental circumstances that are unpleasant in their extremity. This adaptation ultimately leads to a response that induces stress and experiences an unpleasant side of urban living. Guy Debord defines the concept of drifting to an unacquainted space as derived. It can occur within a short period of time. It is very similar to using a rented space, despite having one's own. The idea of 'derive' also alluded to the possibility of encountering a strange situation and the chances of risk behind it. It occurs when one visits an unfamiliar place or meets a stranger with a gut feeling of anxiety and unfamiliarity. The anticipation thus developed in the mind elicits the process of deriving.

The matron took Hagar on a tour of the nursing home. While navigating through the corridor she felt the warden's attitude like that of a person who is going to display a priceless object. The main lounge of the nursing home in the words of the matron was very comfy. During the evenings especially in the winter old people gathered around the fireplace. Hagar with apathy made up her mind not to look at the things around her. "This is our dining hall," the matron says. "Spacious, don't you know? Very light and airy. The larger windows catch the afternoon light. It's bright in here ever so late, way past nine in summer. The tables are solid oak" (Laurence, *SA* 97). Here in this section, the image of a person trying to adapt to a new environment by giving a vivid description of the nursing homes architecture and its artefacts can be seen. Hagar is thus able to derive the surroundings of the nursing home.

There are many instances where the architecture and the style of the nursing home are described in detail. The stairs were not carpeted and the window panes were also in its old style. This is a kind of traditional design found in these kinds of buildings. Hagar says: "The little cells look un-lived in and they smell of creosote. An iron cot, a dresser, a bedspread of that cheap homespun sold by the mail-order houses" (Laurence, *SA* 98). The tour around the nursing home created a sense of anxiety in the mind of Hagar.

Frequent exposure to architectural elements may cause changes in human brains that make them over-responsive to anxiety. There are some types of people who are more prone to their surroundings. Stress and loud noise have long been known to impair cognitive performance and emotional state in all types of environments. It is that one risk factor that lies behind the journey of a flaneur. While returning from the nursing home Hagar paid a visit to Dr. Tappen's clinic. There also the flaneur in her tries to catch hold

of the clinic's geographical setting. “The veranda is shadowy. Awnings have been drawn around the screens and now in the early evening, it has that dank aquarium feel that the prairie houses used to have on midsummer days when all the blinds were drawn against the sun” (Laurence, SA 99).

Culture plays a vital role in regulating the day-to-day activities of every individual. The actions performed regularly get converted into experiences. The innumerable experience of the past that occurs within the lifetime is then expressed in the form of memories. Memories come into every being’s life in the form of internalised cultural conventions that are specific to the society as well as the setting.

To add, culture has arguably shaped how memory is understood and the uses it has been put to, as can be seen in how the concept has varied across the globe. Scott Lopez in an article entitled *How Culture Affects Memory* has mentioned that: “If your culture values social interactions, you will remember those interactions better than a culture that values individual perceptions. Culture really shapes your memory” (Lopez). The culture is a dual operational process. At first, it acts as a functioning agent that shapes a nation’s language, traditions, and geography. Then, it takes the stance of a psychological tool that facilitates and outlines the concept of memory. E. Casey in his book entitled *Annals of the Association of American Geographer*:

When I inhabit a place – whether by moving through it or staying in it-I have it in my actional purview. I also hold it by virtue of being in its ambiance: first in my body as it holds onto the place by various sensory and kinaesthetic means, then by my memory as I ‘hold it in my mind.’ This is how the durability of habitus is

expressed: by my tenacious holding onto of place so as to prolong the experience beyond the present moment. (Casey 687)

A person's self and the place become two factors that reinforce a nation's cultural hegemony. It is through culture a person's identity and the place he lives combine with each other. The experiences gained throughout the lifetime get manifested in the form of time and memory. Thus, a memory-based cultural identity is formed through the intermingling of geography and time. E. Casey has defined the contextual agent between our lived places and our geographical self in his work entitled *Annals of the Association of American Geographer* by naming it as habitus (686). The concept serves as a midway between a person's geographical location and the experiences received within the place expressed in the form of memories.

Geography and cultural identity are inherently connected to the place, its citizens, and their sense of belongingness towards it. The lifetime that spans from birth to old age helps in evolving a person's identity. In the novel entitled *The Stone Angel*, the protagonist Hagar Shipley's cultural identity is interlinked with the geography of Manawaka. The time period of ninety years helps in gaining a collective memory of Hagar's narrative episodes. The Scottish Presbyterian history of her ancestors provides the base for shaping her cultural outlook. Thus, the cultural identity of Hagar is, therefore, a mixture of her memories and experiences.

