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Resistance Against Neo-Colonialism in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Resistance Against Neo-Colonialism in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English
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This thesis entitled **Resistance Against Neo-Colonialism in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*** submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by **Mr. Indra Prasad Pokhrel** has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

This thesis entitled Resistance Against Neo- Colonialism in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* seeks spatio-cultural roots for identity. *Surfacing* (1979) explores identity crisis of a fragmented and dislocated female character in a neo-colonial world. Her resistance against hegemonic intention of American colonizers is the central essence of the novel. The discourse of resistance demonstrates the complex question of identity for an English speaking Canadian female. For the protagonist, identity has become problematic because of her role as a victim of colonial force by Americans and their cultural imperialism or neo-colonialism. Folded with memories, the narrator begins to realize that going home means entering not only another place but another time. As a result, the wild island exerts its elemental hold and she is submerged in the language of the wilderness. She sees that what she is really looking for is her own past or identity. At last, identity lies on the vast cultural domain of the past.

Contents

	Page No.
Acknowledgement	
Abstract	
I: Introduction	1
Colonial Impression	1
II: Theoretical Modality	7
New Form of Imperialism	7
III: Textual Analysis	32
Rejection of American Power in Canadian Soil	32
Canadian Wilderness in Post Colonial Period of Imperial Era	37
Image of Sensibility and Nation	41
Resistance Against Neocolonialism	43
IV: Conclusion	52
Resistance of Cultural Parochialism	52
Works Cited	55

I. Introduction

Colonial Impression

Cultural identity of the protagonist is victimized in the context of neocolonialism and imperialism as underlying forces bring problem in the life of the female protagonist. Neocolonial cultural effect in self-centered quest to find the root of her identity has bullied and oppressed Canadians most consistently to bring great effect, therefore protagonist transforms into wild animals and travels to pre-colonial space that she must visit in order to return with an understanding of herself and her identity as a Canadian.

English Canada was first a part of the wilderness then a part of North America and British Empire, then apart of the world. Canadian writers are trying to assimilate a Canadian environment at a time when new techniques of communication, are annihilating the boundaries of that environment. In Canada, the nationalistic climate that develops after Second World War has stimulated the writing of literature that is self-consciously Canadian. In the early 1970s, Canada was a small neutral country' facing American power on one side and European power on the other.

In the novel *Surfacing* (1972) the woman narrator tries to decipher the wild by divesting herself of the trapping of urban or 'civilized' life. Exploring her own personal history on the land, she seeks a language with which to conceptualize her being in it. To resolve the dilemmas of settle displacement, writers experiment with a variety of techniques. She adopts the vernacular to resist the colonial hangover and identity with a self-respecting ordinary Canada, the vernacular republic! Atwood's target is the overly complacent reader who has the view that Canada lacks a culture and offers no resistance to American imperialism; English Canadians are somehow

more moral, more intellectually honest than their neighbors to the south, their cousins in Quebec, and their second cousins across the Atlantic. *Surfacing* satirizes some of the assumptions of this generation, demonstrating their shallowness. The novel demonstrates the existence of a Canadian literary tradition.

The main character in *Surfacing* makes both a literal and figurative "journey to the interior" as she travels from Toronto to the wilderness of northern Quebec in search of her missing father. She explores "her home ground, foreign territory" (14). It is an anti-American sensibility. Atwood examines the complicities of the imagined community of the "nice Canadian" in the late 1960s while she simultaneously critiques the artifice of niceness by tracing her unnamed narrator's descent into madness in the wilderness of Quebec. The protagonist is forced to examine her self-proclaimed victimization by American technological advantage that encroaches upon the Canadian wilderness. By the effect of American technology she transforms woman into wild animal in a transgressive rite of passage indicative of the madness to define as at once subversive and counter hegemonic. Over the course of this madness the narrator comes to accept that American is responsible to bring this destruction of their wilderness.

For a period of time, the narrator's life radically changes; she destroys everything in the cabin, sleeps outside, refuses to eat from the house or garden, does not walk on paths, sheds her clothes, refers to multiple gods and sees her dead mother and father. She has become "part of the landscape" (192). Eventually, however, she does return to the cabin and prepare for the rescue boat that she knows will come. The narrator leads the reader to believe that it is the right thing to do: "this above all to refuse be a victim. Unless I can do that I can do nothing. I have to recant, give up the

old belief that I am powerless and because of it nothing I can do will ever hurt anyone" (197).

Neocolonialism has been concerned with language because of its importance to identity formation also its use as a weapon to subvert colonial powers. The narrator feels alienated from the words that have been passed down to her and say, "the language is wrong [...] it was the language again; I couldn't use it because it wasn't mine" (100). It is recognized as one of the most fundamental aspects of being and therefore fundamental to these discourse that recognized the importance of identity. By language we know our world and if this is made problematic, or displaced than our relationship with our world and our position within it also becomes problematic and displaced. The question then arises of how to overcome such control and there are main two answers: rejection and subvert.

History is another means of control, developed by European nations during modern colonization to explain and order a world, much of which they had little knowledge or comprehension of, but which nevertheless become, a construction of world reality. It gives the story of our existence, explains our role in the world and without it, it is almost as though she does not exist. Post colonial history has been written by the victor, the suppressor and the idea of history as a single narrative has now become defunct. The nameless heroin has marginalized the painful memories from her past and only reveals, to both readers and her companions, what she seems necessary; because she has no other alternative viewpoint initially she has no choice but to believe tales of colonizer history.

The protagonist reclaims her language, history and her fellow Canadians in danger of losing all sense of a cultural identity in the face of overpowering, neighboring American. Cultural imperialism has recently come to be considered

under the term neocolonialism which coined by Kwame Nkrumah to describe the condition of economic dependence that many post colonial countries form thrashes in.

Margaret Atwood was born in Ottawa in 1939 and spent much of her early life in northern Ontario and Quebec. She has been described as one of the most important writers of contemporary literature and published more than fifty books of fiction, poetry and critical essays. She is an international best seller and winner of the more than fifty literary awards including the prestigious Booker prize for literature; as well as Canadian's own Governor General's awards for both her fiction and her poetry. Her novel include *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Cat's Eye* and *Alias Grace* all of which were short listed for the Booker prize and *The Blind Assassin*, which won the 2000 Booker prize. Her works translated into thirty three languages and she is the recipient of many literary awards and honors, including the *Sunday Times* author of the year in 1993 and the author C. Clarke award for science fiction.

The story is about young woman returning to her hometown for the first time in a number of years. Her friends Anna and David along with her new boyfriend Joe take her back home to investigate the mysterious disappearance of her fathers. David finds an appropriate time to do of his filming. Joe is doing the camera work because he wants to make the film but he is never done it before and they are as like new renaissance men.

Everything has changed; new roads and new houses are built in the village. She goes to find her old friends but they haven't seen her father for years. Her mother is dead. They think she is still married but she divorced and never told anyone, so Joe, her boyfriend is used as a stand-in. Her baby's with her former husband in another city but no-one mentions the child. They catch a boat to the island where she lived. Whilst there someone comes and offer to buy the house, she declines thinking her

father may return home. She is forced to examine her self-proclaimed victimization by American technological advantages. Americans are colonizers who go to Canada to hunt the beaver as a trophy is a common motif in Canadian literature. They kill the heron to prove they could do it. At that time, a police launch arrives and tells her that they have found her father dead in the lake, he had tumbled off the cliff edge. She does not believe them and feels she is being led into a trap. Then, she throws all of David's films into the lake; she gets canoe and her parents. She is alone yet feels they are all around her. She finds out that even the villagers have been badly influenced in almost all the sectors like history, culture and economic status. The unwanted presence of the Americans is consistent throughout the book, from the stuffed moose at the petrol station with the American flag to the constant reference to them as other and the enemy. Condemnation of this Americanization of people and places is most poignantly and symbolically demonstrated with the narrator's final rejection of her friends; her clothes and any food that is not natural.

She realizes that she can not get her pure cultural identity even in the village in such unpleasant situation then she goes back to the cabin and burns all of her belongings from the past, her wedding ring, all her old drawings, anything to clear it all out of her mind. She then burns all her mothers and fathers' things and then smashes the glasses, plates and lamps. She tears pages from books and burns them. She slashes the blankets, sheets and her clothes. She goes down to the lake with her clothes on. She won't go back to the cabin so she sleeps outside under a blanket. She is hungry but does not eat she is gradually disallowing herself to have anything to do with her past. She rejects neocolonialism in every form to visit in order to return with an understanding of herself and her identity as a Canadian. After rejecting all the basic things she sees her mother image standing near the house feeding the birds as

her pure culture. She hears a power boat and notices people are in it. She wonders if it is Joe. They leave and go back as they did not find her. Then she sees her father but whom he turns towards her it's not him. She feels he is not dead as like her culture. She finds footprints and realizes they are her own. She returns back to the cabin as she realizes everything is over now. She thinks she could be pregnant and looks at it like a goldfish in a bowl.

The present thesis has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents a brief introductory outline of the theme, writer and research work it gives an introduction to the present research work along with the general survey of the novel. The second chapter tries to develop a theoretical mode to be applied for analyzing the novel. It throws light on the introduction to the neocolonialism and discusses the terms related to it. The third chapter analyzes the text on the basis of the theoretical mode. The extracts from the text provide evidence for analysis. The concluding chapter summarizes the finding of the analysis. Thus, this study will try to give a fair judgment of Margaret Atwood by hook or by crook on the basis of the study of her novel *Surfacing*.

