

Chapter III

Chapter III

Morag Gunn's Snapshot of Cultural Memory and Formation of Geographical Hybridity in *The Diviners*

The Diviners is one of the important works written by Margaret Laurence in the year 1974. It is the final novel of the Manawaka series that is semi-autobiographical in its style and also acts as a culmination in its form. The plot follows episodes from the life of Morag Gunn, a writer who grew up in Manawaka and struggled to accept her individuality. The novel was conferred the Governor General's Award under the category of fiction during the year 1974. It was regularly featured by the American Library Association as part of their reading campaign. In 1993, a television adaptation of *The Diviners* was made by Anne Wheeler. The title characters were played by Sonja Smits in the role of Morag Gunn and Tom Jackson as Jules Tonnerre.

The Diviners tells the story of Morag Gunn, a strong independent writer. The narrative highlights the hardships Morag faced in her marriage life with Jules Tonnerre and also as a single mother. The major themes discussed in the novel include memory, failed – relationships, the transition of culture, and a person's struggle to accept one's true identity. The aim of the chapter is to trace the psychogeographical elements in Morag's life where she tries to keenly observe the spaces around her and accepts them. By highlighting the theory of psychogeography, Morag's role as a flaneur and the process of deriving and drifting within the spaces is reflected through her actions. Next, the chapter illuminates the cultural transitions and their relationship with the factors like time and memory and also the role played by history in becoming a tool of colonization.

As the novel opens, the forty-seven-year-old Morag Gunn, who lives near East Ontario is searching for her daughter Pique in the log cabin. Pique belongs to the Metis community and has gone to the West the exploration of her roots. She has written a letter for Morag asking them not to get tensed. After reading the note, she was reminded about her life when she was Pique's age. It is at that time, she went to the east from Manitoba in search of her own identity. Every flashback episode of her life was narrated in the form of a series. The childhood photographs of Morag were proof of how she was etched upon the memories of Manawaka. Her parents died of polio when she was young. She was then taken to Manawaka by her foster parents Christie and Logan.

The transition from an upper-middle-class life to a poor background in Manawaka shaped Morag, a form of defiance towards her foster parents. She never valued their love and belittled their lack of education and wealth. Her foster father Christie worked as a town scavenger by dumping trash near Nuisance Grounds. Christie tells her fictitious stories of her ancestors and also about a Scottish hero named Piper Gunn. He claims Piper Gunn to be Morag's ancestor before generations. It is the tales of Piper that helped Morag in moulding her identity and also in the formation of a sense of belongingness towards Manitoba. She believed that her ancestors were wealthy and reputable and also denied herself to be identified as a successor of Logan's.

After getting admission to Winnipeg University, Morag escapes from Manawaka. Then, she marries professor, Mr. Brooke Skeleton who is fifteen years elder than her, and shifts to Toronto. The marriage was unsuccessful, as Brooke was cynical and dominating. He even denied her quest to become a mother. He believed the world was not good enough to bring a child. One day, Morag meets her childhood friend Jules on the street.

He belonged to the Metis community. She tries to rebuild their relationship by inviting him for dinner without Brooke's consent. She even leaves the house for three weeks and engages in a physical relationship with him expecting she will become pregnant.

This puts an end to her married life.

The latter part of the novel is about Morag's life and survival as a writer and single mother. Initially, she moves to Vancouver. She then gives birth to her daughter Pique. The literary career of Morag began only after shifting there. Even after having a child, Jules very rarely stayed with Morag and Pique. Therefore, Pique did not have any association or moments with him. Jules always felt inferior to his race. At times, he even narrated stories about his Metis ancestors. Both Morag and Jules had a sense of being isolated from their respective hometowns.

Morag moves to England with Pique, in the hope of thriving in a literary career filled with freedom and imagination. Contrary to her expectations, she feels alienated even in England. In the end, Morag returns to Canada and realizes that her true home lies there. But reality does not match her imagination, and she is as lonely as ever in her new home. She realizes that Manawaka is her true home, and returns there to find that Christie is dying. She tells him he has been a father to her and also identifies that her true heritage lies in being a Canadian not Scottish. Pique returns home after her journey in search of identity. In the end, Morag finished writing her novel. *The Diviners* is thus an example of a classic narrative that deals with the theme of self-exploration, identity crisis, and mother-daughter bond. By describing the Manawaka experience engrained with the prairie landscape and its culture, Place- identity serves as a key theme of *The Diviners*.

Memory as a narrative form opens the paradigms of space, time, and the cultural identity shown in the life of the characters.

Memory is a system through which individuals connect with each other in the form of language, history, and various cultural representations. It works as an agent involved in the creation and recreation of the human mind. Each memory varies according to the personal experience and interactions of the individuals. David Hume in his work entitled *Treatise of Human Nature* (2000) has mentioned the relation between memory and experience. He states that: “it is a perfect idea, and the faculty by which we repeat our ideas is imagination” (Hume 193).

Human memory can be defined as the varied practices by people of different cognitive capacities. It is through this process one is able to recreate past experiences and collect information suitable for the current situation. History plays a great role in defining an individual’s actions and experiences. It is forfeited through the process of memory. Most notably, the human ability to invoke the specific past episodes of their lives can be accustomed as well as puzzling. The incidents from the past can therefore be considered a key aspect of personal identity.

Memory can also be defined as a storehouse of knowledge. Every individual has the capacity to distinguish between the events that happened and also the experience gained from it. The quality of segregating between one’s perception of the events currently happening and the one’s that took part is the difference between point of view and involvement. An event becomes a process of remembrance, only after it gets transferred into the form of an experience. So, memory is not imaginative instead it is an extension of human reality.

The Diviners reveals the story of Morag Gunn in the form of narrative episodes. The narrative structure enables the protagonist to review and re-examine incidents from the past. The confrontation towards memory thus persuades her to accept and identify her true self. The fate of being orphaned at a young age and the alienation that followed is one of the primary themes seen in the novel. Every time, when Morag tries to remember events from the past, what she can recall is only the picture of a broken home and also life with foster parents.

