Chapter I

Introduction

Margaret Atwood (b. 1939), poet, novelist, literary critic and short story writer is a prominent figure in the contemporary Canadian literature. She was born in Ottawa in Canada in 1939 and raised in Toronto. She graduated from the University of Toronto in 1961 and did her Masters from Redcliff college Harvard University in 1962. She came into limelight with the Governor General’s Award for her anthology of poems entitled The Circle Game (1966). This was followed by the publication of Survival (1972) which brought her further acclaim. The same year, Surfacing, with its feminist and nationalist slant established her reputation internationally. Since the appearance of her first book of poems, Double Persephone (1961), Atwood has published several other volumes of poetry and won many awards. In 1977 she received The City of Toronto Book Award as well as The Canadian Booksellers’ Association Award for Lady Oracle. Atwood has taught at several Canadian universities and also worked as editor with the House of Anansi Press. She was a spokesperson for Amnesty International and President of Pen International.

The fact that Margaret Atwood, a versatile Canadian writer of today, did not want to be recognised as a Canadian
writer in 1960 is not at all surprising when we take into account the fact that the Canadian fiction of early decades of the nineteenth century was not much popular. According to Frye, it was formula writing. Margaret Atwood herself reiterated this fact in "Surviving the Eighties" when she said, "Although we wanted to become writers, we certainly didn't want to become Canadian writers..." A Canadian writer for her was an "oxymoron." According to her, one "could hardly expect us to make a living at it, and anything resembling the American notion of literary success was out of question. Canadian books were routinely not taught in schools and universities. I myself have never taken a course on Canadian literature." Like other writers of her time, she also read Sartre and Beckett. "Literature" meant British literature with "Shakespeare, Eliot, Austen, Thomas Hardy, Keats and Wordsworth and Shelley and Byron" (p. 232). It was at Harvard that Atwood first began to think seriously about Canada. Therefore, she was not only influenced by Northrop Frye and Harvard's Perry Miller but also by her predecessors like A. J. M. Smith, Dorothy Livesay and Al Purdy. The poetry of Pratt, Jay MacPherson, Margaret Avison, P. K. Page and Davidson attracted her and moulded her literary career. According to Davidson, A. E and C. N.:
to shape Atwood’s literary inheritance: together they produced a particular sensibility, a mythic imagination reflected in her treatment of the male-female relationship and Canadian nature."

As regards Canadian fiction that was written before 1900, only a few books deserve mention: Susanna Moodie’s *Roughing it in the Bush* and Major John Richardson’s novel *Wacousta* (1832). F.P. Grove and Grey Own, the two prominent Canadian writers set the trend of taking on fabricated identities. Apart from Kreotsch’s novels *The Studhorse Man* and *Gone Indian*, characters in other novels such as Margaret Laurence’s *The Fire Dwellers*, Robertson Davies’s *The World of Wonders* and Margaret Atwood’s *Lady Oracle* took on fabricated identities.

Besides *Wacousta*, France Brooke’s *The History of Emily Montague* (1769) merits mention in its being the first North American novel as well as for its witty, ironic, cheerful and creditable portrayals of Canadian life of her times. The novel is an interesting testimony to the deep-rootedness of the tradition of women writers in Canada. Sara Jeannette Duncan’s *The Imperialist* (1904) is one of the earliest Canadian novels of this century. A new kind of heroine emerged in the novels of Sara Duncan and Stephen Leacock. The shift from the depiction of ideal beauty and impeccable virtue to the ironic portrayal of the sentiments is clearly seen in their novels.
It is not till the second quarter of the 20th century that the Canadian novel began to grow in bulk and stature. This fact is stressed by Hugo MacPherson in the *Literary History of Canada*. He writes that it is not till well into the twentieth century that Canadian novelists began to "create Canada in the way that Hawthorne, a century earlier, helped to create New England." F. P. Grove, Morley Callaghan, Hugh MacLennan, Sinclair Ross and others wrote and published novels that became cannons of Canadian literature. It was in 1937 that the Governor General's Awards were initiated and new literary magazines and journals began to make their appearance. E. K Brown's *On Canadian Poetry* (1943) is the first recognized classical statement on the development of Canadian poetry. It is a first big step towards the presence of growing literary tradition.