Through the story of Hagar Shipley, Laurence has tried to showcase the concept of the past as vital as the moments experienced in the present. An inclination towards memory for a long period of time to a great extent is a matter of risk. In an article entitled "Cultural Pride and Cultural Baggage", "it is said that: "Cultural pride is a concept that

refers to being proud of your own culture as well as traditions. However, by one being proud of his or her culture, this does not mean anything if that person is not able to express important aspects of his or her traditions” (Ivy Panda).

Being proud of a certain ethnicity implies spreading cultural understanding to the community through leadership, willpower, devotion, and enthusiasm. Hagar always felt proud of the culture of her ancestors. She always tried to maintain the Scottish legacy throughout the story. As a Scottish forerunner, she chose to remain independent in terms of her thoughts and lifestyle. Freedom always remained the major choice of her survival. She always practiced the idea of freedom and prolonged survival in her actions and thoughts.

The concept of culture plays the form of a psychological tool that persuades Hagar’s memory. It is the theme of cultural pride that persuades Hagar’s self-consciousness and memory. To begin with, Hagar can be recognised with the stone angel which is the central image of the novel. It designates their pride and blindness in her. Her father, Jason Currie boosts the male virtues in her and neglects certain of the female virtues which he expects her to eventually display. What she forgets is that a lady is first of all a woman. An education that aims at making women an embellishing element and that which will keep her reliant on men can be seen in this work. Hagar’s sense of pride plays a major theme throughout the novel. The events of the past are recovered from a point in time in *The Stone Angel*.

Hagar’s portrayal throughout the story conveys the struggle she undergoes in communicating with her kith and kin. Hagar refuses her son’s proposal of selling the house because she knows that this would mean her going to Silver Threads, an old-age nursing home. Her denial arises from her attachment to the house where she has lived

almost all her life, and to face up to her deteriorating physical condition and the thought that she has become a burden for her son and daughter-in-law. On one hand, there is Hagar who was trained about the importance of physical appearance in the system of living. On contrary, there is another image of Hagar, who is driven by the need to unravel the truth of an infinite image of life.

The narrative moves in steady progress from the past to the present. As the novel progress, the transition of troubles from the present to the past is redeemed. It can be understood; when Hagar spent a night in the old cannery with a disturbed state of mind. Then she falsely identifies Murray Ferney Lees as her son John and tries to create a rapport with him. It is after Marvin and Doris's arrival at the cannery it is understood that Hagar is slowly dying. Hagar Shipley is labelled by her pride. She carries with her a pride that is unwavering and firm. It affects her relationships, her social interactions, and her family. She inherited the mannerism from her father.

The first reference to pride can be seen in the novel when Hagar describes the stone angel as "my mother's angel that my father brought in pride to mark her bones and proclaim his dynasty" (Laurence, SA 3). The pride that she felt in her youth is present when Hagar grows up. She is frustrated at her health conditions that resulted in a fall. Hagar's ego and stubbornness were the causes of her failed relationships and lack of love in her life. The immoderate pride destroys her relationship with her father, brother, and husband. It even leads to the death of her son, John. It is due to Hagar's immense pride that she was not able to express love towards her fellow beings. From a very young age itself, she always refused to show emotions as she was doomed in self-pride. Hagar's ego

even stopped her from being a mother for her dying brother. Her marriage life with Bram was also an unhappy one and she did not have the feeling of love towards him.

Hagar's egotism towards her husband was based on his physical appearance. She has never let him know about her personal feelings toward him. She even says: "I never let him know. I never spoke aloud" (SA 81). Hagar's neurotic difficulties arise due to her spiritual pride. It also destroyed her relationship with her son John. When John brought Arlene to stay at their home, Hagar was too proud to let her stay and refused. They later died in a car accident and it is then Hagar realised that if she had compromised, they would have been alive. It was too late when she realised it is her ego that hindered the happiness of John.

Here the relevance of the title *The Stone Angel* comes into form like the stone angel of Manawaka that stands without emotions. The protagonist Hagar is also portrayed by Margaret Laurence as a person without any feelings. The numbness of the stone is indicative of Hagar's vaulting pride. In the novel, she is unable to lament her son's death and listens to the death news like a pebble without any feelings. Even at the last stage of her life, Hagar chose to remain self-reliant in terms of her ego. By thinking about life, she says:

Pride was my wilderness, and the demon that led me there was fear. I was alone, never anything else, and never free, for I carried my chains with me and they spread out from me and shackled all I touched. Oh, My two, my dead. Dead by your hands or by mine? Nothing can take away those years. (Laurence, SA 292)

This is a key statement in understanding Hagar's character at the end since this fully reveals her perception of life. In the end, Hagar realises that she has never tried to enjoy the moments of life due to her ego. The inability to express love towards others has

led Hagar into an exile state. To sum up, it is the pride that masked Hagar's life and disrupted her path to happiness. Culture is metaphorically explained in this novel by associating it with Hagar's psyche and memories.