The transition of life at a very young age has emotionally affected the identity of the protagonist. She feels alienated at every stage of her life. She lacked the love, care, and attention of her beloved ones in every part of life. This ultimately led Morag to fall into a state of isolation. The false narratives told by Christie create an incredible image of Scottish ancestors in Morag's mind. She tries to formulate a fake identity by associating with the Scottish clan and thus starts considering herself as a person with standard family background.

The house where she was born becomes the herald of memories when Morag narrates every incident from her past. Even the photographs of the house provide the ambience for a strong historical background. Memory as an element gets triggered in Morag's mind when her daughter Pique leaves their home. Her departure made Morag fall into a situation overflowing with memories. She then compares Pique's running away with that her escape to Winnipeg University. The emotional relief and physical freedom attained after being away from their hometown Manawaka applies the same to Morag and Pique.

Morag's remembrance of the house she lived in with her foster parents, Prin and Christie Logan stands as detailing elements to the narrative episode. The house always

reeked as it was filled with things that were disposed of by others. Since Christie was a town scavenger; he took great interest in collecting the trash from Nuisance grounds and stacking it in their home. Here, the memories indicate the albums, books, and plates collected by Christie that others had thrown out. This situation led Morag to consider herself as a carrier of others' memories. *The Diviners* can therefore be considered a chronological narrative through the incidents from Morag's life.

The novel *Diviners* is autobiographical in its form as it mirrors the protagonist Morag's journey from the small town of Manawaka to Laurence's life in Manitoba. The story portrays Morag's voyage through memories when she is confronted by her daughter's journey to the West in search of her roots. At some point, Morag even feels estranged from her life with her foster parents. She alters her own story and later realises that her memories were loaded with fabricated information.

After closely scrutinizing them, she understands the hardships faced by an individual in terms of shaping identity in the light of culture. As a mother, she felt bad when her daughter left home. Lurked by memories, Morag then feels how her escape from her hometown would have reflected her foster mother. The rejection that Prin faced as a foster mother is again replicated in the life of Morag through her daughter.

The character Morag Gunn is a mirror image of Margaret Laurence. Through the creation of Morag, Laurence validates how a writer's imagination is poured into the form of words and how his alter ego works in the field of creative writing. For, Laurence the key to freedom and also the way to escape from one's alienation was by writing. In *The Diviners*, writing becomes a technique that the protagonist develops to abandon her sense of being

isolated. The life stories of the author and the protagonist can be addressed as a panorama of memories.

The scenic view of the landscape features the importance of prairies in Manawaka and how it serves as a backdrop to the entire story. The various spots in the town including the rivers, nuisance ground, Hill Street, Wachakwa River, the church and the school, etc. have become the harbingers of Morag's narrative episodes. The narrative revolves around Morag's life in various cities like Vancouver, Toronto, and other parts of London. But her realisation a person's true identity exists within the place he lived long. Here, Manawaka is the only place that remains as a factor that outlines the protagonist's life. It, therefore, gives her a feeling of belongingness towards Manawaka.

Memories exist in different forms. In the novel, photographs become the haulers of time that reminisce events from the past represented in the form of visuals. Morag suffered trauma at every stage of her life. The sole reason for her emotional trauma was due to the loss of her parents at a very young age, failed marriage, difficulties of being a single mother along with the feeling of guilt and isolation. It is highlighted in the narrative when Morag explains that: "And that is the end of the totally invented memories" (Laurence, *TD* 9). Morag even tries to identify the reason for her quest to see her parents. She even realizes that her mother died at a very young age and regrets not getting any chance to know more about her.

The irregularity of memories gets revealed as Morag tries to associate things from the episodes of Memory Bank movies. She says: "I recall looking at the pictures, these pictures, over and over again, each time imagining I remembered a little more" (Laurence, *TD* 8). The incidents from the past are titled memory bank movies in the

novel. She even considers it as film that can be altered according to one's choice. All the scenes based on Morag's memory are part of the fictional overtones of her daily life. She even tries to search the old photographs and draws a new dimension of narrative. It is mentioned in the novel in the following way:

These photographs from the past never agreed to get lost. Odd, because she had tried hard enough, over the years, to lose them, or thought she had. She had treated them carelessly, shoved them away in seldom-opened suitcases or in dresser drawers filled with discarded under-wear, scorning to put them into anything as neat as an album. They have jammed any-old-how into an ancient tattered manilla envelope that Christie had given her once when she was a kid, and which said McVitie & Pearl, Barristers & Solicitors, Manawaka, Manitoba. (Laurence, *TD* 5)

The human brain plays a very active role in trying to understand the information sent to it from the eyes. Rather than passively viewing everything that comes in, the visual system instead is optimized to pay attention to contrast to figure out what the subject is. Moreover, the visual system also actively makes predictions about what it expects to see, and photographers can use this to their advantage when creating an image. The interplay between a photograph and an experience is complicated in its performance. It is understood when the visual areas of the brain pay attention by viewing a scene. This process is made interesting when the photographers make images. Morag then says that she has kept the photographs as a reflection of her memories. It is symbolic of the actions and experiences that she has gone through.

The childhood photographs of Morag are dispersed around her house, often hidden in abandoned places, but they succeed to emerge from their secret stash. As she elaborates, an unidentified past is revealed. She remembers the death of her parents more than her life and wishes for forgiveness, in order to liberate herself from their memories. The death of her parents set the stage for a recurring motif of terrifying losses that Morag finds inexplicable. She admits that her nature of describing the photographs was an act of comparison between her actual mother and Prin, the foster parent. Morag even recollects her life with her actual parents, when she returned safely to her home, and how they protected her from everything surrounding by.

