

## Inner Journey of the Protagonists of Margaret Laurence's *A Jest of God* and *The Fire-Dwellers*

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### Introduction – Canadian Literature

Canadian literature is originating from Canada. Canada is a country that always expands towards north and faces through natural condition. The word, “Canada” believed to have been derived from two Spanish words ‘aca’ and ‘nada’ which mean ‘nothing here’. The idea of nothingness is reflected in the name of the country itself. The main concern of the Canadian writers is the search for a recognizable and meaningful life.

Canadian literature is related to the search for a national identity. National identity is related to the influence of the landscape on the Canadian’s imagination. The Canadian writers move steadily towards the landscape. They also portray the journeys, which take place in the geophysical or cultural context. The interior landscape transcends all local, regimental, nationalistic or cultural concerns. After the Second World War, the Canadian women writers begin to assert the authenticity of the feminine sensibility. They also evolve a feminine discourse that is opposed to patriarchal discourse.



## Margaret Laurence

Courtesy: <https://www.pinterest.com/explore/margaret-laurence/>

### Jean Margaret Laurence

Margaret Laurence was born Jean Margaret Wemyess on 18 July 1926 in the small Manitoba town of Neepawa. She was a Canadian novelist and short story writer, and is one of the major figures in Canadian literature. She was also a founder of the Writers' Trust of Canada, a non-profit literary organization that seeks to encourage Canada's writing community. Margaret Laurence is one of the most influential writers of Western Canada. Laurence started writing when she was young. Laurence started writing stories from the age of seven. She wrote all through her high school and college years and worked after graduation, for the *Winnipeg Citizen*, a labour daily. Her first work was not published until the Somaliland years. Laurence's first published short story, "Uncertain Flowering", was published in a Whit Burnett anthology in 1954. She is best known for her novels, *The Stone Angel* (1964), *A Jest of God* (1966), *The Fire - Dwellers* (1969) and *The Diviners* (1970).

### Journey towards Self-Discovery

Margaret Laurence's primary theme is journey towards self. In her novels all her protagonists struggle to achieve the inner freedom. Laurence's novels focus on a central female character in search of her identity, her relations with others ultimately determine that identity. The female hero, unlike the traditional male hero, does not separate herself from others in order to mature. Instead, she defines herself from others. On the other hand, the sense of connection with others is a world of entrapment. All Laurence's women wish to escape from their small town and their dependence on husbands, fathers or grandfathers, yet they have limited financial freedom because as women, their options are even more curtailed than their men's. The need to escape and need to affiliate are equally strong. Exploration of the individual's search for a new sense of personal identity dominates the novels of Margaret Laurence.

Laurence's *A Jest of God* and *The Fire-Dwellers* are sister novels in practical terms. In both the novels, Rachel Cameron and Stacey MacAindra, the protagonists of each novel, suffer an identity-crisis from having to play out the socially given roles. Socialization and