It was due to the absence of recognizable indigenous fictive tradition and the stronghold of colonial outlook that the early novelists preoccupied themselves with the theme of defining man's relation with environment. Their characters tried to gain an adequate perception of self in a self-effacing cultural and geographical space. Northrop Frye also remarks about this problem of obliterated environment in his Preface to *The Bush Garden*. According to him, Canada with "its empty space, its largely unknown
lakes and rivers and islands, its division of language its
dependence on immense railways to hold it physically
together, has had this peculiar problem of an obliterated
environment throughout most of its history.⁴ The problem
of erasure of environment has been so acute that F.P.
Grove’s quasi-autobiographical works Over Prairie Trails
(1922), A Search For America (1927) and his novels Settlers
of the Marsh (1925), Fruits of the Earth (1933) and The
Master of the Mill (1944) explored the dual relationship of
man with nature and technology. The works portray the
struggle of man against hostile and giant landscape and what
it costs him in terms of human loss and bitterness. The
Master of the Mill is, in fact, a prophetic warning against
indiscriminate mechanization and industrialization. Four
decades later, George Grant’s Empire and Technology
and Margaret Atwood’s novels elaborate upon the theme.
Noteworthy among the prairie books are Martha Ostenso’s Wild
Geese (1925) and Robert Stead’s Grain (1926). They were
followed later by Sinclair Ross’s As For Me and My House
(1941), W. O. Mitchell’s Who Has Seen the Wind (1947) and
Sheila Watson’s The Double Hook (1959). These works belong
to the tradition that explores man’s relation with the
environment in symbolic and realistic terms.

The two writers who dominated the Canadian literary
scene in the second quarter of the twen-

Morley Callaghan and Hugh MacLennan. Margaret Laurence in "Ivory Tower or Grass Roots?" identifies these two authors as the "first generation of non-colonial Canadian writers."5 In Such Is My Beloved (1934), They Shall Inherit the Earth (1935), More Joy In Heaven (1937) and The Loved and the Lost (1951), Callaghan explored human relationship of the ordinary people in an uncheerful urban surrounding. This change from rural to urban economy reflects the spirit of the times in Hugh MacLennan's Barometer Rising (1941), Two Solitudes and The Watch that Ends the Night (1959); a sense of Canada as a place emerges. Two Solitudes is an overtly nationalistic novel which attempts to provide in fictional terms a resolution of the Anglo-French conflict. The shift is towards acquiring a holistic Canadian identity. Philip Child in Fiction (1938) terms this "trend towards realism,"6 as the single development of the period.

Sinclair Ross, W. O. Mitchell and Sheila Watson, apart from contributing to the evolution of the prairie fictive tradition are also noteworthy for moving away from the realistic to the symbolic model. This is indicative of the Canadian novel's slow but progressive growth. It marks the new beginning that later culminates in innovative and experimental fiction of the post-nineteen sixties. Philip Child was, therefore, not being overambitious when he
remarked in 1938 that the writer-reader nexus is significantly contributing to the emergence of Canadian fiction.