The additional leeway of the encounter with painful events, and escape becomes a strategy for blocking Morag's aching memories. Through picturesque and acoustic imagery, the memory episodes become an opus for creating records. There are different forms of visual pleasure that a spectator can attain. But the different aspect of an image is offered by photographs and films. Every picture tells a story behind it and every film has the facility of watching according to the user's choice. The videos can be zoomed or re-winded based on preference. A visual frame is therefore an influential tool of memory narrative.

The photographs preserved by Morag are fragments of her childhood that show her life with her parents and the house in which she was born. Each picture had a sepia-toned background and various elements like the people and objects in the life of Morag. The snapshot was a noting element in the narrative of the *Diviners*. Every narrative snapshot contains an episode that focuses on how Morag is part of the story and how she spends time with her family in her childhood. Photos, portraits, and

commemorative films offer a glimpse of the past that helped Morag in the act of exploration and attain a sense of attachment towards her hometown and family. The idea of place is important to her as she creates stories that weave around the architectural specimens of her space.

The nature, and images of her father and mother remain to be a venture in order to make the portrayals static in time so as to be active. The narrative episodes of Morag somehow remain doubtful. Because she invests a lot of time in the process of recollection in order to get a perfect narrative. Morag is therefore not concerned about the constraints of time in creating chronicles of memory. The stories of the past, therefore, act as a kind of restorative reminiscence for Morag, and as a result she grasps them. The narrative episodes are sequenced in a pattern of one after the other, which often makes the reader perceive the textual ideas in the form of visuals.

Morag's recollection of events from her life becomes a facilitator for flaking her frustrations of inappropriate childhood. Being orphaned at a very young age has always affected the psyche of Morag. Her encounter with the past is therefore a battle between her identity and the memory. The narratology discusses the problem of identity and the methods through which Morag identifies herself. So, the paradigms of identity are channelized through Morag's memories. She then explains: "I preserve the snapshots now not for what they show, but for what is hidden in them" (Laurence, *TD* 6). The events of Morag's life are re-examined by herself for ensuring the audacity of her memories.

The narratology of *The Diviners* mesmerizes the reader with the usage of metaphors that focus on the juxtaposition of past and present moments. The architecture,

characters, and scenery thus help in the culmination of Manawaka as a geographical space. The aural factor of memory is emphasized in the narrative tales of Christie. Morag was always fascinated by the folktales told by him. It has helped in heightening her fancies and also traversing through a world full of colours and imagination. The only bond that existed between Christie and Morag was that of a storyteller and a listener.

His storytelling derives from a variety of sources -from the books that he collects from the garbage, from the story he spins by way of searching at the rubbish he collects from each house, and from his rejoinder to the cynicism of his detractors in the town. His insatiability to create the fable world for Morag and his capacity to fill her world with nostalgia, with its legends and folklore come to be the nurturing platform for Morag the writer. Her classmate and a Metis, Jules provides his point of view of the legends and Morag receives specific variations of the identical event. Books of records supply Morag with the 1/3 perspective. Then a couple of differing views awe Morag to imagine all of them and recreate them at will.

The stylistics employed in the narrative elaborates the metaphor to emphasize the truth that Morag finally divines -that life, like literature, is a gamut formulated by the interplay of past and present, fact and imagination. The waters flowed from north to south, was indicative of Morag's life stuck between the past and present. It can be interpreted in both ways by looking towards the future and reminiscing the events of the past, until the moment of silence occurs. While explaining the theme of the book, the life tale of Laurence coincides with that of Morag Gunn. Here, the writer and the protagonist are born and raised in small town. They are engrossed within in the streams of literature.

Morag finds her ache intensifying, as she is a witness to the burning of the shack, the deaths of Jules' sister and her youngsters, and to the revisiting of the dying of Jules' sister via the songs. The novel stays a reproduction of the contours of the mindscape and displays the chasms, the fault strains, and the fissures of the sparks of ache inside her psyche. The reflections and her recollections expose the survival method of the protagonist by way of the therapeutic narration of the story of her past. *The Diviners*, Laurence's masterpiece, starts poetically describing the river that "flowed each way" which quintessentially signifies the previous and the current (Laurence, *TD3*).

In the route of the narrative, the protagonist tries to make a feel of the series of episodic recollections that floods her mind. Features of trauma like the feeling of alienation, fear, doubt, suppression of memories, distortion of reminiscence, and the motif of witnessing painful incidents recur in the novel. Witnessing the cries of different human beings or the ache of others will become some other set of reminiscence etched in Morag's mind. These elements of reminiscence resonate with irritating or painful activities in the existence of Morag and different characters. Although Morag depends on reminiscence to enact as an aid in her life, the previous turns frustrating as she faces the pangs of guilt of surviving.

The death of her mother and father stays painful as guilt stays ingrained in Morag and she is mystified by their death. "She is aware of they are dead. She is aware of what useless means. She has viewed dead gophers, run over through vehicles or shot, their guts redly squashed out on the road" (Laurence, *TD13*). She gathers that her dad and mom died of childish paralysis, a sickness that commonly influences adolescents, and can't

assist thinking: “If it was once the infantile, though, why them and no longer her? She is the child around here” (Laurence, *TD*14).

The guilt that she nurses turns into a recurrent motif in Morag’s existence and accompanies each narrative that signifies death. When Prin as soon as exhibits that she had a stillborn – a boy strangled on the cord-little Morag begins crying as loss of life terrifies her. Violence too terrifies her as she recalls their neighbour, Gus Winkler hitting his son Vernon with a stick Christie and she stay mute spectator and the incident haunts her. Christie slowly attracts Morag into accepting their domestic by means of his assembly of a digital world of characters from folklore, and from linking it to the world of Megan. He narrates memories about her ancestors, who migrated to Manawaka. Creativity beckons Morag, and she began writing poems.