Margaret Laurence believes that it is through the exploration of inherent writing, a writer can discover oneself. A writer who understands the importance of history and time even without a personal experience can easily delve into the act of self-exploration. This kind of assessment is clearly visible in the works of Afro-American writers who try to recreate their ancestor's past in novels and plays in order to recover a sense of their lost identity.

Laurence's writing also followed the path of self-discovery in her works. She even says in her work *A Place to Stand on: Essays by and about Margaret Laurence*: "The attempt to assimilate the past, partly in order to be freed from it. Partly in order to try to understand me and perhaps others of my generation through seeing where we had come from" (Laurence56). In *The Stone Angel* Laurence tried to approach her own background by associating with her ancestors of Scottish Presbyterian origin. They were the first immigrants of the prairie town Manawaka and it is where her roots emerged.

The past plays a significant role in depicting the novel and its characters. Hagar Shipley, the protagonist is one such character who evolved and altered with time. The idea of inheritance and survival is thus central to Laurence's novels. She tries to connect a character within a time frame by combining her role-play with the past and future. The idea of the past is a dormant manifestation in the narrator's mind. The individual should unravel a body of worldly tensions from events of the past, family legacy, and customs practised by keeping in mind time as a matter of survival.

Each time Hagar Shipley changes to her previous existence when she experiences anything in her present. Her ninety-year-old lifetime itself is a perfect example of a character bound by the time factors of past, present, and future. A change in the time story is seen every time when Hagar encounters something. In the opening section of the novel, we could find Hagar describing Stone Angel:

Above the town on the hill brow, the stone angel used to stand. I wonder if she stands there yet, in memory of her who relinquished her feeble ghosts as I gained my stubborn one, my mother's angel that my father brought in pride to mark her bones and proclaim his dynasty, as he fancied, forever and a day. (Laurence, SA 3).

The historical episodes of Hagar's life are described in a manner of re-examining one's self. While demonstrating reviewing the focus of which is on portrayal, by doing so it makes memory an important rule of acknowledgment and force of joining at various times into a solitary unit. As indicated by Hagar, the ninety-year-old lifestyle gained her widespread experience. She does not regularly enjoy her course of reviewing the past. It is out of exhaustion that she began associating her current existence with that of her past.

In the opening section as mentioned earlier Hagar tries to pop up her association with the stone angel. According to her, the angel was the guardian of Manawaka town. It was her father who brought it from Italy by paying a huge amount and was made of pure white marble. In the book entitled *Places of the Heart: The Psychogeography of Everyday Life*, Colin Ellard says that:

It is by observing the intricate relationships between our lived experiences and the places that contain them- an enterprise in which everyone can participate- and to continue by bringing to bare the new arsenal of both scientific theory and modern technology to make sense of such relationships (Ellard 13).

The prairie town of Manawaka provides the cultural background of Margret Laurence's writing. The novel is a sequential entwining of vivid episodes from Hagar's past life. In the opening section, a detailed portrayal of Hagar's life is done by Margaret Laurence. She was born in Manawaka town. Her father Jason Currie was the owner of a general store. He always took pride in the store as it was the first in Manawaka. Her mother Regina had died from some obscure disorder. She had two brothers named Matt and Dan. Her father's ancestors migrated from the East. So, the Anglo-Saxon nature of detailing the things in the house and self-esteem was visible in Jason Currie's attitude. He always said "the devil finds works for idle hands" (Laurence, *SA* 50). He always had faith in homilies as they were his apostle's creed. He even counted them like rosary beads.

The Anglo-Saxon nature of furnishing oneself and the surroundings with extravagant items was seen in the character of Jason Currie. Hagar's way of describing her father's nature gives us an idea about his character. She says: "He never believed in wasting a word or a minute. He was a self-made man. He had started without a bean, he was fond of telling Matt and Dan, and had pulled himself up by his book straps" (Laurence, *SA* 7). He never wanted girls to come out of the house and be a part of society. Instead, a woman should be a perfect cook and a hostess who must find time in showcasing her skills in front of the guests. Therefore, Hagar was sent to a finishing school for grooming.

The term place has much significance in the works of Margret Laurence. The inner layers of this term are clearly seen in the title of her essay “A Place to Stand On”. Here the term not only covers the physical space instead it can also be considered as a particular position or situation. It is one of the strong factors that helped in shaping Laurence’s identity. In the book titled *Margaret Laurence: Critical Reflections*, the writer has mentioned about Margaret Laurence: “This is where my world began. A world which formed me and continues to do so” (David 21). For Laurence leaving behind the monstrosity of such scenes implies physical and transient just as passionate separation from her previous existence, established as it was in the grasslands. She makes a progression of elopement from the area of a steady living environment looking for an unjustifiable presence.