II. Theoretical Modality

New Form of Imperialism

The term neocolonialism developed from Lenin's definition of imperialism, as the last stage of capitalist suggested that although countries like Ghana and India had achieved technical independence, the ex-colonial powers and the newly emerging powers such as the united states continued to play a decisive role through international monetary bodies, through the fixing of prices on world markets, multinational - corporations and cartels and a variety of educational and cultural institutions. In fact, Nkumah argued that neocolonialism is more insidious and more difficult to detect and resist than the older overt colonialism.

Neo- colonialism has come to signify the inability of so- called third world economies to develop an independent economic and political identity under the pressures of globalization. It is manifestation of ongoing nature of imperialism Neocolonialism is used in reaction to any unjust and oppressive expression of western political power. It is a form of control by colonial western or the imperial power by new-actors. The term has since been widely used to refer to any and all forms of control of the ex-colonies. Recently the term has been associated less with the influence of the formal imperial powers than with the role of the new superpowers, especially the United States, who's colonial past, it has been argued, has been replaced by its own dominant neocolonialist role in establishing a global capital economy. The role of the erstwhile Soviet Union in the period of "cold war" mirrored the role of the United States, with aid and development programmers form both sides having many political strings attached, despite the claims of the Soviet Union at the time to be a leading supporter of the many national liberation movements. The term

has been particularly prevalent in discussion of African affairs, and in Latin American and south Asian circles.

Post-colonialism deals with the effect of colonization on culture and society. As originally used by historians after the WW Second in terms such as the post colonial state. Post-colonial had a clearly chronological meaning, designating the post-independence period. However from the late 1970s, the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization. Post colonial literatures are proliferating and changing as the critical approaches to them. One of the noteworthy developments over the 1980s has been the convergence between some political writing and post structuralist critical theory in the western academy. The writing in English from the former colonies including Asian and African countries has proved itself as vital and as important as the literature in English rather than of English Literature. This theory has played a central role in organizing both the perception and the reception of writing after empire. Some Scholars, however, extend the scope of such analysis also to the discourse and cultural productions of such countries as Australia, Canada and New Zealand which achieved independence much earlier than the third world countries. It can be used to imply a body of theory or an attitude towards European essentialism.

At the time of 1960s, the former colonies were busy producing literatures of their own, the idea that English literature was mutating into literatures in English in which the literary production of England was only important. English critics interested in the writing that come out of the former colonies developed the idea of a commonwealth literature. It creates hierarchy between other literature and put at the centre at literature of Great Britain. Commonwealth literature is traditionally humanistic; its critical practice focuses on characters as free moral agents and on

characters development and mostly ignored the historical and cultural contexts within their creators. The perspective of this liberal humanism was specifically English, a writer like Chinua Achebe is not primarily as Nigerian but as contributing to the English literary tradition and as an output of the great humanistic European civilization on which that tradition is based. Commonwealth writers are working within the English tradition that gave hopelessly heterogeneous field of commonwealth studies. No matter how different writers for say, New Zealand and Trinidad might be, what they were supposed to have in common was the heritage of English literature. The rank of English literature might for writers from former colonies like Australia or Canada still have counted as an official stamp of approval. However Asia and African writers were not happy with the western or Euro-centric perspective of commonwealth criticism. In the course of 1970s Achebe's colonialist criticism and other critiques began to find a serious echo in the writings of a number of British literacy academics who had begun to question universal validity of humanist values. The writers most have seen within specific context of the culture. Culture is not inferior but only different from.

The publication of Said's *Orientalism* in 1978 is generally regarded as the principal catalyst and reference point for postcolonial theory but sufficient attention has to be paid to the fact that this text evolved within a distinctly post structuralism climate dominated by Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. Orient is almost European invention and had since antiquity a place of romance exotic being haunting memories and landscapes remarkable experiences. Relation between occident and orient is the relationship of power .Said uses Foucauldian notion of discourse as representation to say that Orientalism as a discourse is rooted in real east\orient. It is a discourse by west upon east not to find truth but to create truth. So he writes:

Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point, orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate instruction about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, setting it ruling over it. In short, orientalism is a western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the orient. (3)

Saidian concepts are pertinent to the issue of colonialism, post colonialism and even beyond post colonialism. Orientalism is not an airy European fantasy about the orient but a created body of theory and practice in which for many generations there has been considerable material investment. Orientalism is a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly economic, sociological, historical and philosophical tests. Orientalism begins where its predecessors left off at around 1970. This is the period of great colonial expansion into the orient. Now it shifts from British to American hegemony. Here, Said is trying to sketch the present intellectual and social realities of orientalism in the United States. It is not only a positive doctrine about the orient it also an influential academic tradition as well as an area of concern defined by travels, commercial enterprises, governments, readers of novels, accounts of exotic adventure. Edward Said argues that orientalism can be found in current western depictions of Arab cultures. The depiction of Arab is irrational, untrustworthy, anti-western and dishonest. Perhaps most significantly, prototypical ideas are those into which orientalist scholarship has enrolled. Those nations are trusted as foundations for both ideologies and policies developed by the occident. In this context Said writes:

Orientalism is not only a positive doctrine about the orient that exists at any one time in the west; it is also an influential academic tradition (which one refers to as orientalism), as well as an area of concern

defined by travelers, commercial enterprises, government, military, expeditions, readers of novels and accounts of exotic adventure, natural historians, and pilgrims to whom the orient is a specific kind of knowledge about specific places, peoples, and civilizations. For the orient idioms become frequent, and these idioms took firm hold in European discourse. Beneath there was a layer of doctrine about the orient; this doctrine was fashioned out of the experiences of many Europeans, all of these converging upon such essential aspects of the orient as the oriental characters oriental despotism, oriental sensuality, and the like" for any European during the nineteenth century-and I think one can say this almost without qualification orientalism was such a system of truths, truth in Nietzsche's sense of the word. It is therefore correct that every European, in what he would resist an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric. (203-4)

The mission of western people to decolonized nations after independence is like that of colonial period. The neocolonialists are involved in various academic and business fields. They came as traders and commercial men, historians as school teachers, and military men to rule the decolonized nations. The decolonized countries' people failed to rule themselves because they have no education, no money and no political ideology. Thus, neocolonialism has involved on the same colonial principles. However, now day's economics is playing a dominant role on it. Edward Said calls into question about the assumptions that form the foundation of orientalist thinking. The rejection of orientalism entails a rejection of biological generalizations, cultural constructions, racial and religious prejudices. It is a rejection of greed as a primary motivating factor in intellectual pursuit. It is an erasure of the line between the west

and the other. Said argued the use of narrative rather than vision in interpreting the geographical landscape known as the orient.

Said's *Orientalism* represents the first phase of post colonial theory. Rather than engaging with the ambivalent condition of the colonial aftermath or in deep with the history and motivation of anti-colonial resistance, it directs our attention to the discursive and textual production of colonial time. Colonialism involves the consolidation of imperial power. It is manifested in the settlements of territory, the exploitation, the development of resources and the attempt to govern the indigenous in habitants of occupied lands.

Colonial literature, which is the writing concerned with colonial perceptions and experiences, is written by metropolitan. About the colonial literature Ellek Boehmer writes in her book *Colonial and Post Colonial literature*:

From the early days of colonization, therefore not only text but literature, broadly defined, under pinned efforts to interpret other lands' offering home audience a way of thinking about exploration, western conquest, national velour, new colonial acquisitions. Travelers, trader administrators, settlers, 'read' the strange and new by drawing on familiar books such as the Bible or "Pilgrims Progress". Empire was of course as powerfully shaped by military conflict, the unprecedented displacement of peoples, and the quest for profits. (14)

We can compare colonialism and imperialism with in a delicious dinner (meal): appetizer, main course and dessert. The earlier days of colonization are appetizer for colonizers. Those days, they tasked the inferior people. In the beginning of colonialism, Europeans wanted to know the other. They started entering other countries as travel first, become traders, and lastly they started ruling them.

Now it is better to discuss about imperial literature and how it produced the stereotypical images of the non-west as “the other” of Europe. Imperial literature, though it is difficult to give precise definition because of its heterogeneity, reflects imperial ethos. In general imperial literature exhibits a tinge of local imperial color, or feature imperial motifs- example the quest beyond the frontier of civilization. They exhibit imperial experiences and perceptions, and are written from the imperial perspective. It is, as Boehmer writes "... informed by theories concerning the superiority of empire". (3)

In the heyday of empire, writers felt it necessary to write about new places and the people. They began writing about people who inhabited the lands they (colonizers) claimed: the natives, the colonized. But the problem was that of truly understanding the alien people, culture, geography and the landscapes. They were dumbfounded to see the things in new surrounding, and the attitudes and the behaviors of the people entirely unreadable. Then, they began to represent these people and cultures in their own familiar vocabularies, their own metaphors and tropes and the “strangeness was made comprehensible by using everyday names dependable textural conventions, both rhetorical and syntactic"(Boehmer14). In this process of defining and renaming the natives, they started classifying them as barbaric and degenerate, either dangerous or alluring. This notion of danger was expressed in their depiction of nest and mysterious landscape, wild jungles and swampy lands, Boehner writers: classifications and codes imported form Europe were matched to people, cultures and topographies that were entirely non-European. And having once done the work of interpretation, the imported symbols, even if entirely arbitrary often stack"(17). It was literature written by and for colonizing Europeans about non-European lands dominated by them. It embodied the imperialists’ point of view.