Although Christie’s performativity discourse permits Morag to spend time with him, she continues to hang on to thoughts of her lifeless dad and mom and their memory. They continue to be the sole proof of her past life. The guilt of surviving turns into a chorus in Morag’s memories, alongside being witness to the trauma of abortion. For instance, Christie, whilst narrating stories, mentions burying a foetus in the Nuisance grounds. “It used to be a new child baby. Wrapped in newspapers, however, it fell out. Dead, of course. Hadn’t long past its full term. It was once that small, like a skinned rabbit” (Laurence, *TD* 62).

The mom later got married and Christie maintains the secret from him and refuses to expose details. The suppression of abortion stays unknown to the city without Morag whose friends bury secrets and techniques and live in the nuisance grounds. Yet some other traumatic reminiscence from her schooldays used to be of her buddy Eva who

discovers that she was once pregnant. Frantic and terrified of her father Gus, Eva manages to abort the foetus “that night time with a partly straightened-out wire garments hanger” (Laurence, *TD* 123). Christie drives Eva to the medical institution as she bleeds and her mother, Mrs. Winkler realises the truth. Morag wonders whether Eva felt responsible for the possibility of surviving. Morag believes that Christie would have buried the foetus in the Nuisance grounds which she phrases the “unofficial cemetery” (Laurence, *TD*124). It may be surmised that death, loss, secret lives, and the ‘guilt of surviving’ create in Morag’s world that stays hidden inside the layers of memory.

Place as a memory aid has come to be a necessary concept in the developing area of memory studies without any disciplinary boundaries. In particular, a countless spectrum of cultural and social geographers has tried to retrace the material by making them into a symbolic and affective transformation of memorial sites. All individuals appear to be obsessed with geographical memory. Memorials and museums proceed to proliferate, producing heated debates over their structure and meaning.

The ongoing public dialogue of the remaining years has altered the discourse of memory, elevating new questions involving what and why we pick to remember, how this remembering takes place -and by means of whom. There are several approaches in which the shape of the memorial has been challenged and modified as an end result of this altering discourse, focusing on the specific position that panorama has performed in the hegemony of transformation. While there has continually been a longstanding relationship between the memorial and the garden, the panorama has taken on new and heightened means in present-day commemoration as the sketch of the memorial has shifted from the making of objects to the making of place.

A place is important to human life in several ways. The habit of transporting the images and visuals seen in an environment into a literary text is called representation. Edward S. Casey's splitting of re-presentation. He supplements the static, mimetic suggestions of representation with the idea that "aesthetic engagements with the environment create effects of re-implication, where a place is re-formed as it appears with the aesthetic object" (Casey 30). This replacement not only sets a place down into a new context, but it stages representation itself, making a representation of representation a primary aesthetic experience:

Just as the object of description thereby becomes a represented object, so the activity of description sets this object over against us within a nexus of pictorial horizons. The world-as-picture is a world that has become a totality of objects that solicit us to remake them – which is to say, to represent them in their very representedness – by our own descriptive and depictive actions. (Casey 236)

While Casey refers to pictures – maps and landscape painting – something similar applies to literary images when it comes to the act of describing the environment. Casey addresses literary engagements with the landscape in his epilogue, noting that, in prose fiction, "at least a tacit reference to landscape and holds narrated events together, furnishing for them a common matrix of interconnected place" (Casey 274).

The concept of geographical space is represented in *The Diviners* in different forms. The acceptance of Canada as one's own country surpasses the ultimatum of Canadian Culture. In the text, there are several instances where geography and psychology go hand in hand. Our daily experiences of geographical places are not usually inspiring.

The protagonist Morag Gunn is a person who got a chance to live in different geographical spaces in and around Canada. Even though she was born in Canada, Morag always considered herself to be a person with Anglican origins. This thought has paved a great role in shaping Morag's identity. She goes to the West in search of her roots and after being there she feels isolated. But, in her late forties, Morag returns to Canada and lives near Ontario. It is then she realizes that all these years she was living in a misconception of false identity. Her thought about being born and living as a Canadian is reflected in the novel.

Manawaka is the prime geographical space that shapes the personality of Morag. The autobiographical elements help us in analysing the fact that like Morag, Margaret Laurence's identity is also formed and moulded by her life in Manitoba. An individual's interaction and survival within a place become the metaphor for his identity.

The elements of psychogeography work here, every time when Morag encounters the incidents from the past. The fond remembrances of her past life are portrayed in the novel as snapshots. When Morag sees her childhood photos of her parents, in the background she could see the visuals of her old house in the frame. She then describes the style of the building in the following way:

In the far background at the end of the road, can be seen the dim outlines of a house, two-storey, a square box of a house, its gracelessness atoned for, to some extent, by a veranda and steps at the front. Spruce trees, high and black, stand beside the house. In the further background, there is a shadow structure which could be the barn. (Laurence, *TD* 6)

The above-mentioned quote states the importance of architecture in space. In an article entitled *Power to the Psychogeographers*, it is mentioned that “The world we live in, and beginning with its material decor, is discovered to be narrower by the day. It stifles us” (Parker, *The Guardian*). In that way, Morag here becomes the narrower who discovers the architectural beauty of her old house. The problem for urban designers is that people always want to break the rules that planners try to set them. The design of the great council estates of the 1950s and 60s was a failure, suggests Mr. McKay, precisely because planners sought to create communities without bothering to examine how people wanted to live their lives. Only in transgressing the rules of the planned space can we really find our own meaning and space,” said Mr. McKay. A good planner knows this and allows for this transgression of the plan by the individuals who have to live in the space.

Even though, it is the architect or the planner who decides the structure and design of a building. It is the person who lives within the constructed space that adds soul to it. After living in the house for years, an individual is able to perceive everything that constituted in converting the house into a space. Morag, in her memory narratives tries to explain the interior and exterior design of the house. Here, the concept of the house not only serves the purpose of utility but also a space that connects a human psyche. In one of the snapshot episodes, Morag says that: “The house is very huge, full of strange corners and places to explore. It even has a dining room, with good furniture, a sideboard, and a big round table. The Gunns eat in their dining room every single Sunday without fail” (Laurence, *TD 7*).