The idea of survival gave a lot of significance to the possibility of self-investigation that Laurence felt as the need for vanity but was unconscious of where to search for it. Her excursion of self-investigation has a close relationship with her imaginative abilities. This is found in her first scholarly works and furthermore in her artistic diaries. Laurence at all her phases of life attempted to retain the encounters she gained from other individuals and furthermore about herself.

According to Margaret Laurence, finding an ideal place where her identity gets rooted was a simple task. She even felt the consistency of living in an unfamiliar land as a simpler one than imagined. In Laurence’s narratives, she perceives and recognises the significance of being an outsider in a foreign land. It is expressed by her in the following way in “A Place to Stand on”: “One can never be a stranger in one’s own land... It is precisely this fact which makes it so difficult to live there” (Laurence 2).

In an unfamiliar land, a traveller always experiences the feeling of isolation. This according to Laurence is a feeling of being out of the way. The condition is further enlarged by the strangeness of unknown landscapes and weather conditions and the transition in cultural practices. In all her novels, the state of isolation experienced by Laurence becomes the context of reference. So, while trying to define the living environment one must be well aware of the changes that are going to happen to the identity of a person.

In Canadian fiction, Laurence attempts to manage the struggle endured by her characters who manage to find a space in their homeland by battling with the cultural dominion of the ancestors and by upholding the values in the present. The characters are tied within the chains of cultural supremacy, family impact, and ethnicity of their ancestors. Only through self-liberation these characters can escape from the chains of supremacy and know the value of their culture.

The heroine of *The Stone Angel* Hagar Shipley has a lot of closeness towards the Canadian ethnicity. She has an emotional attachment to the ancestral legends that were of her dad's age. She considers him to be a dictator and hesitates to show affection toward him. Her love and affection are covered by fear. Her dad always endures the highlanders and added them to the establishment of the town. He often spoke about the highlanders and even finds time in mentioning his father: "He died before your birth, Father would say, "Before he even knew I'd made good over here. I left when I was seventeen, and never saw him again. You were named after him, Dan. Sir Daniel Currie- the title died with him, for it wasn't a baronetcy" (Laurence, SA 14).

Hagar's grandfather was a silk importer who lived in India during his younger days. He was not a good merchant and lost everything out of his innocence. Jaison Currie

always took pride in mentioning that the Curries are Highlanders. Jaison Currie is like Laurence's grandfather Simpson, who had the stubborn attitude of the forerunners. Hagar always felt from her father's epic tales of highlanders that: "the Highlanders must be the most fortunate of all men on earth, spending their days in flailing about them with claymores, and their nights in eight some reels. They lived in castles, too, every man jack of them and all were gentlemen" (Laurence, SA15).

In the present narration, Hagar is portrayed as a ninety-year-old woman haunted by her memories. She chose to live in the past as she believed the quality of time is too short in the present world. Therefore, she finds time in discovering things that made her. In Hagar's memory, the beauty of the land where she lived in her youth is still alive. She recalls the strength and generosity of nature in its seasonal change. On the night before her wedding, she was staying at Charlotte Tappen's house, through the act of recalling her wedding day she says:

It was spring that day, a different spring from this one. The poplar bluffs had budded with sticky leaves, and the frogs had come back to the sloughs and sang like choruses of angels with sore throats, and the marsh marigolds were opening like the shaving of the sun on the brown river where the tadpoles danced and the bloodsuckers lay slimy and low, waiting for the boys' feet. And I rode in the black-topped buggy beside the man who was now my mate (Laurence, SA50).

The Manawaka town in Laurence's works is considered an incredible and legendary spot where an author had the option to rise above her spirits and furthermore to arrive at a general vision. Manawaka is in this way a conurbation of everyman's intellect. For the creation of Manawaka, Laurence took components from her own roots named

Neepawa. Manawaka became a part of internal adornment in the existence of all the women characters created by her. In the novel, there are many instances where Hagar has described the ambience of Manawaka landscapes. At first, she mentions the landscapes surrounded by the cemetery:

In summer the cemetery was rich and thick as syrup with the funeral parlour perfume of the planted peonies, dark crimson, and wallpaper pink, the pompous blossoms hanging leadenly, too heavy for their light stems, bowed down with the weight of themselves and the weight of the rain, infested with upstart ants that sauntered through the plush petals as though to the manner born. (Laurence, SA 4)

As an inhabitant of the town, she is more prone to observe the little things that surround the beauty of the cemetery. Even though it is a place of the dead, Hagar used to walk there often when she was young. One day Hagar asked her son John to take her for a drive to the Manawaka cemetery. When her son asked the purpose of her visit, she expressed her wish to see how the Curries plot has been maintained, as her father allotted money for that purpose. On reaching there she says:

