SRINIVASAN COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichy)

PERAMBALUR-621212

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

COURSE : M.A ENGLISH YEAR : II SEMESTER : IV

SUBJECT NAME : NEW LITERATURES IN ENGLISH

SUB. CODE (BDU given) : P16EN41

PREPARED BY : R.ABIRAMI, MA.,B.Ed.,M.Phil.,

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

ENGLISH

MONTH &YEAR : MARCH 2020

Core Course – XIII

New Literatures in English

Objectives:

To make learners familiarize with writers of new literatures

To enable learners to appreciate various cultures

Unit – I (Poetry)

David Diop : "Africa"

Wole Soyinka: "Telephone Conversation"

Judith Wright: "Fire at Murdering Hut"

A.D. Hope: "Australia"

Unit – II (Poetry)

Archibald Lampman : "A January Morning"

F.R. Scott: "The Canadian Authors Meet"

Margaret Atwood: "Journey to the Interior"

Leonard Cohen: "If It Were Spring"

Unit – III (Prose)

Stuart Hall: "Cultural Identity and Diaspora"

Chinua Achebe: "Marriage is a Private Affair

Unit – IV (Drama)

Wole Soyinka: The Swamp Dwellers

Tomson Highway: Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing

Unit – V (Fiction)

Adele Wiseman: Crackpot

Margaret Laurence: Stone Angel

UNIT-I

AFRICA BY DAVID DIOP

DAVID DIOP

David Mandessi Diop (Bordeaux, 9 July 1927 – 29 August 1960) was a French West African poet known for his contribution to the Negritude literary movement. His work reflects his anti-colonial stance. Diop started writing poems while he was still in school, and his poems started appearing in Présence Africaine since he was just 15. Diop lived his life transitioning constantly between France and West Africa, from childhood onwards. While in Paris, Diop became a prominent figure in Négritude literature. His work is seen as a condemnation of colonialism, and detest towards colonial rule. Like many Négritude authors of the time, Diop hoped for an independent Africa.

He died in the crash of Air France Flight 343 in the Atlantic Ocean off Dakar, Senegal, at the age of 33 on 29 August 1960. His one small collection of poetry, Coups de pilon, came out from Présence Africaine in 1956; it was posthumously published in English as Hammer Blows, translated and edited by Simon Mondo and Frank Jones (African Writers Series, 1975).

Poem

Africa

Africa my Africa

Africa of proud warriors in ancestral savannahs
Africa of whom my grandmother sings
On the banks of the distant river
I have never known you
But your blood flows in my veins
Your beautiful black blood that irrigates the fields
The blood of your sweat
The sweat of your work
The work of your slavery
Africa, tell me Africa
Is this your back that is unbent
This back that never breaks under the weight of humiliation
This back trembling with red scars
And saying no to the whip under the midday sun
But a grave voice answers me
Impetuous child that tree, young and strong
That tree over there
Splendidly alone amidst white and faded flowers
That is your Africa springing up anew
springing up patiently, obstinately
Whose fruit bit by bit acquires
The bitter taste of liberty.

Summary

David Diop is an African poet. He has written many poems, fighting against the racial injustice. The poem Africa is about the glorious past of Africa, the nation, in comparison with the present situation of the country and its citizens, who are mere slaves.

The opening line of the poem expresses the poet persona's love for his nation, Africa. He uses a possessive pronoun to exhibit his love for Africa. The poet persona regrets for not being a part of olden Africa, wherein it had many warriors and rich savannahs. The poet persona has heard of the glorious past, about which he comes to know through the folk songs of his grandmother.

The poet persona is proud with his self-recognition of his ancestors' blood running in his vein. He is proud of his colour and race. He happily announces the colour of his blood as black. The poet persona says that their black blood irrigated the entire grounds of Africa.

The persona vehemently transfers his pride about the country into a rage. The colonizers, who enslaved the Africans, drained all the blood, which was exerted from the Africans in the form of work and sweat. The person becomes ferocious and questions the silent submission of the Africans. He cannot digest the thought and sight of the Africans being bent, with scars for the whips held by the colonizers.

The persona listens to a voice those talks about a tree, which is found alone amidst white and faded flowers. The voice addresses the persona as an angry man. The voice says him that the tree is Africa, the persona's own Africa. Like the tree, growing patiently, Africans would also taste the fruits liberty.

Telephone conversation by Wole Soyinka

Wole Soyinka

Akinwande Oluwole Babatunde Soyinka known as **Wole Soyinka**, is a Nigerian playwright, poet and essayist. He was awarded the 1986 Nobel Prize in Literature, the first African to be honoured in that category.

Soyinka was born into a Yoruba family in Abeokuta. In 1954, he attended Government College in Ibadan, and subsequently University College Ibadan and the University of Leeds in England.[4] After studying in Nigeria and the UK, he worked with the Royal Court Theatre in London. He went on to write plays that were produced in both countries, in theatres and on radio. He took an active role in Nigeria's political history and its struggle for independence from Great Britain. In 1965, he seized the Western Nigeria Broadcasting Service studio and broadcast a demand for the cancellation of the Western Nigeria Regional Elections. In 1967, during the Nigerian Civil War, he was arrested by the federal government of General Yakubu Gowon and put in solitary confinement for two years.

Poem

Telephone Conversation

The price seemed reasonable, location
Indifferent. The landlady swore she lived
Off premises. Nothing remained
But self-confession. "Madam," I warned,
"I hate a wasted journey—I am African."
Silence. Silenced transmission of
Pressurized good-breeding. Voice, when it came,
Lipstick coated, long gold rolled
Cigarette-holder pipped. Caught I was foully.
"HOW DARK?" . . . I had not misheard . . . "ARE YOU LIGHT
OR VERY DARK?" Button B, Button A.* Stench
Of rancid breath of public hide-and-speak.
Red booth. Red pillar box. Red double-tiered
Omnibus squelching tar. It was real! Shamed
By ill-mannered silence, surrender
Pushed dumbfounded to beg simplification.
Considerate she was, varying the emphasis--
"ARE YOU DARK? OR VERY LIGHT?" Revelation came.
"You mean--like plain or milk chocolate?"
Her assent was clinical, crushing in its light
Impersonality. Rapidly, wave-length adjusted,
I chose. "West African sepia"--and as afterthought,
"Down in my passport." Silence for spectroscopic
Flight of fancy, till truthfulness clanged her accent
Hard on the mouthpiece. "WHAT'S THAT?" conceding
"DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS." "Like brunette."

"THAT'S DARK, ISN'T IT?" "Not altogether.
Facially, I am brunette, but, madam, you should see
The rest of me. Palm of my hand, soles of my feet
Are a peroxide blond. Friction, caused--
Foolishly, madam--by sitting down, has turned
My bottom raven black--One moment, madam!"--sensing
Her receiver rearing on the thunderclap
About my ears--"Madam," I pleaded, "wouldn't you rather
See for yourself?"
Nigerian poet Wole Soyinka uses irony to depict the absurdity of racism in his poem, "Telephone Conversation."

Summary

"Telephone Conversation" is exactly what its title promises: an imagined conversation between a African man and a presumably white landlady with accommodations to rent. Some of the idioms in the poem mark the general geography of the poem as England, most likely London. The city saw a substantial influx of African immigrants throughout the post-war decades, a period that also saw a rise of racial tensions in the country, so such conversations would not have been unfamiliar.

The poem opens with the African speaker clarifying the essential information about the location, the cost, and similar business details. The landlady is initially described as being of "good-breeding," a standing that makes her questions about the color of the speaker's skin seem suddenly and dramatically out of place. Specifically, she wants to know if he is light or very dark skinned, a distinction that seems to carry particular weight within the racial atmosphere of the day.

From this pointed and clearly prejudicial question, the poem moves smoothly between the thoughts of the speaker as he considers the question as a political statement and the landlady's insistent repetition of the same questions or variations thereof. As the conversation unfolds, it becomes a painful accumulation of ironic miscommunication and blatant racism. The more the speaker tries to answer the questions, the deeper the exchange slips into irony as the speaker answers the woman with cool logic that clouds rather than clarifies the situation. At first comparing himself to chocolate, for instance, the speaker settles on describing himself as "West African sepia," a term he knows will further confuse his listener.

As the speaker's ironic tone takes hold of the conversation, he begins to describe various body parts, from his hair to the soles of his feet, in an effort to explain to her that he is, like all people, several different colors. The final lines of the poem carry a double-edged message. The first is clear: making a judgment about a person's character based solely on the color of their skin is the key absurdity of racial prejudice. The second layer of the closing lines underscore the meeting of absurdity with additional absurdity, an approach Soyinka often brings to his explorations of such situations, as the speaker invites the woman to "see" for herself all of the varied colors of the body parts he catalogues.