The decorum and ambience are the two factors to be considered when one thinks about spatiality. For example, the ornate decoration, heavy columns, or pillars in a court

house does not serve their actual purpose. A person who just goes to pay the parking ticket is confronted with the decorum and it thus creates a feeling of belittling when they stand in the presence of an authority.

The arrangement of such spaces not only affects human feelings but also creates a great impact on one's attitudes and behaviour by making them more compliant and ready to conform to a greater and more powerful will. Laurence highlights one such instance from the novel. "Morag Gunn, country woman, never managing to overcome a quiver of distaste at the sight of an earthworm. Lover of swallows, orioles, and red-winged blackbirds. Detester of physical labour. Lover of rivers and tall trees. Hater of axes and shovels. What a farce" (Laurence, *TD* 46). After living near the countryside for years, Morag has got a powerful will to accept the challenges and also to experience the adventures that await her.

From ancient times, human beings have had the practice of moving from one place to another. However, many people prefer to live in the same area throughout their life, and others choose to live in various parts of the world during their lifetime. There are some people who live their whole life staying in the same place due to fear of the unknown. To illustrate, everyone feels fear of something. For many people, it is a fear of being indefinitely surrounded by mystery.

Eventually, the fear will change after shifting to a new place. By moving to a new place to live, an individual is unable to retain the present situation if something goes wrong. In fact, they do not want to challenge the status quo by embracing new challenges in life due to fear of the unknown. Besides, culture and family-oriented attitudes also dissuade people from living in different places. In India, for example, it is commonplace

that people spend their whole life in their ancestral homes. As Colin Ellard suggests in *The Places of Heart: Psychogeography of the Everyday Life*:

When we walk down a wide suburban street with huge setbacks and monotonous tracks of identical cookie-cutter houses, we experience the achingly slow passage of time and state of boredom not qualitatively different from the experienced by pioneers of sensory deprivation experiments in the 1960s. (Ellard 16)

A stroll via a busy, city road market teeming with vibrant wares, the scrumptious aroma of food, and a hubbub of human activity, on the different hand, can reason our moods to soar. The distinction between our reactions to such areas can be examined without problems from our bodies. It is viewed in our posture, the patterns of our eye and head movements, and even in our genius activity. Morag Gunn was a person who never took hold of consciousness with the places she lived. In fact, in she observes an instance where she is portrayed in the following manner:

She had lived in cities as though passing through briefly. Even when she'd lived in one city or another for years, they'd never taken hold of her consciousness. Her childhood had taken place in another world, a world A-Okay and Maudie had never known and couldn't begin to imagine, a world which in some ways Morag could still hardly believe was over and gone forever. These kids had been born and grown up in Toronto. They weren't afraid of cities in the way Morag was afraid. (Laurence, *TD* 46-47)

Manawaka was always a recurring geographical space in the narratives of Morag Gunn. As a narrator, Morag takes time to visit her fond remembrances. When talking about her childhood, the school in which she studied played a great role in determining

the spatial narrative of *The Diviners*. She describes her Grade six classroom, which was full of maple desks. On the desks, students always tried writing their initials. The process of writing initials on the desks is a common practice done by every school student for years. It is one of the first things that comes to a person's mind while associating with their memories. Morag has also put her initials "M.G." (53) on the desk. She even mentions the blackboard, the walls framed with big pictures etc. The ambience of the classroom thus stand out as a psychogeographical element that elicits the memories of Morag.

Memory and episodes from the past are always related to the human psyche. A person always has a deeper sense of connection with the places that he has lived. This connection is reciprocated in the form of their collective conscious memory. The episodes can be bad as well as good. But the effect that it has manifested upon the person is how we relate psycho-geography and memory. As quoted in *The Places of Heart: Psychogeography of the Everyday Life*:

The history of interactions with another person nurtures feelings of trust, openness, and affection. In much the same way, our history of visits to a place, the time we spend there, and the experience we have given rise to strong feelings of attachment. And much as with love between humans, what we bring to a relationship from our own past can be just as important as what we experience in new encounters with a place. (Ellard 81)

In one of the past episodes from the novel, When Morag was studying in Grade six, her teacher Miss McMurtrie asked her a question, but she did not respond. Instead, Morag was in a dream world. Laurence points out this in the following manner: "Morag is not here. She is in the Wachakwa valley and the couch grass is high around her"

(Laurence, *TD* 55). Therefore what the author tries to convey is that Morag was deeply connected with the atmosphere of Manawaka. Her thoughts were surrounded by the nature and space of the living environment.

Charles Baudelaire's concept of *flaneur* idealizes the notion of wandering through the streets. In academia, as popularised by Walter Benjamin, the concept envisages on a romantic stroller, the *flaneur* wandered about the streets, with no clear purpose other than to wander. Here the focus is on the urban wanderer. But in contrast to that the novel seeks to explore the nexus of a wanderer of a prairie town or a rural area. However, the ultimate feeling of getting lost is received in the fictional space.

Morag Gunn is portrayed as the stroller of her living environment. She tries to observe the mundane of her physical environment at different levels. This is best understood when Morag tries to visit the Nuisance Grounds. As mentioned in the novel: "Morag goes alone to the Nuisance Grounds. Not with Christie. Not with anyone. Eva wants to come along but Morag says no. Just for once she has to see what the place looks like. By herself" (Laurence, *TD*57).