The cemetery, being on the hill, caught all the wind but wasn't cooled by it, for the wind was so hot and dry it seemed to shrivel your nostrils. The spruce trees beside the road stood dark against the sun, and the only sound there that day was the faint clicking and ticking of grasshoppers as they jumped like mechanical toys. (Laurence, SA178)

The Situationists were evident in bringing Psychogeography as a response to a particular situation, overwhelmingly, the professed categorisation of Paris. Derive was a strategy for the fight that rebelliously disregarded those categories of space and praised

arbitrary development. Applying, psychogeography to something besides a metropolitan setting is a worthless undertaking. The major devices of a geographical space like the scene, the *dérive*, and the *détournement* are dependent in their form through the expedient articulations of broad communications. Human mediation of this assortment is occasionally found in rustic idylls. So here in the novel, Hagar is involved in the act of *détournement* by exploring the backdrops and landscapes of Manawaka.

The next place that influenced Hagar is the Wachawaka Valley. In the novel, there are many instances where the beauty of Wachawaka Valley has been strikingly expressed by Laurence. The blend of how a perfect climate and vast landscape go in hand can be seen in the description of the Wachawaka Valley by the protagonist Hagar.

“In winter the Wachawaka river was solid as marble, and we skated there, twining around the bends, stumbling over the rough spots where the water had frozen in waves, avoiding the occasional patch where the ice was thin- “rubber ice,” we called it” (Laurence, SA23).

When Hagar tries to escape from not going to the Silver Threads nursing home, she chooses another place as her temporary abode and its name is Shadow Point.

The place was part of her memory. She recollects its name in the following manner:

I can recall a quiet place, I think, and not so very far from here. Didn't we go there for a picnic? Was it this year? Now, if the name will only come to me.

The name is necessary and essential. For the ticket. Point something. Was it?

What's the point? Like a plague of black flies, the phrases buzz and mock me.

Then it comes. Shadow Point is so named because the cliffs at noon cast shadows on the sea. (Laurence, SA 139)

Hagar finally reaches the shadow point when she reached there, she was astonished by its looks because it was entirely different from her expectations in her words it looked ordinary. But still, she was proud of her journey as she made it her own. The only trouble found there was in identifying the location of the steps. Meanwhile, she speaks about the climate. The sky is striped blue, like a tub filled with water from a spinning cube of blueness. She also felt that she is alone there. Then she goes on to describe the shadow point. After identifying the stairway, she says that by standing among the trees growing down a steep slope to the sea. She hears a piercing call, and the silence that follows is reinforced by the memory of that one cry: leaves swaying, touching, making faint, unsettling noises paraphrased from (Laurence, SA 9).

The above-mentioned situations of the novel point out a single idea that modern psycho-geographers rely on history, nostalgia, and romanticism to paint a more dimensional portrait of a town, city, or other landscape. There is a sustained depth to their explorations that borders on hagiography. But to approach psychogeography in this way, as a discursive form of exegesis, misunderstands its founding principle. It became clear that psychogeography was a statement of the social milieu that facilitated the importance of man and space.

In the novel, a recurring image of stairs is mentioned. When Hagar reaches the destination, she then says it is the final desired place that can bring peace to her. After reaching there, she questions to herself whether she can find the steps that lead down. It is the first time that the image of stairs is seen in the text. The fact that the stairs “lead down and down” is also interesting as it is a common belief that hell is below us. When Hagar arrives at the beginning of the stairway she admits “It’s not a proper stairway,”

The idea of Hagar walking through the upstairs is a reflection of “the stairway to heaven” (Laurence, SA 154). When she gets to the top of the staircase, she says she feels “more barricaded, safer” (Laurence, SA 155). This leads to giving the assumption that the destination at the top of the stairs is symbolic of heaven.

Margaret Laurence’s novels could be interpreted through adherence to stylistic devices. The biblical imagery has paid a strong influence in the structure of the novel. The Hagar in the bible was to conceive a son with the husband named Abraham of her owner, Sarah, who, herself, was unable to conceive. Hagar did bear a son but Sarah became very jealous of Hagar and had her thrown out into the wilderness. Hagar's son was born and they both returned to the place where Sarah and her husband, Abraham lived. (Verukyl, Genesis XXI)

Hagar and her son were cast into the wilderness once again when Sarah bore a son of her own and Hagar’s son, Ishmael, mocked Sarah's child. Nearing death, Hagar and her son were saved by God who provided them with a well of water. (Verkuyl, Genesis XVI: 1-5). The Hagar in *The Stone Angel* is very similar to the Hagar in the bible. Laurence’s Hagar became a housekeeper to Bram after she married him, which is ironic for a woman with her qualities. Hagar realizes this and sees herself as a bondwoman and therefore, she feels trapped like a prisoner

She experiences a feeling of being at home when she says that her room “has been prepared for (her)” (Laurence, SA 155). She talks as if she is the owner of the place. Hagar is finding comfort in this heavenly setting. The image of Hagar climbing the stairs up and down is indicative of the need in undergoing a confession before she can reach the

stage of redemption. Laurence uses this image ironically to express the status of life where one seeks for salvation. On contrary, Hagar is still ignorant and has not attained the state of reclamation. While Laurence is hinting at spiritual freedom, Hagar is running away from her problems back in Manawaka rather than facing them.