THEMES

Racial Conflict

"Telephone Conversation" is a dramatic dialogue in which a person of color responds to the racial prejudices of a woman with whom he is trying to negotiate rental accommodations. As the poem begins, the speaker's well-educated and polished voice, as heard on the telephone, make him acceptable to the landlady, but when he turns to the crucial moment of "self-confession," the truth of racial conflict comes to the foreground. The landlady clearly does not want a tenant of color, yet at the same time is trapped by the code of civil conduct that will not allow her to acknowledge what might be considered an uncivilized racial prejudice. The cluster of assumptions articulated by the well-bred landlady gather into an almost textbook definition of racism. She is xenophobic (exhibiting an irrational fear of foreigners, such as the African caller). She engages a vocabulary of racial stereotypes (making hasty generalizations based on skin color or ethnic background), and her unwillingness to rent to a man of color reinforces a policy of racial segregation or what has been called ghettoization (the practice of restricting members of a racial or ethnic group to certain neighborhoods or areas of a city). But even as she weaves her way through a series of deeply prejudicial questions, ranging from "HOW DARK?" to "THAT's DARK, ISN'T IT?" the woman reveals the confused underside of racial attitudes. At no point in the poem does the speaker internalize the sense of inferiority that is being projected upon him, nor does he react in anger to her narrow-mindedness. Instead, he engages language in a calm and highly sophisticated manner, elevating the poem from diatribe or attack to a much more effective end of allowing readers to see the world through the absurd lens of racial prejudice.

STYLE

Satire

Satire is a technique that uses humor and irony to undercut misguided behaviors or to censure social and political attitudes. From its origins in the writing and culture of the ancient Greeks, satire has remained a powerful tool of moral judgment. The tone of satiric literature ranges from the detached irony of Soyinka's "Telephone Conversation" to fully expressed anger and vehement contempt. Given that most satire relies heavily on balancing humor and word play with criticism, it is appropriate that irony is one of its chief tools.

Fire at Murdering Hut by Judith Wright

Judith Wright

Judith Arundell Wright was an Australian poet, environmentalist and campaigner for Aboriginal land rights. She was a recipient of the Christopher Brennan Award. Wikipedia

Born: 31 May 1915, Armidale, Australia
Died: 25 June 2000, Canberra, Australia
Parents: Ethel Wright, Phillip Wright
Awards: Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry, Christopher Brennan Award
Children: Meredith McKinney

PARAPHRASE OF THE POEM

Bush-fire in Australia is common. They break outland devastate often. Huts with inmates are put out in the blaze.

1-THE GRAVE

Grave speaks to Fire. The Fire is like a snake hidden under the Grave. It comes out suddenly and devastate. It is the soul of the bush-fire. The Fire has come to make the Grave to witness another stormy session of fire in the night to pacify the Grave's lust. The Fire has come to take the Grave Away with its knife like flame-tongue. The Grave is observing silence for over a century without seeing the Fire. Now the Fire is found. For long the Fire has left the Grave alone. Rose-tree has grown beside the Grave. Now the Grave is frigid, cold frost. The Grave appeals to the Fire to lay down its flames again beside the Grave's frost and the Fire's blade of flame by the Stone-Cut upon the Grave. The Grave has been for too long a time in the drought and in the rain. It is all true. Now the Fire has come to take the Grave again. With its blade of flame, which is the Fire's heart, the Fire will dig the Grave out and wake it. This time the Fire will find the Grave lying alone. The Grave has been here too long with the white rose-tree, the blowing mist and the Stone-Cut on the Grave.

II-THE FIRE

Now the Fire charges at the Grave if it is one of the old dead. The complaints of the Grave are whispers to the Fire. The Fire will stamp the Grave down under its feet. The Grave is shallow like a red-bird. The song of Fire, death, is the final message of love. Now the Fire hungers to eat the white roses, the dry stone-moss and the bones within its vault. No Neihter love or death comes to death. Flesh docs not grow on the bared bone, It means the dead cannot come alive and the dead cannot die again. The Fire asks the Grave to look at its dancing on the grave like a lover's ghost. The Fire looks beautiful. The Fire dances on the tree of roses. It burns. The blade of flame rips the tree and the tree chars to coal-dust. The Fire is not the lover of Grave and it does not love. But before it goes, it kisses the Grave through the rose-root and delves into her breast and tattoo a love message in black satin, as a badge of black plague upon the white breast stone.

III. THE STONE

Now the Cut-Stone speaks. The blade of Flame seems to be a steel knife. It is cruel in the hands that split the sleep of the stone and marks it with pain. The Stone is willing to be left alone, cold, quiet and in deep sleep. Now it is exposed to the Fire again. The Fire sets it naked throughout the merciless day and to devour for years. The Fire is the instrument of love, that will eat the stone away. The poor, naked bone lies beneath the stone and it looks to be left bare. The Stone hears

the Fire calling on the Grave. The Fire is a terrible one and it is the eater of Death even. The dead body lies hidden inside the Grave. It should lie there quietly forgetting the summoning cry of the wild sun and forget the Fire that would lay open the heart with a love to tear it. The stone asks the dead body to lie quietly in the Grave when the blade of Flame destroys its bone. The Cut-Stone is on the life that was and by itself it stands as 'no more'. In other words Stone is life-starved. That is why the Stone is afraid of the falling of the scorching sun rays and the rain falling on to beat its breast. Fire does not open the Stone's heart. The Stone does not wish to be awakening to the cruel day of love. The Stone prays for REST.

Australia by A.D.Hope

A.D.Hope

Alec Derwent Hope AC OBE was an Australian poet and essayist known for his satirical slant. He was also a critic, teacher and academic. He was referred to in an American journal as "the 20th century's greatest 18th-century poet". Wikipedia

Born: 21 July 1907, Cooma, Australia
Died: 13 July 2000, Canberra, Australia
Nationality: Australian
Education: The University of Sydney, University College, University of Oxford, Fort Street High School
Awards: Christopher Brennan Award

Poem

Australia

A Nation of trees, drab green and desolate grey
In the field uniform of modern wars,
Darkens her hills, those endless, outstretched paws
Of Sphinx demolished or stone lion worn away.

They call her a young country, but they lie:
She is the last of lands, the emptiest,
A woman beyond her change of life, a breast
Still tender but within the womb is dry.

Without songs, architecture, history:
The emotions and superstitions of younger lands,
Her rivers of water drown among inland sands,
The river of her immense stupidity

Floods her monotonous tribes from Cairns to Perth.
In them at last the ultimate men arrive
Whose boast is not: "we live" but "we survive",
A type who will inhabit the dying earth.

And her five cities, like five teeming sores,
Each drains her: a vast parasite robber-state
Where second hand Europeans pullulate
Timidly on the edge of alien shores.

Yet there are some like me turn gladly home
From the lush jungle of modern thought, to find
The Arabian desert of the human mind,

Hoping, if still from the deserts the prophets come,

Such savage and scarlet as no green hills dare
Springs in that waste, some spirit which escapes
The learned doubt, the chatter of cultured apes
Which is called civilization over there.

Summary

A.D Hope was an Australian poet and essayist known for his satirical slant. He was also a critic, teacher and an academic. He was referred to in an American journal as “the 20th century's greatest 18th-century poet ".

In the poem, "Australia” A.D Hope questions the idea that Australia is civilized. In the first five stanzas the poet talks about Australia. He describes how it is both a new and old country, geologically old but politically new and how it is both a European colony and an independent but a parasitical country. The next two stanzas talk about the wilderness of Australia.

The poet describes Australia as being a “ nation of trees, drab green an desolate Grey” that “darkens her hills “. He sees Australia as a country that is bleak and almost colourless and dull. This very much resembles the “field uniform of modern wars”, where everything is in shade of grey and green.

The poet likens the country to a ‘sphinx'. The sphinx was a figure from Egyptian myths which possessed the body of lion and head of a man. This comparison could be directly related to the author's vision of Australia.

The poet suggests that Australia’s realm of intelligence and power have now been “worn away" which suggests that Australia used to be better than it is now. He believes that Australia is a country that is old. People may call Australia “A young country, but they lie". Australia to him is the “last of lands, the emptiest. A woman beyond her change of life, a breast still tender but within the womb is dry”. Australia may be considered as young by the world’s standards, but it is empty within. It has only external beauty but no inner beauty.

Australia to him is devoid of culture which is “without songs, architecture, and history". He sees Australia as being a country that has neither historical background nor culture to speak of. He believes that it has the capabilities to do so, however, the ideas are drowned among “island sands”.

