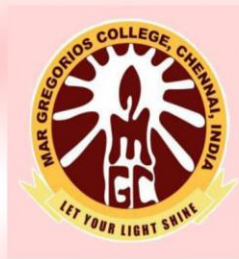


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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**SUBJECT NAME: POST COLONIAL LITERATURE IN ENGLISH:
CANADIAN LITERATURE**

SUBJECT CODE: BRA6B

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Unit 1

Post colonial literature

Post-colonial literature is the literature produced by people who were formerly colonized by British and other European empires. The term post-colonial covers “all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the day of colonization to the present, post-colonial literatures are those literatures written by people affected by colonialism or by “cultures which suffered the experience of colonization” and had to fight against imperial dependence.

Origin of canadian literature

Canadian literature is the literature of a multicultural country, created by Indigenous people, Settlers and by people of other ancestral backgrounds, in languages including Canadian English, Canadian French, Indigenous languages, and many others such as Canadian Gaelic.

Indigenous literature has flourished in recent years and is based upon many distinct oral traditions, languages, and cultural practices. Dominant European cultures in Canada were originally English, French, and Gaelic. However, in recent decades Canada's literature has been strongly influenced by immigrants. Since 1980s Canada's ethnic and cultural diversity has been openly reflected in its literature, with writers focusing on ethnic minority identity, duality and cultural differences.

Canadian literature in English

Prose and poetry

From settlement to 1900

The first writers of English in Canada were visitors, explorers, travelers, and British officers and their wives who recorded their impressions of British North America in charts, diaries, journals, and letters. These foundational documents of journeys and settlements presage the documentary tradition in Canadian literature in which geography, history, and arduous voyages of exploration and discovery represent the quest for a myth of origins and for a personal and national identity. As the critic Northrop Frye observed, Canadian literature is haunted by the overriding question “Where is here?”; thus, metaphoric mappings of peoples and places became central to the evolution of the Canadian literary imagination.

The earliest documents were unadorned narratives of travel and exploration. Written in plain language, these accounts document heroic journeys to the vast, unknown west and north and encounters with Inuit and other native peoples (called First Nations in Canada), often on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, the great fur-trading companies. The explorer Samuel Hearne wrote *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean* (1795), and Sir Alexander Mackenzie, an explorer and fur trader, described his travels in *Voyages from Montreal...Through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans* (1801). Simon Fraser recorded details of his 1808 trip west to Fraser Canyon (*The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser, 1806–1808*, 1960). Captain John Franklin's published account of a British naval expedition to the Arctic, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea* (1823), and his mysterious disappearance during a subsequent journey reemerged in the 20th century in the writing of

authors Margaret Atwood and Rudy Wiebe. *A Narrative of the Adventures and Sufferings of John R. Jewitt* (1815) is a captivity narrative that describes Jewitt's experience as a prisoner of the Nootka (Nuu-chah-nulth) chief Maquinna after Jewitt was shipwrecked off Canada's west coast; on the whole, it presents a sympathetic ethnography of the Nuu-chah-nulth people. *The Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe* (1911) records the everyday life in 1792–96 of the wife of the first lieutenant governor of Upper Canada (now Ontario). In 1838 Anna Jameson published *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, an account of her travels in the New World.

Frances Brooke, the wife of a visiting British military chaplain in the conquered French garrison of Quebec wrote the first published novel with a Canadian setting. Her *History of Emily Montague* (1769) is an epistolary romance describing the sparkling winter scenery of Quebec and the life and manners of its residents.

Halifax, in the colony of Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick's Fredericton were the scenes of the earliest literary flowering in Canada. The first literary journal, the *Nova-Scotia Magazine*, was published in Halifax in 1789. The town's literary activity was invigorated by an influx of loyalists during the American Revolution and by the energetic Joseph Howe, a journalist, a poet, and the first premier of Nova Scotia. Two of the most potent influences on literary development were in evidence by the end of the 18th century: literary magazines and presses and a strong sense of regionalism. By satirizing the dialect, habits, and foibles of Nova Scotians, or Bluenoses, Thomas McCulloch, in his serialized *Letters of Mephibosheth Stepsure* (1821–22), and Thomas Chandler Haliburton, in *The Clockmaker* (1835–36), featuring the brash Yankee peddler Sam Slick, adroitly brought their region to life and helped found the genre of folk humour.

Most of the earliest poems were patriotic songs and hymns (*The Loyal Verses* of Joseph Stansbury and Doctor Jonathan Odell, 1860) or topographical narratives, reflecting the first visitors' concern with discovering and naming the new land and its inhabitants. In *The Rising Village* (1825), native-born Oliver Goldsmith used heroic couplets to celebrate pioneer life and the growth of Nova Scotia, which, in his words, promised to be "the wonder of the Western Skies." His optimistic tones were a direct response to the melancholy poem written by his Anglo-Irish granduncle, Oliver Goldsmith, whose *The Deserted Village* (1770) concludes with the forced emigration of dispossessed villagers.

Immigrants, dreaming of a new Eden but encountering instead the realities of unpredictable native peoples, a fierce climate, unfamiliar wildlife, and physical and cultural deprivation, were the subject of prose sketches by the Strickland sisters, Susanna Strickland Moodie and Catherine Parr Strickland Traill. Moodie's harsh, yet at times comical, *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) was written to discourage prospective emigrants, but Traill's *Backwoods of Canada* (1836) presents a more favourable picture of the New World.

The Dominion of Canada, created in 1867 by the confederation of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Upper Canada, and Lower Canada (now Quebec), precipitated a flurry of patriotic and literary activity. The so-called Confederation poets turned to the landscape in their search for a truly native verse. Unlike their predecessors, they no longer merely described or moralized nature but attempted to capture what the Ottawa poet Archibald Lampman called the "answering harmony between the soul of the poet and the spirit and mystery of nature." New Brunswick poet Charles G.D. Roberts inspired his cousin, the prolific and vagabond Bliss Carman, as well as Lampman and Duncan Campbell Scott, also

an Ottawa poet, to begin writing verse. Lampman is known for his meditations on the landscape. Scott, who was a government administrator, has become better known for advocating the assimilation of First Nation peoples than for his poetry's depiction of Canada's northern wilderness. Perhaps the most original poet of this period was Isabella Valancy Crawford, whose colourful mythopoeic verse, with its images drawn from the lore of native peoples, pioneer life, mythology, and a symbolic animated nature, was published as *Old Spookses' Pass, Malcolm's Katie, and Other Poems* in 1884.

The historical romance was the most popular form of novel. Seignorial life in New France provided the setting for Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart's melodramatic *St. Ursula's Convent; or, The Nun of Canada* (1824) and William Kirby's gothic tale *The Golden Dog* (1877), while Rosanna Leprohon's romance *Antoinette de Mirecourt; or, Secret Marrying and Secret Sorrowing* (1864) depicted life in Quebec after the English conquest in 1759. In *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy* (1832), John Richardson portrayed the 1763 uprising led by Pontiac, chief of the Ottawa Indians, at Fort Detroit. However, James De Mille's satiric travel fantasy *A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder* (1888) and Roberts's renowned quasi-documentary animal stories (*Earth's Enigmas*, 1896; *The Kindred of the Wild*, 1902) represented different and original fictional forms.

Oral traditions including myths folklore and legends

Some broad themes can be identified in Indigenous Canadian mythology. Creation myths are among the most sacred to many Indigenous cultures. Haida myths of the Raven, a "celestial being", explain the creation of the sun. The Haida word for Raven means "the one who is going to order things", and it was Raven who established the laws of nature and was present when people were first created.[8]

One creation myth from the Northeastern Woodlands tribes describes the creation of North America, or Turtle Island, by Muskrat and Turtle. Myths about the origins of landscape features, such as mountains and rivers, are common in several Indigenous peoples oral traditions.

Supernatural beings are prominent in many myths about the origin of places, animals, and other natural phenomena. Nanabozho is the "trickster" spirit and hero of Ojibwa mythology (part of the larger body of Anishinaabe traditional beliefs). Glooscap, a giant gifted with supernatural powers, is the hero and "transformer" of the mythology of the Wabanaki peoples. Supernatural experiences by ordinary mortals are found in other myths. For example, the Chippewa have myths explaining the first corn and the first robin, triggered by a boy's vision. Some myths explain the origins of sacred rituals or objects, such as sweat lodges, wampum, and the sun dance.

Cryptids, or mythical beasts, exist in some Native folklore. Bigfoot, or Sasquatch, the Wendigo, and Ogopogo are popular examples.

The first nation: Native literature

Indigenous peoples of Canada are culturally diverse. Each group has its own literature, language and culture. The term "Indigenous literature" therefore can be misleading. As writer Jeannette Armstrong states in one interview, "I would stay away from the idea of "Native"

literature, there is no such thing. There is Mohawk literature, there is Okanagan literature, but there is no generic Native in Canada".