Imperial writing is important for revealing the ways in which that world's system could represent the degradation of other human beings as natural, an innate part of their degenerate or barbarian state. The blacks (representing all African, Yellow, Brown and Red) were represented as less human, less civilized as child or savage or headless mass or, they were depicted as inferior only because they were different from the whites. Thus, over determined by stereotypes, the characterization of indigenous people tended to screen out their agency, diversity and resistance, during the time of high imperialism, the writers cherished the idea of white superiority; they maintained and celebrated the dichotomy between "us" and "them". Boehmer reminds us this idea when she writes:

Stereotypes of the other as indolent malingers, shirkers good for nothings, lay about, degenerate visions of the pastoral idler, and were the stock-in-trade of colonialist writing. In contrast, the White man represented himself as the archetypal worker and provident profit-maker. (39)

The imperialist writing represented the white's as the civilizers of the world and a postal of light, and the blacks as degenerate, barbaric and in heed of European master to civilize and to uplift them out of their filth.

There is no fundamental difference between the earlier and today's imperialism and colonialism. The source of these early interpretations were as extensive as their knowledge and experience of stories—specifically, the source included colonized people, their oral narratives, fantasy and ancient sacred books. The subject matter of literature is either 'narratives', 'culture', or 'landscape'. Therefore, erotic and fantasy led in the native cultures. But the literary writers were dedicated to the imperialist's. The form is changed but the content is almost the same.

British Empire was a vast communications network and the world map flushed pink. It was also represent by texts. Present day readers anyway experience empire textually, through the medium of nineteenth and twentieth century novels, periodicals and travels writings. Yet empire was itself, at least in part, a textual day was conceived and maintained in an array of writing such as- political treaties, diaries, acts and edicts, administrative records, reports memories, and government belief. Colonial settlement too was expressed textually. Writing in the form of treaties was used to claim territory. The text a vehicle of imperial authority, symbolized and in some cases indeed performed the act of taking possession. They transferred familiar metaphors, which are themselves already bridging devices, to unfamiliar and unlikely contexts. Strangeness was made comprehensible using everyday matches, defensible textual conventions, both rhetorical and syntactic.

In Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), an early paradigmatic text of European colonial experience the practice of interpretation as replication is memorably demonstrated. Crusoe, the long shipwrecked settler words of starvation and the anxiety of the unknown by building him a small estate. He lays claim to land by investing it with his labor, developing it in true protestant tradition and protecting it with high will. He works strictly to conventions and rules retrieved from memory, using tools he saved from the wrecked ship. In the absence of society, writing journal becomes a way of objectifying and confirming the surrounding reality. He also trains his parrot to speak to him his own name. Thus, the signifiers of his past life are repeated back to him.

The figures of speech through which travelers and colonizers pictured the exotic from Shakespeare's *Tempest* or the traveler's tales, developed through the process of reiteration and re-borrowing other lands. In a continuing process of

historical sedimentation travelers wrote memories preserving the fascinations which had tempted them out in the first place. In their turn, these interpretative symbols fed the anticipations of futures explore, map making scientists and the colonizers those who took over lands or long-established traditions of symbolic interpretation. They, too, sought to interpret the obscure by using symbols exotic in signification.

Manipulating their inheritance, building on the general history of the past, the Victorians becomes probably the most active and impassioned disseminators of imperial dream which modern history has seen. However, interpreting the beyond, even where they dismissed local cultures as primitive, Europeans did not necessarily cancel as the scripts and artifacts made by colonized peoples.

Post-colonial theory is instrumental in bringing the matters of colony and empire in a prominence; it is not the only unique or inaugural in its academic concern with the subject of imperialism and its consequences. So, it is methodologically and conceptually indebted to a variety of both earlier and more recent western theories. It is highly indebted to the intellectual tradition of Marxist, anti-imperialist thought and radical rupture of western metaphysical tradition by post-structuralism and post modernism. As Leela Gandhi writes:

Intellectual history of postcolonial theory is marked by dialectic between Marxism and post modernism on the other. So this theoretical contestation informs the academic content of postcolonial analysis, manifesting itself in an ongoing debate between the competing claims of nationalism and intellectualism, strategic essentialism and hybridity, solidarity and dispersal, the politics of structure and totality and the politics of the fragment. (vii-ix)

Former colonics share certain qualities and experiences. There is both continuity and break in the nature of government and structure of power from colonial to post colonial societies. The postcolonial governments are obviously different from the colonial regimes, but the freedom and self-rule for which the colonized fought bitterly proved to be unexpectedly illusive. New forms of domination and dependence pervaded the so called independent nations.

The difficulty arises in defining the term 'postcolonial' stem from the semantic implication on the actual world. Semantically, post colonialism means after colonialism. The definition is too restrictive and to limiting, for it implies only political independence and suggests that colonialism has completely ended. It does take into account the continuing far reaching effects of colonialism.

So, postcolonial study directs its critique against the cultural hegemony of European knowledge in an attempt to assert the epistemological value and agency of non-European world. As we know there was always an unequal distribution of power among cultures by the other. On this line, regarding post-colonial perspective Homi Bhabha in *Redrawing The Boundaries* directs our attention to “bear witness” to inequalities in various modes and process of representation. He opines:

Postcolonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for social and political authority within the modern world order. Postcolonial perspectives emerged from the colonial testimony of the third world countries and the discourse of “minorities” within the geo-political divisions of east and west, north and south. They intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give hegemony “normality” to the uneven development of the differential, often disadvantage,

histories of nation races, communities, and people. They formulate their critical revisions ground issues of cultural difference, social authority and political discriminations in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments with in the “rationalizations” of modernity. (437)

Colonialism involves the consolidations of imperial power. It is manifested in the settlement of territory, exploitation, the development of resources and the attempt to govern, the indigenous inhabitants of unoccupied lands.

Colonial literature, which is the writing concerned with colonial perceptions and experience is writing by metropolitans. About the colonial literature Elleke Boehmer writes in her book *Colonial and Post-colonial Literature*.

From the early days of colonization, therefore, not only text in general but literature broadly defines underpinned efforts to about exploration, western conquest, national velour, new colonial acquisitions.

Travelers, traders, administrator’s settlers, “read” the strange and new by drawing on familiar books such as the Bible or *Pilgrim’s Progress*. Empires were of course as powerfully saved by military conflict, the unprecedented displacement of people, and the quest for profits. Yet it is also true that Spanish, Portuguese, and later Dutch, British and French hegemony was affirmed, under written and justify in myriad forms of cultural pageantry and symbolic display. As well as oral communication (word of mouth, tell tale and rumor), Literature created channels for the exchange of colonial images and ideas. In writing as various as romances, memories, advantage tales, or the later poetry of

Tennyson, the view of the world as direct from the colonial metropolis was consolidated and confirmed. (14)

We can compare colonialism and imperialism with a delicious dinner. The earlier days of colonization are appetizer for colonizers. Those days, they tested the inferior people. In the beginning of colonialism European wanted to know the other. They started entering other countries as travelers and traders first, and lastly they started ruling them.

The colonizers ruled many countries. European countries, especially Britain, France and Spain, for instance ruled the countries like Africa and India. After the independent eras, the colonization did not end politically the colonized countries were free but other aspects like economic and ideological domination remain unchanged. This is the dessert for colonizers. Today we call this new form of colonialism as neocolonialism, which remains as an “apple pie” for western colonizers.

The form is changed but the content is almost the same. There is no fundamental difference between the early and today’s imperialism and colonialism. The sources of these early interpretations were as extensive as their knowledge and experience of stories. Specifically, the sources included colonized people, their oral narrative, fantasy and ancient sacred books. These subject matters of literature are the natives, their culture, or the landscape. Therefore, erotic and fantasy led in the native cultures. But the literary writers were dedicated to the imperialists.

Boehemer in *Colonial and Post Colonial Literature* considers Joseph Conrad’s Lord Jim as “Late imperial hero” (60). The literature or narrative was derived from colonial experience. Such writing revolves constantly, even obsessively, around certain key themes like the introversion of the colonial mission, or colonial drama. The drama deals with the masculine aspect and the resistant

incomprehensibility or unreliability of the colonialism. The literary writers, with pre-occupied mind and attitudes towards post colonialism the significant aspects of European Self-projection, were the representation of the natives and colonized people who inhabited the lands they claimed. Colonial power was far from a metropolitan center, extensively outwards. The native portrayed as primitive, as insurrectionary force, as libidinous temptation, as madness, was also an image of extreme colonial uncertainty. Of course colonization did not do a total destruction of local power structures. The colonizers always involve mass exploitation. The colonizers were always concerned with power and money. The rich people of colonized nation helped them. For example *Jamindars* (landowners), moneylenders, capitalist farmer chose to co-operate with the colonial power before the independence power of India.

According to Naipaul's *A Bend in the River*, colonial college was established like that of the New Domain in African nation and country railroad is built contributing to peace. Naipaul considered pre-independent colonial period relatively peaceful, which he wanted to restore.