As a *flaneur* of her own living environment, Morag finds time to visit the other places of Manawaka as well. One such location is called the Tonnerre's place. The ethnic group of Tonnerre has a great cultural influence on the narrative. The Tonnerre was described as half-breed people, who were mysterious in their attitude and behaviour. The people of Manawaka never talked to them. In the novel when Skinner is engaged in a conversation with Morag, he tries to describe the place to her. The Tonnerre place was very near to Wachakwa River. It was a square cabin chinked with mud. The place also had different sheds and shanties made out of plastic tin cans. Skinner even said that it was

his grandfather who built the place. Skinners' description of the Tonner's place is an example of how history can also contribute to the geographical space narratives.

Psychogeographers always try to link the earth and body, through their geographical exploration in the form of walking through different spaces. It prompts them to have a clear imagination and be prescient about the area they step into. The decoding of the city area is finished with exceptional approaches via the psychogeographers. The high obligation of a psycho-geographer is to analyse the results of the geographical environment. The sordid underneath corners of the town are regarded to be the reflections of darkish corners in the human mind. Almost all of us in the world experience fabricated areas in our everyday life.

It can be considered in our homes, workspace, or the locations we travel. It conjures up in us an indistinct feeling or an impact on how we suppose and what we do, and we will regularly search for our precise settings exactly due to the fact we prefer to trip these influences. To a positive extent, we have an emotional connection to the house we belong to. It is mirrored in our movements when we belong there. But we don't have the time to separate our daily retorts to deliver the most mind shape of them. In the novel, Morag Gunn regularly took great risks to spree the environment in which she lived. She consequently had a clear imagination and prescience of the space that she has stepped into. The description of Morag's go to the Manawaka cemetery, itself proves how Margaret Laurence as a writer has decoded the fictional house into its verbal form. As quoted in the novel:

She knows exactly where the spot is. Everybody knows that. A little above the town, the second hill, the same hill as the Manawaka cemetery. All the dead stuff together there on the same hill. Except that the cemetery is decent and respectable, with big spruce trees, and grass which is kept cut, and lots of the plots have flowers which people plant and tend. *Gunn* is just a small stone with grass around it, no flowers. Morag has only been there once and doesn't want to go again. (Laurence, *TD* 57)

The speculation of a truly wild environment by human beings highlights an interesting and important fact about the human situation. Modern human beings created a new environment that is detached from the surroundings their bodies and mind took shape. On the other hand, the interaction with a wild space often becomes useless, as we don't know how to behave, where to go, and what to look. Despite the modern state of detachment from the situations that helped in shaping our essence, we still have the desire to connect with nature, irrespective of the kind. Morag Gunn also has the same craving to contact nature. It is clearly mentioned in the scene when she visits Nuisance grounds. That kind of feeling people often when walking through open air and the terrains are seen in the following lines:

The Nuisance Grounds are on a large flat sort of plain, up there, and no trees grow, although the place is surrounded on all sides by poplars and clumps of choke cherry and pin cherry bushes, screening it from sight. Morag approaches it quietly, cannily, looking around. Okay. Nobody here. She can feel the sun hot and dusty on her bare arms and legs, and this hot closed-in place. It isn't really that

much closed-in. It just feels so. Should she maybe not have come here?

(Laurence, *TD* 57)

Human beings live and flourish in a wide range of habitats. The mechanism that rules the habitat choices arises from the tests, that people do. This happens as it is easier to probe the inner mental state of human beings and to measure the extent to which individuals prefer one type of setting over another using a wide range of tools from simple self-assessment.

The flaneur was something of a groovy person who ambled through the city streets while ordinary people scurried to work all around him. Free from the pressures of the work and busy world, he sought the random encounters that the city streets were always ready to offer. He preferred nothing more than to merge with the throng and to dwell in the ebb and flows of the cityscapes. A flaneur is always a man within a crowd. By being one among the crowd, he chose to be part of a space and also by drifting toward the hidden aspects of the same.

As mentioned above, a flaneur is one who encounters his surroundings and tries to probe his choice through the testament of his own life. Here in the novel Morag is considered to be a flaneur of her own surroundings. It is well understood when Morag tries to walk through the streets. “Morag, walking on streets, not knowing where, stumbling into people, seeing only small hard bright replayed movies inside?” (Laurence, *TD* 81). Here, in the novel through the process of walking Morag is considered an aimless wanderer.

She is both an urban and rural explorer. She has tried to portray an array of the environment mostly through her writings. In the opening section of the novel, an example of Morag trying to picturise her own house. She says:

The house seemed too quiet. Dank. The kitchen had that sour milk and stale bread smell that Morag remembered from her childhood, and which she loathed. There was, however, no sour milk or stale bread here – it must be all in the head, emanating from the emptiness of the place. Until recently the house was full, not only Pique but A-Okay Smith and Maudie and their shifting but ever-large tribe. (Laurence, *TD* 4-5)

Morag's memory is another element that adds to the intrinsic geographical observations of the novel's analysis of spatiality. Before her parent's tragic death, Morag used to live with them. At that time the house in which they lived had a lot of pictures. Her father always loved taking pictures. Most of them were framed and hung on the wall. According to Morag, her father was a wonderful person. He always helped her and also had the time to be with family. While sharing the memories of her father, she also tried to describe the house in which they lived. Here we could see the trait of Morag as a hidden explorer of her own living space. It is stated as follows:

The house is very huge, full of strange corners and places to explore. It even has a dining room, with good furniture, a sideboard, and a big round table. The Gunns eat in their dining room every single Sunday without fail. There is a cupboard under the front stairs, into which Morag crawls when she wishes to find hidden treasure. It goes a long way back and is just high enough for her to stand up. (Laurence, *TD* 7)

The human experiences carry each and every one backyard the slender confines of the physique space, encouraging them to survive within a space for many years. Every individual has a feeling of timelessness as the obstacles of time and the house that keep them stranded are unexpectedly swept aside. It has also many associations with culture. In the novel, culture is analysed from the post-colonial point of view. Laurence's life in Africa becomes the background for the post-colonial narrative.