History

Many Indigenous cultures in Canada and worldwide are deeply rooted in oral tradition. Oral tradition includes myths, folklore, and legends. Passing down oral tradition takes great care on the part of the storyteller, as the moral of the tale and its underlying truth must be retold accurately. Oral tradition may take the form of songs, prayers, spiritual teachings and stories, shaping the everyday life of the community and the individual's sense of identity. The significance of oral tradition is cultural transmission from one generation to the next. The knowledge and wisdom of the Elders serve as link between the young generation and the past generation, keeping the livelihood of a culture intact. When the British and French colonized the land that is now Canada, settlers prioritized written literature over oral literature, under the bias that oral must be uncivilized, and written is civilized. Today, many Indigenous societies rely on oral tradition as a tool for expression and knowledge transmission, despite having adopted written literature. For over a century, the Government of Canada has controlled and regulated Indigenous cultural practices in the form of policy and regulation. The Residential School System separated Indigenous children from their families and communities in order to indoctrinate them Western and Christian thought and to "kill the Indian in the child". Commonly described as cultural genocide, the residential school generated severe cultural, psychological, and social impacts on Indigenous communities. The passing down of culture and knowledge was interrupted as children were removed from their communities. Children experienced physical, psychological and sexual abuse in these schools, and were not allowed to speak their languages.

Mi'kmaq literature

Mohawk literature

Anishinaabe and Ojibway literature

Cree literature

Colonisation and the colonizers: british and french and economically colonized by the americans

The history of Canada covers the period from the arrival of the Paleo-Indians thousands of years ago to the present day. Prior to European colonization, the lands encompassing present-day Canada were inhabited for millennia by Indigenous peoples, with distinct trade networks, spiritual beliefs, and styles of social organization. Some of these older civilizations had long faded by the time of the first European arrivals and have been discovered through archeological investigations.

From the late 15th century, French and British expeditions explored, colonized, and fought over various places within North America in what constitutes present-day Canada. The colony of New France was claimed in 1534 with permanent settlements beginning in 1608. France ceded nearly all its North American possessions to the United Kingdom in 1763 after the French defeat in the Seven Years' War. The now British Province of Quebec was divided into Upper and Lower Canada in 1791 and reunified in 1841. In 1867, the Province of Canada was joined with two other British colonies of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia through Confederation, forming a self-governing entity named Canada. The new country

expanded by incorporating other parts of British North America, finishing with Newfoundland and Labrador in 1949.

Although responsible government had existed in Canada since 1848, Britain continued to set its foreign and defence policies until the end of the First World War. The passing of the Statute of Westminster in 1931 recognized that Canada had become co-equal with the United Kingdom. After the Constitution was patriated in 1982, the final vestiges of legal dependence on the British parliament were removed. Canada currently consists of ten provinces and three territories and is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy with Queen Elizabeth II as its head of state.

Over centuries, elements of Indigenous, French, British and more recent immigrant customs have combined to form a Canadian culture that has also been strongly influenced by its linguistic, geographic and economic neighbour, the United States. Since the conclusion of the Second World War, Canadians have supported multilateralism abroad and socioeconomic development.

The garrison mentality as a common theme of Canadian literature

The garrison mentality is a common theme in regards to Canadian literature and Canadian cinema. The term was first coined by literary critic Northrop Frye and further explored by author Margaret Atwood, who discussed Canada's preoccupation with the theme of survival in her book *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*. This mentality is assumed to come from part of the Canadian identity that fears the emptiness of the Canadian landscape and fears the oppressiveness of other nations.

In texts with the garrison mentality, characters are always looking outwards and building metaphorical walls against the outside world.

Recent developments in mainstream writing

The term “Canadian Literature in English” refers to that which is written in what is now territorially Canada or written by Canadians abroad (see also *Literature in French*).

Writers have described Canada in many ways; for example, as a French or English colony, a “fifty-first state,” a Pacific Rim country, an Arctic giant, a friendly territory or an uninhabitable wilderness. Canadian literature has often had to deal with such differences in attitude, not just because many Canadian authors were born elsewhere and brought outsiders’ expectations with them, but also because popular attitudes often perpetuated stereotypes of Canada. Three pervasive stereotypes portray Canada as (1) a physical desert, (2) a cultural wasteland and (3) a raw land of investment opportunity and resource extraction. These distortions have created an audience for stereotypes, which Canadian writers sometimes reinforced by writing romantic adventures of the frozen North, in which everything local was savage or hostile and “civilization” was imported. But over time, they sought to record local experience and to use literature to shape their own culture rather than to imitate or defer to the presumptions of another society.

Insofar as Canadian culture continues to be shaped by a range of languages in use and by wide variations in geography, social experience, Indigenous cultures, immigration patterns and proximity to Europe, Asia and the USA, the “Canadian voice” is not uniform. Nevertheless, however much their aesthetic practices and political commitments may differ, Canadian

writers bring many shared perspectives to their representations of nature, civility and human interaction, whether at home or abroad. Some critical approaches to Canadian literature have attempted to identify national or regional characteristics in literature. Other criticism (see *Literature in English: Theory and Criticism*) has fastened on language and formal strategies, theories of knowledge and meaning, ethics (variously defined) and the politics and psychology of race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, identity and environment. “Canadian literature” does not therefore restrict itself to a particular set of topics, terms or even Canadian settings, nor does any set of topics and terms constitute a required ingredient in a Canadian book.

Motifs and Patterns

Although the national character is not always the subject of Canadian literature, the culture’s social attitudes and values can be seen in the language and forms it uses (see *Literature in English: Language and Literary Form*). For instance, communication is often achieved through tone as much as through direct statement. Irony is a dominant mode, litotes (the negative positive: not unappreciated) is a common speech pattern, trickster (rather than hero) figures recur, and a sense of humour (understatement, parody, mimicry, wry satire) punctuates much serious literary work. Some commentators have interpreted Canadian tendencies toward literary indirectness politically and psychologically, finding in it a sign of national insecurity and a group feeling of inferiority. Others argue that indirectness is a healthy demonstration of the culture’s ability to adapt an inherited tongue to its own purposes. Irony, for example, can undercut as much as apologize, and the quiet demeanour of an onlooker figure in a narrative can effectively undermine positions of ostensible power.

Several specific narrative patterns recur in Canadian writing, especially evident in fiction and life writing: (1) a community walls itself off from the wilderness (the “garrison mentality”); (2) a person leaves the homeland, adjusts to the new world, then finds the new “homeland” to be “alien”; (3) a person born in Canada feels like a permanent stranger in his or her own home; (4) people arrive in the new home only to find that they are excluded from power; (5) a person attempts to recover from the past the secret or suppressed life of a previous generation; (6) a woman struggles to come to terms with her own creativity and the inhibitions of her cultural upbringing (often told as conflict between colony and empire); (7) an apparently passive observer, surrounded by articulate tricksters and raconteurs, turns out to be able to tell both their story and his or her own, often ironically; (8) an adventurer turns failure into a form of grace; (9) a child grows up to inherit a world of promise, or a world of loss, frequently both at once; (10) a subjective historian meditates on place and memory; (11) characters celebrate space and wilderness, usually after a struggle to learn to accept that the wilderness provides spiritual therapy only on its own terms; (12) characters, adrift in a maze of words or a fog of ambiguity and anonymity, shape “acceptable fictions” into a workable life.

Writing about their society, many writers of short fiction, novel, autobiography or memoir, biography, poetry and drama have recurrently portrayed particular historical figures, both to reveal their intrinsic interest and implicitly to suggest how they epitomize certain cultural attributes or qualities of character. Such figures include Samuel Hearne, Louis Riel, Susanna Moodie, Sir John A. Macdonald, Emily Carr and William Lyon Mackenzie. In the retelling, sometimes transposed from their own time into the present, each possesses a vision but remains an ordinary human being, one with frailties, not a conventional hero. Characteristically, Canadian writing resists the binaries associated with perfectionism (right-

wrong, good-evil, hero-villain), embracing notions of multiple alternatives, working pluralities, multivoicedness and negotiated or evolving resolution instead. In narrative, violence generally functions as an instigation of action and as a penultimate event rather than as a solution or act of closure. Repeatedly, individual rights balance against community responsibilities. In more recent drama, poetry, and prose—even in much popular genre writing (see *Popular Literature in English*)—open endings predominate over conventional strategies of closure, inviting readers/listeners to participate in the play of alternatives and possibilities.

Settings

Settings often possess a symbolic dimension. Catholic Québec recurrently figures in anglophone writing as a land of mystery, attractive but enthralling and morally dangerous; Ontario as an enigmatic blend of moral uprightness and moral evasiveness; Atlantic Canada as a repository of old values; the North as a land of vision; the Prairies as a land of isolation and acquisition; and the West Coast as a dream of the future in which people often mistakenly believe. Europe often appears as the home of refinement, deceit, and discrimination; the United States as a land of crass achievement and tangible success; and Africa as the embodiment of all that seems “other” to Protestant rationalism. In recent writing, Latin America and Asia (both East and South) are frequently configured as sites of political entanglement, which is expressed through inheritance and family ties or embodied in the complexities of larger communities. Within Canada, the land itself is recurrently associated with power, whether as property, region, a hostile force, a godly gift, the basis for resource extraction, the site of communication, the contested territory of competing cultural claims, the border or the ecological medium in which human life integrates with all other living beings in Nature.