Australia is portrayed as a country that is nothing at all, where there are “monotonous tribes from Cairns to Perth” The five main cities are compared to " five teeming sores “. The people who come to live in Australia do not boast of living but rather merely surviving.
He believes that people who move here are rather unwelcome, and they are "second-hand Europeans” that grow rapidly on these “alien shores". He sees these people as people who “drain” Australia” . For him it is a" vast parasite robber state” which has lost its original vitality. The last two stanzas refer to the modern civilization of Australia. For Hope the civilization of Australia is nothing but the false imitation of cultured apes which is mistaken as modern civilization.

UNIT-II

A January Morning by Archibald Lampman

Archibald Lampman

Archibald Lampman FRSC was a Canadian poet. "He has been described as 'the Canadian Keats;' and he is perhaps the most outstanding exponent of the Canadian school of nature poets." The Canadian Encyclopedia says that he is "generally considered the finest of Canada's late 19th-century poets in English." Wikipedia

Born: 17 November 1861, Upper Canada
Died: 10 February 1899, Ottawa, Canada
Nationality: Canadian
Spouse: Maude Playter (m. 1887)
Movies: Morning on the Lievre
Children: Natalie Charlotte, Arnold Gesner, Archibald Otto

Poem

The glittering roofs are still with frost; each worn
Black chimney builds into the quiet sky
Its curling pile to crumble silently.
Far out to westward on the edge of morn,
The slender misty city towers up-borne
Glimmer faint rose against the pallid blue;
And yonder on those northern hills, the hue
Of amethyst, hang fleeces dull as horn.
And here behind me come the woodmen's sleighs
With shouts and clamorous squeakings; might and main
Up the steep slope the horses stamp and strain,
Urged on by hoarse-tongued drivers—cheeks ablaze,
Iced beards and frozen eyelids—team by team,
With frost-fringed flanks, and nostrils jetting steam.

Summary

The poet begins the poem with the description of the building in the city glittering with the description of the buildings in the city with frost on their roofs. Each building has a chimney that hits the sky with its smoke piling up silently. The gracefully thin, smoky city towers carried a shining and sparkling faint rose against the pale blue. And there at some distance on those northern hills, can see the colour of amethyst where farmers rear sheep whose fleeces hang Behind the poet come the men of the woods who ride on their horses with great skill and strength. The sleighs are noisy and the men control the animals that climb up the slope with great difficulty. The woodsmen force the poor animals to move according to their will. These men

shout at the horses harshly due to anger. The poet describes them as cruel their beards and eyes are frozen, with frost bordered sides and their nostrils produce steam since it is winter season.

Rhythm and Form

Archibald Lampman has used end rhymes and has incorporated rhyming couplets, too. The type of poem is lyrical poetry. Rhyme scheme is abbaaccabaabdd. This is in iambic pentameter and a limerick. Most important A January Morning is a sonnet. Literary devices used here are notable. The most common type is imagery.

The Canadian Authors Meet by F.R.Scott

F.R.Scott

Francis Reginald Scott (1899–1985), commonly known as Frank Scott or F. R. Scott, was a Canadian poet, intellectual, and constitutional expert. He helped found the first Canadian social democratic party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, and its successor, the New Democratic Party. He won Canada's top literary prize, the Governor General's Award, twice, once for poetry and once for non-fiction. He was married to artist Marian Dale Scott.

Poem

Expansive puppets percolate self-unction
Beneath a portrait of the Prince of Wales.
Miss Crotchet's muse has somehow failed to function,
Yet she's a poetess. Beaming, she sails

From group to chattering group, with such a dear
Victorian saintliness, as is her fashion,
Greeting the other unknowns with a cheer—
Virgins of sixty who still write of passion.

The air is heavy with Canadian topics,
And Carman, Lampman, Roberts, Campbell, Scott,
Are measured for their faith and philanthropics,
Their zeal for God and King, their earnest thought.

The cakes are sweet, but sweeter is the feeling
That one is mixing with the literati;
It warms the old, and melts the most congealing.
Really, it is a most delightful party.

Shall we go round the mulberry bush, or shall
We gather at the river, or shall we
Appoint a Poet Laureate this fall,
Or shall we have another cup of tea?

O Canada, O Canada, O can
A day go by without new authors springing
To paint the native maple, and to plan
More ways to set the selfsame welkin ringing?

Summary

"The Canadian Authors Meet" is a satirical poem by F.R.Scott. Francis Reginald Scott (1899-1985), commonly known as Frank Scott or F. R. Scott, was a Canadian poet, intellectual and constitutional expert. He was the son of Frederick George Scott, a well-known Canadian

poet and author, known as the Poet of the Laurentians. Here in this poem, the poet makes fun of pseudo-Canadian poets.

A group of Canadian authors meet in a large and comfortable hall. These writers are bloated with pride. They have gathered under "a portrait of the Prince of Wales". This shows how these so-called writers are still parasites and are in need of patronage from Britain. In the gathering, there is one Miss.Crotchet. Crotchet in music is a note having one-fourth the time value of a whole note. This may mean that Miss.Crotchet is a minor poet, negligible writer and a literary non-entity. Her "muse has somehow failed to function". The Muse in Greek mythology is the goddess of music, song and dance, and the source of inspiration to poets.
Thus Miss.Crotchet never had the inspiration to write poetry, "Yet she's a poetess". The underlying irony is evident in this observation of the poet.

Smiling expansively, Miss.Crotchet moves "From group to chattering group". To cover her incompetence, she smiles in an affected way. "Victorian saintliness" "is her fashion" as she is a snob. The meeting hall is filled with many more insignificant writers. Miss.Crotchet greets these "unknowns with a cheer" – unknown to her as well as unknown to the world. Like virgins, these authors lack in exposure and experience. It is ironic that they should speak of love and passion, especially when they are all above sixty.

These writers talk on "Canadian topics" which are boring and uninteresting. They also discuss great poets like Bliss Carman, Archibald Lampman, Charles G.D. Roberts, William Wilfred Campbell and Frederick George Scott / Duncan Campbell Scott. These men are all very influential Canadian poets, who wrote Victorian and Romantic poetry, something to which Scott was opposed. But they are not measured for their literary merits but for their religious faith and charity. "Their zeal for God and King" and "their earnest thought" alone are discussed. These are peripheral issues which are non-literary attainments. Scott emphatically criticizes the paraliterary considerations used by these half-baked authors in judging poets and their works.

Scott describes the party which is overflowing with cakes. The cakes are sweet but for them, sweeter is the feeling of mixing with the literary men. It "warms" these old writers. The sentimental ones melted most early. Literary flavour is lacking in this "most delightful party".

For these self-styled writes, there is no difference between a simple Nursery school rhyme like "Shall we go round the mulberry bush" or the Christian hymn "Shall we gather at the river". Their motive is to find a private place for their private affairs, that can be behind a "mulberry bush" or on the banks of a "river" The appointment of a Poet Laureate is spoken in the same breath as having another cup of tea. It is ironic that these poets should feel competent enough to select the Poet Laureate. Everything non-literary happens here.

After lampooning these fake writers, Scott moves on to criticize the plethora of mediocre new writers who emerge on the Canadian literary scene. In anguish, he cries out "O Canada, O Canada". Scott in clear hues presents how these ordinary writers "paint the native maple" (Country – Canada) with substandard writing. (The maple leaf is the most widely recognized national symbol of Canada). These writers repeat the ideas of their predecessors. Nothing is new in their writing as same things are duplicated.

Journey to the Interior by Margaret Atwood

Margaret Atwood

Margaret Eleanor Atwood (born November 18, 1939) is a Canadian poet, novelist, literary critic, essayist, inventor, teacher, and environmental activist. Since 1961, she has published 18 books of poetry, 18 novels, 11 books of non-fiction, nine collections of short fiction, eight children's books, and two graphic novels, as well as a number of small press editions of both poetry and fiction. Atwood has won numerous awards and honors for her writing, including the Booker Prize (twice), Arthur C. Clarke Award, Governor General's Award, Franz Kafka Prize, and the National Book Critics and PEN Center USA Lifetime Achievement Awards. A number of her works have been adapted for film and television, increasing her exposure.

Poem

There are similarities
I notice: that the hills
which the eyes make flat as a wall, welded
together, open as I move
to let me through; become
endless as prairies; that the trees
grow spindly, have their roots
often in swamps; that this is a poor country;
that a cliff is not known
as rough except by hand, and is
therefore inaccessible. Mostly
that travel is not the easy going

from point to point, a dotted
line on a map, location
plotted on a square surface
but that I move surrounded by a tangle
of branches, a net of air and alternate
light and dark, at all times;
that there are no destinations
apart from this.

There are differences
of course: the lack of reliable charts;
more important, the distraction of small details:
your shoe among the brambles under the chair
where it shouldn’t be; lucent
white mushrooms and a paring knife
on the kitchen table; a sentence
crossing my path, sodden as a fallen log
I’m sure I passed yesterday

(have I been
walking in circles again?)

but mostly the danger:
many have been here, but only
some have returned safely.