From the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, significant events accelerated the development of Canadian literature. On the political front, Canada broke the Imperialist connection by the Statute of West Minster in 1949. It asserted the complete supremacy of its own Parliament and appointed a Canadian as its Governor General in 1952. The Canadian council was set up in 1957 which became a significant agency to create a body of Canadian literature. The prominent novelists like Robertson Davies, Ethel Wilson, Earnest Buckler, Mordecai Richler, Sheila Watson and Adele Wiseman who enriched the literary tradition began their writing careers in 1950s. Robertson Davies introduced ideas and concepts into his fiction. His *Fifth Business* (1970), *The Manticore* (1972), *World of Wonders* (1975) acquired psychological and religious dimensions. Ethel Wilson in *The Innocent Traveller* (1949), *Swamp Angel* (1954) wrote exclusively of women with sensitivity and acute intelligence. Mordecai Richler, the Jewish Canadian writer who calls his four novels "naturalistic" published his work *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* in 1959. Adele Wiseman's *The Sacrifice* appeared in 1956. It gave voice to the silent/silenced minorities to be heard later in the novels
of Rudy Wiebe in the 70s. Another major event was the publication of Canada's premier scholarly journal Canadian Literature in 1959 which provided a creditable platform for critical writings on Canadian literature. On Feb 15, 1965, Canada adopted its Maple Leaf Flag and symbolically enhanced the growing sense of nationalhood. It was against this background of resurgent nationalism that Canadian literary renaissance took place in post 1960's. Even Frye who castigated the critical evaluation of Canadian literature as "a debunking project" (p. 213) had to revise his opinion in the second edition of Klinck's literary history. He confessed that it was "no longer a gleam in a paternal critic's eye."\(^7\)

The desire for an indigenous Canadian literature was not new. J. Gordon Mowat and McGee had pleaded for the need to have a Canadian literature of their own which could reflect their national culture. As far back as 1897 John A. Cooper voiced the need to have Canadian literature that is not only set within the culture but is also remarkable for critical insight and creative excellence. According to him, no writing must be called Canadian literature "unless in quality it is equal to the writings of the world's best authors."\(^8\) It was this desire to assert the significance of Canadian literature that it became important to document and catalogue Canadian metaphors and motifs so as to recover
the distinctive Canadian archetypes. This was accomplished by Margaret Atwood’s *Survival* (1972), John Moss’s *Patterns of Isolation* (1974) and D.G. Jones’s *Butterfly on Rock* (1970). These works delineated and defined the prototypical Canadian themes and influenced the literary Renaissance of the 1960’s and 1970’s in which Margaret Atwood and Margaret Laurence exercised central influence.

Margaret Laurence, the contemporary of Margaret Atwood is the "creative godmother to an entire generation." She wrote four novels *The Diviners* (1974), *The Stone Angel* (1964), *Two Solitudes*, *A Jest of God* (1966) and one collection of stories. All her works are set in the fictional town of Manawaka. Although Laurence confesses that she writes about women and that her works deal with a lot of the stuff women’s lib is talking about right now, she refutes that she writes "just for and about women." Her concern is broader than that. She wants Canadian literature to voice the Canadian situation just as the third world writers voice and capture their problems. She is also aware of the hardships faced by the Canadian writers countering the overwhelming cultural imperialism. Another writer who deserves mention is Alice Munro. Though Munro portrays the female experience of the world, she is particularly known for her sympathetic rendering of male characters. Her fiction evokes the feel of the life in South Western

Among the male writers, Rudy Wiebe, a native Indian, concerns himself with the life of his Mennonites and their historical past. His stories are not mere records of the life and situation of Canadian-Indian, they are "a meaning and life" to him and his people. Jack Hodgin and Robert Kroetsch’s vision is essentially comic. Dave Godfrey’s The New Ancestors (1970) is innovative in style and structure. Michael Ondaatze explores the dilemma of modern man, Hugh Hood has an optimistic view of life. For him, art has a spiritual function. Hood’s works show commitment to an affirmative and religious vision. In the novels of Timothy Findley, the inclination is towards history. But The Last of the Crazy People (1967) is a psychological novel about the psychological and social disintegration of the Winslow family. Matt Cohen produced seven novels and set them in the fictional town of Salem. We come across a fine portrayal of the transition period in The Colours of War
(1977) when rural and urban values clash and create conflicts.