Although most Canadians live in cities, until recently writers used rural and small-town settings more frequently than urban ones, and to the degree that they adapted conventional adventure and pastoral formulas to Canadian settings, they seldom questioned unstated assumptions about status and race. From early on in Canadian literature, however, essayists (see *Essay in English*) and travel writers (see *Travel Literature*) analyzed and challenged as well as celebrated Canadian political life. Often, women writers used fiction and autobiography to reveal social divisions within Canada that male adventure writers ignored or underplayed, and to suggest reforms. Recent writing by both women and men focuses more directly and fully on urban life as well as on social issues (ethnicity, gender, poverty, health, education) that transcend setting.

“Regional” writing also conveys political stances. The term is used in two ways: to refer to places ruled by a real or imagined centre, and to configure the variant parts that make up a collective unit or community. By rejecting a single definition of “Canada,” writing about regional distinctiveness sometimes declares separatist claims on identity and power and in other instances asserts the viability of a nation with a plural character (see *Regionalism in Literature*). Increasingly, Indigenous writers and writers who draw on backgrounds other than western European ones have examined the political opportunities of Canadian pluralism, but also the social limitations of local convention.

History

A rough chronological guide to changes and developments in Canadian writing should not be equated with a simple chart of “progress”; each age (Colonial, Early National, Interwar and

Postwar, Contemporary) reveals differing conventions, preoccupations and accomplishments. Hence, as fashions and critical tastes change over time, so do determinations of value and significance.

Canadian literature in English can be said to begin in the early 17th century with Jacobean poetry in Newfoundland; in the decades that followed with numerous explorers writing narratives of contact (see Exploration Literature); or in the mid-18th century with the epistolary fiction of the English garrison community in Québec. After 1776, in the Loyalist settlements of Upper Canada and the Maritimes, many writers turned to political verse satire (see Humorous Writing in English; Literature and Politics). Newly founded newspapers and magazines (see also Literary Magazines in English) became venues for political commentary, both conservative and reform-minded, as well as for literary expression, which in the 19th century generally followed Romantic, Sentimental and Orientalist fashions in Britain. Some scathing satire emerged in Nova Scotia. Novels and dramas followed historical romance and Gothic paradigms, as did most long poems. Mid-19th century autobiographies set in present day Ontario provide insight into daily life: Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852), Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836) and Anna Brownell Jameson's *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* (1838) highlight British women's various attitudes toward settlement, while the Nishnaabe missionary George Copway's memoir *The Life, History and Travels of Kah-ga-gah-Bowh* (1847) both celebrates Christianity and emphasizes the value of Indigenous law, land use and religion. Short personal sketches of persons and places formed the basis for much travel writing and for the short fiction that emerged as a new genre during the 19th century. Folksong and folktale survive, but Native oral literature received scant literary attention until the later 19th century.

Early National

In the years leading up to Confederation and during the five decades following, much attention turned to literacy and political organization. Schools and universities opened, as did several Carnegie Libraries, part of a network of public libraries across North America financed by the fortune of Pittsburgh steel magnate Andrew Carnegie. Writers celebrated their newfound nationalism and were drawn variously to such enterprises as the Mechanics' Institutes, the Institut Canadien, the Royal Society of Canada, the Canada First Movement and Imperial Federation (see Imperialism). Philosophical and scientific writing flourished, encouraging thoughtful discourse across language lines. Travel (within Canada and abroad) encouraged other kinds of contact, and with it both impressionistic and reportorial writing. By the end of the 19th century, writers like Edith Maude Eaton (*Sui Sin Far*) addressed racism against Chinese North Americans, while proponents of Women's Suffrage and Prohibition wrote stories and essays that focused on issues of social change.

Many other social assumptions nevertheless remained largely unexamined. While attention turned to First Nations' oral tales, writers treated them (despite the emergence of First Nations writers publishing in English) as "simple" texts, suitable in translation (if expurgated) mainly to entertain children. Tales and poems about "Indians," such as Duncan Campbell Scott's "The Onondaga Madonna" (1894), largely assumed that First Nations people were "a dying race" and their several complex cultures unsophisticated. Poet and performer E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake) drew on her Mohawk and British heritage to challenge these stereotypes and address the relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadians. Nevertheless, the romance of the "Indians" was matched by a continuing romance of Empire. Ontario- and Maritime-based Canadian culture remained dominantly Celtic and

anglocentric. Early creative narratives from the Prairies and the West Coast, while recurrently probing the real-life travails of immigrants and the exigencies of farm and forest management, were largely overshadowed in the popular imagination by Ontario romances of Presbyterian conversion.

By the early 20th century, many Canadian books won widespread international popularity, notably L.M. Montgomery's *Anne Of Green Gables* (1908), a humorous tale of an orphan's life in Prince Edward Island. C.G.D. Roberts's and E.T. Seton's seemingly realistic animal tales provide other examples, as do the comic sketches of Stephen Leacock, which parodied literary stereotypes and dealt ironically with social platitudes. In poetry, the Confederation group (William Wilfred Campbell, Bliss Carman, Archibald Lampman, Charles G.D. Roberts, Duncan Campbell Scott and Fredrick George Scott) produced the most important writings of the late 19th century; committed to closely observed details, they variously reshaped how the lyric represented nature, winter and the Canadian landscape.

Interwar and Postwar

Cultural and social attitudes changed during and after the First World War. One creative generation was lost but another emerged, objecting both to imperial assumptions of militarism and the language associated with it (see *The First World War in Canadian Literature*). New magazines affirmed the independence of Canadian thought. New prizes were established to recognize Canadian literary accomplishment. In the fiction of the 1920s, while some popular family chronicles continued to affirm conventional class distinctions, antiwar novels and class critiques began to appear, a trend magnified during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Many writers focussed on uprooted or marginalized individuals and the troubled lives of non-English-speaking immigrants. Novelists championed industrial workers' rights and sought fresh, more direct forms of speech, spurning the sentimental romance in favour of a more "realistic" (some called it a more "violent") vocabulary. American literary practice—and the international avant-garde of postwar Paris—drew writers such as John Glassco and Morley Callaghan; the short story genre thrived, espousing forms that resisted narrative closure.

Young writers also rejected received social values by mounting left-wing agitprop drama, writing dramas that satirized nationalist pageantry, publishing erotica, finding inspiration in the Group of Seven painters, and embracing the modernist dicta of the poet T.S. Eliot and others. Chief among emerging Canadian poets at this time were those associated with the "McGill" (or "Montreal") Group, especially F.R. Scott for his commitment to social justice and Abraham Klein for his passionate embrace of his Jewish heritage. Over succeeding decades Dorothy Livesay became the voice of socialist feminism and Scott, with the poet-critic A.J.M. Smith, became an influential anthologist, shaping the early teaching of Canadian literature.

In the wake of the Second World War came a mix of propaganda, pacifist rhetoric, parodies of military ineptitude, and a new wave of progressivist writers, by turns humanist, anticlerical, community-minded and intellectually anarchist. Notable names include Irving Layton, Earle Birney, Gabrielle Roy (who remains one of the best-known francophone writers in translation), P.K. Page and George Woodcock. In the 1940s and 1950s, social policies were being drafted that would shape a Canadian sense of community for decades to come. New Literary Periodicals demanded a sharper, more locally grounded language. Radio technology also served this end. Public radio, established in 1932, led to a wave of cross-country spoken-word broadcasts, talks, dramas, readings of short stories and children's

programs, all reconfirming the sounds of Canadian speech as a literary medium, especially from 1943 on. Novelists such as Hugh MacLennan and Sinclair Ross turned again to local settings, rendering the prairies, the Maritimes and Montreal as sites of personal and political trauma. Critics now praise more highly the innovative stylistic practice of Ethel Wilson for her insights into women's lives; Malcolm Lowry for his symphonies of despair and transient joy; Sheila Watson for her rendering of life as an elliptical mythology; and in a career that would last for half a century, Mordecai Richler for his frank and animated cultural politics.

Contemporary: Three Generations

Several social developments markedly changed Canadian society in the years following 1960. The large "baby-boom" generation matured, with the vocal "X" and "Y" generations following; immigration policies were altered to allow greater numbers of new citizens from Asia, Africa and Latin America; startling technological developments (from radio to the Internet) collapsed notions of space and sped up communication. All these changes had an impact on literary topics and techniques. Cross-border and cross-cultural contacts validated notions of cultural "hybridity" as a social norm, challenging conventional definitions of "ethnic purity" and "fixed identity." Family biographies shifted focus from single lives onto lives-in-context. Multimedia presentations challenged conventions regarding the unity of literary form. Bilingual texts, triptychs (in fiction and drama), and discontinuous narratives in fiction and poetry all deliberately disrupted conventional linearity as a literary technique. Numerous integrated (but discontinuous) collections of short fiction appeared called sequences, cycles or "composite narratives." Some of the major writers of these decades had just been emerging in the 1950s: Richler and two of the world's foremost authors of short fiction, Alice Munro and Mavis Gallant, whose stories embed more than announce, reveal more than parade. They would be joined by Alistair MacLeod, Clark Blaise and numerous others.