Postcolonial criticism, licensed with cultural discourse of suspicion on the part of colonized people seeks to undermine the imperial subjects; it has forcefully produced parallel discourses which have questioned stereotypes about myths. The power and authority of western colonial representations have been questioned and challenged by the discoursed by the people supposed to be subordinates. Those postcolonial writers and critics turned the table from the real situation of the colonial countries and presented the colonial history from the perspective of colonized peoples' experiences. By doing this, they revealed what the colonizer authority diet in the name of progress, Science and civilization. Frantz Fanon, one of the eminent

postcolonial writes and critics, seems to be more radical on this issue. Said in his *Cultural and Imperialism* writes about Fanon:

Fanon revises the hitherto accepted paradigm Europe gave the colonies their modernity and argues instead that not only were the well being and the progress Europe built up the sweet and the dead bodies of Negroes, Arabs, Indians and the yellow races but Europe is literally the creation of the Third world. (197)

Emerging from displacement and dereliction of social marginality, the post colonial writer produced parallel discourse in order to re-inscribe and relocate cultural differences. Many writers of the colonial period influenced and encouraged by the postcolonial tenants, based their narrative on ideological premising regarding cultural differences. From the perspective of colonized people, colonizers debunked western colonial misrepresentation about themselves. The narratives of the Third World writers are designed in such a way to form and change the ideological process of misrepresentation. These writers have made vigorous attempts to restudy, reinterpret and even to rewrite their own history. Postcolonial writers and critics, by subverting the colonial perspective, played a crucial role in reinserting the colonial history. They were concerned about creating/recreating their own history to give the cultural definition of their own. In the process of developing national history self-meaning of nation emerged with imagination writing about nation. Appropriate definition of a nation was much more complicated in such writing with reference to concepts of nationalism and new nationalism, Boehmer writes:

The early moment of anti-imperialist nationalist of more accurately, nationalist or more accurately, 'nativist' resistance was in many cases a reliability sedate preliminary to the more offer to the more overt

libertinism which followed. But it was laid the ideological and the strategy bedrock of later developments. As with earlier nationalism, the movement sought, in the first instance an inversion of imperial value, if not of structures. Their mechanism drew support from other utopian ideologies of the time. (For example Marxism, Feminism, versions of Christianity) the message they communicated was distinguished a strenuous defense of the virtues of native culture, characterized as reach, pure and authentic (through the term nativist). The idea was that a people's identity, through long suppressed, by embedded in its cultural origins and was recoverable intact unadulterated by the depredation of colonialism. (100)

The colonial and postcolonial countries can be the appropriate places to analyze nation and nationalism rather than the west. The feeling of nation and nationalism affected the whole social and political life of the colonizer and colonized during the period of direct colonial involvement and postcolonial time. The national and independent movements caused trouble to the colonized and decolonized people. How Bhabha's project is a theoretical model which manifests the difficulties that a writer has to face with reference to culture ambivalences of both Bhabha and other cultural critics because the nation is the conglomeration of cultural policies. Nation can formulate its identity only through cultural manifestations. But only through nation and nationalism, cultural projection is possible. In his book *Nation and Nationalism*, Bhabha writes; "The nation, as a form of cultural elaboration, is an agency of ambivalent narration that holds culture at its most productive position, as a force for subordination, fracturing, diffusing, reproducing, as much as creating, producing forcing and guiding" (9).

The nation in this sense is the sum total of cultural practices, which ultimately contribute national identity. It describes other cultures in superior position where cultures in terms of differences so as to put the self in the superior position when culture acts as force for subordination. Bhabha disseminates about the time narrative and the magic of the modern nations. However, he is concerned with the formulation of “the complex strategies of cultural identification and describes address that functions in the name of ‘the people’ or ‘the nation’ and make them the immanent subjects and objects of range of social and literally narrative” (192) His focus on the nation is a form of the locality of cultural paves and the way for the temporal dimension in the study of the nation as narration. The locality of culture for Bhabha is:

More around temporality than about historically a form of living that is connotative than country less patriotic than parties more rhetorical than the reason of state, more methodological than ideological, less homogeneously than hegemony; less centered than citizen. More collective than subjective, more cyclic than civility, more hybrid in the articulation of cultural differences and identification gender, race clues them can be represented in any hierarchical or binary structuring of socio-antagonism. (292)

Bhabha further argues:

It is neither sociological study of these terms nor their holistic history that gives them the narrative and psychological forces that they have brought to be a cultural production and projections. It is the man of the ambivalence of the nation as the narrative strategy and an apparatus of power that is produced as continual slippage into analogous, even

metonymic categories, like the people, the minorities and cultural differences that continually overlap in the act of writing the nation.

(292)

Such an argument shows that there is always a kind of controversy between the idea of historical necessity of the nation and the arbitrary signs and symbols. It signifies the effective life of the national culture as Bhabha quotes E. Gellner's words and says that "nationalism is not what it seems and above all nor what it seem to itself... cultural shared and patched used by nationalism are often arbitrary and historical investments" (293). Postcolonial writers like Naipaul showed the short comings of nationalism. He mocks the boarder lines of world's nations. He could not find nationalism nowadays, particularly after the independence. He questioned about the socio cultural aspect of decolonized nation. The ideologies, awareness and consciousness grow rapidly. Life in third world countries will be painful if the people do not trample the nationalistic feelings.

To gain Indian, African and West Indian efforts, it is important to examine the self obsession of the colonialist, metropolitan interlocutors and the voice of cultural authority. One common argument among postcolonial intellectual is that, the imperialism has ended. This occurred when the European empires relinquished their colonies during the few decades after the Second World War. The use of the terms, neocolonialism is manifestation of ongoing nature of imperialism. Neocolonialism is often used in reaction to any unjust and oppressive expression of western political power. The use of the prefix 'post' in colonialism is questioned. So, Boehmer is right because she defines new colonialism in her book *Colonial and Post-colonial Literatures* in this ways; "Neocolonialism and post-colonialism refers to post independence period. A term from economic theory, neocolonialism signifies the

continuing economic control by the west of the once colonized world under the guise of political independence” (9).

In other words the continuing western influence located in flexible combinations of the economic, political, military, and the ideological is called neocolonialism in terms of technology, business and industrialization. Lying underneath all these various meanings, neocolonialism is a tacit understanding that shows colonialism something more than the formal occupation and control of territories by a western metro pole. Hence, the formal methods of colonial governance are administrative structures, military forces and incorporation of the natives in the metropolitan governance, neocolonialism suggests an indirect form of control through economic independence. In this case, neocolonialism describes the continued control of former colonies through ruling native elites. The neocolonial powers are alleged to exploit the populations of colonized for their labor and resources in order to feed an insatiable appetite for finished physical or cultural commodities made by the metro pole. Postcolonial text and their writers talk about the decolonized natives or former colonial cultures. There is some theoretical consensus and development of neocolonialism as well. Scholars in postcolonial studies like Robert Young, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Giffiths, and Helen Tiffin agree that in spite of the looseness of the term, neocolonialism originated with Ghana’s first president after independence namely Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah became aware that the independence and national sovereignty in African states were partly taken and in no substantial way they altered the relationship between the colonial powers and the colonized state. This awareness arose when parts of a burgeoning consciousness among postcolonial elites in Africa progressed. Thus, this exposition resulted the formal granting of independence of dependence of dependency and exploitation. Nkrumah says:

Neocolonialism is the worst form of imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploration without redress. In the days of old fashioned colonialism, the imperial power had at least to explain and justify at home the actions it was taken a board. In the colonial who served the ruling imperial power could at least look to its protection against any violent move by their opponents. With neocolonialism neither is the case. (*Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, xi)

Kwame Nkrumah, in his book *Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* argues that neocolonialism actively controls the affair of the newly independent state. In most cases neocolonialism is manifested through economic and monetary measures. For example, the neocolonialism territories (or imperial centers) become the target markets for supports. Neocolonialism may be a form of control by colonial western or the imperial power by new, actors. These new actors may be international and monetary organizations. The ruling elites see neocolonial masters differently as a result the needs of population; education and development are often ignored. The resultant outcome of this negligence is poverty.

Recently, the irrational antipathy towards the west is that there have been attempts to frame new form of colonialism. Nkrumah's views on neocolonialism cannot be explained early because such views are firmly elaborate historical and deterministic structures. Particularly Nkrumah sought to develop the ideas of imperialism advanced by Lenin in imperialism: the highest stage of capitalism. Nkrumah claims that imperialism sustains itself because of the continued lust for power to govern. There exists higher logic driven by capitalism and the never ending need of accumulation and production sustained on a global scale. Nkrumah follows

the Marxist themes and points out the problems of new capitalism (like class conflict) occurring at the metropolitan centers. Nkrumah does not provide a solution to neocolonialism in neocolonialism: the last stage of imperialism.

Nkrumah makes tacit suggestions including the need for pan-African unity which made more difficult for neocolonialism to sustain. But there are numerous allusions to Marxism about Nkrumah's expositions on colonialism as a potentially self-defending project. In some sense, through post-colonial resistance and revolt of neocolonialism reaches a culmination in the peripheries. However, they indirectly destabilize the neocolonial centers.

In neocolonial literature, the texts and the writer support new colonial ruler. Those writers and texts never hope for decolonized nation. They mirror disease, ignorance, poverty and violence of the decolonized nation. The writers like Naipaul and Achebe appeal neocolonial ruler to govern the decolonized nation. Unlike Nkrumah they see colonialism as a just form of system. Actually, neocolonialists never see the development potential of any sort without new form of imperialism, that is, neocolonialism.