This brief resume of the Canadian fiction shows variations in themes, technique, style and philosophical approach to life. It is also clear that women writers have exercised tremendous influence on the contemporary Canadian literature. The first Canadian/North American novel, *The History of Emily Montague* was written by a woman--Frances Brooke as early as 1769. Other women writers to make significant contribution to the growth and development of Canadian novel are Susanna Moodie, Sara Jeannette Duncan, Mazo de la Roche, Martha Ostenso, Ethel Wilson, Adele Wiseman and Sheila Watson. Commenting on pioneer women writers of Canada, Margaret Atwood contends that since the English Canada got populated in the nineteenth century, women took to writing because "by that time the women could write." Moreover, the suffrage movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Canada gave a further fillip to the literary ambitions of women. With the passage of time, more and more women took to writing. The "new woman" emerged during the first world war period who, as Barbara Godard observes "astonished, amused and frightened Canadians." In the late sixties, Canadian women began to assert a distinctive female identity in life as well as in literature. As Margaret Atwood remarks, women
became a force to be reckoned with and so they "cannot be ignored in Canadian literature." The same can be said of Atwood who perceives a dialectic relationship between culture and art and is aware of the dynamics between artist and society. Margaret Atwood holds a significant place in Canadian literature as a poet, novelist, short story-writer and above all a critic.

Atwood's fiction cannot be fixed within the conventional labels like feminist, nationalist, modernist and post-modernist. It is not because she herself disclaims these labels but because of the fact that she is a diverse and elusive writer. Sherill Grace is right when she confesses that "such a versatile and evolving writer" cannot be fixed in a phrase. Atwood's concern goes much beyond. She calls for the creation and acceptance of female characters who are fully human with all the individuality and variety. However, she has been instrumental in shaping Canada's understanding of herself. Her *Survival* played a significant role in this regard. *Survival* located the Canadian "here" by providing a map so that they could see themselves in relation to everything else. She contends that "Canada is an unknown territory for the people who live in it."\(^{12}\) It provided a national myth and it could compete with the American Frontier myth. *Survival* established the fact that there was a Canadian literature. It is in this
that *Survival*'s importance lies; it created a sense of "being" that Canadians are; Canadian literature is. It was not merely a major publishing success but as Rosenberg says "the most visible, widely read critical work on Canadian literature in Canada's history." Atwood herself admits that she became "a thing. . . a culmination of being an icon, that is something that people worship, and being a target, that is something they shoot at (qtd. in Rosenberg 134). To Atwood it is "a personal statement" and "political manifesto" (*Survival*, p. 13) but critics judged it as centralist, historic and non-evaluative. However, the book's literary if not critical achievement is undeniable. J. Lee Thomson does not consider it whimsical to think if Canada and Canadian Literature could have survived "without, in one form or another, *Survival*." Even to George Woodcock, *Survival* is "interesting and exciting as an index to the development of our [Canadian] Literary tradition." According to B. W. Powe, Canadians felt "insecure and isolated particularly because of their proximity to the American literary machine and so felt the need to express a difference." *Survival* expresses just that: "a difference."

To date, Margaret Atwood has seven novels to her credit besides a large number of verses, short stories and other writings. Chronologically the novels are as follows:
The Edible Woman \(^{17}\) (1969),
Surfacing \(^{18}\) (1972),
Lady Oracle \(^{19}\) (1976),
Life Before Man \(^{20}\) (1979),
Bodily Harm \(^{21}\) (1981),
The Handmaid’s Tale \(^{22}\) (1985),
Cat’s Eye \(^{23}\) (1989),

In her first novel, The Edible Woman, Atwood focuses upon the victim situation. It is the story of Marian MacAlpin who is obsessed with the idea that she is being a consumer--item in the present day consumer society. She breaks her relationship with Peter but is still haunted by fear. The novel provides an excellent insight into human consciousness. In Surfacing (1972) too, the unnamed heroine is obsessed. Apparently she goes out in search of her father but this search leads her to another quest--the search for her own identity. The novel reveals the heroine’s haunting fear of her own inadequacy, her past life with her artist lover, the trauma of having aborted her child. Finally, there comes a point when she is troubled by the images of her mother as a bird and her father as the face of an animal. The protagonist tries to get over these mental abrasions. The novel ends with her resolve to go back to her city.
Lady Oracle (1976), Atwood’s third novel revolves round the theme of double identity. Joan Foster who becomes a famous gothic romancer, tries to hide her real identity and feigns dead. However, the scheme backfires and those who had helped her to escape to Italy land in trouble. Joan finds herself unable to live under her fake identity.