The number of Canadian universities, small presses, accessible academic and literary periodicals (from *Canadian Literature* to *Geist*), courses in Canadian literature and creative writing schools also increased, in part because of the recommendations of the Massey Commission and the emergence of the Canada Council in the 1950s. Further government policies led to such social developments as the Charter Of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, but a sudden shift to policies that favoured fiscal restraint and cultural cutbacks occurred in the early 21st century and have persisted; the publishing industry, libraries, public media and scholarship were all affected. New technologies opened up opportunities for local (and frequently more innovative) publishing (including experiments in syllabic and concrete poetry, mixed-media presentations, performance poetry and other formats), yet they did not guarantee access to publicity and sales. Coteries came and went; so did scores of journals and papers. Newspapers faced hardships, and some stopped publishing print editions; this was due in part to a readership that had shifted to online news sources. Publishers of formula fiction remained monetarily successful. Some writers of mystery and science fiction achieved international stardom and praise for their literary achievements, as in the case of William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1986), Nalo Hopkinson's *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1998) and Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy (2003, 2009 and 2013). But publishing houses that had thrived in the 1960s when American control over the information industry was resisted faced closure in the 2010s with the increasing influence of electronic publishing and multinational corporations. The CBC's annual Canada Reads contest, which began in 2002, pits a selection of books against one another, each with its own celebrity endorsement. The event promotes Canadian writing and emphasizes the importance of a reading public yet simplifies literature and contributes to a competitive literary culture. Likewise, a plethora of

prizes, often with corporate sponsorship, began to construct literature as spectacle. Many bookstores nevertheless closed.

Throughout the decades from 1960 onward, while there has been some evidence of a literary return to older forms of expression and fundamentalist redefinitions of ethics, writers more characteristically in each generation embraced social justice and reformist causes: for women's rights (see Women's Movement), for gay and lesbian equality (See Homosexuality), against colonialism and against increasing poverty. Children's literature, an enterprise that flourished at this time, ranging from nonsense verse to problem-centred novels for young adults, addressed some of these same issues of race, gender, alcohol, drug abuse and social identity. Science writing, social history, life writing, environmental inquiry and other forms of "creative nonfiction" also frequently combined discovery with protest. Critiques of social arrogance in one decade (foreign wars, napalm, racism) morphed into critiques of other disparities in the next (discrimination by sex, gender, ethnicity, economics). Margaret Atwood embraced the new nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s (with the Centennial celebrations in 1967) but later tempered her observations in dystopias such as *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), which challenges government control over women's bodies. Robertson Davies's Jungian novels expressed one pervasive understanding of myth and psychology; Robert Kroetsch's poems and tales deconstructed such conventions and rerooted the epic in everyday vernacular experience. Language and literary form again became subjects for analysis and theoretical discussion, as in the work of Marshall McLuhan and Northrop Frye, as well as territories for dispute, as when Nicole Brossard's critiques of French grammar influenced feminist writers in English, or when, in much of 21st-century fiction, conventional vulgarities became normative (and therefore potentially radical, culturally upsetting) speech.

The Writers Union of Canada formed in 1973, reflecting writers' numbers and endeavouring to help deal with the challenges they face.

Other writers addressed cultural, social, and political alternatives in Canadian society, some of which were longstanding, others deriving from more recent changes in population, technology, language and communication. Many of these writers sought a balance between criticism of social practice (racism, passive dismissal, restrictive legislation) and celebration of social potential. A great number of Métis and First Nations writers have provided important commentary, variously critiquing colonialism and celebrating Indigenous life. More specifically (although authors address multiple topics in each work), Maria Campbell's *Half-Breed* (1973), Lee Maracle's *Bobbi Lee* (1973) and Jeannette Armstrong's *Slash* (1985) depict journeys toward political consciousness; Ruby Slipperjack's *Honour the Sun* (1987), Richard Van Camp's *The Lesser Blessed* (1996), and Eden Robinson's *Monkey Beach* (2000) represent childhood and adolescence; Thomas King's *The Truth about Stories* (2003) highlights the value of Indigenous creation stories; Marie Clements's *Burning Vision* (2003) and Drew Hayden Taylor's *Motorcycles and Sweetgrass* (2010) consider environment and land use; Tomson Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (1998), Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road* (2005) and Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse* (2012) address the residential school system, which has been further investigated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2008–15). The poet Robert Bringhurst translated some of the great classic Haida oral tales, Al Purdy created poetry out of the rhythms of ordinary speech, Jack Hodgins turned Vancouver Island idiosyncrasy into a comedy of human aspiration, George Elliott Clarke and Wayne Compton called attention to Black writing in Canada, and increasing numbers of writers (including Rohinton Mistry, Michael Ondaatje and Wayson Choy) drew on their

Asian heritage both to reflect on adaptations to difference and to dramatize the challenges and rewards of a fractured or shared history.

Developments in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, the “war on terror,” and climate change awareness underscored global interconnectedness. While regions and places continued to provide inspiration for contemporary fiction, as in David Adams Richards’ *Mercy Among the Children* (2001) and André Alexis’s *Pastoral* (2014), stress was often laid on globalization’s impact on specific locales, as in Alistair MacLeod’s *No Great Mischief* (1999) and Lisa Moore’s *February* (2009). Environmental concerns were made central in Hiromi Goto’s *The Kappa Child* (2001), Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being* (2013), Thomas King’s *The Back of the Turtle* (2014), and Rita Wong’s *Forage* (2008) and *undercurrent* (2015), which share concerns about the global ramifications of overconsumption, waste disposal and polluted water. With a similar planetary focus, Margaret Atwood’s *MaddAddam* trilogy (2003, 2009 and 2013) explores the frailty of national borders in the wake of climate change.

Globalization notwithstanding, literary interest in the nation-state persisted. Canadian writers’ attention to the United States increased after the September 11th terrorist attacks and Canada’s subsequent involvement in the “war on terror.” Dionne Brand’s encyclopedic *Inventory* (2006) and Douglas Coupland’s apocalyptic narrative *Player One* (2010) respond to the violence generated by terrorism and war. Historical narratives have provided an alternative way of engaging with Canada’s southern neighbour: Patrick DeWitt’s *The Sisters Brothers* (2011) and Alix Hawley’s *All True Not a Lie in It* (2015) reinterpret myths of the American west, whereas characters’ movement between American and Canadian settings in Guy Vanderhaeghe’s *A Good Man* (2011) suggests that the two countries have a shared history, in some respects at least. Perspectives on contemporary human migration, in the form of refugees and illegal immigrants, is provided in John Vaillant’s *The Jaguar’s Children* (2015) and Lawrence Hill’s *The Illegal* (2015), thereby giving pause to literal and metaphoric borders, as well as the complex and multiple networks that connect people, places, environments and countries in a globalized era.

Unit-2: Prose and Fiction

1. Godzilla vs. Post-colonial – Thomas King

Thomas King emphasizes that Native Literature is not Postcolonial literature. Pre and Post colonialism are two different entities. While post-colonialism purports to be a method by which we can begin to look at those literatures which are formed out of the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, the colonized and the colonizer, the term itself assumes that the starting point for that discussion is the advent of Europeans in North America. At the same time, the term organizes the literature progressively suggesting that there is both progress and improvement. No less distressing, it also assumes that the struggle between guardian and ward is the catalyst for contemporary Native literature, providing those of us who write with method and topic. And, worst of all, the idea of post-colonial writing effectively cuts us off from our traditions, traditions that were in place before colonialism ever became a question, traditions which have come down to us through our cultures in spite of colonization, and it supposes that contemporary Native writing is largely a construct of oppression. Post-colonial literature can be categorized by four terms; tribal, interfusion, polemical, and associational.

Tribal literature exists primarily within a tribe or community and is almost exclusively available to that specific tribe and is written in their native dialect. Polemical refers to literature that is either in a native language or a more common language such as French, English, Spanish, etc. Polemical literature typically concerns itself with the clash of native and non-native cultures. Interfusion literature describes a native literature that is a blend of oral and written literature. Associational literature is commonly a body of literature that is created for contemporary native writers and often describes native communities.

As a whole, these four categories or subsets of post-colonial literature by native peoples allows us a critics to assess native works through the notion that there is a usable past of literature and a cultural tenacity for a viable future which may well organize itself around major revivals of language, philosophy, and spiritualism.

ANALYSIS OF THE PROSE

Thomas King's essay "Godzilla vs.the Postcolonial" points out problematic issues surrounding the term "post-colonial". The term generalizes numerous races and cultures together instead of creating a distinction and forms a binary between Europeans and those who have been colonized. The term post-colonial is problematic because it continually connects the colonized to the colonizers as well when referring to literature produced by the colonised it asserts their literature as a reaction to colonialism. Such a generalization about literature produced by those cultures recovering from colonialization would be wrong, and definitely incorrect. For example, one of my favourite novels is Joseph Boyden's Three Day Road which contains information about Native culture focusing on storytelling.