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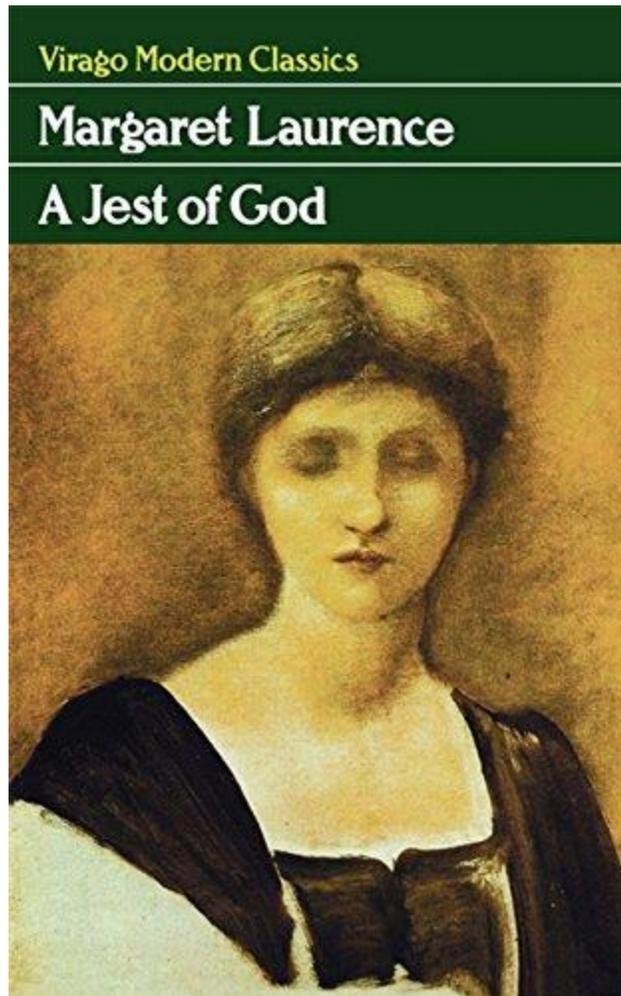
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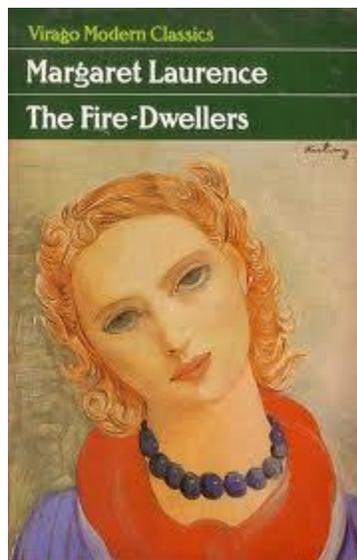
institutionalization of their femininity results in a sense of inferiority and inadequacy and problematizes their self-perception. Each accepts the mirrored image of herself and enacts the given role, that of a sexless, spinster school-teacher, in the case of Rachel, and a mindless, middle-aged house-wife, in the case of Stacey.

*A Jest of God*



In *A Jest of God*, Rachel Cameron, the protagonist, is an oppressed individual, obsessed by her fears and inhibition. A middle-ageing school teacher in the prairie town of Manawaka, Rachel's life is very dull due to its narrow range. After her father's death fourteen years ago, there was not enough money for Rachel to complete her studies at the University. At the age of twenty, she took upon herself the responsibility of looking after her mother and came back to Manawaka to teach in school.

Stacey Cameron is the protagonist of *The Fire-Dwellers*. She is an elder sister of Rachel Cameron in Laurence's *A Jest of God*. She leaves Manawaka at the age of nineteen and marries Cliff MacAindra, a salesman. At the beginning of the novel, she is living with her four children in Vancouver, British Columbia. She reveals herself at the age of thirty-nine, she feels unattractive, surrounded by the stresses of motherhood, chaotic by the absence of communication with her husband. It is a story of a housewife, the mother of four children, Stacey MacAindra struggles to identify herself as an individual amidst the role of daughter, wife, and mother.



### **Reflection in the Mirror**

Laurence's women, in both the novels, have the relation with the mirror which is an ambivalent one. Their reflection in the mirror confirms their reality while reminding them that the image in the mirror fails to match their ideal selves. Rachel's mirrors reflect the extreme subjectivity in her perception of things. Her mirrors are all distorting ones and she recognizes that she herself is the mirror, generating these distorted images of herself. Like Rachel, Stacey's mirror tells that she is gaining weight and growing old, it does not tell of her desires, her memories and her fears for the future. It frames her physical appearance as if this were her only reality. She knows that neither her literal image in the mirror, nor the articles written for housewives like her reflect her own complex reality.

### **Rachel Cameron and Stacey MacAindra - Inner Monologues**

Rachel Cameron lives in a cosy flat decorated according to her widowed mother's tastes and teaches in a school meant for children. May Cameron is a typical mother imposing the narrow traditions on her loving daughter. Mrs. Cameron is a frail but vain little woman whose tyranny over her daughter ranges from sharp censure of her activities to pathetic intimations of her own death. All the time Rachel is bothered about what the mother would say. She wants an extension cord attached to the phone so that she can take it to her room. However, she does' do so because she will never be able to explain it to her mother in any way the latter would accept. Again when she mentions to Calla that she intends doing an extension course in English the next term, the mother overhears and resents that Rachel has not mentioned it to her.