Life Before Man (1979) is set in Toronto in the late 1970. Lesje, the main character is paleaontologist at the Royal Ontario Museum. She falls in love with Nate Schoenhof, a dispirited toy-maker who once was a lawyer. She dreams of a better life before man but finds herself in conflict with Nate’s dissipated wife-Elizabeth. But her deliberate action to become pregnant by Nate relieves her of pessimism and offers a new hope in life.

Bodily Harm (1981) is the story of Rennie Wilfor, Toronto journalist who visits the Tiny Caribbean islands in order to write a travel article for her magazine. As a young woman, she is not seriously involved with anything. Her mastectomy awakens her to other aspects of being alive. She becomes involved in political corruption, C. I. A agents and later even in smuggling. She is assumed to be a spy. This charge awakens her to human suffering. She gives up her aloof detachment. She participates in larger world with true compassion for agonized fellow beings. In the end, her
vision and understanding of life get enlarged. The theme of The Handmaid's Tale (1985) is political as the novel deals with the Republic of Gilead and covers a century from 1990 to 2195. The focus is again on women and their conditions in society. Once again the woman is the victim.

Cat's Eye (1989) is an unusual work which deals with a detailed and perceptive exploration of girlhood. It travels upto the middle age of Elaine Risley, the heroine. We see the heroine passing through different phases of life and finally "I am the older one now. I'm the stronger," she asserts.

An overview of Margaret Atwood's fiction reveals that Atwood's characters are motivated by intra-psychic and interpersonal conflicts. The brief resume given above shows that her protagonists are obsessed with some kind of fear which lead them either to hide their identity or to assume double identity so as to escape reality. All of them are self-alienated. It is felt that the motivational system of these characters can be understood if we study them in the light of Horneyan tenets. After all, these characters are human beings placed in different situations. They move in their particular social and cultural settings and react to them in peculiar manners according to their motivation systems. Karen Horney's theory presents us with suitable
tools to understand these characters. However, before proceeding with my discussion on the viability of Horneyan tenets to study Margaret Atwood's protagonists, I would like to give a brief survey of the critical works done so far on Atwood's fiction so as to ascertain that my thesis is innovative in nature and that no critic has so far studied Atwood in the light of Horney.

Margaret Atwood is a widely read contemporary writer who has received critical acclaim from all over the world. Frank Davey and Wayne Fraser are prominent critics who discuss her feminism and nationalism. Frank Davey in Reading Canadian Reading deals with Margaret Atwood and her feminist poetics. He finds in Atwood's texts a major feminist ideological critique of western cultures. He concentrates on the radical role feminist ideology plays in the language of her writings. He emphasises the semiotic operations of the text and presents the process/product paradox as gender defined. Wayne Fraser on the other hand is concerned with her nationalism or anti-Americanism. He deals with The Dominion of Women and explores her concern with Canadian and feminine oppression. Like David Stouck, the writer of Major Canadian Authors, he also takes the victor-victim themes and Canadian nationalism. Fraser examines Cat's Eye from "post-feminist" point of view while
Stouck is concerned only with the themes of victimization and social realism.