The focus on storytelling as a structure and a theme illuminates the importance of stories with Native culture. King in The Truth About Stories states "The truth about stories is that's all that we are" King states stories are important to culture, and create individual identity as well as cultural identity. King's statement illustrates literature produced by cultures who have experienced colonialism does not always focus on that experience, but rather they produce literature which contains cultural information. Many writers like Boyden use their native language and by defining themselves and their culture they take back the power to define themselves. King in his article states a major point which is by using the term postcolonial to refer to literature written by indigenous people it focus on their contemporary literature as a reaction to colonialism, and to view their literature as such is incorrect. Joseph Boyden's novel is contemporary literature which focuses on the Cree culture, and is an example of aesthetic work which is not speaking about colonialism. To view literature produced by the colonised as a reaction to colonialism is limiting, and it prevents individuals from exploring the structure, content and intrigue literary value they offer as well as it may hinder the amount of cultural knowledge that can be found, and learn in the literary works. When examining this issue King raises surrounding Native literature , immediately I thought of Boyden who offers so much cultural insight as well as presents the beauty found in these cultures.

Thomas King emphasizes that post-colonial literature must be produced by the native people at any given time following their homeland's colonization by a foreign entity. Polemical literature typically concerns itself with the clash of native and non-native cultures.

2.Disunity as Unity: A Canadian Strategy - Robert Krotesch

In 1972, Robert Kroetsch and William Spanos founded the influential critical journal "Boundary . A Journal of post-modern literature. According to Robert Lecker, Kroetsch, "attempts to defy the tyranny of narrative, and explains his involvement or co-edits of a journal of postmodern aesthetics significantly entitled Boundary Linda Hutcheon also alludes to his postmodernist, attempt to defy "the tyranny of narrative", telling how the editing contradicted Kroetsch's constant desire to combat ordering impulses". She assesses Kroetsch as the motivating force behind Canadian postmodernism "In many ways it is probably redundant to call Robert Kroetsch a postmodernist; he is Mr. Canadian," The Post-modernist"

Therefore, in the Introduction to *The Canadian Postmodern*, the chapters in which she defines postmodernism, she quotes Kroetsch extensively and briefly discusses some of his novels as examples of postmodern works. The Four major postmodern contents used in Robert Kroetsch's writings are

1. Meta –Narrative
2. Quest –narrative
3. Subversive identity

In an essay "Disunity as Unity: A Canadian Strategy" like Kroetsch explains

'Meta-narrative' as concerned with the narrative itself, "The shared story has traditionally been basic to nationhood. As a writer he was interested in these assumed stories what he calls Meta-narratives. It may be that the writing of particular narratives, within a culture, is dependent on these Meta-narratives." Kroetsch defines a **Meta-narrative as a kind of archaeological art that succeeds against the traditional narrative.**

His writing and criticism reveals that he is **against 'totalizing Centre and the coherent narrative'**. His meta-narrative structure is nothing but **multilayered and abounds in the use of mythological fragments** with reference to the myths and stories of the Canadian past and present, which uncovers, revealing a new layer of meaning under the surface of the story. Apart from layer, the archeological technique allows for the existence of fragments, the interrelationships of which expand the meaning of the main narrative by means of imaginative speculation.

Quest narrative

Kroetsch problematizes the Canadian quest problematic in the quest-narratives of his protagonists. All his protagonists are questers and the quest is actually or figuratively always in terms of and with reference to the idea of self-assertion and self-actualization. However, his narratives do not posit resolutions of the narrative quests in a prophetic vision of closure. Instead his narratives leave a sense of endless trace.

Subversive Identity

Frank Davey's notion of Identity very much relates to Kroetsch's notion of subversive identity. In Frank Davey's opinion, the heterogeneous and multi-cultural mix of Canadian

society, disallows a centred Canadian Identity. For Kroetsch, therefore the Canadian monolithic notion of Identity and reality is questionable and untenable. This enforces logicity and coherence and he believes the differences in culture that can neither be denied nor inscribed within the generic label 'Canadian.' For Kroetsch, in fact, Canada is an apt site for postmodernism which, as against the totalizing and homogenizing impulses of modernism, acknowledges and encourages the idea of plurality.

As Shirley Newman and Robert Wilson note, Kroetsch "Prefers multiplicity and fragmentation to unities; the voices of Babble to the prophetic voice" and in so doing expresses his postmodern impulses. Contestual discourse on identity, as Kroetsch says "The fiction makes us real". In the Studhorse Man, for instance, Demeter Proud foot, the naked man narrator, ostensibly attempts to write Hazard Leepage's biography, but ends up eventually fabricating an identity for himself. In Gone Indian. Mark Madham de-creates himself in his professed recreation of Jeremy's story. In Badlands, similarly, Anna Dawe's narrative of William Dawe's quest becomes the narrative of Anna's own quest for Identity.

Unit-2: Poetry

1.First Neighbours – P K Page

This poem was written by P.K.PAGE . She was acknowledged as the best Canadian poet and also fellow of Royal Society of Canada. Her homeland is England and so her dialect is from that of the people of Canada. She expresses her feeling that all humans are equal and there is no difference in them, but the people of Canada feel that she is different with the shape of her ear. she says that the girl jeered at her for burned bread. The homeland is always secure, when compared to the other nation.

She says that she has become a minor and invalid. Her remarks are not worthy. Her gestures are silly and sick. She has become a trivial being in the views of her neighbours. the next stanza speaks about her mental state. And she says that finally she has become hardened like a chapped tarpaulin. She started to negotiate whatever she uttered, the strange meanings to others and Vice versa. She wants to connect herself with others. She brought herself down to get connected with them.

In the next stanza , she explores mindscape through landscape, she says that nothing is steady. Everything is inaccurate. Here, the forest is compared to the inner mind. She wants to be connected with them. She gets scared and then she says that clumsiness and fright are inevitable. Finally she says that prediction is forever impossible. We cannot predict anything. Thus she concludes her poem.

Summary

In the poem the First Neighbours, the speaker puts down the cultural encounters she/he was forced to face and compelled to adapt. The speaker is caught in an ambiguous situation at last and is in a dilemma, whether to return to the native condition or to surrender to the culture and unpredictable conditions. All the experiences suggested by the speaker warns them to Go back, as in the lines, "Go back, where you came from."

The immigrants in Canada had to experience the crisis of rootlessness and search for identity but they had deep down in their hearts the unforgettable memories of and affinities with the

culture of their native country and an intense desire to cultivate that cultural ethos in their adopted country.

The Preview Group offered Canadian readers a refined combination of new poetry and politics. John Sutherland remarks, “Both in subject matter and style Preview provided Page with a necessary cue. She had been developing in the general direction of Auden and Spender and under Preview’s influence she took a considerable step forward.”

2. Indian Reservation: Caughnawaga – A M Klein

The lamenting tone is dramatic with an abrupt beginning to captivate the attention of the readers. It means a sense of loss. Men were of different kinds like warriors and chieftains, wherein brave means warriors which has two semantic differences “where and brave”. It tells us that they are no more brave. The early natives lived in a bound state having a vast land. Being colonised they lost their identity and their mind power. They were not able to express them as the sons of the soil and were treated like animals to be tamed. The autumn front symbolises the old age and a season of death and also the beginning of the race. The poem is narrated from with an extrinsic information.

“Indian Reservation: Caughnawaga” is a poem about the fall of an Indian and aftereffects. It narrates downfall and the reason, the ‘sense of fear’. The poet A.M.Klien is a Jewish Canadian writer, yet he talks about the Indians, North Americans. He shares his experiences, as a Jewish who suffered in the hands of whites. His poem “Indian Reservation: Caughnawaga” is about the story of the Indians. The Poem starts with a melancholic tone.

The child here refers to the poet himself who feels nostalgic about the bravery that is missing in the Indians. It has two perspectives, the child’s and the adult’s. The child looks at the “coloured front piece” which is the front-page of a book. It has the picture of the braves and the “monosyllabic chief” who has dignity and had never wasted time, speaking; compared to the Indian God Manito, known for courage, grandeur and greatness which is seen in the coloured front piece. He is standing “arms akimbo”, showing his self-esteem, dignity and pride which is now only an analepsis.

The poet says that in his childhood he wished he were an Indian, a kind of exclamation, fancy, illusion. “The classroom chalk” is a symbol of symbolisation; “varnish smell”, “the watered dust of the street”, where he desires to live a life of common people with nature; an escape from the problems of reality and goes to nature. He mentions the Iroquois which was the chief tribe invaded by French. It had sub-tribes and many dialects in their path. They never go in the same for the sale of security which also has adventurous experience in it. He says that this is what his illusion was but in reality it never came through. And he tells that the chief stands his arms akimbo who awaits “the runaway mascot” which is a symbol of good omen and luck changing. Cultural changes usually come silently without hinting, he says.

Later, a drastic change has happened where moccasin, a shoe without heels which protected the feet of Indians and made no sound is now used by the dacoits, vulnerable and glorious in the past. Feeling is one way of learning in the lap of nature. He wanted many adventures by taking different paths. There he can see what others have not seen and experienced like the Indians. He says that Indians were dead, what we see now is the remembrance of the chief, living in the world of illusion and experiencing reality. The change of western culture is visible in the names we choose and the dress we use. When the names change, the identity

also changes. Still braves exist by it not with the Indianess, completely changed to western culture.