Robert young has also discussed about neocolonialism. Young, in book *Post Colonialism: An Historical Introduction*, writes neocolonialism as contents of development and dependency theory and also critical development theory. For the dependency and development theorists, the Third World faces difficulty in escaping from the western nation of development. Classifying third world in terms of economic growth, the methods of measuring economic output and the linear model of development adopted in developed world have been so deeply entrenched in the neocolonized world that they have no other recourse but be part of that system. Consequence theories depict a world made up of developmental equities, metropolitan

centers and under developed periphery through trade exploitation. More recently critical development theories go beyond because the notion of neocolonial actions is so easily explained, especially with the economic successes of Asia/Africa. In this regard, development can no longer be theorized in purely economic terms but has to incorporate other dimensions like culture, gender, society and politics as well. Yung asserts that there has been a movement towards popular development with reference to critical development theory. This is the empowerment of civil actors to address fundamental human needs. Hence, it emphasizes sustainable development, self reliance and pluralism and rights. A number of post-development scholars have been advocated development outside the framework of the enlightenment logic. This logic looks towards postcolonial politics as the future direction development theory. Young notes the potential convergence developmental theory and post colonialism. We cannot separate economics and development theories form literature always concerns common people. The above non-literary ideas are essential to analyze a piece of literary work. Boehmer expresses her ideas about the neocolonialism in her book as:

Here it is important to remember the apparently self-evident, but none the significant face that migrant literature represents a geographic, cultural and political retreat by writers form the new sat ailing nations of the post colonial world back to the old metropolis. The literatures are a product of that retreat; they are marked by its disillusionment. Since the early 1970's as is widely known, post independence nations have been increasingly played by neocolonial ills: economic disorders and social malaise, government corruption. In much of the ones colonized world, decolonized in fact produced few challenges: power

hierarchies were maintained, the values of former colonizer remained influential. (237)

On the one hand, revolutionary force of decolonized nation attacks the idea of globalization and universal brotherhood. The decolonized nation suffered from the internal crisis and external domination. We can find this situation in Naipaul's novel. Naipaul's idea about the colonial ruler is no doubt positive. He always sees miraculous peace in colonial eras. Former colonizers influence him. Neocolonial ruling is essential for the decolonized nation where natives are failing to rule their own countries. The natives have high expectations after the independence but their hope dreams shattered. Then, they start revolting against the rulers. Decolonized people have no ideological consciousness. The neocolonial writers ignore the exploitations of natives or decolonized people. Now the neocolonial writers and scholars are influenced by west, Boehm expresses her ideas in this way:

But the more practical response too many writers to what Fanon called "the farce of national independence" have been to seek refuge-if not to be forced to seek refuge-in less repressive and the richer places in the world. In making this move, and in then securing a positive reception, writers have been much advantaged by the class, political and educational connections with European or American which in many cases they enjoyed. They have developed what was any way a cosmopolitan tendency, often pillaged as part of an elite upbringing in their home countries. This fact may not appear important to their writing as such. But it is fundamental in explaining their reception and their status as privileged migrants in the west. Because of their connections or their upbringing, they have tended sooner or later to

win acceptance in metropolitan elites. Essentially, they have been able, by migrating, to secure for themselves a different, more comfortable location in the wider neocolonial world. (237-238)

The Boehmer's feeling about the migrant literature is: "The western powers which retain the economic and military upper hand in relations with ex-colonial territories are also the countries in which migrant literature is given wide support" (238). Boehmer, wonderfully expresses her ideas:

True, as Rushdie and Wilson Harris amongst the others explain, the hybridity of migrant's art may well signify a freeing voices, a technique for dismantling authority a liberating polyphony that shakes off the authoritarian yoke. However, it is hybridity that remains primarily an aesthetic device, or a source of themes. Indeed, in certain lights it may seem that writers' connections with their Third World background have become chiefly metaphorical. They can appear to concern themselves with series of national confusion and cultural *Brouhaha* primarily to furnish images for their art, which also means once again, that they thus participate in the time-worm process through which those in the west scrutinize the other the better to understand themselves. For reason such as these, through migrant writers are themselves often vociferously opposed to neocolonial malformations, their work has drawn criticism for being a literate without loyalties, lacking in the regional and affiliations which are deemed to be so necessary at a time of mass globalization. (238-239)

The above citation and Robert Young's ideas of development are remarkable. Migrant art according to Boehmer signifies a feeling of voice and dismantling

authorities. The same idea is expressed by Naipaul in *A Bend in the River*. He wants to dismantle the traditional culture of decolonized country. Decolonized people neither are culturally furnished nor do they succeed to rule themselves. New form of imperialism can eliminate the disorder, poverty and ignorance. These ideas came up in the mind of Naipaul. He saw miraculous peace in the colonial system and that miraculous peace fell apart after the independence. Now, he appeals good gods who are western intellectual and scientist to the decolonized nations. The only thing Naipaul appreciates is the colonial past. He is indifference to the bad deeds of colonialism.

III. Textual Analysis

Rejection of American Power in Canadian Soil

Power in the novel embodies a critique of human exploitative attitude towards their fellow men. Atwood offers in this novel a vision of human society especially of western society is depicted as justifying its transgression against nature and logic, which in turn constitutes the pillars of the humanistic belief in scientific and social progress. This is one of the senses in which the novel questions the hierarchies embedded in western through which valorize culture over nature, man over women, logos over pathos, the historically important point made by Derrida.

Atwood suggests that power can also be a creative psychologically and morally enabling force needed to achieve in automatic selfhood that empower the individual against victimhood. We can thus deduce from the novel an ontologically neutral definition of power, which would imply that power is inherently on why, how, by whom and over whom it is used.

The novel begins with the journey with the protagonist who is also a narrator, to her childhood home in the northern Canadian wilderness together with her lover, Joe, and a couple called Anna and David in search of her missing father. We learn that her father, who is a botanist, has been living in total isolation on a lake island after his wife's death. The wilderness as the setting of the novel has a multi-dimensional symbolic significance. It is the setting of the protagonist's childhood, and as such a symbol for lust innocence and happiness. It stands for a realm of existence outside of alienating materialistic, ecologically and spiritually polluted urban way of life, which the protagonist and companions are parts of the wilderness stands for nature, which is appropriate and victimized by human society. The wilderness provides the

background against which the protagonist's thought and feelings about an exploitative and destructive civilization take shape.

American function as the main symbol of destruction power, or power-over, earlier in the novel they are for the protagonist simply representatives of a national spirit characterized by egotism and exploitation and a country contaminated by urban pollution and decay, soul killing machinery, and artificiality. They intrude on nature, living behind nothing but garbage. They are the "mental killers" who come to the Canadian wilderness for hunting and fishing. They kill for fun, to satisfy their greedy and narcissistic urge for exploitation and violence. During the fishing expedition the protagonist and her friends came across a dead heron with smashed eyes, hanging from the branch of a tree. War, people killing each other, is seen by the protagonist as just an extension of killing animals: "Anything we could do to the animals we could do each other" (115). The protagonist realizes that since they killed the heron, they are still American no matter what country they are from and that "they are what in store for us, what we are turning into" (123). One thing that helps to bring about this realization in her mind is her close observation of David, an American in spirit despite his alleged hatred of Americans. She detects in him the egotism and inauthenticity she associates with Americans. When he makes her vulgar pass at her attempting to reduce her to a mere sexual object for fun, on exercise, as he calls it. She thinks:

He didn't know what language to use, he had forgotten his own, he had to copy, second-hand. American was spreading over him in patches like manure or lichen. He was infested, garbled, and I couldn't help him: it would take such time to heal, unearth him, and scrape down to where he was true. (146)

The protagonist starts seeing each human as a potential American: “then I realized it wasn’t the men I hated, it was Americans, the human beings, men and women both” (148). She implicitly acknowledges her own American-ness because she thinks it is impossible not to share the responsibility for the crimes of others. It is Heron’s death, which is a central metaphor for victimization in the novel that brings about this consciousness in the protagonist; “I felt a sickening complicity, sticky as glue, blood on my hands, as though I had been there and watched without saying. No or doing to stop it: one of the silent guarded faces in the crowd. The troublesome people have being German, I through, I have being human” (124).

She explores the implications of victimization as a psycho-sociological state of mind typical of Canada as a nation. The national issue of victimhood converges in Canadian identity for the protagonist. Canada is a geo-political body embodying the Canadian nation, to be taken possession from within by resisting colonization by power structures that threaten them with engulfment and amputation. Canada and Canadian wilderness are plundered and amputated by the technological money-making machinery. Canada is economically and culturally colonized by America: “My country, sold or drowned, a reservoir; the people were sold along with the land and the animals” (126). The sense of collective guilt is evinced in the protagonist’s idea that it was a “bargain”.

At the end of the novel, she plunges into the lake to surface again empowered with the determination to refuse victimhood: “This above all, to refuse to be a victim...I have to recant, give up the old belief that I am powerless and because of it nothing I can do will ever hurt anyone’s” (185). This is the curse of the issue of power in the novel, where Atwood questions the moral implications of the ‘innocent victim’

position. She suggests that belief in one's own powerlessness amount to evasion of both responsibilities which power involves.