Michel de Certeau says in his *The Practice of Everyday Life*: “To walk is to lack a place. It is the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper” (Certeau 103). A flaneur is an individual who wanders amidst but against the crowds and urban flows of modern life. His identity is an incomplete one and an existence that is unsatisfactory. According to Bauman in *The Practice of Everyday Life*: “The flaneur is the mirror-image, the imitation, the product of stock-taking, the forced adjustment and mimicry of the modern world” (58). In *The Stone Angel*, as Laurence has to try to figure out an identity that embarks upon the geographical space, the idea of a flaneur can be attributed to the protagonist Hagar Shipley. For centuries the term flaneur was attributed to a person of urban space, but here in the novel, Hagar Shipley is a blend of a modern and a rural flaneur.

Her quality of observing the deepest or the hidden things around the geographical space makes Hagar a perfect flaneur. As an anti-modern flaneur, the rural landscape of Manawaka offered the possibility of hope in her life. Thus, Manawaka is the geographical space where Hagar practised the art of flaneuring. In describing the cemetery where the stone angel is placed Hager says: “I used to walk there often when I was a girl. There could not have been many places to walk primly in those days, on paths, where white kid boots and dangling skirts would not be torn by thistles or put in unseemly disarray” (Laurence, SA 4- 5).

By discovering the rural landscape, a flaneur is trying to counter pose the limitations of a reversed urban life, even though the concept of landscape is an urban creation. Donald Meinig States in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*: “Landscape is interpreted by our vision and interpreted by our minds. It is a panorama that continuously changes as we move along any route. Strictly speaking, we are never in it, it lies before our eyes and it becomes real as we become conscious of it” (Meinig 3).

In the novel, Hagar’s visualisation of the cemetery’s landscape proves that she is trying to counterpose the limitations of urban life. It can be understood from the following section. She explains that the landscape of the cemetery was tough-rooted. The wild and garish flowers were held back at the cemetery’s edge.

A flaneur in the words of John Mulgan in *Man Alone* is the “one who wanders the streets, ambling through its passages, and revealing its undisclosed secrets: they are also the one who when ‘distracted among a crowd’, makes ‘unconscious and unwitting connections’ and so in the process, ‘reveals the mythological secrets of society” (Mulgan 17). In the novel, there is an instance when Hagar is engaged in the process of wandering through the streets.

I walked out into Saturday’s throng of people on the Main Street sidewalk, boots and overshoes crunching and squeaking on the hard-packed snow. Among the cutters and sleighs on the road, a few motor cars spun and struggled, their drivers sitting high and proud, punching the horns and making them rudely say “a-hoo-gah!” like boys with paper tooters at a party (Laurence, *SA* 133-34).

After leaving Bram’s home, Hagar’s journey was in the train. The trip was towards the urban space. This is a transition in the life of Hagar. So here Hagar’s choice

of relocating her life from Manawaka to the city is symbolic of a person who is in search of a new existence. When she starts her journey toward the city, a change in the geographical structure of Manawaka town could be felt. She says: “we passed the shacks and shanties that clustered around the station, and the railway buildings and water tower painted their dried blood red. Then we were away from Manawaka. It came as a shock to me, how small the town was, and how short a time it took to leave it, as we measure time” (Laurence, SA 98).

When her husband Bram fell ill, Hagar decides to return to Shipley Place. On returning she is convinced by the fact that even after going to different places, a person’s final destination is the home itself. Society and culture take expression on the mood and emotions of a flaneur. Thus, a flaneur tries to be the manifestation of a sociocultural fallacy by observing the outlooks on the landscape as well as the urban space. So, Hagar Shipley is one of the best literary characters that conceived the notion of an urban as well as a rural flaneur in her everyday life. Laurence’s research of Hagar’s reminiscences within *The Stone Angel* includes a section of the novel, when Hagar marries Bram Shipley, leading to an emotional and physical detachment from life.