He says that Indians have become pale, lost his colour, health and nobility and his nature. He is ironic. The women were inside the “elementary shawls” being inactive who also have lost their identities. Children were playful but have become least worthy now. Tourists, white men had pleasure in throwing alms at children “at the old church door” who had already been defeated. The old church door symbolises love, giving and brotherhood once but now have turned a sight of cultural humiliation. transforming children to pauppers.

Their past is sold in shops, meaning that their tradition is lost, fallen to the ground, dusty, because of the colonizers. They are made to sell themselves, their attitude and tradition to whites, exploiting, destroying their land. Man is the cause of exploitation, occupying the first place as a predator in food chain. Justice not denied here but deranged.

Nature is shrinking as we are expanding, thereby killing tradition and making it momentous out of it which is an insult to the Indians. The worst was the white men selling Indian tradition. White men scalped Indian’s tradition and we live with dead things. We have become savages of civilisation. The irony is made to generate the Indians.

The last stanza is very pathetic, ironically presents the promises made and the betrayals, illusions and realities, the desires of Indians as a “grassy-ghetto”, an oxymoron

There is a composition of both freedom and bondage. They were promised freedom but bound in bondage. The entire poem seems to be about reservation. A “ghetto” is a synonym for reservation. Through a positive commotion of the culture, the white men destroyed them and used them. “And these are fauna on a museum kept”. Fauna is associated with the animal like Indian; the savage is now imprisoned in museum. The irony is that the hunter has now become the hunted. “The better hunters have prevailed”. The Indian has transformed from a golden position to a civilized poverty and humility. The poet calls the hunting as a game which is a very significant statement. He says that both are hunters, the Indian hunts for his survival, but the white men hunt for the destruction in one way. This goes by the theory of Darwinism. He hits at the sore of the white men’s civilisation. Indians lose their blood which empathetically means “passions and emotions” that “makes the grounds it’s crypt”, “bleached are their living”. Indian is dead, in becoming the subservient servant of the whites. He has lost his life and lives like a “living vegetable”. The whites are referred to as “pious prosperous ghosts”, an oxymoron which means they are materially prosperous.

The poet concludes by saying that the ruler and the ruled, higher and lower, the rich and the poor are the marginals. He uses the metaphor “hunting” to show their lives. The analogy is that the individual hunts for the sake of survival whereas whites do it for fun and sport. Human rights have it’s boundaries as per P.G.Wodehouse, “the sons of the toil are buried beneath tonnes of soil”. Indian for his sake of survival has lost his identity. If Indian is the dead living, then the white man is the living dead, concludes the poet.

3.The Cattle Thief – Emily Pauline Johnson

Summary

The Cree are one of the largest groups of First Nations in North America. In Canada, over 350,000 people are Cree or have Cree ancestry. The major proportion of Cree in Canada live north and west of Lake Superior, in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

The Cree Indians were hunters who hunt caribou, elk, and moose and smaller animals like beaver and rabbits. The Plains Cree followed the buffalo herds in a nomadic lifestyle. For the Eastern Cree, fishing and hunting seals from canoes were more important.

The Chief of Cree Community is called Eagle. A protector of his community. The Early settlers, who later turned to be the oppressors condemn the Eagle chief accusing him for the theft of cattles. The English on hunting the Eagle chief , finally finds him near the Cree area. With a lion like courage the chief confronts the White and challenges him. They massacre him and when trying to slaughter the corpse, the White were interrupted by a Cree woman, daughter of the Chief who was trying to protect the corpse . Taken aback by the act of the girl trying to express the unfairness. She claimed for the dignity of their tribe

Johnson, Pauline E. "Cattle Thief." 1895.

4. Like an Old Proud King in a Parable – A J M Smith

Introduction

"Like an Old Proud King in a Parable" is a poem that was published in *New Provinces*, the first anthology of modern Canadian poetry, which was edited by F.R. Scott and A.J.M. Smith. The poem was originally published in the *McGill Fortnightly Review* in 1928 before making it into anthology in 1936.

In the Introduction to *The Book of Canadian Poetry*, Smith writes of "the modern revival that began in the twenties with a simplification of the technique" . Smith's goal within his own poetry was to create something new and unique in Canadian Poetry, though he understood the benefits of learning from the classical poets. He continues by saying that "following the lead of the 'new poets' in the United States and the Georgians in England, Canadian poets turned against rhetoric, sought a sharper, more objective imagery, and limited themselves to the language of everyday and the rhythms of speech" . "Like an Old Proud King in a Parable" is a prime example of the fusion of new Canadian poetry and the acknowledgement of the ancient poets.

"Like an Old Proud King in a Parable" is primarily a metaphysical poem. A metaphysical poem in figurative language and a way of organizing the meditative process or the poetic argument" Related to the metaphysical poem, "the metaphysical conceit, combines dissimilar images the most heterogeneous ideas yoked by violence together" Smith combines the idea of a bitter king with the disillusionment of power. The king wants to be away from the

“fawning courtier and doting queen,” in search of peace. This idea is against the traditional romantic poem.

Summary

A king is bored to forego the pleasure of the Kingdom. He renounces his kingdom, and leaves his flattering courtiers and adoring wife. The king readily sacrifices the existing kingly life and moves to a lonely land, “a meadow in the Northern Stone”. Northern Stone is in the northern parts of Canada, a land of mountains, snow and forest filled with nature. The King rejoices to live his life along the meadow. In the meadow he feels like an uncontrollable swan, “the heart that controlled liked the swan”. The King desires to give up his worldly life and aspires for an isolated life along the Northern Stone.

The poet employs a device to depersonalize the poem. The bitter King tosses away the worldly life and seeks the Goddess of Pride, Intellectuality. He realizes that intellectual beauty is more vital than worldly pleasures. So, the King decides to sing songs for the barren rocks.

The poem ends in a typical ironic self-mockery. The Poem demonstrates Smith’s need for a change in Canadian poetry. A Bitter King , A Poet who wishes to violate the old traditions for a new, modern Canadian Poetic style.

Unit-4: Drama

1.The Ecstasy of Rita Joe – George Ryga

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The play *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* was widely discussed, first because there was not much in the way of Canadian drama and second because there was little in any art form that dealt so frankly with American Indian issues. The play was immediately controversial, because of both its thematic content and its deeply accusatory tone. [George Ryga](#) confronted his largely white audience with the harsh reality of the lives of American Indians who were living only blocks from the theater in which the play was being performed. His general condemnation of the organizations dealing with American Indian people also caused a storm. However, if his play rankled the white population, it also jolted many American Indians to face the issues that concerned them.

Ryga was an eclectic and prolific writer. Besides plays, he published poetry, novels, and radio and television dramas on a variety of subjects, but it is on his plays that his reputation rests. Ryga’s works include *Ballad of a Stone-Picker* (1966), a novel about prairie dirt farmers in the 1940’s and 1950’s; *Nothing but a Man* (pr., pb. 1966), a play about Federico García Lorca; *Captives of the Faceless Drummer* (pr. 1971), a drama based on the October, 1970, terrorist crisis in the province of Quebec; *Paracelsus and the Hero* (pb. 1974), a play about the sixteenth century Swiss physician and philosopher; and *In the Shadow of the Vulture* (pb. 1985), a novel about Mexican immigrant workers.

Similar themes and techniques run throughout his work. In socially conscious plays such as *Indian* (pr. 1962) and *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, Ryga portrays the lives of the poor and the dispossessed and strongly criticizes social service organizations that preach conformity and patronize those who dwell on the margins of society. He was an innovative dramatist, mixing [realism](#) and lyricism, manipulating time, and using music to complement and counterpoint his themes. Ryga was particularly interested in reviving the oral, tale-telling aspect of drama, and to that end he included ballads and composed music for many of his plays. He also experimented freely with the audience-performer relationship, even inviting spectators to participate in the action, as in *Grass and Wild Strawberries* (pr. 1969). *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* has also been produced in French and as a ballet, and it is considered a classic because it marked the beginning of modern, indigenous Canadian drama.

The Ecstasy of Rita Joe Summary

The Ecstasy of Rita Joe is the story of a young Native American woman who is falsely accused of prostitution. Rita Joe leaves her reservation and goes to the city to find a job. She struggles to find work and is offered money from undercover policemen. When she accepts the money, she is arrested for prostitution.

The play is set during Rita Joe's trial and opens with the magistrate declaring himself to be stern but fair. Rita attempts to defend herself against the accusations, and the magistrate has a flashback to a young girl he once saw on the side of the road in Cariboo country. He begins to feel partial to Rita—however, his sense of patriotism kicks in, and he stands strong against her. Rita begins having flashbacks to characters from her past. She thinks of Jaimie Paul, a Native American man from her reservation who also moved to the city and at first had success. However, he eventually lost his job and began to drink. Rita has further flashbacks to her father, the priest, her former teacher, and the school board clerk. The school board clerk and her former teacher, Miss Donohue, end up testifying against Rita in the trial, and she is sentenced to thirty days in prison.

After serving her time, Rita reconnects with her friend Jaimie. The two go to Mr. Homer's Center for Native Americans, where they are too proud to accept the food and clothing offered. Mr. Homer lashes out at Rita, and Jaimie attacks him. Jaimie and Rita are put before the magistrate again, and Jaimie is sentenced to thirty days in prison. Rita's father comes to the city to bring his daughter home, but Rita refuses because she does not want to leave without Jaimie. When Jaimie is released from prison, the two plan to go out to celebrate. The flashbacks continue and become frenetic. Ultimately, the two friends are circled by a group of racist white men who murder them both.