Like Rachel Cameron, Stacey MacAindra's inner monologues speak for her real self which longs to enjoy life at her mother's place. Outwardly, she has to be conscious of her role as mother to her children. She has great complex about her advanced age, matronly look, rural background and the absence of proper education. Laurence has adopted the method of interior monologue to narrate the story of Stacey and her reaction to the present situation:

Everything would be alright if I only was better educated...Listen Stacey, at thirty nine, after four kids, you can't expect to look like a sylp...Everything will be alright when the kids are older. I'll be more free. Free for what? What in hell is the matter with you, anyway? Everything will be alright...Come on, fat slob on down town, get up off your ass and get going...All the thing I hate. Hate, but perpetuate. (FD 8-9)

Again Stacey engages language in an effort to repair, reunite, rejoin separate entities- husband and wife, mother and child, woman and friend, body and brain, inside and outside. This struggle unfolds against a backdrop of silence her husband Mac's, her son Ian's, and her daughter Jen's. Even at the age of two, Jen appears determined not to communicate.

Amongst the people Rachel meets in the school, she becomes friendly with Calla, a fellow teacher. Calla lives with the songless cannery who does not even notice her, for she finds comfort in listening to some movement in the darkness of the night. But the fundamentalism of Calla's Pentecostal religion keeps Rachel on guard. She is embarrassed at Calla's talking about

the Tabernacle in the presence of her mother. Moreover, Calla looks and acts strange. Rachel wishes that Calla were like other girls and not so unusual. Another person who offers friendship to Rachel when she moves to Manawaka is Lennox Cates. He quite often asks her out but Rachel does not want to become the wife of a farmer who has not even finished high school learning. Lennox gets married leaving Rachel to her loneliness. To some extent, then Rachel is herself responsible for her loneliness.

### **Search Her Identity through Her Four Children**

Stacey attempts to search her identity through her four children Katie, Ian, Duncan and Jennifer. She loves and cares for all the four children and does not want them to be spoiled. The role of wife and mother in a modern family in which, the mothers both promoted and gulped by their children. Even though Stacey does all the unchanging responsibilities related with life as a mother, she worries that she is always sacrificing her life in this sequence of trifles. Although she accepts that taking care of children is a valuable job, she needs a little for herself to be spent. She desires to talk with her husband, her children, and the world. She loves her children so dearly that she often prays to the Almighty to care and bless them. But still she is unable to cope up and feels bored, unhappy and even wants to escape. Stacey craves for a thing and when she gets it, she is somewhere far away. Then she doubts whether she has actually wants. She wants Mac and also her kids, still she would look for an escape from them. It is too late when Stacey comes to conformity with her incompatible married life, for her children are spoiled by this time. Her elder daughter Katie is lost in promiscuous way of living, her sons Ian and Duncan are ruined by Stacey's excessive cuddling, and her younger daughter Jen is unable to speak at the age of two. Communication is then a central theme, emphasized by the fact that Stacey's youngest child Jennifer Rachel, her "flower," does not speak, the breakthrough of the novel occurs when Jen turns to her mother and enquires casually, "Want tea, Mum? (FD 273) Stacey cannot communicate with any of her children, "I can't get through the sound barrier" (FD 203), she complains, as she contemplates, "All your locked rooms." (FD 198) Stacey's relationship with her eldest daughter Katie epitomizes the generation gap a hangover from the jitterbugging generation of boogie-woogie. Stacey is "a stranger in the new world" (FD 274) the sixties counterculture of marijuana and flower power. Her search for identity through her children also ends in failure.

## **Self-Imposed Silence**

Self-imposed silence hurts Rachel Cameron in *A Jest of God*. She feels powerless in the Manawaka world as a spinster schoolteacher, which requires both responsibility and respect for the social norms. She longs to express a lot but bound by duty to her mother, she feels that she is not supposed to discuss with her sex and death. When denied the privilege to express herself freely she cries out at the Tabernacle and feels ashamed of her outburst. What she needs is a male counterpart to establish her feminine identity.