The protagonist, not having the name in the novel is surely also an indication of her sense of alienation. Having grown up party in the wilderness in the city, she has always been a halfway outsider to the destructive civilization she is repulsed by. She recounts that as a child she felt "like a person from another culture' because she could not participate in the power games of other children" (66). Her rejection of conformity to the norms of proper female behavior and sanity also started easily in childhood. As a girl she displayed a certain resistance to learning to be polite or civilized as her mother called it. Ironically, her mother was not "civilized" because she was a stranger to the ways of civilization. For instance, the protagonist tells us that her mother hated doctors and hospitals because they would steal from her the natural death she wanted to die and what she feared actually happened.

Alienated female consciousness that involves an opposition to the imperialist ethos finds recurrent expression in the novel through the protagonist's attitude to American's advocacy of the principles of logic and reason. She sees his vision of these as the pillars of their naive faith in science, positivism and the moral perfectibility of American: "to him...Hitler exemplified not the triumph of evil but the failure of reason" (53). Since the protagonist experiences logic and reason as repressive and oppressive instruments that are often in the service of evil and destruction, she distances herself from them in such a way as finally she reach the limits of the symbolic, she tries to transform her most powerful experiences into 'logical' versions of an attempt "to keep the death away form me" (137).

She can finally discard the false sanity which she has been trying to preserve by means of logic and plunge into madness. The protagonist's search for her father

following the clues left by him, such as drawing and notes on the ancient rock painting under the lake function as the vehicles of her psychic transformation. Her father's scientific journey to the sacred sites of the North American Indian helps the protagonist to find the sacred space within her own psyche in clearly archetypal terms.

She starts acting as body and soul together for the first time in the novel. She makes love to Joe with the determination of conceiving a child. Later, when the others leave she remains on the island they call her name but it is too late, she thinks, because she "no longer has a name" (162). Discarding her human identity, she starts living like an animal, thus completing her rejection of culture. She reverses the mirror in the cabin so that "it no longer traps her as it did Anna" (169). Initiating shamanistic initiation rituals of meeting nature on nature's own terms, she discards from her body and from the cabin every object reflecting the artificiality of civilization. She thinks that this is the sacrifice the gods require to admit her into their holy space and time: "everything form history must be eliminated, the circles and the arrogant square pages" (170). This is both her personal history and the history of linear time, by which western civilization measures itself. She clears a space for herself in the cabin, one that is symbolically outside culture. Then she purges herself in the lake, shedding the last traces of her false self. She is reborn out of the multi lingual water; where there are no divisions but unity of being: "Around me the space restless; owl sound, across the lake or inside me, distance contracts" (172).

Emerging from her mystical state at the end of *Surfacing*, Margaret Atwood's protagonist observes, in a seeming anticlimax, "this, above all, to refuse to be a victim" (4). It is the coming to terms, as best one can, with being human that is the protagonist's goal. An escape into the wilderness is an escape from one's humanity. And, although Atwood states that "one can, with the proper knowledge, survive in the

wilderness” (5) such is not the position of the narrator, who chooses, rather, to return to civilization, she does so, not as a repudiation of some primitivism impulse, but because for her, “the alternative is death” (191).

Canadian Wilderness In Post Colonial Period Of Imperial Era

The main characters in *Surfacing* makes both a literal and a figurative “journey to the interior” as she travels from Toronto to the wilderness of northern Quebec in search of her missing father. She has problem created by neo colonialism. She defines her problems in terms of language: “the trouble is all in the knob at the top of our bodies, I’m not against body or the head either: only the neck which creates the illusion that they are separate. The language is wrong, it shouldn’t have different worlds for them ... if the head is detached from the body both of them will die” (91). Everything, she says, is a “dialect problem”: a failed marriage, a successful abortion, and estrangement from her roots have left her “translating badly”. She is a “severed thumb numb” (129). Hardly human, and her language has cut her off from herself and others.

The numbness begins to leave as she explores “her home ground, foreign territory” (14). The lake suggests all those submerged forces about to erupt: it is tricky, weather shift; the wind swells up quickly and has “deadheads old pieces of tree waterlogged and partly decayed floating under the surface” (36). The protagonist is no longer sure she knows the way; nothing is predictable and safe. She tears the appearance of her father-will he be sane or mad, dead or alive, suicide, accident or murder victim? The old categories no longer fit the situation. The land is one of transformation, of ghosts and gods, and for it she will need new maps. She looks for maps in both her past and present, but none of her three companions can help her. She cannot rely on simplistic moral distinctions taught by her brother; for him leeches

were either “good” or “bad” a division similar to the “clean” or “dirty” words she learned in school: “the bad ones in French were religious ones, the worst ones in any language were what they were most afraid of and in English it was the body, that was even scarier than God” (52).

She examines her father’s drawings of the hidden Indian cave-paintings that he had so carefully copied does she interpret reality in a new way. The strange pictographs defy simple linguistic labels. The concrete products of a culture not trapped by the abstraction of language, they are “magic drawing (142) which lead her back into the world of her imagination and out of the world of “acid patterns” unlike language, they do not trap her but release her and provide a means of deliverance. When she dives into the lake to find the actual painting, she dives into those inaccessible parts of her own psyche. She dives through language to find an image transcending language: “it was there but it wasn’t a painting, it was not on the rock. It was below me, drifting towards me from the furthest level where there was no life, a dark oval trailing limbs. It was blurred but it had eyes, they were open, it was something I knew about, a dead thing, it was dead” (167). The frightening image connects her drowned father, her almost drowned brother, and her aborted fetus. Her almost drowned brother, and her aborted fetus. Because her parents lived apart from the rest of the world, they were innocent and didn’t teach us about evil (169).

To regain her vision completely, she must become like a “child again, barbarian, a vandal” (156). She must become one who sees ghosts in the dark even if they cannot see her. The picture preserved for her by her dead mother provides the sign she needs: “on the left was a woman with a round moon stomach; the baby was sitting up inside her gazing out. Opposite her was man with horns on his head like cow horns and a barbed tail” (185). The image of her aborted child merges with that

of the child she will conceive, one she “will never teach... any words” (191). The two are seen as one, and the vision leads her to her final act of cleansing. The protagonists renewal ritual immerses her in “the other language” (185) she rejects the trappings of civilizations altogether-casts off her clothes eats barriers and roots burn through all the words would take too long” (207). She flees from her friends and finally the cabin, “that cage wooden rectangle” (209). Her father’s garden is “a stunt, a trick, it could not exist without the fence” (211). The buried message of the self however is not hedged with words and speaks the language of “A light wind, the small wanes tacking against the shore, multilingual water” (209).

English Canada was first part of the wilderness, then a part of North America and the British Empire, then a part of the world. Canadian writers are, even now, still a part of the world. Canadian environment at a time when new techniques of communication, they are annihilating the boundaries of that environment. This foreshortening of Canadian history, would account for many features of it: its fixation on its own past, its penchant for old fashioned literary techniques, its preoccupation with the theme of strangled articulateness, It seems that Canadian sensibility has been profoundly disturbed, not so much by famous problem of identity. In the early 1970s, Canada was “small neutral country” facing American power on one side and European power on the other, but it was a country where nascent hopes of nationhood were vitiated by internal conflict with Quebec. The 1970s brought the invocation of the war measures Act, the royal commission on bilingualism and biculturalism, and public outrage about the storing of American rockets on Canadian soil.

Surfacing is a prose anatomy of Canadian writing and culture up to 1972. Canadian literature in English to the whole tradition of the Canadian search for political identity and its articulation. Atwood was a nationalist, but in Canada, unlike

in the United States and England where a national identity in literature was already rooted in the predominately masculine world of culture production 1960s nationalism coalesced with second-wave feminism.

The Quebec political situation is evoked in *Surfacing* by allusions to the narrator's poor spoken French and by her inability to interpret: "I was poorly translating badly a dialect problem" (8). More importantly, the central political theme of the novel, "Creeping Americanism" refers not only to the "bunkers" used to stone American missiles but also to the bright infecting Canadian white birch trees from south of the boarder (7). Atwood develops this blight or disease of a North American civilization as the primary psychological metaphor of *Surfacing*. In macrocosm, this term becomes a catch-all for the agonies of a post-industrial world and is associated with war, mechanization and death. In microcosm it becomes a personal, psychological metaphor that functions as does the metaphor of the "false front"

Similarly, in *Surfacing* David and his wife, Anna, are identified with a surface blight, initially associated with the United States and imitation that results in the projection of false selves. For David "second-hand American was separating over him in patches, like manages or lichen. He was infested, garbled, and I couldn't help him" (163). For Anna, it is a playboy centerfold, "a seamed and folded imitation of a magazine picture that is itself an imitation of a woman who is also an imitation, the origins now were" (177). The metaphors used to typify Canada also show it to be a derivative society that, reflecting Canadian history, is built on a "copy" of an American "imitation" of a European "original". When the narrator and her friends visited the beer parlor on the main street of the little Quebec town, they find it to be "an imitation of other places, more southern ones, which are themselves imitation, the

original someone's distorted memory of nineteenth century English gentlemen's shooting lodge" (30).

The narrator of *Surfacing* also raises the issue of false gods, blaming her parents for making her think that they were gods. "If you tell your children God doesn't exist they will be forced to believe you are the god, but what happens when they find out you are human after all....?" (112). Parents didn't teach find us about evil. They didn't understand about it how could I describe it to them? (154). Similarly Atwood's narrator discovers Joe's sexual encounter with Ann and finds her father's dead body: the shock of this last *Surfacing* experience generates a sequence of images that forces her to acknowledge her own responsibilities for an earlier abortion. The recognition of victimization in novel is followed by revolution.