Critical Appreciation of the Play

The Ecstasy of Rita Joe begins as a trial. Rita Joe is the defendant, alone and without representation, against a policeman, who acts as witness against her, and the Magistrate, who will decide her fate. As the Magistrate's opening lines demonstrate, he is determined to be stern but fair. Rita Joe's first words, however, undermine the Magistrate's eloquent [exposition](#): She was picked up by undercover policemen who offered her money and then arrested her for prostitution. The Magistrate continues his paean to justice while Rita Joe professes her innocence and the Singer offers up a haunting, melodic verse.

The futile exchange between Rita and the Magistrate continues, setting a pattern for the rest of act 1. As the trial goes on, however, the past begins to interrupt and inform the present at

various intervals. Even the Magistrate is haunted by memories: Rita Joe reminds him of a young, poorly dressed girl he saw once standing all alone by the side of the road in the harsh Cariboo country. He would like to extend to her the sympathy that this recollection arouses in him, but his sense of duty finally overwhelms his humanity, and he reverts to being officious. The Magistrate becomes increasingly exasperated as he questions Rita about whether she understands the charges against her, whether she can provide witnesses in her favor, and whether she is a carrier of venereal disease.

For her part, Rita seems neither capable of nor interested in defending herself. There is not much she understands or trusts about the system in which she finds herself caught. Thus, she welcomes those figures from her past who intrude upon the action, disrupting her dialogue with the Magistrate and distracting her from the chronic fatigue, hunger, and sickness from which she suffers. Jaimie Paul, Eileen Joe, the Old Woman, and David Joe are American Indians and appear to Rita alone; white people such as the Priest, Mr. Homer, the Teacher, the Policeman, the School Board Clerk, and various Witnesses (who double as murderers) appear both in Rita's dreams and in the trial.

The Ecstasy of Rita Joe Characters

Rita Joe

A young and poor Indigenous woman, Rita Joe is the protagonist of the play. She comes to the city from the reservation where she grew up, seeking a better life. Rita loves her father, sister and Jaimie Paul, and she calls upon memories of her loved one when she is in difficult situations. Rita Joe represents the indigenous person in a colonized nation: demonized, degraded, and misunderstood. Rita loses her job and falls into a series of arrests for various crimes. Her story is consistently doubted by those in power. At the end of the play, Rita is killed.

Jaimie Paul

Jaimie Paul is a young Indigenous man and lifelong friend of Rita Joe. He comes to the city with high hopes, but he eventually loses his job and takes to drinking. He lives in poverty, but self-respect keeps him from accepting charity. He fights back against marginalization and is angered by the discrimination he experiences. Jaimie Paul demands equal opportunities to those enjoyed by white men, but he too is marginalized and his voice is suppressed as Rita Joe's.

David Joe

David Joe is Rita's father. He is a man who accepts the various aspects of colonization easily. He moves to the reservation they are given, and also tries to persuade Rita Joe to return to the reservation, as he knows the dangers of being alone in the city. He never rebels against the colonizers and accepts all the injustices he faces in silence. He is, as Jaimie Paul describes him, "the kind of Indian a white man likes."

Magistrate

The Magistrate is the person who hears Rita Joe's case. He is not given a name, which shows that he is not one person, but rather represents the whole of the law-giving body in a colonized nation. When Rita Joe first appears before him in court, he expresses his will to be

just and fair to her, but he does not understand or relate to her, making him distrust her and in turn making him give her an unjust sentence more than once.

Father Andrew

Father Andrew is a priest who works among the Indigenous people on the reservation. He visits Rita Joe in jail, and there tries to get a confession out of her. He keeps trying to thrust Christianity onto the natives. Even at the end, when Rita Joe and Jaimie Paul die, he barges into the funeral to recite his prayers. He represents the role of religion in the process of colonization.

Miss Donohue

Miss Donohue is Rita Joe's school teacher. She is a white woman and is not able to understand Rita Joe. She finds Rita a trying student when young. She appears in court as a witness for Rita Joe, but she doesn't have much of an opinion about her and believes that she is a prostitute.

Singer

The singer is an alter-ego of Rita Joe. She acts as a kind of a chorus to the play, trying to fill the gaps in the play. The singer is used to portray the native perspective of things. She often sings the line, "God was gonna have a laugh // An' gave me a job in the city!", which summarizes the whole of the play

Unit-5: Short Stories and Legends

1.Face – Alice Munro

The unnamed narrator of Alice Munro's story "Face" is born with a birthmark covering one side of his face. According to the narrator, who in turn relies a great deal on his mother's account on all matters, this causes his father to reject him. His father takes a look at him in the hospital nursery and tells his mother "What a chunk of chopped liver" and threatens "You don't need to think you're going to bring that into the house."

The boy actually grows up in this house for nine years, living in proximity to a father whose "most vivid quality was a capacity for hating and despising". He internalizes a warped view of himself, remarking at one point, "Of course, a production like myself was an insult that he had to face every time he opened his own door". Accordingly, he and his mother go out of their way to keep the fact of his face hidden, not only by keeping the boy out of the way of the father, but also by keeping the fact of his face hidden from the boy. On one level, this is done by strategic placing of mirrors. On another, it's done by keeping the boy hidden from the world at large. All for his good, or so the boy believed and the man remembering does as well. He's to be seen but not too clearly. Gradually, he loses sight of what he looks like; he minimizes the mark on his face, believing "that half my face was a dull, mild sort of color, almost mousy, a furry shadow".

Of course, as the story argues, love is based on sight. Whether it originates in the physical or finds a home there, it is dependent on the body.

The little boy in the story longs to be loved. His mother can't. She's dependent on him. The fact of his face serves her as an explanation of why her marriage has failed; she's failed to produce an acceptable son to the father. She binds with the child as his self-sacrificing protector. As the son recalls, "She had been devoted to me-not a word either of us would have used, but I think the right one-till I was nine". On his side, he remains loyal, defending her decisions when he can, pleading ignorance of her motives when he can't.

Seeking love, the little boy develops crushes on various older women he happens to come across. However, when he's about four, he develops a friendship with a little girl about his age, Nancy, who lives with her mother in a gardener's cottage on the grounds of his home. In reality, this is proved to be a childhood love of sorts. Living in an isolated area, estranged from parental figures, the two children develop a love between them that proves profound. Although she clearly proves to be the love of his life, The narrator can't bring himself to call her this; instead, he's almost erased her but for a single incident with her that he refers to as "the Great Drama" of my life.

The narrator hedges and evades on the way to remembering this great drama, admitting during one such digression, "how I circle and dither around this subject," yet gradually recalls an afternoon when both are eight years old and exploring in the cellar. They discover some old jars of paint and brushes with badly stiffened bristles. Loosening up an old brush with turpentine, the boy begins to write on the wall with paint. The little girl "had her back to me and was wielding the paintbrush on herself". Using a loud red paint, she's painting her face to match his face. She's "overjoyed, as if she had managed something magical" and asks "Now do I look like you?".

The little boy is horrified. He feels this as an insult. He wishes to be loved. But this means either not seeing him, or, only seeing him as he's come to see himself. The little girl's come to love him fully. She's come to love his birthmark. Her seeing it forces him to confront something he wishes forgotten. Loving him wholly, and as a body, she loves a part of himself he can't face.

This is a strange and heartbreaking story. It is most remarkable for its form. Although it is a horrifying tale, it is told in a conversational style. We witness a man in the process of remembering a significant event, the one love of his life. Munro skillfully sketches a man's memory as it struggles and moves by indirection to an event he can neither bear to remember or forget.

2. "The Hostelry of Mr Smith" (Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town) – Stephen Leacock

The Story is set in Canada, in a little town named Mariposa. The Canadian census puts its population down as around 5000, the inhabitants inflate the number to 10000. To the unaccustomed eye, Mariposa is a quiet, peaceful town. Yet, the sunlit town *bustles with activity* and the people are proud of the trains that pass by their town, even if they don't stop! If you spend a few months in this town, you'll notice that the buildings become taller, the traffic multiplies, and the crowds thicken.

There is a hostelry on Main Street—"JOS. SMITH, PROP." owned by Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith, a bulky man who wears chequered waistcoats with plaid trousers, Mr. Smith has a solemn and unreadable face, which makes him a natural king of the hotel business.

On a particular afternoon, Mr. Smith anxiously awaits a telegram from his legal advisor who is representing him before the License Commissioners. The Mariposa Court had ordered Mr. Smith to close down the hostel for selling liquors after hours. Mr. Smith knew his fault but "crime always seems impossible in retrospect." Normally, Smith would close his doors at 11pm, he'd of course try to open them a few minutes longer if his hostel wasn't full enough, but never would he dream of closing them before Judge Pepperleigh and attorney McCartney were inside the bar. But on that fatal night, he did. As well, before that, Smith had given \$100 to the Liberals, and Pepperleigh happened to be a Conservative.