A compass is useless; also
trying to take directions
from the movements of the sun,
which are erratic;
and words here are as pointless
as calling in a vacant wilderness.

Whatever I do I must
keep my head. I know
it is easier for me to lose my way
forever here, than in other landscapes

Summary

The poem views the human mind as a landscape. As one delves deeper and deeper into the mind, it seems to widen out in various directions, all equally daunting and ultimately inscrutable. Only someone endowed with enormous faith in one's own selfhood can launch on such a daring journey and emerge unscathed at the end.

For those who stand outside and the non-observant, human psyche is as flat as any two-dimensional picture: "Flat as a wall." Its shades and colours may seem to be "welded together," as in a landscape painting. One cannot travel through it. But for those endowed with the gift of probing the mind, the mind will "open as I move to let me through," like endless prairies, the vast open grasslands of Canada. It is not that the interior 'landscape' or the 'mindscape' is uniformly fertile; for the mind has its own inaccessible, barren swamps too, capable of producing merely "spindly trees."

The exploration of the interior of the mind is not a straight forward enterprise. It is not a point-to-point, neat "dotted line on map." The daring traveller must traverse several devious routes in order to make some headway. These routes offer a variety of obstacles on the way. Significantly, "there are no destinations" at the end of such a 'journey.'

We are the only owner and tiller of this interior landscape – the mind, neither we can sell them nor lend them to others. In Martine Heidegger's terminology (whom I consider a great "Teacher" of the 20th Century and say further – so far I haven't found another) I would say we are "beings thrown-into-the-world" with a unique interior landscape of mind given to us without a choice. The question is not about 'choice' given or not given. It is more of how much we take time to travel, explore and till the landscape of our mind whose outcome reflects our interior and exterior outlook towards oneself, others and the universe. It says about the unique attitude and character and so on of a person. This aspect is often mentioned by/to each of us when we say to others or hear from others commends like 'you have an inclusive mind,' 'you have a big heart,'

and other synonymous phrases. All these commend which passes through our lives unnoticed are actually a mirroring of the landscape of our mind. Hence I think poet leaves us with a soul-searching question, how much do we travel and explore our mind the unique landscape we possess, and further till it to make it beautiful and fruitful. I think to explore and till the interior landscape of mind and make it beautiful and see it filled with the fruits of our labour is the ‘real happiness’ of life/a life actualized.

If it Were Spring by Leonard Cohen

Leonard Cohen

Leonard Norman Cohen (September 21, 1934 – November 7, 2016) was a Canadian singer, songwriter, poet, and novelist. His work explored religion, politics, isolation, depression, sexuality, loss, death and romantic relationships.[2] Cohen was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame, the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He was invested as a Companion of the Order of Canada, the nation's highest civilian honour. In 2011, Cohen received one of the Prince of Asturias Awards for literature and the ninth Glenn Gould Prize.

Poem

If it were Spring
and I killed a man,
I would change him to leaves
and hang him from a tree,

a tree in a grove
at the edge of a dune,
where small beasts came
to flee the sun.

Wind would make him
part of song,
and rain would cling
like tiny crystal worlds

upon his branch
of leaf-green skies,
and he would bear the dance
of fragile bone,

brush of wings
against his maps of arteries,
and turn up a yellow-stomached flag
to herald the touring storm.

o my victim,
ou would grow your season
as I grew mine,
under the spell of growth,

an instrument
of the blue sky,
an instrument of the sun,
a palm above the dark, splendid eyes.

What language the city will hear
because of your death,
anguish explain,
sorrow relieve.

Everywhere I see
the world waiting you,
the pens raised, walls prepared,
hands hung above the strings and keys.

And come Autumn
I will spin a net
between your height and earth
to hold your crisp parts.

In the fields and orchards
it must be turning Spring,
look at the faces
clustered around mine.

And I hear
the irrefutable argument of hunger
whispered, spoken, shouted,
but never sung.

I will kill a man this week;
before this week is gone
I will hang him to a tree,
I will see this mercy done.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF COHEN'S POEM IF IT WERE SPRING

The poet begins the poem by informing that he would kill. Man during the spring season, change him to leaves and hang him from a tree in the woods, which is seen at the edge of a bank. Here small animals would come and hide for shelter in order to escape the hot sun. The corpse of the man would be eaten up by these creatures and nothing but flexible bones and veins remain. The veins would turn pale yellow gradually. The body would suffer under the wind rain and storm.

The poet addresses the man as his victim calling him an instrument of the sky and the sun. The city will not feel the pain of the pain of the death of the man but the village will. When autumn comes the poet says he will spin a net to hold the body tightly and squeeze it to pieces. The in depth meaning of the poem is that the poet is unable to tolerate the destruction of nature by man. That's why he wants to take revenge upon the human race. Being a Jewish, Leonard Cohen feels the agony of racism due to which the Jewish people suffered very much. He feels that like god who shows mercy upon all creatures, humans too should be unbiased and show mercy upon the living creatures including nature. Man cuts tree and pollute the land for which the best penalty would be death and make him suffer under the hands of nature.

UNIT III
Cultural Identity and Diaspora by Stuart Hall

Stuart Hall

Stuart McPhail Hall (3 February 1932 – 10 February 2014) was a Jamaican-born British Marxist sociologist, cultural theorist and political activist. Hall, along with Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, was one of the founding figures of the school of thought that is now known as British Cultural Studies or The Birmingham School of Cultural Studies.

Summary

This article focuses on Stuart Hall's interdisciplinary theoretical work on race, class, and representation in 1980s Britain and his engagement with the wider arts and film culture. In this postcolonial and postwar period of U.K. history, Hall's theoretical work on emerging cultural identity, his role as public intellectual and connotative presence on the TV screen, and frequent interventions into public debate helped shape and advance the development of emerging Black identity in Britain.

This article explores the ways in which Hall's work accomplished these things from the 1980s through the development of cultural theory, while also raising key questions on the role of film art in the formation and articulation of Black diaspora identity. There is further inquiry into the role of experimental and conventional forms of cinematic language for the development and expression of emerging identity in 1980s Britain, and the role of public and private funding for the development of Black British cinema.

Hall's work and engagement with social justice remain relevant for broader understandings of historical conjunctures, and for progressive readings of emergent sub-cultures and representational forms resistant to cultural hegemony in corporate media societies.

Marriage is a Private Affair by Chinua Achebe

Chinua Achebe

Chinua Achebe (born Albert Chinụalụmọgụ Achebe, 16 November 1930 – 21 March 2013) was a Nigerian novelist, poet, professor, and critic. His first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), often considered his masterpiece, is the most widely read book in modern African literature.

Summary

"Marriage is a Private Affair," begins with Nene asking Nnaemeka if he has told his father, Okeke, about their big news. Though Nnaemeka thinks it would be better to have the conversation with his father in six weeks when he goes to visit his village, Nene encourages him to write to Okeke and tell him sooner. She is sure that Okeke will be happy—who wouldn't be delighted that their son is getting married?—but Nnaemeka has to remind her that things are more complicated because the rural community that he is from is much different from Lagos, the city where Nene has lived all her life. He explains that in his community, it is customary for a father to choose a spouse for his children, and that said spouse must be Ibo. Although this is difficult for Nene to grasp, she realizes for the first time that Okeke might be displeased by their decision to get married. She nevertheless remains positive that Okeke will forgive Nnaemeka and subsequently continues to encourage him to send a letter to his father. Before returning to his place, Nnaemeka is able to finally convince Nene that it will be better for him to tell his father in person.

Later, Nnaemeka thinks about the letter his father sent him recently and smiles. In the letter, Okeke details the merits of a woman named Ugoye, particularly her "Christian upbringing," and communicates his desire to begin marriage negotiations between Nnaemeka and Ugoye in December.

During the second night of Nnaemeka's visit to his village, he asks his father for forgiveness before refusing to marry Ugoye, claiming that he doesn't love her. Okeke is shocked by Nnaemeka's refusal and is surprised that his son thinks he has to love Ugoye to marry her. Although Okeke tries to change his son's mind, Nnaemeka won't budge. Instead, Nnaemeka tells Okeke more about Nene, particularly her Christian faith and her job as a teacher. This makes Okeke even more furious, as he does not believe Christian women should teach, but his anger reaches its height when he realizes that Nene is not Ibo. Nnaemeka remains steadfast, however, and insists that Nene will be his future wife. Okeke walks away from the conversation and refuses to eat dinner that night.

The next day, Okeke again tries to convince his son to change course, but is unsuccessful, leading him to characterize his son's decision as "Satan's work." Nnaemeka, however, continues to hope that Okeke will change his mind, though Okeke promises that he will never accept or even meet Nene.