Image of Sensibility and Nation

The members of the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. The source of a national collective consciousness in the eighteenth century nationalism, as a mode of thought filled the space left by decline of religions through during a period of increase secularization. The printed text in the former of the novel and the newspaper as "two forms of imagining which first flowered in Europe in the eighteenth century" (25). Both forms of discourse served to construct the imagined community of the nation: the daily newspaper becomes a collectively practiced prayer like ritual that provided selective access to the rest of the world, and the novel allowed reader to experience the simultaneous occurrence of multiple events within a paradigm that conflated space and time in order to present concurrent narratives.

Atwood examines the construction of sensible behavior through the visual media as a colonizing agent in the lives of white, middle class female protagonist. The narrative position of the protagonists in a period of interregnum as the apocalyptic moment during which “the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum there arise a great diversity of morbid symptoms” (176). For Atwood’s narrator, this interregnum is the time of looking for her missing father, a time that symbolically allows her to renegotiate her status as both Canadian and female and deconstruct the other side of the binaries, American and male.

Margaret Atwood wrote *Surfacing* in 1972, a year in Canadian history characterized by a void in Canadian national conception of itself. Canada’s national self-concept has evolved since Canada peacefully achieved self-government from the British in 1867 after nearly a century of colonial domination. Canada’s colonial history is unique, then because “unlike most former colonies which established nationality by resisting imperial rule, Canada steamed a middle course that generally avoided resistance” (67). Such complicit interaction with British rule has made Canada’s national position difficult to identify, but its identity has evolved over three main stages since its colonization in eighteenth century: Canada was first viewed as a colonial or provincial outpost of empire; second as a colonial nation; and third, by the middle of twentieth century, there is scarcely any consistent image at all. Part of a reason for this ambiguity is Canada’s unavoidable proximity to the United States whose size and power make the emergence and ultimate survival of a truly independent Canadian nation. Canada’s relationship with its imposing neighbor has been unstable of various points in history. Canadian policy was one of cooperation with and emulation of the United States escalation of the Vietnamese war, “Canadians

began to think of themselves as a nicer people” (126). At this point in its colonial history, Canada’s sense of interiority was replaced by a sense of moral righteousness.

It is this anti-American sensibility that Atwood portrays in *Surfacing*. Atwood examines the complexities of the imagined community of the “nice Canadian” in the late 1960s while she simultaneously critiques the artifice of niceness by tracing her unnamed narrator’s descent into madness in the wilderness of Quebec. It implies the ecological destruction of land under American economic imperialism. *Surfacing* traces the experiences of an unnamed female narrator as she journeys, with her lover, Joe and her married friends, David and Anna, to her family’s island cabin in the wilderness of Quebec in search of her missing father. Over the course of the narrative, the protagonist is forced to examine her self proclaimed victimization by the American technological advanced that encroach upon the Canadian wilderness.

During these fine days, the narrator is transformed from a woman into a wild animal in a transgress rite of passage indicative of accept that Canadians are as responsible as American for the destruction of their wilderness. The narrator’s sense of self is obtained at least a part from her interaction with the civilizing construction of her world through images and language. She is working on a book called *Quebec Folk Tales* at the time of her father’s disappearance. She creates the visual images that accompany her nation’s mythology and those rigidly defined images constitute the cultural work of codifying.

Resistance Against Neocolonialism

Margaret Atwood’s novel *Surfacing* demonstrates the complex question of identity for an English-speaking Canadian female. Identity, for the protagonist has become problematic because of her role as a victim of colonial force by Americans and their cultural imperialism or neocolonialism. The Euro-centric legacy remains in

her country although the physical presences of English and French rulers have gone. The protagonist's experience of the power politics of general and their problematic relation to patriarchal tradition of authority have affinities with the Canadian attitudes to the cultural imperialism of the United States as well as its ambivalence towards its European inheritors.

Post colonialist theories examine the voice and position of people in colonized surety. The domination by where people have led to their alignment and relevant discussions about their problems, affects and strategies. Atwood's examination has left the victim with feeling of displacement and disconnectedness from their language history, and culture which it turn has led to a fractured sense of self was a desperate need to regain and reclaim identity. The damage caused to those who have been colonized is plat formed by Atwood through her focus on certain effects and issue of colonization. This brief examination of their problematic nature for the protagonist of the novel should demonstrate their role in postcolonial discourse, their importance to as individual's construction of identity, suffering does not deal with the physical art of colonizing a country, but instead it focused on the aftermath and the mental colonizing that still exist, long after so-called decolonization has occurred; this is a much more insidious form of colonization and it has left people with worlds that do not express their idea, a displacement from the country or cultural group to which they belong and a past they feel disconnected from.

Post colonialism has been concerned with language because of its importance to identity formation and also its use as a weapon to colonial power. It is recognized as one of the most fundamental aspects of our being and therefore fundamental to these discourses that recognize the importance of identity. The colonial process itself begins in language. The reason for this is its ability to control, either by displacing

native language or imposing certain standards and signs that become the “norm” language is how we understand, describe and know our world and if this is made problematic, or displaced, then our relationship with our world and our position within it also becomes problematic and displaced. The question then arises of how to overcome such control and there are two main answers, reject or subvert. Recently theorists and writers have tended to opt for the latter, using language as a self of signs that are invested with meaning and its new meanings are assigned and new uses invested, than effectively it is a new language, but one that remains recognizable.

Atwood incorporates many of these ideas about language into her novel and from the outset we are made aware of the whole question of language for Canadians. The issue is initially presented to us, and indeed to all who travel from English to French, Canada, or vice versa, by the sign that reads “Bievenue” on side and “welcome” on the other. This sets up a problem of communication that exists for Canadians who, because of their colonial history share a country but not a native tongue. The sign acts as a signal and perhaps us for a more poignant and personal demonstration of this communication problem, which is presented in a vignette of the narrator’s mother and Paul’s wife: described for us are two neighbors sitting together in awkward silence because they have not the power to communicate to one another, they do not speak each other’s language. Atwood then goes on to show that the inability to communicate and own a language is not necessarily that of speaking different tongues as her fellow Canadians.

For Atwood’s narrator, this is further complicated by the fact that words say colonizer but they do not say her problem. She constantly refers to her inability to communicate, even those closest to her, “the language is wrong” (70), and “it was the language again, I could not use it because it was not mine” (100). She feels alienated

from the words that have been passed down to her, feeling they have not come from her own experience, her own values or ideas, but from the white European or American who essentially has had a different set of experiences and invested different meanings and ideas in the words that have come to produce and explain, not only this word, but the word in general. The notion of language is a set of meaning is dominated in the novel through the cultural differences that words acquire and denote, highlighted by the narrators examples; how the worst words in any language are those we are most afraid of, in French these are religious words in English they are connected with the body and how in some countries the innocent Canadians emblem of a beaver has become a synonym.

The protagonist feels that she can not express herself and that language has been hijacked by those in control, she must choose between rejection and subversion. As with all problems the first step to solution is a recognition that there is a problem which occurs during the course of novel and progresses to an initial rejection of language and words, a move to silence, a state that is presented as primitive, pre-colonial in every sense, and while it was necessary to visit this point to truly understand, there is a that remaining there will achieve and changed nothing, for that is not how the world is any longer. We are left at the end of the novel with the anticipation of her new voice, one that she has chosen appropriated and understand.

Language is not only thing in the novel that needs to be appropriated by the oppressed; their history and their past must also be reclaimed, and in some cases almost completely rewritten. History is another means of control, developed by European nations during modern colonization to explain and order of world, much of which they had a little knowledge or comprehension of, but which nevertheless become a construction of world reality. To have a history, in effect, legitimates us, it

gives us the story of our existence, explains our role in the world and without it, it is almost as if we did not exist. What post-colonialist theorists have recognized is that history has been written by the victor, the suppressor and the idea of history as a single narrative has now become defunct? There is more than one way to see things, including history and which complicates, but makes more necessary the process of uncovering truth, the process which can be slow and painful but will inevitably lead to a clearer understanding of ourselves and our wrong. As the narrator of *Surfacing* demonstrates, a single version of history allows for selfhood and construction and as the Post-colonialist must deconstruct those stories already told and reinstate those untold, so must we, along with our protagonist do the same with her story.

The nameless heroine has marginalized the painful memories from her past and only reveals, to both the readers and her companions, what she seems necessary; because we have no other alternative viewpoint, initially we have no choice but to believe her tales of husband and abandoned children. It is the literary journey to the series of her past that initiates the metaphorical one into her subconscious, which in turn forces her to confront certain ghosts and to re-examine what she has become convinced is true, the lies she has told herself and those that others and society have impressed upon her such as there never having been any important women artists. Slowly, she becomes awakened to the functionality of history and memory and thus begins the re-examination of her past, "I must be more careful of my memories, I have to be sure they are my own and not the memories of other people telling me what I felt how I acted, what I said" (67). We have all heard the saying that if we are told something often enough we will begin to believe it and this is used to the advantage of those in a position to do the telling; just as the narrator in her formative years, is consistently told, and therefore grows to believe, that all women should be

housewives and that they should grow up. Once her awakening to the falsehoods that she both invented and been taught we begins to witness the process of rejection and finally of, reclamation of those memories and histories that had been ousted. But before achieving this, she travels to a place beyond or before, history that is reminiscent of a pre-colonial Canada and one of the major theme of Canadian literature, a place in the wilderness a place of nature, a literal place her father chose so “he could recreate, not the settle farm life of this own father but that of the earliest ones who arrived when there was nothing but forest and no ideologies but the ones they bought with them” (53), and a metaphorical places from where she can retrace her history’s steps and this time from a cleansed and renewed perspective. She surfaces from a cleansed and renewed perspective. She surfaces from her post and her acceptance and acknowledgment of it is presented as vital in her process of regeneration.