So, on that afternoon, four men were in the bar as Smith awaited the telegram: Mullins and Duff, the expensively dressed bank managers; Diston, the high school teacher who never got a raise because he goes to the hostelry unaccompanied by neither lady nor child; and Gingham the undertaker, who once said, "Get to know people really well while they are alive, be friends with them, close friends, and then when they die you don't need to worry. You'll get the order every time."

The four visitors suggested that perhaps Mr. Smith could open a hotel in the city instead. And he could too, for from the start, Smith, was a successful proprietor. He had all the qualifications, he was big enough to haul two drunken men out of the bar, his drinks cost 5 cents, or 6 for 25 cents, and meals and beds were free. He was also a philanthropic soul: he subscribed to everything, joined everything, and gave to everything (especially to all those things that needed premises to meet in and grew thirsty in their discussions.)

When Billy, the desk clerk, entered the room with the telegram, Mr. Smith asked detachedly, "What does it say?" (for he was illiterate and no one was the wiser) Billy reads, "Commissioners give you three months to close down." And Smith said, "Let me read it...that's right, three months to close down." But he had an idea.

Within two days, the hotel swarmed with construction workers. And within a month, Smith's hostelry had transformed into a "caff like what they have in the city, a ladies' and gent's caff, and that underneath is a Rat's Cooler." Soon, Smith's new "caff" was packed. It had a new French cook, prices stood fast at 25 cents a meal. Everyone loved the place, but not a soul in the town except Mr. Smith ever guessed that waiters, palms, and marble tables can be rented over the long distance telephone. Soon, the delicious food won over the town, including Judge Pepperleigh. And so it is that Smith's license was renewed for three years.

In the midst of all the celebrations, Mr. Smith got Billy to send back all the palms and tables. The "caff" remained, only there were changes, small changes. The food soon tasted like any other food in town after Alphonse the French cook left. Mr. Smith had promised to open a "girl room" in the winter, and still talked of it, but there's been a sort of feeling against it. The "Rats' Cooler" was closed for repairs, but it'll probably not be opened for the next three years.

3.Cannibal Woman – Ron Geyschick

Canada Mythologies

A lady becomes allergic to otters. Otters are arctic animals. They have the tendency to poison humans at the prick of their stinging hairs or consumption of their blood. One should know to medicate them to remove the toxins from blood if they become allergic. The lady in the story turns a cannibal called a windigo after the allergy, she kills the family members and the neighbours in the reserves. She then takes her daughter and moves in a different direction for it is said that the Cannibals go weaker during winters. The lady names the daughter as go-tish-swash. Unable to be a victim for the sins, the daughter decides to kill her. She plans to trap her by placing a block of iceberg to slip. With the help of the men in the reserve she then cut off her head and other parts and threw in different places. The girl cautiously carried out the plan before the dawn. The girl was reminded by the lady after her death in her dreams about the ways to lead life. The lady guided her the directions and instructed her to move towards the south, eat an otter and travel to a special place where she would be treated by the stone and star people of the ocean. Go-tish-swash turned to the south and stood away from Indians before she started to kill. She grew weaker because of starving, she received the powers from her mother. Next morning she floated and reached the place without killing any Indian. The Spirits blessed her. The stone and the star people arranged a ceremony to celebrate her arrival. They medicated and made her turn to a new animal called a-mi-sa-be.

4.The Edible Woman – Margaret Atwood

INTRODUCTION

The Edible Woman is a 1969 novel that helped to establish Margaret Atwood as a prose writer of major significance. It is the story of a young woman whose sane, structured, consumer-oriented world starts to slip out of focus. Following her engagement, Marian feels her body and her self are becoming separated. As Marian begins endowing food with human qualities that cause her to identify with it, she finds herself unable to eat, repelled by metaphorical cannibalism.[1] In a foreword written in 1979 for the Virago edition of the novel, Atwood described it as a protofeminist rather than feminist work.

CHARACTERS

Marian MacAlpin is the protagonist and the first-person narrator in the First and Third part of the novel.

Ainsley Tewce is Marian's roommate; she works in an electric toothbrush repair shop.

Peter Wollander, a lawyer, is Marian's boyfriend, and later, fiancé.

Len Slank is a bachelor friend of Marian's from college; he works for a television channel.

Clara Bates is another friend from college; Clara dropped out second year to marry Joe and has three children

Duncan is a English graduate student

The three office virgins of Marian: Lucy, Emmy, and Millie

Mrs. Bogue, head of the research department at Marian's firm

Fischer Smythe and Trevor, Duncan's roommates, also English graduate students.

Marian and Ainsley's landlady, allegorically representing traditional female ideals.

SUMMARY

Marian MacAlpin works in a market research firm, writing survey questions and sampling products. She shares the top-floor apartment of a house in Toronto (never named in the novel)

with her roommate Ainsley and dates a dependable and boring boyfriend, Peter. Marian also keeps in touch with Clara, a friend from college, who is now a constantly pregnant housewife.

Ainsley announces she wants to have a baby and intends to do it without getting married. When Marian is horrified, Ainsley replies, "The thing that ruins families these days is the husbands." Looking for a man who will have no interest in fatherhood, she sets her sights on Marian's "womanizer" friend Len, who is infamous for his relationships with young, naive girls.

At work, Marian is assigned the task of gathering responses for a survey about a new brand of beer. While walking from house to house asking people their opinions, she meets Duncan, a graduate student in English who intrigues her with his atypical and eccentric answers.

Marian later has a dinner date with Peter and Len, during which Ainsley shows up dressed as a virginal schoolgirl – the first stage of her plan to trick Len into impregnating her. Marian finds herself disassociating from her body as Peter recounts a gory rabbit hunt to Len:

"After a while I noticed that a large drop of something wet had materialized on the table. I poked it with my finger and smudged it around a little before I realized with horror that it was a tear."

Marian runs from the restaurant and is chased down by Peter in his car. Unaware of Ainsley's plan to get pregnant by Len, Peter chides, "Ainsley behaved herself properly, why couldn't you?"

At the end of the night, Peter proposes to her. When asked to choose a date for the wedding, Marian slips into unexpected passivity:

"I'd rather have you decide that. I'd rather leave the big decisions up to you.' I was astonished at myself. I'd never said anything remotely like that to him before. The funny thing was that I really meant it."

Marian and Duncan have a surprise meeting in a laundromat, engage in awkward conversation, and kiss. Shortly afterwards, Marian's problems with food begin when she finds herself empathizing with a steak that Peter is eating, imagining it "knocked on the head as it stood in a queue like someone waiting for a streetcar." After this, she is unable to eat meat – anything with "bone or tendon or fiber".

Ainsley's plot to seduce Len succeeds. When Len later learns that Ainsley is pregnant, he talks to Marian, who confesses that pregnancy was Ainsley's plan all along. Len reveals his childhood fear of eggs, and from that point Marian can no longer face her soft-boiled egg in the morning. Soon thereafter, she is unable to eat vegetables or cake.

Peter decides to throw a party, to which Marian invites "the office virgins" from her work, Duncan, and Duncan's roommates. Peter suggests that Marian buy herself a new dress for his party – something less "mousy" than her normal wardrobe. Marian submits to his wishes and buys a daring red dress. Before the party, Ainsley does Marian's makeup, including false eyelashes and a big lipstick smile. When Duncan arrives, he says, "You didn't tell me it was a masquerade. Who the hell are you supposed to be?" He leaves and Marian follows.

They end up going to a sleazy hotel, where they have unsatisfying sex. The next morning, they go out to breakfast and Marian finds that she cannot eat anything.

After Duncan leaves, Marian realizes that Peter is metaphorically devouring her. To test him, she bakes a pink cake in the shape of a woman and dares him to eat it. "This is what you really want", she says, offering the cake woman as a substitute to him feeding upon her. Peter leaves disturbed. Once Peter leaves, Marian feels hungry and realizes it's just a cake so she starts eating it.

Marian, in the closing pages of the book narrates. Duncan visits Marian's apartment. Marian offers him the remains of the cake for Duncan to taste it. He thanks Marian for offering the cake and comments delicious. Thus the author leaves the conclusion to the audience.

ANALYSIS

Atwood explores gender stereotypes through characters who strictly adhere to them (such as Peter or Lucy) and those who defy their constraints (such as Ainsley or Duncan). The narrative point of view shifts from first to third person, accentuating Marian's slow detachment from reality. At the conclusion, first person narration returns, consistent with the character's willingness to take control of her life again. Food and clothing are major symbols used by the author to explore themes and grant the reader insight on each of the characters' personalities, moods and motivations.

Setting is used to identify differences between the characters; for example, Duncan is encountered in a mundane laundromat, gloomy theatre or sleazy hotel. In comparison, Peter inhabits genteel bars and a sparkling new apartment. However these changing environments are also used to explore different angles of existence, contrasting a freer, wilder glimpse of life, with a civilised, gilded cage. This highlights the difficulties presented to women in the era, where freedom was synonymous with uncertainty but marriage presented problems of its own.

This novel's publication coincided with the rise of the women's movement in North America, but is described by Atwood as "protofeminist" because it was written in 1965^[3] and thus anticipated second wave feminism.