The rest of the village takes Okeke's side and share in his disappointment that Nnaemeka has chosen to marry "a woman who spoke a different tongue." Some take Nnaemeka's behavior as a sign of the "beginning of the end." One person in the village, Madubogwu, eventually suggests that Okeke consult a native doctor and get medicine to cure his son. Okeke refuses,

citing Ms. Ochuba's mistakes as the reason he will not consult a native doctor to help his son "kill himself."

Six months pass and Okeke still has not come around. He even sends back the wedding picture Nnaemeka and Nene sent to him, with Nene cut out of the picture, with a letter describing how little interest he has in the couple. Nnaemeka consoles Nene after they read the letter. Eight more years pass and Okeke still refuses to see his son or have him in his house.

Nene also faces hardship within the Ibo community in Lagos, but the community eventually comes around accepts her. News of Nene and Nnaemeka's happy marriage travel to Okeke's village, but Okeke remains aloof. He uses his energy to push his son out of his mind, almost killing himself in the process.

One day, however, Okeke receives a letter from Nene. In the letter, Nene reveals that she and Nnaemeka have two sons, and explains that the boys would like to know their grandfather. For the first time since shunning Nnaemeka, Okeke feels overcome with guilt. Though he tries to fight it and attempts to stuff down his feelings, the raging storm outside pushes him to think about the consequences of his actions, his estrangement from his son and grandsons, and what it will mean for his family. He is unable to sleep peacefully that night because of his fear that he will never atone for his behavior.

UNIT-IV
The Swamp Dwellers by Wole Soyinka

Wole Soyinka

Akinwande Oluwole Babatunde Soyinka (Yoruba: *Akinwándé Oluwọlé Babátúndé Ṣóyinká*; born 13 July 1934), known as Wole Soyinka, is a Nigerian playwright, poet and essayist. He was awarded the 1986 Nobel Prize in Literature,[2] the first African to be honoured in that category.

Summary

The play begins with Alu and Makuri in their hut in a village in the swamps of Africa. They are waiting for their son Igwezu to come back to the house after his return from the city where he and his wife set out in order to make money. Igwezu has a twin brother who lives in the city, and Alu believes he is dead. A blind Beggar then arrives at Makuri and Alu's home, and they give him drink and wash his feet.

The Beggar explains that he is in search of a patch of land for himself in the swamp, a place that no one will touch because they believe it is too far gone so that he can make it fertile to grow food once more. But Makuri tells him that the parts of the swamp that are not used by the villagers belong to the Serpent of the Swamp as a sacrifice to this diety to keep it from consuming the land that does produce food for the people.

The priest of the village, Kadiye arrives at their home. Makuri and Alu believe he is there to speak to Igwezu, their son who has just returned, but in fact Kadiye is there for a shave. He has forgone shaving his beard and showering while their land was flooded as a sacrifice to the Serpent of the Swamp, and he want Igwezu to shave him, not Makuri who is an old man whose hands shake. So, Kadiye leaves to circumsise a baby and tells them he will return.

Igwezu then comes into his childhood home where we learn that he has been wandering the swamps all day, and saw Kadiye coming to the hut and decided to wait until he left to come inside. Immediately the Beggar calls Igwezu his master, saying that he will be his bondsman for life. We learn that Igwezu lost all of his money in the city, a place where people go and make mountains of money compared to the poverty of the village. Igwezu has even gone into deb and his wife left him for his twin brother.

When Kadiye returns Igwezu begins to shave him. During the shave Igwezu asks the priest if he offered all of the sacrifices he gave him for surety of wealth in the city, and for his marriage to be unified and grow prosperous. Igwezu believes Kadiye to have been eating the sacrifices given to him rather than offering them all up to the Serpent of the Swamp. This is something that the Beggar caught onto in Kadiye's previous visit, though the Beggar is blind who could hear that the priest was a fat man, well fed.

Igwezu threatens Kadiye with the knife so close to his throat, even stating his unbelief that the priest never showered during the floods as he must have stepped out into the rains. Kadiye never admits his stealing the sacrifices for himself, but his two servants that came in with him run out of the hut as if they know the truth of their master's wicked ways and desire to keep

their lives. By the end of Igwezu's accusations everyone believes he will kill the priest, but he does not. He lets him go.

And Igwezu knows that Kadiye will have the entire village after his head. He knows he must leave the village at once and never return. The Beggar desires to go with him as a guide, but he won't allow him to cross the swamps with him. Igwezu must leave his village, alone.

Characters

Alu

Alu is the wife of Makuri. They have twin sons, one who has left and made money for himself in the city and the other, Igwezu who has returned home to the village. She is a woman who believes her son to be dead, and has believed it for a decade as he has not returned. Accustomed to the ways of the village, she stands by the traditions of her people and the land.

Makuri

Makuri is married to Alu and they have twin boys. His profession is a barber in the village. A trade which he taught to his son, Igwezu. He is a man who believes deeply in his village's deity the Serpent of the Swamp. He and his wife bicker their days away as he cannot stand her constantly believing that one of their sons is dead, when he knows he isn't.

Igwezu

Igwezu is one of the twins which belong to Makuri and Alu. He has just returned from the city where his wife left him for his twin brother. There, Igwezu also lost all of his money and went into debt to his brother. He has returned and accuses Kabiye, the village priest of consuming his sacrifices for wealth and marriage prior to his journey to the city. That because of this he has lost his wife, his money, and his dignity.

A Beggar

The Beggar appears in the story in search of any land that he can make his own. He is from Bukanji, a village of beggar in the northern Nigeria. It is a draught-inflicted region. He usually doesn't beg. He is blind, but believes he has a healing hand and can make any soil fertile once again. He believes in Allah, which is not the god of the swamp dwellers. He becomes Igwezu's bondsman as he desires to serve him in order to help him work the land of his parents in the village. He also senses that Kadiye is a man who is fat, as his voice indicates that he eats much food.

The Kadiye

The only priest of the Serpent god or swamp god. He receives sacrifices from the ordinary people and perform all the rituals on behalf of the villagers to satisfy and pacify the god. The swamp people sacrifices the best ones of their production in order to pacify the serpent god so that they can yield a good harvest otherwise they might suffer from loss.

However, the Kadiye is the most influential character. He lives lavishly. The beggar is the foil to Kadiye. One works hard to earn bread and butter, while the other cheats and deceives the ignorant people to flourish on them. The true nature of Kadiye is vividly demonstrated by the interrogation of Igwezu, who suspects his (Kadiye's) loyalty and honesty.

Awuchike

The twin brother of Igwezu. He goes to the city and leaves his home-village behind forever. He makes money there illegally and quickly and becomes prosperous overnight. He sales timber. He seduces his brother's wife Desala and keeps her as his mistress. He is mentioned Makuri, his father, to be dead.

Desala

The wife of Igwezu, chosen by his mother Alu. She agreed to marry Igwezu only to go to and live in the city. Igwezu keeps his words. But she deceives him and leaves him for his prosperous brother Awuchike.

The servant of Kadiye

A minor character. He keeps company of the Kadiye and bears his master's loads. He is seen to steal a little sum of money.

The Drummer

He alerts the villagers about Kadiye's arrival and movement. His character shows Kadiye's grand lifestyle.

Themes

Abuse of Power

Kadiye is the priest of the village. Moreover, he is the man who offers sacrifices to the Serpent of the Swamp in order to keep it satiated; this action keeps the villagers' land from being consumed so that they can grow food to survive. But, we learn that he is a man who is fat per the Beggar who hears in his voice that he is well fed compared to the rest of the villagers. He has been stealing the offerings of the people, their sacrifices to the Serpent of the Swamp and consuming them for himself rather than offering them up to the deity. And this betrayal is seen clearly by Igwezu who believes his wife leaving him and his money being taken is due to the priests wicked consummation of his worthy sacrifices.

Wealth and Poverty

People leave the village in order to find wealth in the city. This is why Igwezu has left. Moreover, his twin brother has stayed away because he has made a fortune. Soyinka has crafted a play that speaks to the morality of making money. Igwezu has stayed true to his word by sending his father a comfortable chair for his clients to sit in while he shaves them. He did this week after he arrived in the city. However, Igwezu's brother has been gone for nearly a decade without a word back to his family. His mother believes he has died, when in fact he has become rich beyond any of their wildest imaginations. But the truth of his monetary wealth is that it has corrupted his soul. Not only has he taken his brother's wife, but he has demanded his brother's inheritance (their father's land as collateral for his debt). His brother has gained the whole world, and it is not enough to fill his newly acquired city appetite.