George Woodcock, Linda Hutcheon, Annette Kolody, Paul Goetsch deal with Atwood's art and technique. Linda Hutcheon in *Margaret Atwood: Language, Text, And System* is preoccupied with Atwood's paradoxes of artistic creations from postmodernist viewpoint. Her criticism also includes the ideological, psychological and artistic aspects of her first four novels. Linda Hutcheon tries to trace the core of Atwood's post-modernism in *The Canadian Postmodern*. She also discusses the traditional literary convention, contradictions, parody and metafictive self-reflexivity from post-modern point of view. George Woodcock traces the impact of Atwood's poetic sensibility on her handling of images and myths in *Survival* and *Surfacing*. In this book, *Introducing Margaret Atwood's Surfacing*, George Woodcock discusses her new attitude towards her characters and their inner landscape. He not only analyses the metaphorical structure, the Ancient Quest but also discusses the themes and characters in relationship to the female protagonist. *Surfacing* like *Survival* has attracted a large number of critical studies. The author discusses the myth and mythical heroic quest in "The Woman as Hero in Margaret Atwood's Surfacing." The unnamed heroine is compared with Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. 
Annette Kolody discusses the politics of narrative in her essay, "Margaret Atwood and the Politics of Narrative," in *Studies on Canadian Literature*. She first sees Atwood's four works in the light of Nathaniel Hawthorne's definitions of romances and also notes down the changes in Atwood's romances. She says Atwood used narrative strategies of comic romances in her first two novels and parodied this form in *Lady Oracle* and turned *The Handmaid's Tale* into romance fantasy. Sherill Grace's *Violent Duality: A Study of Margaret Atwood* is the thematic study of her works. To Grace, women are by nature multiple. Sherill Grace discusses the technique of Atwood's fiction in "Articulating the 'space between': Atwood's Untold Stories and Fresh Beginnings." In *Gaining Ground*, Paul Goetsch describes Margaret Atwood's *Life Before Man* as a Novel of Manners and Shannon Hengen in *Margaret Atwood's Power* discusses the psychological aspects of Atwood's works. Linda Hutcheon also studies the psychological self-consciousness in *Life Before Man*. Shannon in her essay on "Mirrors, Men, And Empowerment: The First Two Novels" probes into Atwood's sense of pervasiveness of regressive narcissism in the cultural milieux. The author uses mirror imagery to discuss the issue of pathological male characters to show they dominate protagonist's relationship. Robert Lecker is another writer who discusses the art of Margaret Atwood by
using mirror imagery in the first three novels in an essay "Janus Through The Looking Glass: Atwood’s First Three Novels," in The Art of Margaret Atwood

Coral Ann Howells is the only European critic who has taken comparative criticism of Atwood’s works. She traces the interplay of contradictory discourses of realism and fictions. She takes the fiction of Alice Munro and contrasts it with Margaret Atwood’s Bodily Harm in her "Worlds Alongside: Contradictory Discourses in the Fiction of Alice Munro and Margaret Atwood," in Gaining Ground: European Critics On Canadian Literature.

Canadian novelists like Margaret Atwood, Laurence and Wiebe were almost unknown in India ten years ago but now they are being taught and researched upon. The Tropical Maple Leaf contains scholarly papers on Canadian social scientists on social themes, whereas four essays deal with literature. Roshan G. Shahani focuses on Atwood’s novel The Handmaid’s Tale. He takes the theme of "Women as Villains or Victims?" This theme of victimization is also taken by Christine Gomez in her essay "From Being an Unaware Victim to Becoming a Creative Non-Victim: A Study of Two Novels of Margaret Atwood." She relates the four basic victim positions (as outlined in Survival) to her portrayal of women characters in The Edible Woman and The Handmaid’s
Tale. In the same book, M. F. Salat writes about Margaret Atwood's thematic patterns and concerns. Her preoccupation with deconstructing the dialectics of male/female opposition is also traced by the critic. While Shahani, Salat, Christine Gomez take up the thematic criticism, Barbara Godard deals with the psychological aspect. She seeks to find out what constitutes Atwood's subversive tactics in "My(m) Other, MySelf: Strategies for Subversion in Atwood and He'bert in Canadian literature." She concentrates on the sexual implication of the differences on the basis of social system and logic. Sunaina Singh in Ambivalence: Studies in Canadian Literature explores the various forces that drive the protagonists of Margaret Atwood and Anita Desai to escape. Her psychological probe is directed to find if escape is defense mechanism or a way to confront the challenges of reality. In the same book Jai Dev deals with Surfacing from structural criticism point of view and emphasises on the imagery of journey which to him means the journey of life. Iqbal Kaur in Margaret Atwood's Surfacing: A Critical Study, deals not only with the major concerns of Atwood at the thematic level but also tries to demystify the novel by concentrating on the linguistic devices and stylistic analysis.