She inaccurately believed that Bram’s extrovert nature was something that must be changed. On contrary, Hagar went more and more reclusive, as Bram’s unrefined language, lack of decorum, and improper behaviour while meeting people always made her a little embarrassed. She even hesitated to accompany him to the town while going for shopping. “After the first year of our marriage, I let Bram go to town alone, and I stayed home” (Laurence, SA 71). Eventually, attending church with Bram during the weekends was also a moment of discomfit. Hagar then states: “I never went to church

after that. I preferred possible damnation in some comfortably distant future, to any ordeal then of peeking or pitying eyes” (Laurence, *SA* 89-90).

The concept of marriage was never satisfactory for Hagar. Her marriage life lacked acceptance towards each other. The idea of turning a house into a home through unconditional love never turned successful in Hagar’s life. She never had a sense of attachment to the place. It also lacked the natural development of the house. Hagar’s memory of her new house was very less. It was not properly maintained. In the novel it is described as a “square and frame, two-storied, the furniture shoddy and second-hand, the kitchen reeking and stale” (50), that remained “an unpainted house” (84), crammed with promise. The idea of home was never fulfilled. The house is thus a reflection of Hagar and Bram’s unhealthy relationship which remained colourless and incomplete.

Hagar had many opportunities in altering her relationship with Bram. It could be made into a sexually and emotionally intimate relationship. Instead, Hagar chose to remain detached by tarnishing their marriage life. She tolerated him only because he fulfilled her hidden sexual desires. Hagar tried to suppress her self-identity by becoming side-lined in the society. The marginalisation indicates the isolation and imprisonment of Hagar’s life in a confined space. After becoming old, Hagar started reflecting on the suppressed familiarity of her marriage by explaining that:

Now there is no one to speak to.... My bed is cold as winter, and now it seems to me that I am lying as the children used to do, on fields of snow...The icy whiteness covers me, drifts over me, and I could drift to sleep in it, like someone caught in a blizzard, and freeze.(Laurence, *SA* 81)

Hagar then equates the emotional outsidership and detachment towards an imaginary space with that of a marriage life. Thus, Margaret Laurence has tried to depict the apparatus of Hagar's marriage life as an undesirable. She also emblemized the protagonist's emotional detachment while collaborating with the dented physical life-spaces. As an author, she provides the method of escaping from reality by allowing Hagar to expand the individualised geomorphologies and form emotional attachments towards new places.

In *The Stone Angel*, Hagar moves from Manitoba to British Columbia in order to reduce the physical distance of her relationship. Despite the clay-charged isolation from society, Hagar's sense of being destined to a place helped in surviving the unsuccessful marriage life. She feels that the twenty-four years of her life washed away like the sand banks of the sea. After her unexpected departure to Vancouver, Laurence was able to generate a new sense of identity. She rented Mr. Oatley's house in the city. Here, Hagar tried to regain a deeper sense of connection to place and had similar feelings towards her childhood house. Life was systematic and satisfying. She was able to live in a proper house filled with good furniture made of solid mahogany and Chinese carpets of deep blue.

During her forties, Hagar felt living in a tiled house as complete and manageable. The possibility of making changes in her living space was still at its zenith. The extension of Hagar's own geographical space enhanced the possibility of increasing a person's skills. It also permitted her the chance to ignore undesirable occasions and settings.

Sometimes, Hagar had to convince others about her lineages. She even educated her manager that she "came from a decent family" and that her "significant other was dead" (Laurence, SA 158). This spot-based memory enables the old Hagar, loaning her a

misguided feeling of autonomy when her matured body has taken out these sentiments from her personality. Hagar's link to place and home is a state of transient feeling. Her home is continuously contributed to the conduct of short-lived moments and assumptions that flows with the passage of time. The opportunities of being versatile according to the transition of time always made Hagar, an admirer of her memories. She is thus a type of flaneur who travels beyond the scope of time.

In the novel when Hagar was shifted to the nursing home, she associates it with her life in Vancouver. Life at Vancouver was always a state of transition in her life. The memory thus triggers her to think about the effects of shifting to a new space. She then says: "I've assumed control over issues previously, and can once more" (Laurence, SA 139). She understands that she would "never get out. The main departure from those spots is feet first in a wooden box" (Laurence, SA185). Her perspective on the house is totally changed during this stage. She then considers the idea of a house to that of a jail, wherein she would be a detainee waiting for capital punishment, living just to pass on.

The journey towards Shadow Point gives Hagar the worthless acceptance of living independently. Laurence exhibits that, old Hagar's feeling of her autonomous and practical self is inherently connected with the need to guarantee her very own position. It is here that Hagar proceeds to expel her family. When the novel ends, Hagar is hospitalised and her body becomes excessively feeble.

She feels wiped out to make due all alone in a disengaged and antagonistic climate. Here she remarks few moments of her life when the physical space reduced in its form and the situations where she confronted death: "How the world has contracted.