The Meek

The Beggar is a blind man that has traveled a great distance from a drought-ridden land in order to find a piece of land that is solely his own to work and grow crops upon. He desires to turn what is dead into something that is alive, even saying that he has healing in his hands. Also,

although he is blind, his other sense is heightened. He knows that the priest is a consuming food that he did not grow, he hears those who are coming, he can navigate the darkness and no longer does he wish to beg but to earn his keep (symbolized when he doesn't accept the priests offering). The Beggar is a symbol for the classes that reside even in great poverty, and he represents the will of a human being to claim their life as their own creation. That no man shall determine his position in life, that is up to him. This is an idea that many, if not all of these characters do not have.

Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing
by Tomson Highway

Tomson Highway

Tomson Highway, CM (born 6 December 1951) is an Indigenous Canadian playwright, novelist, and children's author. He is best known for his plays The Rez Sisters and Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing, both of which won him the Dora Mavor Moore Award and the Floyd S. Chalmers Award.

Highway has also published a novel, Kiss of the Fur Queen (1998), which is based on the events that led to his brother René Highway's death of AIDS. He also has the distinction of being the librettist of the first Cree language opera, The Journey or Pimooteewin.

Summary

The play open with Zachary waking up naked after NanaBush (a shape-shifting trickster) Gazelle has kissed him on the buttcheek. Big Joey enters his house to find that Zachary has slept with his wife. He says he will let it pass if he tells the board to let him start his radio show instead of them backing Zachary's bakery. If he doesn't Big Joey threatens to tell Zachary's wife, Hera that he slept with his wife, and he will give her proof. A picture and his undershorts. Zachary won't agree and runs off to work out number for his new bakery in order to report back to his wife as they are supposed to have a meeting about the businesses specifics
We learn that Creature Nataways was once married to Gazelle Nataways, who now lives with Big Joey, and whom Zachary has just slept with. And the big new that has come is that the women of the reservation have decided to form a hockey team, and Pierre St. Pierre has been hired to be the referee for the games. Throughout the play we watch as Nanabush changes form in order to enact the men's phobias and fantasies about women.

The plot moves the men towards the inevitable hockey game where the women end up fighting one another as all hell breaks loose on the ice. Big Joey calls the game as the radio broadcaster as the other men watch. The men's fears about the women playing hockey have come true in this misogynistic fantasy that we learn has been Zachary's dream. He didn't sleep with NanaBush Gazelle, he was asleep at home on his own couch and his wife, Hera kisses him on the buttcheek and hands him their son. And, the play ends with Zachary naked holding up his naked son.

Character List

Zachary Jeremia Keeschigeesik

Zachary is a man who is having a bad dream where he has cheated on his wife with Big Joey's girlfriend, and Pierre St. Pierre's ex-wife. He wakes up to realize it was only a dream.

Big Joey

Big Joey lives with Gazelle Nataways, Pierre St. Pierre's ex-wife. He threatens to tell Hera that Zachary slept with his wife if he doesn't help him to get his broadcasting radio show going with the council.

Pierre St. Pierre

Pierre St. Pierre is a bootlegger. In Zachary's dream, Pierre St. Pierre becomes the referee for the women's hockey league.

Dickie Bird Halked

Dickie Bird Halked was born in a bar, and suffers from fetal alcohol syndrome and does not talk. It seems that his father is Big Joey, but he denies it to the kid. He is willing to get violent to intimidate people.

Spooky Lacroix

Spooky is a man who has become a Christian and wants the other men to convert as well. He cares for Dickie Bird Halked, and when Pierre St. Pierre comes looking for his skate Spooky makes him declare that he will become Christian in order to have it.

Hera Keechigeesik

Hera is Zachary's wife, they have an infant son together. She joins the women's hockey team in Zachary's dream.

Creature Nataways

A pathetic follower of Big Joey, whom Gazelle Nataways (now Big Joey's girlfriend) was formerly married to.

Themes

NanaBush

NanaBush is the spirit of the trickster in Cree belief. We see this trickster take the form of many characters including Gazelle Nataways in the opening scene who has just slept with Zachary who is married. Once we learn that Zachary has been dreaming the entire play we see how the trickster has manipulated him in order to confuse him and set out chaos amongst his mind.

Misogyny

As a theme, misogyny is represented in the men loathing the fact that the women of the reservation have formed a hockey team. This is a sport traditionally seen as a man's game and by the women choosing to play it represents to them an upheaval of the value within the community of the reservation.

Dreams vs. Reality

Highway's play creates a dream landscape for a community of Indian men who sleep with one another's women and have babies they don't claim. It is a bleak picture, but this theme serves as a contrast to the message that arises in the final scene where Zachary and holds his son high up with his arms as both are naked. It has been the picture of the conceptualized idea of the Indian man, and Highway's imagery creates a demand to see the Indian man as beautiful and a loving father.

UNIT-V

Crackpot by Adele Wiseman

Adele Wiseman

Adele Wiseman (May 21, 1928 – June 1, 1992) was a Canadian author.

Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, she received a B.A. in English literature and Psychology from the University of Manitoba in 1949. Her parents were Russian Jews who emigrated from the Ukraine to Canada, in part, to escape the pogroms that accompanied the Russian Civil War.

In 1956, Wiseman published her first novel, The Sacrifice, which won the Governor General's Award,Canada's most prestigious literary prize. Her novel, Crackpot, was published in 1974. Both novels deal with Jewish immigrant heritage, the struggle to survive the Depression and World War II, and the challenges the next generation faced in acculturating to Canadian society.

Wiseman also published plays, children's stories, essays, and other non-fiction. Her book, Old Woman at Play, examines and meditates on the creative process while paying tribute to Wiseman's mother and the dolls she made.

Wiseman was lifelong friends with Margaret Laurence who was another Canadian author from Manitoba. She was an active and accessible Writer-in-Residence at the University of Windsor in her final years. At a campus rally against the First Gulf War, she read passionately a new poem denouncing war.

Summary

Hoda, the protagonist of Crackpot, is one of the most captivating characters in Canadian fiction. Graduating from a tumultuous childhood to a life of prostitution, she becomes a legend in her neighbourhood, a canny and ingenious woman, generous, intuitive, and exuding a wholesome lust for life.

Resonant with myth and superstition, this radiant novel is a joyous celebration of life and the mystery that is at the heart of all experience.

Hoda is a prostitute, but that is not the most important fact about her. Earthy, bawdy, vulnerable, and big-hearted, she is the daughter of an impoverished Jewish couple who emigrated from Russia to Canada to escape persecution. Growing up in a ghetto of Winnipeg, she experiences cruelty and bigotry early and fights back with humor and anger, which is something to behold as her young body takes on gargantuan proportions. In the neighborhood, she is considered a crackpot and worse. In truth, she is a cracked pot, a flawed human being, but her quest for love, which brings hope out of humiliation, is one of the most memorable in modern fiction.

Crackpot, set in the period between two world wars, is Adele Wiseman's comic vision, for all its darkness. Somewhat satirically, the novel touches on puritanical hypocrisy and the inhumanity of institutions, notably the schools and the welfare system. Hoda, caught in a web of relationships beginning with her blind father and humpbacked mother, is its great heartbeat.

Stone Angel by Margaret Laurence

Margaret Laurence

Jean Margaret Laurence CC (née Wemyss; 1926–1987) 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.

The Stone Angel Summary

The Stone Angel is a first-person narrative that at times almost breaks into stream-of-consciousness writing as Hagar, the main character, gradually loses lucidity due to old age and illness. The narrative is divided into ten chapters, each of which shifts back and forth between the present time (the 1960s) and an earlier point in Hagar's life.
The novel is set in the fictional town of Manawaka (inspired by Neepawa), a rural part of Canada where conservative values reign and where archaic notions of gender and social class are taken seriously even in the modern era. The central character, Hagar, is a protagonist only by convention. Given her antagonistic behavior toward everyone else around her, which is rooted in her overwhelming pride, the reader would not be wrong to consider her an anti-heroine.

The book consists of two narrative arcs. The present-day story shows us the life of Hagar as an elderly woman of at least 90. Hagar lives in an upstairs bedroom in what used to be her house but which now belongs to her son Marvin. When she discovers that Marvin and his wife Doris are planning to put her into a nursing home, Hagar runs away to a rural spot called Shadow Point. She stays overnight in an abandoned house and is eventually found by her son and daughter-in-law, who immediately take her to the hospital where she is literally belted to the bed at night so that she cannot wander. From time to time, she lapses into the memories that define the second narrative arc. These memories are related to the reader in the present tense, as though they were actually happening simultaneously with the present-day narrative.