Stacey MacAindra's dilemma arises out of the many roles expected of a woman. Her immediate male counterpart Mac, her husband is not an effective communicator who can rescue her from all her internal fears and conflicts. She says, "Mac never talks about his war, never has, not that he talks much about anything anymore." (FD 10) Stacey attempts to search her identity through her husband, Clifford MacAindra. Stacey wants to a harmonious relationship with her children but cannot help behaving like her mother, May Cameron. She wants to become a good mother.

Stacey cannot expect her husband Clifford MacAindra in this regard because as a salesman he comes back home very late. So she has to shoulder the family responsibilities all by herself. Even during his short stay at home, Clifford Mac has preoccupied with his own work. After returning home he could merely enquire Stacey about the children and go ahead with his work. Their physical intimacy develops a sense of boredom in Stacey. Stacey yearns for a mental affinity with her husband but he does not want to respond her affiliation. Mac is reserved while Stacey is talkative. Whenever she wants to share her joys and sorrows with him, he asks her to leave him alone. She thinks that she and her husband are like two parallel lines, which go together but can never meet. Sometimes Stacey is even sorry to have married Mac at all. Due to the physical and spiritual distance between the husband and wife they are able to exercise only negative impact on their children.

## **Rachel's Brief Affair with Nick**

In *A Jest of God*, Rachel's brief affair with Nick during the summer holidays brings a sea change in her. A former schoolmate, Nick is a teacher in Winnipeg who has come to his father's farm near Manawaka. Rachel has such a strong need for love that she overcomes all the constraints and inhibitions of a small town girl and enters a physical relationship with Nick. When Nick asks her out she goes, when he kisses her she responds, when he makes love to her she is ready. She takes the initiative in her first physical love with Nick. She goes all out during her sexual encounter and wants to know Nick's body to the last detail,

Then I want my hands to know everything about him, the way the hair grows in his armpits, the curve of his bones at the hips, the tight muscles of his belly, the arching of his sex. (AJG 104)

Even the second time, it is she who reaches out to touch first, to ask for it. She suggests to Nick that he can shift to Manawaka. When Nick says that her openness suggests her loss of pride, Rachel says,

No, I have no pride, None left, not now. This realization renders me all at once calm, inexplicably, and almost free. Have I finished with facades? Whatever happens, let it happen. I won't deny it. (AJG 142)

She no longer has her obscure sex-fantasies, rather she dreams about being in bed with Nick or about marriage.

Rachel's relationship with Nick offers her an opportunity to free herself from the control of her mother. Her attitude towards her mother changes as she goes steady with Nick. When Rachel comes back from the outing, she finds her mother wide awake. She informs her that Nick had taken her to his house to meet his family. The mother's face gets more wan and sunken at this and she asks Rachel if the affair was serious. Rachel can see the real cause of her mother's worry the thought that is tormenting her mother, "What will become of me" (AJG 114) after Rachel is gone.

### **Stacey's Extra-Marital Relationship**

Stacey's extra-marital relationship begins with Buckle, Mac's friend provides Stacey with an opportunity to move with a male counterpart by frequenting their home during Mac's absence. She senses a sex motive in Buckle's visits and is unable to find a real companion in him. The personal conflict between Mac and Buckle in the office makes Buckle revenge on Mac through Stacey. The patriarchal man is in an advantageous position in that he lies to Mac that Stacey has had sex with him and the uncommunicative husband does not verify but believes his fellow man's lie. Thus, Stacey is induced to leave home, for the uncommunicative husband and treacherous villain do not permit her the licence of living in her fantasy world.

But it is not just Stacey's inner world that is burning, the whole outer world is in flames, as the news constantly reminds the readers in capital letters,  
ever-open eye...man burning. his face cannot be seen. he lies still, perhaps already dead.  
flames leap and quiver from his blackened robe like excited children of hell. voice: today  
another buddhist monk set fire to himself in protest against the war in. (fd 116)

Laurence makes her protagonist carve her own identity and gains a balanced vision of life at the end.