So, the protagonist reclaims her language and her past but she, and her fellow Canadians, are also in danger of losing all sense of a cultural identity in the face of the overpowering, neighboring Americans. This cultural imperialism has recently come to be considered under the term neocolonialism, which was coined by Kwame Nkrumah to describe the condition of economic dependence that many post colonial countries found them in. The protagonist is talking about her artistic freedom and that ever through she is illustrating a book of Quebec Folk Tales she must make it appeal to the English and American markets Canada’s publishing industry is not economically sustainable alone.

The term, white still used its original sense, now denote any form of control over former colonies and, most recently, to describe the former or imperialism that the new superpowers of the world, most especially the unused states, have inflicted

including the cultural domination that Atwood reacts against whilst America's global cultural and economic imperialism has placed a Mc Donald's in the four corners of the earth, and almost everywhere in between, it has bullied and oppressed Canadians most consistently and to great effect. Margaret Atwood writes in, *Survival* that she only realized there was a problem with the Canadian cultural identity when she went to America to study, there she heard the comparisons that were being made, comparisons that left Canada looking dull, middle of the road and banal, a place devoid of any culture or literature of their own. In *Survival*, it is fair to say she has helped changed the face of her country's or otherwise is seen everywhere, *South Park* the out being one example that springs to mind, and there have been many attempts by Canadian to reclaim their cultural heritage through history, literature and art. But, as evoked by the house this is not necessarily enough, it is not all about maple leaves, stars and stripes but is, almost crucially, a state of mind, "if you look like them and talk like them and think like them then you are them" (123).

The unwanted presence of the Americans is consistent throughout the book, from the stuffed moose at the petrol station with American flag to the constant reference to them as other, them as an enemy. David, the character who is most prone to denouncing them, "Bloody fascist pig yanks" (3) is the one who is most like them, with his desire to control and desire for excess and his desire to control and capture that which is not his to take, like the protagonist's, and the many other women's bodies and the random samples he collects. He is the same breed as the Canadians who are initially mistaken for Americans and who have killed the Herons, as though they were theirs to destroy, and the developers and holiday makers who take over and ruin the natural world and the wilderness, eventually turning it into their to under.

Throughout the novel there is a definite condemnation of this Americanization of people and place but it is most poignantly and symbolically demonstrated with the

animator's final rejection she rejects neocolonialism in every form and travels to a pre-colonial space that must visit in order to return with an understanding of herself and her identity as a Canadian and as a woman. Her surfacing is made possible by, firstly rejecting all that seeks to colonize her and then subverting the forces they use such as language, history, and culture to reject her identity as a victim.

Atwood quins smile conceptions for her characters. Several images of the characters mother are important to her and carry the most important message. She is seen standing by the bird feeder "quiet as a time" (60) as the birds feed from her hand and, another time, "from the back, arms upraised as though she was flying" as she freights off a beer with the world scat!"(95). Finally during the protagonist's role of renewal she has a union in which her mother is transformed into a bird. Word and gesture are one and confer an almost magical power. While she must reform to the city and live "in the usual way-defining things –"by their absence; and love by its failures, power by its loss, its renunciations" (221). She takes with her knowledge of a true language that goes beyond good and evil by speaking to her own needs: "the animals have no need for speech, why talk when you own a word. I lean against a tree; I am a tree learning (212).

Surfacing stands for fear, a fear shared by artists. Each feels a world of fixed forms, a language whose gift is separation from self and others. John ferry being caught in one of her several identities: the "eternal wiring on the run" (103) of her novels.

For a period, of time the surface's life radically changes she destroys everything in the cabin, sleeps outside, refuses to eat from the house or garden, does not walk on path, sheds her clothes, refers to multiple gods, and 'sees' her dead mother and father. She has become "part of the landscape" (192). Eventually however, she does return to the cabin and prepare for the rescue boat that she knows will come. Through cities approach this re-attachment to the patriarchal society in multiple ways, the narrator

leads the reader to believe that it is the right thing to do: “This above all to refuse to be a victim. Unless I can do that I can do powerless and because of it nothing I can do will never hurt anyone” (197). She has embraced one of the major element of eco-feminism – that of the “recognition that although the nature-culture dualism is a product of culture, we can nonetheless consciously choose not to serve the woman-nature connection by joining male culture. Rather, we can use it as a vantage point for creating a different kind of culture and politics that would integrate intuitive, spiritual, and national form of knowledge embracing science and magic insofar as they enable us to transform the nature-culture distinction and to envision and create a free, ecological society. The narrator, in the last few pages, sees the nature world as her equal, refuse to fall into the same patriarchal trap that initially destroyed her, and reclaims her ability to trust. Through she does not return society; she does so as a charged person. She realizes “that human beings are not radically separate from nature: that the fulfillment of our own humanity is profoundly linked with learning to appreciate the nature within us and without [...] Standing there, with the trees...asking and giving nothing” (199).

IV. Conclusion

Resistance of Cultural Parochialism

The basic issue under scrutiny in *Surfacing* is the investigation of the mysterious disappearance of her father. However, a careful study of the novel reveals. Atwood's resistance against neocolonialism is undertaken by rejecting the colonial stereotypes. This is the basic issue of examination in the basic issue of examination in the present research. On the basis of this study, therefore, it can be deduced that Atwood is extremely anti-American. She has applied the transformation into animal of her unnamed narrator as device of neocolonial resistance in order to undo the colonial stereotypes underlying in colonial discourse.

Resistance has become a dominant mode of literacy expression among the writers of the third world societies after the advent of post-colonialism. It is because the single monolithic colonial practices ushered them to do so for the purpose of postulating their cultural identity. Margaret Atwood's works on the framework of culture of resistance, her work primarily resist to colonial attitude developed in culture.

Margaret Atwood's novel *Surfacing* demonstrates the complex question of identity for an English speaking Canadian female. Identity, for the protagonist, has become problematic because of her role as a victim of colonial force by Americans and their cultural imperialism or neocolonialism. The Euro-centric legacy remains in her country although the physical presence of English and French rules has gone. The novel begins with the journey with the protagonist who is also a narrator, to her childhood home in the northern Canadian wilderness together with her lover, Joe, and a couple called Anna and David in search of her missing father. We learn that her father, who is botanist, has been living in total isolation on a lake-island after his

wife's death. The wilderness as the setting of the novel has a multi-dimensional symbolic significance. So, the narrator explores the implications of victimization. The national issue of victim hood converges in Canadian identity for the protagonist. Her identity is victimized in the context of neocolonialism. By Americanism, her cultural identity has been affected. American's global cultural and economic imperialism placed Mc Donaldization. Therefore, she transforms into wild animal and travels to pre-colonial space that she must visit in order to return with an understanding of herself and her identity as a Canadian.

In the colonial discourse, the colonizer used to create many types of stereotypes against non-European especially about its people, landscape and its people's activities. The central motive of creation of such stereotypes was no other than to exploit the non-European by willingness. In the novel *Surfacing*, American culture as a typical representative of western colonizer holds similar offensive attitude against the people of Canada who are alien and barbaric to its. But Anna resists all the dominant form of neocolonialism by transforms into wild animal.

Atwood employs traditional patterns from Canadian culture to resist the forces of American civilization. However, the subject matter of the play, Anna is self-identified character she has destined to sacrifice herself for a refreshment of Canadian culture from the burden and bad luck of Americanism. She is the symbol of scape-goating ritual myth of Canadian cosmology. Anna's ritual journey projects a ritual model of organic restoration of canon who seeks her own life to bridge the abysses that separates the Canadian culture from American globalization.

The discourse of resistance got manifested as a main stream of colonial writing after the World War Second. The date is considered as the format warning of colonial project of western countries. Many colonized countries got freedom from the

colonial grip. Along with the celebration of political independence, literature concerned with national and indigenous cultural ethos comes into vogue there. As a literature was foregrounded in the recently faded European culture, it was, no doubt, resistance to these entire representations of Euro-centric views. But the beginning of the resistance in the colonized people had emerged along with the western oriental project.

The colonized writers try to see their identity as the product of refusing American's gaze and returning to their own anti-colonialist look. This attempt is in a way to restore the imprisoned nation to it. In such resistance nation, foregrounding ethnic superiority and national chauvinism are the primary concern. Their attempt to enhance ethnicity accounts of human variation in terms of culture, tradition, language social patterns and ancestry. The ethnic groups are distinguished both from inside and outside on the basis of cultural criteria so that defining characteristics of a particular ethnicity have usually depended on the various purpose for which the group has been identified. There was, on the other, simultaneous emergence of national chauvinism.

Resistance is a deliberate act of an individual writer to posit his/her standpoint. In the present context of globalization, instead of practicing parochial attitude in culture, Atwood is of the opinion that it is necessary to take reference from other cultures to measure out the progression of one society. In order to posit cultural identity, it is sometime necessary to liberate form and relate this collective awareness to the value of other. Thus Atwood resists cultural parochialism.

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