Hagar spends most of her life being defined by the men to whom she is connected. She is the third child of Jason Currie, a successful self-made businessman who has built a thriving shop up from nothing. Her mother died in Hagar's birth, and thus Hagar is raised by a housekeeper whom she calls "Auntie Doll." From an early age, it is clear Hagar takes after her stern, calculating, emotionless father; this is evidenced in the way Hagar does not even cry when her father gives her a beating. Hagar's two older brothers, on the other hand, show less aptitude for business, although their father takes pains to teach each of them the basics of the trade. Although Hagar superficially takes after her father, she is also aware of how his loveless nature has shaped her own icy demeanor.
Hagar is neither particularly maternal nor nurturing. When one of her brothers is injured by falling into a frozen pond, she refuses to nurse him through his subsequent illness on his deathbed. Later, Hagar is also a distant mother toward her two sons, unable to show emotion when Marvin, for instance, goes off to fight in World War I.

The reader can infer that Jason Currie is grooming Hagar to run and possibly inherit his family business. She—not her surviving elder brother—is sent to a finishing school in the East. Upon her return, her father wants her to keep the account books in the store. This job is vital to the

success of the company. But instead of interpreting the gesture as an expression of trust and respect, Hagar regards it as her father's effort to control her. Hagar exclaims that she wants to be a schoolteacher instead, displeasing her father. And then, in a fit of rebellion, Hagar chooses to marry the crude and lower-class Brampton "Bram" Shipley. Jason Currie retaliates by cutting Hagar out of his life. Hagar, who was previously positioned to run the store, ends up not receiving any inheritance from him whatsoever.

Hagar's marriage with Bram turns out to be very unhappy. Bram speaks poorly, blows his nose with his fingers, and has the tendency to go out drinking with his lower-class friends. He is not particularly hardworking, doing only enough work to survive. Whether Hagar or their two sons are well provided for is not a factor in his decision-making. However, Hagar is physically attracted to Bram, at least initially, because of his handsome appearance, his skill as a dancer, and the fact he seems somewhat forbidden from Jason Currie's perspective. Bram also occasionally shows himself to have a warmth of character, demonstrated when he is heartbroken after his horse disappears. Bram's character creates a difficult predicament for Hagar, who feels it nearly impossible to relate to someone so unrefined. She often feels embarrassed by Bram and realizes her marriage has made it so she is no longer regarded as the highly-esteemed "Jason Currie's daughter." The couple mostly spends their time apart, except at night when Bram frequently comes to Hagar for somewhat forceful sexual encounters. The two eventually separate, and Hagar leaves town to live on the coast as a housekeeper, taking her younger son, John, with her.

As John grows to adulthood, Hagar starts to turn into her father. She resents that she cannot control her son, who eventually abandons her and returns to Manawaka, where he pairs up with a woman named Arlene, who is the daughter of Hagar's childhood friend, Lottie Dreiser. Hagar visits her hometown after hearing news of Bram's poor health. After Hagar has stayed with him for a few weeks, Bram passes away; Hagar decides to stay a few weeks more to provide company for John. But the tragedies continue as John and Arlene are killed in a car accident. Upon hearing news of her son's death, Hagar is unable to show any emotion. Later, when she is alone, she cannot weep at all. She believes she has turned to stone metaphorically, like the large, blind stone angel in the church cemetery.
In the present day, Hagar runs away when she overhears Marvin discussing the possibility of placing her in a nursing home. She associates the nursing home not only with death but also with being controlled. Having spent a lifetime controlling others and getting her own way, Hagar does not wish to become a patient. But Marvin and Doris are no longer capable of caring for her in their home.

Hagar wanders around for a while at Shadow Point, reminiscing, and she meets a stranger named Murray Lees who also spends the night in the abandoned cannery. They speak for a while, and Hagar shares some of her experiences. Later in the morning, the stranger sneaks away to bring help. After a night outdoors, Hagar is sick and suffering from the cold and damp. Marvin and Doris immediately bring Hagar to the hospital—a worse destination than even the dreaded nursing home.
Marvin, Hagar's surviving son, visits her in the hospital. Aware that she is dying, she finally apologizes to him and starts to express her feelings, even forming relationships with the other patients in the hospital. She drinks a glass of water and her train of thought cuts out, leaving the reader to imagine what is next.

The Stone Angel Character List

Hagar Currie Shipley

Hagar is the narrator of The Stone Angel and the events of the story unfold through her eyes. Hagar is from a small Canadian prairie town called Manawaka; she is the daughter of a wealthy shop owner, Jason Currie. In her old age, Hagar has outlived her husband and her son John. When she discovers that her son Marvin and her daughter-in-law plan to put her into a nursing home, she runs away into the woods.

The titular angel can be seen as a representation of Hagar, her stony rigidity, and her tendency to suppress her emotions as a way to have power over others. Hagar's tragic flaw is pride: she believes herself to be superior to everyone she encounters and isn't afraid to show it. She is often impatient and judgmental with even those trying to help her, such as the nurses or minister, and she often assumes the worst in other people, continually casting herself as the victim. It is only through old age and losing control of her physical abilities that Hagar begins to show an inkling of humility, softening her lifelong coldness and recognizing that life without love is not worth anything.

Bram Shipley

Bram Shipley is the local farmer Hagar marries at the expense of her relationship with her father and brothers, who disown her. Bram is rough, lazy, and ill-mannered, not caring about the upper-class sensibilities that Hagar takes so seriously. Over time, Bram develops a drinking problem, which is aggravated by Hagar's constant biting criticism of him. Bram rarely shows affection to Hagar except in their nightly sexual encounters. He is also a distant and apathetic father, valuing his sons more for how they can help out on the farm than who they are as people. Bram and Hagar eventually part ways and only see each other again when Bram develops some sort of dementia, which develops rapidly and leads to his death. Despite his flaws, the reader can infer Hagar still has a soft spot in her heart for her husband, sometimes talking to him as if he were still alive.

Marvin Shipley

Marvin is the eldest of Hagar's two sons. He is by far the more loyal and patient of the two, even though Hagar inexplicably favors his younger brother John. Marvin becomes a paint salesman and marries a woman named Doris, who is Hagar's sole caregiver. As Marvin and Doris also age, they begin to find it more and more exhausting to care for Hagar. Accordingly, Marvin makes the very difficult decision to move his mother to a nursing home, despite her protests. Marvin is portrayed to be a calm man who sometimes struggles to express his feelings, leading to sudden frustrated outbursts towards his mother or wife.

John Shipley

John is the younger of Hagar's sons. John is Hagar's favorite child and one of the few people in her life whom she holds in high esteem. This is perhaps because she sees in John a resemblance to her father, and puts hope in John that he will take after the intelligence and hardworking ethic of Jason Currie. Hagar brings John with her when she separates from Bram and tries to encourage him to continue with school. However, as a young man, John moves back with his father and soon shows to take after him in his drunken and slovenly habits. John falls in love with a young woman named Arlene, but they both die in a drunken car accident. John rejects the path set before him by Hagar, a reality which Hagar has a hard time accepting in the present day.

Jason Currie

Jason Currie is Hagar's father. A wealthy, self-made man, he has high standards for his children. Jason tries to imprint in his daughter and two sons the same shrewd business ethic that has made him so successful. He prides himself in being an upper-class member of the town and frequently talks down to those whom he deems lower-class. As a single father, he has Auntie Doll do most of the mothering and household work that he is unable to provide—not only because he is busy, but also because he lacks any nurturing sensibility. He disowns his daughter when she insists on going through with what he believes to be a bad marriage. Hagar comes to have the same domineering, controlling attitude that her father displayed. It becomes clear throughout the story that she has partly derived her self-destructive pride from her father.

Lottie Dreiser

Lottie is a former friend and schoolmate of Hagar. For most of her life, Hagar has seen Lottie in a condescending way, judging her for being born out of wedlock. She particularly remembers one time that Lottie brazenly killed mutilated chicks to end their suffering; it is an image that remains with Hagar. Lottie and Hagar's paths cross again in middle-age when their children, Arlene and John, become a couple. After Arlene's death, however, their relationship is broken.

Doris Shipley

Doris is Hagar's daughter-in-law. She is responsible for caring for Hagar, cooking, helping her change her clothes, and taking her to doctor appointments. Yet Hagar regards her as inferior, constantly thinking about how Doris wants her to die so that she can inherit her house. In reality, Doris is a rather kind woman whose patience is tested by Hagar's combined neediness and thanklessness.

Murray Lees

Murray is a stranger who comes to the cannery to sit alone and drink quietly. He and Hagar have a deep conversation in which they both share their life stories and find that they have something in common: they have both lost a son. Murray comforts Hagar when she has a bad dream; in the morning, he fetches Marvin and Doris to save Hagar.

Matt and Dan

Hagar's brothers, Matt and Dan, are described somewhat briefly, both having died at a rather young age from disease. We learn that Dan is a more sickly boy who has a hard time following in his father's footsteps, while Matt is more miserly and reserved. Even Hagar acknowledges that she barely knew her brothers.