The British management in the colonized international locations paved the manner for post-colonial writing. When the idea of colonialism added the machine of British supremacy throughout the international locations of the world, post-colonialism endeavoured to lose the chains of the colonisation. The post-colonial international locations like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, the Caribbean, and Africa via their literature have exhibited their academic, spiritual, and socio-linguistic aptitudes. The stereotyped form of the precise regions disregards the extra-terrestrial beings of the British and famed the inborn additives of the colonized countries - Canada, Australia, India, New Zealand, the Caribbean, and Africa. In "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences" Homi. k. Bhabha brings out the uniqueness of each character:

Cultural diversity is an epistemological object – culture as an object of empirical knowledge - whereas the cultural difference is the process of the enunciation of culture as 'knowledgeable,' authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification...If cultural diversity is a category of comparative ethics, aesthetics, or ethnology, cultural difference is a process of signification through which statements of culture or on culture differentiate, discriminate, and authorize the production of fields of force, reference, applicability, and capacity. (Bhabha 206)

The novel *The Diviners* the aid of using Pique displays Pique's look for her ancestry and Morag's distrust of Canada. The novel additionally makes a speciality of the hardships encountered with the aid of using the Métis clan. Christie's first story of Piper Gunn speaks of the break out of the humans from the Bitch-Dew, even as different stories just like the Battle of Bourlonwood, Piper Gunn and the Rebels, Lazarus' story of Old Jules and the battle out West, and the Skinner's story of Dieppe all depict the battle among the Scots and the Metis. These stories shape the ground for the post-colonial cultural narrative in *The Diviners*. Christie tells the stories of the agreement between the Scottish and Metis in Canada, with Pibrochs gambling Pibrochs even as the duchess turned in her deep sleep. It is explained in the following quote:

'CHRISTIE'S FIRST TALE OF PIPER GUNN': Among all of them people there on the rocks, see, was a piper, and he was from the Clan Gunn, and it was many of the Gunns who lost their hearths and homes and lived wild on the stormy rocks there. And Piper Gunn, he was a great tall man, a man with the voice of drums and the heart of a child and the gall of a thousand and the strength of conviction. (Laurence, *TD* 59)

Piper Gunn and Morag's journey finished at Hudson Bay, where a dispute between the half-breeds and Indians led to a battle between the Métis and the English and Scots. The Sovereign of Braves, a prophet, and Jules joined the battle, but they lost the war. The novel describes a dispute between the Scots and the Métis in locating an area in Canada. The Scots had been from Sutherland and claimed a homeland, at the same time as the Métis had been the inborn occupants of the land whose vital career changed into chasing buffalos. The Métis had an unmistakable chronicled foundation, which debts for

his or her agreement hundred years previous to Rupert's arrival and with the limitless waste vessel of Hudson Cove.

The Métis had a notable love for their own circle of relative line and the career of the Canadian lands via way of means of the Scots had made a feel of war of words among the Scots and the Métis and a sense of hatred in the direction of Canada. Skinner Tonnerre stored calm despite the truth that he had an excellent voice. Their limitation inside the socio-cultural machine of Canada had made the Metis lodge to such behaviour. Laurence's novel contrasts the Scottish and Metis communities in Canada. The battle between the two groups is depicted through snapshots, memory bank motion pictures, tales, and tunes. Skinner's melodies eulogize the valour of the Métis during their battle for settlement and ethnic personality, such as Louis Riel's entry and Jules Tonnerre's showdown with the Scots.

Morag marries Rupert Brooke and later forbids her identity with the aid by transporting herself to the arena of literature. She discovers that the simplest alienation lies in international books and writes down a counter-discourse so one can redeem an excellent kingdom with the aid of using turning in the direction of the real and ethnic structures observed in Manawaka. Morag's country is called upon to attempt to do as well. Pique Tonnerre Gunn's inheritance is cultural and genetic, together with her mom passing on memories of Piper Gunn and Rider Tonnerre. Morag acknowledges those memories as myths and the country itself has to produce its very own myth.

The Diviners suggest that the Scots and breed have a record of dispossession with the aid of using English human beings empire makers, and in the event that they renowned this, the descendants of settlers and indigenes will set up a brand new

community. Morag outgrows her battle and identifies it as now no longer with a selected landscape, but with a geographical mapping of her identification.

Morag's dual identity crisis in terms of becoming a Scottish or a Canadian provides the foundation for viewing the story from the mythical point of view. Her dual identity crisis in terms of becoming a Scottish or a Canadian provides the foundation for viewing the story from the mythical point of view. Her dual identity crisis in terms of becoming a Scottish or a Canadian provides the foundation for viewing the story from the mythical point of view. Both halves of the national myth that Morag embodies - the marriage to and separation from Brooke and the aborted pilgrimage to Sutherland involve the same double movement of departure and return. Canada is not where Morag is from but it is where she goes back to.

Morag's journey to Scotland helped her identify herself as a Canadian, as she became aware of her differences and learned to identify the importance of being isolated. Scottishness must be present for Morag to become a Canadian, and if it is not present, then Scottishness must be invented. Young Morag is an example of a modern person and an orphan without a past or guarantee of meaning, and her name itself is without content. She discovers that the Gunns are without arms or motto, and can be imagined as self-engendering: an American or Caribbean Adam. Morag rejects the idea that her name carries no implicit identity and imagines a Scottish identity and family history.

At Christie's invitation, she imagines herself as the last surviving bearer of the name Gunn. Christie himself was born in Scotland and came to Canada as a small boy. To give his adopted daughter some of his own sense of ethnic identity, Christie must invent an ancestor, Piper Gunn, who bears her name and came with the first Scottish set

tiers to Manitoba. Morag's Scottish identity is a cisatlantic fiction, and she is no more Scottish than she is Siamese.