Presently it's only one gigantic room, loaded with high white iron beds, each tight, and in everyone a female body or the like;” and alluding to her space once more, she calls it “the contracted world” (Laurence, SA 254), that turned out to be much more restrictive. Thus, by comparing her life with a physical space Hagar was able to review the critical spot-based memories of her life.

During the situation, when she moves to a semi-private room Hagar says that: “The world is significantly more modest at this point. It’s contracting so rapidly. The following room will be the littlest of all...“Just adequate room for me” (Laurence, SA 264). The outline of Laurence’s novel gives flashback episodes that signify Hagar’s association with places amidst the individuals. The physical life space of Hagar diminishes completely by the end of the novel. Thereby, Laurence permits her a few chances to comprehend the worth of human relations and maintain it before death.

When Hagar dies, one of her caretakers said that she was blessed to live for many years in this world. During the last stage before her death, the nurse even tells her that nothing can take away her memories. It is a mixed gift where the good and bad episodes of life submerge a person to look back. As an experienced individual, Hagar considers the stereotype of older people living in the past to be gibberish, and she appears to regard memory as a luxury she cannot afford.

Subsequent to remembering a long period of recollections in which she estranged individuals around her and stifled her own feelings, recollections in which she showed her profound association with the place, Hagar, her living space diminished to a “casing” in which she is “woven around with strings, held firmly,” (Laurence, SA 306), remarks that:

I lie here and attempt to review something genuinely free that I've done in ninety years. I can imagine just two demonstrations that may be thus, both later. One was a joke... The difference was completely false—yet not a lie, for it was spoken in any event and finally with what may maybe be a sort of adoration. (*Laurence, SA 307*).

In the novel, Laurence has tried to compare Hagar's living space to the size of a pin-prick, as, intensely subject to pain-relievers. She then says: "The world is a needle" (*Laurence, SA 307*). In fact, Laurence portrays Hagar as a compliant person, who controls the moments of her life irrespective of time. It's understood when Hagar says: "I should get back, back to my smooth casing, where I'm practically agreeable... I can gather my contemplations there. That is the thing that I need to do, gather my musings" (*SA308*). By emphasising the connection between memory and disposition, Laurence presents the idea that Hagar accepts she could keep living in an extended life-space through her place-based recollections however long her body stays alive, leaving the user with the prospect that in case Hagar's person was to proceed with her artistic life past, she may rise up out of her "cover" (*Laurence, SA 308*) with a more prominent association with the characters around her.

The cognitive abilities of a person improve as he matures from the stage of infancy and when the world around him expands. Then, one starts to explore the world around him and begins to develop the attachment towards the place and frames an identity. The spatial construct of young children and adults are formed based on their childhood experiences which has a tinge of fantasy mixed in it. But as they grow up the doors of reality is opened and the spatial memories grow beyond the limit. The insecurity

and diminished sense of self-worth perceived by the elderly individual leads to a dichotomous relationship between physical and mental spaces.

For the elderly individuals, the memories of place help in framing the economic, social, and cultural identity. So, the concept of self is being analysed from the perspective of a psychological tool that helps in reaffirming and reasserting an individual's life.

Memory always provides a broader outlook for the stability of place as it develops, and the shared memories that define the essence of place are transferred from one group's memories and social identity to another group's position of insiderness within it.

All the imagery used in the novel helps the themes, characters, or plot to be more effective. The biblical imagery aids the development of Hagar's character and the plot. The water imagery helps to establish the theme of death and to attempt the impossible - escape from death. The flower imagery showed the way Hagar lived her life and the way she should have lived her life. Margaret Laurence is brilliant in her use of imagery to further propel the strength of her story. Without this outstanding application of imagery, the novel *The Stone Angel* would not be nearly as powerful as portrayed.

The place is that centre of human- lives loaded with memories where one fosters the feeling of existence and comprehend the unfolding incidents of life. The existence of a person within the world is therefore an amalgamation of several factors like the place, roles played and the purpose served by him as a social being. The moments of life set the ambiance for the characters to internalise the artefacts and other objects that builds a setting. In every literary work, the idea of memory can be interpreted in its metaphorical and real sense. The ambivalence of time thus paves the way for memory to patent human emotions in the form of shared experiences.

By creating the character of Hagar Shipley, Laurence has tried to showcase the importance of self-acknowledgement in a person's life. The flashback episodes empower the character to reaffirm and recreate their personalities before death. The novel also posits the idea that every individual has a sense of attachment towards the place that he has lived for years. The feeling towards the place is popped in the form of cultural memory and experience. Time is the only factor that enables a character to switch between different episodes of the past and present life. Culture and geography are interlinked and the place- identity thus created helps an individual in moving through the terrains of flaneuring and drifting.