The resume of the critical works reveals that critics in America, Canada, Europe and India have given the
feminist, textual, formalist, comparative, structural criticism. They have discussed psychological aspects, postmodernism, mythic pattern, victor-victim themes and Canadian nationalism. Her art and technique, her imagery, verbal metaphor and narrative symbols are traced by the critics. It is also felt that her first three novels have received detailed critical attention while her later novels *Life Before Man*, *The Handmaid’s Tale*, *Cat’s Eye* have yet to be explored. There is no full length critical book which contains full perspectives on Margaret Atwood. The *Raison d’être* of studying Atwood in the light of Horneyan theory is that so far no critical work has studied the character and conflict in her novel from Horneyan angle. This study, it is hoped, will shed light on the characters from a new angle and will add a new perspective to the already existing body of criticism. In order to understand the basic principles of Horneyan theory, I would like to give a brief summary of the approach.

(ii)

**THIRD FORCE PSYCHOLOGY**

In literary criticism, the term "Third Force Psychology" came into focus in 1964 when B.J. Paris, an exponent in the field started analysing literary characters with the help of the psychological theories of Karen Horney
and Abraham Maslow. In the field of psychology, however, the term was in vogue since 1962. It was Abraham Maslow who used it for the first time in the preface to *Toward a Psychology of Being* for all those psychologists who gave a comprehensive view of human nature distinct from that of the Freudians and the behaviorists. It follows then that Third Force Psychology is not a new branch of psychology. It includes what Maslow termed the "splinter groups," who coalesced and formed a "Third Force." These are: Adler and his followers, Jungians, Neo-Freudians, Post-Freudians, Otto Rank and his followers, Gestalt therapists, Self-psychologists, phenomenological psychologists, humanitarian psychologists, Rogerians and growth-psychologists. Since all these theorists offered a holistic and optimistic view of human nature, they came to be known as "humanistic psychologists."

According to Third Force Psychologists, man is not a tension-reducing machine, nor is he a conditional animal; man has in him a third force, an "evolutionary constructive" force which inspires him to strive for self-realization. Man has the intrinsic potential to reach the goal of self-fulfilment but unfortunately, his efforts are forestalled in life by unhealthy or injurious influences. All Third Force psychologists see self-realization as the highest value for a human being. It means that he has the potential to be
"fully human." Different psychologists give it different names: self-actualization, individuation, autonomy, integration, self-realization. Whatever be the name, the goal is the same: realisation of the highest potential.

The field of Third Force is vast and the psychologists comprising this branch are numerous. However, I shall only expound the theory of Karen Horney and refer to Abraham Maslow and Erich-Fromm as and when necessary. I have delimited my field in order to achieve sharper focus so as to be precise in my analysis.

Karen Horney, like other Third Force psychologists insists on the need to realise the real self. Real self for her is the foundation of personality. It is the central inner force which is common to all human beings but it is unique in each. As she observes these are "The unique alive forces of his real self: the clarity and depth of his feelings, thoughts, wishes, interests; the ability to tap his own resources, the strength of his will-power; the special capacities or gifts he may have; the faculty to express himself to others with his spontaneous feelings. All this will in time enable him to find his set of values and his aims in life." Horney has "the belief in the inherent urge to grow." For her, the real self is "the original", force that leads towards individual growth. It is this real
self we are looking for "when we say that we want to find ourselves" (NHG, p. 158). Given favourable environment, warmth of affection, inner security, inner freedom the child learns to live according to his real self.

As Horney sees it, unfavourable or adverse condition in his environment produces in a child a feeling of "basic anxiety." Horney describes basic anxiety as the "feeling of being isolated and helpless in a world conceived as potentially hostile" (NHG, p. 18). These feelings arise in childhood when one does not get favourable condition to grow according to his individual needs. Children whose parents don’t give them genuine love, lose the sense of belonging, the "we" feeling. They develop "profound insecurity and vague apprehensions " (NHG, p. 18).