### **Making Choice**

Towards the end, Rachel does make a choice. Her decision to move away from Manawaka indicates that she is an authentic individual, trying to create her own identity. She proves herself capable of freedom. She does not achieve passionate flight and social independence, instead she is free to accept the care of her mother and to move westward into a quiet new life.

Laurence thus introduces men who are promoters as well as stumbling blocks in her women's journey towards identity. She portrays her women protagonists' undivided self, which can be preserved only in relation to the other half of their psyche, the animus represented by the male characters. These redeeming men help the women break the strong chains wound round them by their restrictive husbands and partners.

### **Theme of Survival**

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The term “survival” brings into focus how women use their language in voicing their sufferings. It stands for continuing to live or exist. A survivalist is a person who believes in ensuring personal survival of a catastrophic event by arming himself and by often living in the wild. The theme of survival is not restricted to one nation. It is a universal theme. Nor is it confined to literature written only in the twentieth century. In the twentieth century however, diverse experiences of alienation and survival are encountered, as the central characters are drawn not only from the ruling or upper classes but also from various classes, occupations and races. The mental anguish of man as depicted in modern literary works, mirrors reality.

In *A Jest of God*, the primary theme is survival. Survival continues to be the basic theme in *The Fire-Dwellers*. It is an attempt of the personality to survive with some dignity, tilting the load of excess baggage that everyone carries, until the moment of death. Connected to this theme, there are a set of interrelated themes the incompleteness of human relationships resulting aloneness, the ambivalence between human relationships, miscommunication or lack of it, human alienation, personal identity and the case of women in a male dominated world all of which result in isolation.

Stacey in *The Fire-Dweller* is doubly under pressure for being forced into assuming the pre-ordained role of a woman as a mother of four, for whom there can't be any place in the society, unless she performs her duty as the good woman. In such a state, the coolness and silence of nature along with the presence of river and mountains are inspiring forces for her that would lead into her liberation and resistance.

Through *A Jest of God* Laurence depicts her protagonist's dissatisfaction and loneliness in small prairie town. For these protagonists, the small town is a symbol of restriction and boundaries, and they want to free from boundaries. But, as the depth of human mind and misery cannot be fathomed and understood easily, Laurence tries to devise a spiritual connection with nature that will help her go beyond the usual torments of life. In other words, human mind cannot calculate exactly the psychological and social pains inflicted upon humanity, because it is not yet scientifically very strong specially with regards to ordinary people, but there can always be a will and determination among all people to overcome the deadliness of life and find a window of calmness and meaning in the everyday life.

Margaret Laurence's *A Jest of God* explores and explodes the myth of spinsterhood. At the outset, she presents Rachel Cameron, a woman struggling to come to terms with love, with death, with herself, and her world. Every time she lacks in confidence and poise. She is abnormally timid. All these hinder her from establishing meaningful relationships with men as well as with other women. Rachel is a victim of low self-esteem, which is not congenial for the establishment and maintenance of harmonious relationships. Rachel thinks of herself as dry and empty, but she fights with darkness which makes her life significant. Clara Thomas describes her condition and the affirmation of life and living which the novel makes in the following words:

*A Jest of God* makes a great affirmation of life and living, happening in the midst of and in spite of terrible muddle, anxiety and confusion. Rachel does not grandly go mad or tragically die like those who would break life to their wills : She bends to life's blows, as most mortals have done before her and life plays its amazing, everlasting trick once again for her, bringing vitality and at least some hope out of defeat. (Thomas 87-88)

Margaret Laurence's *The Fire-Dwellers* epitomizes the dehumanizing, hellish state of urban existence. She depicts the plight of Stacey MacAindra, the protagonist, a middle-aged woman, who became a victim of the Bedlam in which she lives. Her consciousness of the chaotic wide world batters her sensibilities from all sides. The milieu is grotesque due to the encroachment of meaningless violence. It looks as though the universe is on the brink of conflagration, Stacey is perforce made to rely on her own internal resources for help, something to act as a bridge between the internal and the external world of her experience. Stacey's problem is that of the marginalized woman. The novelist utilises thoughts, memories and inner monologues constantly to keep everyone aware of the action unfolding within the mind of the protagonist.