Morag Gunn's Scottish identity is based totally on the mild hyperlink with the past presented via way of means of her surname. To supplement Christie's memories, Morag invents memories about Piper Gunn's woman, additionally referred to as Morag. Margaret Laurence has identified and objected to the tyranny of the patrilineal right call, however, Morag's cultural identity is primarily based totally on humans she has now no longer recognized and has to consequently imagine. The family song is an unsatisfactory metonym for genetic inheritance, as Morag has inherited the genes of multiple ancestors and is sort of truly manufactured from generations of Creole unions. Morag Gunn is a descendant of Scottish settlers to Manitoba; however, her ancestors are not going to be from Scotland.

Margaret Laurence and Christie Logan bring Morag Gunn ancestors who got here from Sutherland for the duration of the Highland Clearances. Morag recollects Colin Gunn, her father, who had unhappiness and a stern quality. Can it ever be eradicated? Strangely, Morag additionally feels the want for Scottish ancestry, partly due to her social popularity because of the daughter of the Scavenger. In the form of irony, Christie's tales encourage her with pleasure even though he stays in the supply of deep disgrace.

The isolation Morag suffers due to the fact she is associated with Christie the Scavenger is linked metonymically to the dispossession of the Highland Clearances, and so turns into meaningful. Jules Tonnerre has an addition burdened dating together with his father. Deeply ashamed of his father and his alcoholism, Jules counters that disgrace with the tales Lazarus has instructed him of heroic ancestors and with pleasure in his

father's suffering. Jules, however, has no manner of fending off his racial identification; it's miles inscribed on his pores and skin in a manner that Morag's is now no longer. In her rush to disclaim Christie and Manawaka's component in her, Morag may properly have shed the ethnicity invented for her. She does now no longer do that. The recognition of herself as a Canadian is one of the fundamental findings that exemplify the distinction of embracing one's very own culture.

Laurence's own memoir resists that tyranny by tracing a genealogy through the mothers she has known. But Morag Gunn's ethnic identity is based on people she has not known and must therefore imagine. Since all she has with which to imagine them is her own family name, she inevitably imagines a patrilineal family. The arbitrariness of ethnic identity based solely on a name becomes obvious if one imagines a Franco-Manitoban or for that matter a Cree with the name Gunn, something very much within the realms of possibility. The first man to carry the name Gunn to what is now Manitoba might have come from the United States.

Language, place, physical differences, and immediate ancestry are usually more important than the family name in the constitution of ethnic identity. The family name is an unsatisfactory metonym for genetic inheritance. Morag Gunn has inherited the genes of more than one ancestor and is almost certainly the product of generations of créole unions. Even if Morag had an ancestor who came over with the Selkirk settlers and the novel insists there is no reason to think so and that such an ancestor was her great-grandfather (she was born in 1926; Piper Gunn was adult in 1814), she would have very little genetically in common with him. She would still have thirty-two ancestors at the same confiscation as Piper Gunn.

Few of these are likely to have been from Scotland: the population of Manitoba doubled in 1875-6 alone and has multiplied many times since, and the bulk of that immigration was from Ontario (Morton 176). Readers of the novel have all, without exception, assumed that Morag really is a descendant of Scottish settlers to Manitoba. The lapse may be forgiven, for Margaret Laurence makes the same mistake: she writes that she gave Morag Gunn “ancestors who came from Sutherland and who were turned out during the Highland Clearances” (*Heart of a Stranger*), forgetting that it is Christie Logan who gave Morag those ancestors. An older Morag, who has learned that Scotland is nothing to her, remembers Colin Gunn, the father she scarcely knew, as someone whose people came to this country so long ago, from Sutherland, during the Highland Clearances, maybe, and who had in them a sadness and a stern quality. “Can it ever be eradicated?” (Laurence, *TD*18).

With that maybe Morag casts doubt on the identification of her father’s clan. However, in the same manner, she asserts that she has inherited a certain personality from this ancestor she cannot positively identify. The moroseness that elsewhere Morag calls “the Black Celt” is imagined as a genetic legacy linked directly to the name Gunn; that is, it is inherited by children of both sexes but passed on only by males. This genetic impossibility is a seemingly ineradicable myth Christie Logan, who remembers a childhood in Scotland, remembers a lot else besides Highland Clearances, tartans, and clan mottos. His claims to ancestry compensate for his lowly status in Manawaka:

Let the Connors and the McVities and the Camerons and Simon Pearl and all them in their houses up there—let them look down on the likes of Christie Logan.

. . They don't touch me, Morag. For my kin and clan are as good as theirs any

day of the week, any week of the month, any month of the year, any year of the century, and any century of all time. (Laurence, *TD56*)

Strangely, Morag also feels the need for Scottish ancestry, partially because of her social status as the daughter of the Scavenger. Ironically, Christie's stories inspire her with pride although he remains the source of deep shame. The ostracism Morag suffers because she is related to Christie the Scavenger is related metonymically to the dispossession of the Highland Clearances, and so becomes meaningful. Jules Tonnerre has a similarly confused relationship with his father. Deeply ashamed of his father and his alcoholism, Jules counters that shame with the stories Lazarus has told him of heroic ancestors and with pride in his father's suffering. Jules, however, has no way of avoiding his racial identity; it is inscribed on his skin in a way that Morag's is not. In her rush to deny Christie and Manawaka's part in her, Morag might well have shed the ethnicity invented for her. She does not do that. The acceptance of herself as a Canadian is one of the main findings that exemplify the glory of embracing one's own culture.

The Diviners is an autobiographical narrative that culminates the geographical space and the ambivalence of memory as factors that uplift the narrative. The protagonist Morag Gunn lives in different spaces and finally realizes the position of her identity. The amalgamation of different cultures mentioned in the narrative elucidates the post-colonial as well as multicultural elements in the novel. To conclude, the chapter has thus highlighted the role played by memory in determining a geographical identity for a person in the light of multiculturalism.