Elva Jardine

Elva is a woman Hagar encounters in the public ward of the hospital. At first, Hagar judges her for being scrawny and weak. Yet in the hospital, as Hagar begins to realize her fragility and imminent death, she becomes more humble and opens up to Elva. They discover things they have in common, and Hagar is touched by the old woman's kindness. Their brief connection is perhaps one of the few genuine relationships Hagar has in her whole life.

The Stone Angel Themes

The Dangers of Pride

As Hagar comes to realize towards the end of the book, most of the problems in her life stem from her excessive pride. Her sense of superiority is behind her ill-treatment of others, her refusal to acknowledge when she is wrong, and her inability to compromise with others or to see

their point of view. Her behavior throughout the story leads to the destruction of several long-term relationships that might otherwise have sustained her and enriched her life.

Ultimately, her illusory superiority only leads to her own suffering. This point is emphasized in the scene where she is in the hospital and is visited by Mr. Troy, who sings a hymn about rejoicing for God. Previously, Hagar has been reluctant to pray, as belief in a higher power requires the relinquishing of pride and embrace of humility. Yet at this moment, Hagar is finally moved to tears, made to viscerally realize that it is her pride that has imprisoned her throughout whole life, blocking her from the true purposes of life: love and happiness.

Control

One of the things Hagar resists more than anything else is other people's attempts to control her. This is a vestige of her reaction to her excessively controlling father. Hagar began to rebel at an early age, but one of the defining points in her life comes when she decides to marry Bram Shipley, thereby destroying her relationships with most of her family. Her efforts to improve her new husband and to keep him from drinking fail—and she is unable to retain control over her favorite son, whom she loses tragically. But the most prominent example of Hagar's resistance to (what she perceives to be) other people's control comes when she runs away into the woods after discovering that her son and daughter-in-law plan to put her in a nursing home. It is only when Marvin and Doris place her in the hospital—where she is physically restrained at night—that she realizes that control is no longer possible and she begins to come to terms with her own fragility.

Growing Old

The aging process is a central element of The Stone Angel. Few books are told in the point of view of an elderly person, from the perspective of reflecting on one's life as the body weakens. Despite Hagar being a difficult woman most of the time, the reader is still made to sympathize with her predicament and glean insight into how older people become practically invisible. In a society that is very tailored to meet the needs of the young and fit, the elderly are often placed in nursing homes and other institutions, causing them to feel cut-off from their families and normal lives. Since Hagar has felt lonely throughout her life, her age has only exacerbated her circumstance. Yet it also brings a blessing in the sense that, as she degrades physically, she is finally allowed to let go of control and open herself up to others once more.

The Suppression of Emotions

Throughout her life, Hagar constantly suppresses her emotions as an extension of her obsessive need to control herself and others. As a child, she is not moved by seeing a grotesque scene of dying baby chicks. She does not shed a tear when her son John tragically dies in a car accident, having become as emotionally rigid and feelingless as the stone angel of the title. It is not until the end of the book, when she receives kindness from others, that Hagar is finally able to feel and express her emotions, illustrated by the moment when she cries during the minister's hymn.

Resentment

Hagar resents what she perceives to be interference from other people and deliberate attempts by them to control her or to thwart her will. As a young and unmarried woman, she wishes to become a schoolteacher, but her father vetoes the idea, trying to push her into

managing the accounts for the store he owns. Whereas her father sees an opportunity for Hagar, she sees only a short-sighted attempt by him to ruin her career plans for his own personal gain. She marries Bram Shipley partly out of resentment, as she knows her father believes Bram to be an unsuitable and unworthy husband. When Hagar insists on marrying him, her father cuts her off without a cent and changes his will so that she will inherit nothing. Jason Currie thus develops his own resentment towards his daughter, whom he refuses to see for the rest of his life. The resentment of these characters stems from their pride and need to be right, which end up isolating them from their family.

Womanhood

What it truly means to be a woman is something that often eludes Hagar in the novel. This is partly due to Hagar coming of age at a time when traditional gender roles are still very much in place, especially in the small-town life of Manawaka. A woman's options in life are often restricted to marriage, childbearing, and the other sorts of "feminine" skills that Hagar learns at finishing school. For her whole life, Hagar is dependent on a man, whether it is her father, her husband, or, later, Mr. Oatley, for whom she works as a housekeeper.

The roles of wife, mother, and daughter do not satisfy Hagar. She refuses to be the heiress to her father's business. She views sexual intimacy with her husband as a chore and burden to bear. Hagar is alienated from her own mothering qualities, having lost her own mother as a newborn. Her emotional rigidity makes it impossible for her to nurture others, at times even becoming apathetic towards her own children. This all contributes to Hagar's sense of always waiting for something more in life and not knowing who she is.

Duty

Throughout the novel, Hagar and characters struggle to understand their duty to their fellow human beings, at times upholding it and at times avoiding it. Early in her life, Hagar neglects the duty to her father and instead chooses to marry Bram Shipley. Once married, Hagar sees a mirror of her own lack of responsibility in Bram, who has difficulty completing the most basic of household chores. This causes Hagar to move away with John, hoping that a new setting will provide John with the clean slate to follow in the footsteps of Jason Currie and perform the duty that Hagar failed to accomplish.

Yet when Bram falls ill, Hagar is motivated by a strong sense of duty, traveling back to Manawaka to visit him and take care of her son. And when Bram dies, Hagar is moved to bury her former husband in the Currie family plot. Although Hagar struggled in her relationships with both her father and her husband, by uniting the families in the graveyard, Hagar is able to somewhat reconcile the past and come to terms with the duty that has often evaded her.

QUESTION PAPER-I

Section–A

I .Answer the following questions in about 50 words each: (10 X 2 = 20)

1. How does the Author pictures Australia in the beginning?
2. Write a note on Miss.Crotchet?
3. What is meant by a metaphysical poem?
4. How is the title 'Marriage is a private Affair' ironic?
5. Character Sketch of Desala?
6. How does Joey compensate his importance?
7. Discuss Dry Lips as a Cree-authored text?
8. Who were the childhood friends of Hagar?
9. Describe John as a child?
10. What does the stone angel symbolize in the novel?

Section –B

II. Answer any FIVE of the following questions in about 250 words each.

(5 X 5 = 25)

11. (a) How does David Dios reflect his patriotism in the poem.(or)
    (b) Comment on the structure and style of the poem Australia.
12. (a)Write a note on Negritude Movement.(OR)
    (b)Discuss the theme of 'Marriage is a private affair'.
13. (a) What role does Kadiyea play? (or)
    (b) Describe the life of the swamp dwellers.
14. (a) Describe 'Trickster Gods'.(or)
    (b) Write a study of wise man's crackpot.
15. (a)Write a character sketch of Doris. (or)
    (b) Justify the title 'The Stone Angel'.

Section – C

III. Answer any THREE of the following questions in about 500 words each.

(3 X 10 = 30)

16. Analyze the poem Africa by Diop. Summarize the poem conversation.
17. Discuss Atwood's poem Journey to the Interior as a monologue.
18. Critical appreciation of Cohen's poem 'If it were spring'.
19. Bring out the dramatic technique used by Soyinka in the play, the swamp Dwellers.
20. Write a critical analysis of Crackpot.

QUESTION PAPER-II

Section–A

I. Answer the following questions in about 50 words each: (10 X 2 = 20)

1. Character of the Land Lady in "Telephonic Conversation".
2. How does the author pictures Australia in the beginning?
3. How does Scott describe the party?
4. Is the journey adventurous or interesting?
5. What is the history of all Diaspora?
6. How is the title "Marriage is a Private Affair" ironic?
7. Character sketch of Desala.
8. Who is Spooky?
9. Who is David?
10. How did Danniel die?

Section –B

II. Answer the following questions. (ANY 5) (5 X 5 = 25)

11. (a) Pictures the poem 'Africa' from the viewpoint of David Diop (or)
    (b) Write a note on the poetry of A.D.Hope in general.
12. (a) Write a note on Miss. Crotchet. (or)
    (b) Write a short note on the poem "If it were a Spring".
13. (a) Bring out the views of Stuart Hall in his "Cultural Identity and Diaspora". (or)
    (b) Why does Okeke have trouble sleeping at the end of the story?
14. (a) Comment on the role of Makuri. (or)
    (b) Sketch the character of Simon.
15. (a) Sketch the character of Hoda. (or)
    (b) Justify the title and its signification of "The Stone Angel"

Section – C

III. Answer the following questions. (ANY 3) (3 X 10 = 30)

16. Describe the acrimony between the two races in "Telephonic Conversation".
17. Write a critical appreciation of the poem "A January Morning"
18. Who is the main character in "Marriage is a Private Affair".
19. Give a detailed summary of the "The Swamp Dwellers".
20. How does Hager Shipley confront age and death in the novel "The Stone Angel".