Rachel and her mother live in a cosy flat which is bedecked to her widowed mother's tastes. She teaches in a school for children in the prairie town of Manawaka. Rachel exhibits her resentment and envy towards her sister Stacey living in Vancouver. After her father's demise

fourteen years ago, they were not gifted with enough, Rachel helplessly dropped her studies at university. She felt the responsibility to support her mother and came back to Manawaka to take up a job at school. At this precise moment in her life, she fails to notice what she is doing or what she has done. She manages to get through each day, and worse still, by teaching. Each tormented night moves on to the next, but she manages to support, pamper, and even feel some indulgence for her mother. All these facts mean nothing to her. She fears being thought an eccentric spinster. She identifies herself to be the object of the children's songs. During the course of the novel, she refers to herself as "a thin giant," "a stroke of a white chalk on a black board," (AJG 38) "a stick of chalk," "some ungainly bird" having a "crane of a body." (AJG 121)

Stacey MacAindra, thirty nine years old, is the wife of MacAindra, a salesman and the mother of Jen, Duncan, Ian and Katie, aged between two and fourteen. She has a deep anxiety about the family, about the hellfires of city existence, about the tension of modern-day living. Stacey places before everyone the picture of a confused, anxious, self-doubting, contemporary housewife.

Like Rachel, Stacey finds herself and her family imprisoned by the city's power structures which rob the people of their acclaimed identity and disintegrate the family. Furthermore, accidents, crime, international catastrophes have become part of everyday existence and make mockery of harmonious family life. The violence reported by media breeds violence among the younger generation. Stacey is affected by the images of war and violence shown on television and by newspaper headlines which interact with her maternal fears for the safety of her own children. Hallucinations of burning buildings, forest fires and Roman Centurions flash across in her inner vision, Stacey fears that her children become victims of sexual violence, murder, accidents, or even war. These are very real fears arising out of her immediate environment. Moreover, the occurrences are reflected inevitably in the home environment. Stacey is succumbed into a state of anguish by witnessing the behaviour of Mac's violent fits of temper, Ian's sullenness, Duncans nightmares and Katie's rebelliousness. Even the baby's inability to talk is an indication of the more fundamental problem arising out of modern-day city experience.

Unlike Rachel, Stacey in *The Fire-Dwellers* governed by the maternal principle. She is despair - stricken because her maternal voice of compassion is drowned in the chaos of the urban inferno that the city is. The maternal process is however disoriented into negative channels in her so that she attempts to live solely through the lives of husband and children. This leads to a greater fragmentation and self-destruction. However, like Rachel, Stacey is also self-aware and self-analytical. Initially, however she finds herself without a support system. Her mother's memory always fills her with a sense of guilt. The mother had demarcated as forbidden that territory where neither she nor her daughter could enter. Stacey wants to communicate with her family, but she seems to fail. The key episode here is the one in relation to her daughter Katie. *A Jest of God*, written from the daughter's perspective, portrays the dilemmas of the younger women and those of the mother. What Stacey looks for, and by extension, what Katie looks for is a common ground where mother and daughter can meet. The first crucial episode dramatically rendered is the one where Stacey returns home after her date Luke in the manner in which her teenage daughter might have loved. It is the daughter who rebukes the mother by putting on the mother's tone and expressing her rebelliousness as well as her mother's anxiety.

In *A Jest of God*, Margaret Laurence writes with deep passion about Rachel trapped in a milieu of deceit and pettiness. Through her summer affair with Nick Kazlick, a schoolmate from earlier years, she learns at last to reach out another person and to make herself vulnerable. She recognizes Nick's role as that of the other self, "He had his own demons and webs mine brushed across him for an instant and he saw them and had to draw away, knowing that what I wanted from him was too much" (AJG 189) After symbolic completion the 'rite de passage', Rachel is 'reborn.' She can now cope with of the imperialistic and colonizing force symbolized by her mother and society. She asserts her independence by deciding to leave Manawaka against her mother's wish. She is able to make her peace with her inherited past symbolised by her great father. She thus acquires a holistic sense of reclaiming and valuing her inherited ancestry.

It is the story of a woman trapped in a prison partly of her own making. But the prison here is more tightly locked. The readers never see Rachel anywhere but in her home town, except for the trip to the hospital, she makes her break for freedom exists mostly in the future. Her prison is so difficult to get out of because it is made from virtues gone sour. Rachel alternates

between the two poles of courage and desperation. At the end, she realizes the childishness of her own mother, and her inability to offer emotional safety. She acknowledges our human, necessary limitations.

### **Narrative Technique**

Narrative techniques are the methods that writers use to give certain artistic and emotional effects to a story. Although the term gets used loosely in everyday speech to talk about narrative, a ‘story’ is just a sequence of events in time. Not until a writer chooses how to present that story in language, it becomes a “narrative”. Many key narrative techniques fall into four categories: plot, character, point of view, and style.

The Narrative Techniques of Laurence reveals her as one of the leading master craftswomen of her time. In each of Margaret Laurence’s two Canadian novels *A Jest of God* and *The Fire-Dwellers*, the character whose thoughts, memories and actions control all aspects of the novel is a woman. They are all natives of Manawaka the prairie town that is the focus of Margaret Laurence’s fictional world, a world as real as any actual Manitoba town. The Manawaka novels center on female characters and are told from their individual points of view. One can speak interchangeably of the Manawaka world or of the Manawaka women of Margaret Laurence it is the women who reflect and refract that world; the novel provides them with materials for their monologic dialogues. Each heroine in the Manawaka novels tells her own story in her own voice. Yet her shared experience of the condition of being a woman colours all Laurence’s stories with similar thematic concern.

The fantasy narratives within Rachel’s and Stacey’s interior monologues are structured as direct imaginative responses to their social situations, for, to Laurence the possibilities of subversion and revision lie within individuals and existing structures. She uses the conventions of autobiographical fiction which privilege subjectivity in order to create the spaces for her character’s dreams and fantasies and such breathing spaces in their turn expose the limits of realist fiction as a construction of private or social reality.

One of the major challenges of the novelist is to control the weight of the details by his narrative art. It must be said to the credit of Laurence that she manages her material with admirable dexterity. Mixing the present and past, Laurence gives the reader a new reading experience. She uses images, metaphors, allusions to deepen the meaning and significance of the event. In both the novels the narrative technique control very effectively the action, the meaning and characters involved. Laurence proves herself as an eminent Canadian feminist writer through *The Fire-Dwellers* and *A Jest of God* by using the language, uses of landscape and uses of prominent narrative structure and techniques.

### **Summation**

The Geo-physical factors in Canada made it an entirely different country from any of the typical European countries, the inhabitants of which had migrated to Canada to settle there on permanent basis. But the cultural ethos they brought with them made Canada, culturally and linguistically speaking, a healthy mosaic against the American culture. The natives of Canada had hardly any literary tradition of their own except in some folk forms. The task of the Canadian writers whose parents had come from European countries was chiefly confined to carve out norms for cultural rootedness. Hence the main thematic concerns perceptible in their works are the question of a distinct identity of their own. Many Canadian novelists have based their novels on the theme of search for identity.

Margaret Laurence's fiction is largely dominated by an individual character's persistent search for identity. Laurence's fiction has always tried to explore the definitions of women and to dramatize the ways in which a woman discovers her voice and uses it as a path to self-realization. Each of her Manawaka novels portrays the growth of a woman's individual consciousness.

The present study has also attempted to show how the women protagonists of Margaret Laurence flout the traditional notions of woman as either the 'Angel in the house' or the 'Sexually Voracious', and reveal the mortal nature of an ordinary woman. In the process of their discovery, the characters realize that they have lost their real identity which they strive to assert.

The realization of their lost identity propels them forward to break the shackles that bind them and come out of the cocoons of subordination which is either built by them or by others.

A perusal of the status of women in the two novels reveals the fact that women keep evolving from time to time yet all the while sticking to the grove of the culture. They do not overstep the borders but try to push it further to suit their position and circumstances. This offers an immense scope for further research on the evolving pattern. So, a study on this would always enrich the existing literature and throw more light on the transformation which is inevitable.

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