A child’s urge for safety, warmth and love are so strong and when he fails to get these he abandons his real self. As Maslow puts it, "The primary choice is between others and one’s own self. If the only way to maintain the self is to lose the other, then the ordinary child will give up the self." Erich Fromm also recognizes the importance of relatedness. He describes the emergence of individuation as the process of "growing aloneness." When it happens, a child may submerge himself in the outside world or give in to hostile feelings. Or he may develop in a productive way.
He may establish a spontaneous relationship with man and nature. According to Erich Fromm, if every step in the direction of separation and individuation were matched by "corresponding growth of the self, the development of the child would be harmonious." He also points out that while the individuation is an automatic process, growth of the self is affected by various social and personal factors.

In *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* (1987), Karen Horney makes it clear that childhood experiences determine conditions for neurosis but they cannot be considered the only cause of later troubles. Like other Third Force psychologists, she does not deny the role of childhood environment in shaping the neurotic drives of an individual but stresses on the present structure of the psyche and refutes the Freudian Theory that adult reactions are the repetition of infantile experiences. She emphasises that once the child starts feeling "basic anxiety," he resorts to certain defensive strategies to deal with the conditions arising out of his fears and inadequacy. Later his particular system develops under the influence of external factors such as familial atmosphere, social and cultural exigencies. His internal necessities to feel whole and external pressures, mould his adult character.
Horney, Maslow and Fromm are of the view that specific social and cultural conditions generate neurotic trends. Maslow terms neurosis, a deficiency disease and Horney classifies it as a deviation from normal pattern of social behaviour. "Most neurosis involved, along with other complex determinants, ungratified wishes for safety, for belongingness and identifications for close relationships and for respect and prestige" (TPB, p. 21). Social-psychologists emphasise the role of social and cultural forces in shaping man's responses to his surroundings. Erich Fromm affirms that even the most beautiful and the most ugly inclination of man are not a part of his biological fixed nature, "but result from the social process which creates man." Man's self-consciousness helps him to think of himself as a whole. His interactions with other members of society enable him to bring himself within his own experimental purview. "Thus he can consciously integrate and unify the various aspects of his self, to form a single consistent and coherent and organized personality."  

According to Horney, when a child sees a "potentially hostile" environment, he feels threatened and does not relate himself to others with his real self but with his compulsive drives. "He cannot simply like or dislike, trust or distrust, express his wishes or protest against those of others but has automatically to devise ways to cope with
people and to manipulate them with minimum damage to himself." This process weakens the real self and he reacts to his environment with fears. It produces in him a dread of himself and others. He feels angry, hostile but helpless to express his danger in this threatening environment. When he represses his hostility, he feels unworthy, unlovable, weak and impotent. To compensate for his feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy, he lifts himself above others by seeking self-glorification. This he does by adopting interpersonal strategies of defence.

These three solutions are: his move towards people, move away from people and move against people. The selection of these strategies of defence depends upon individual temperament, his social or familial conditions. A person is driven by the compulsive nature of his inner necessities. A child who moves towards people adopts compliant or self-effacing characteristics. In move against people, he adopts an aggressive trend. Those who move away from people become detached. The above three solutions are not mutually exclusive. A person may adopt one or more of these strategies. The individual may move from one solution to another to gain some sense of wholeness and ability to function but he will not be able to resolve his basic conflict.
The three interpersonal moves give us a picture of character "types" but in life, "people tending towards the same main solution" may differ in their human qualities, gifts or achievements. As Horney puts it:

Moreover, what we regard as "types" are actually cross sections of personalities in which the neurotic process had led to rather extreme developments with pronounced characteristics. But there is always an indeterminate range of intermediate structure defying any precise qualifications. These complexities are further enhanced by the fact that, owing to the process of psychic fragmentation, even in extreme instances, there is often more than one main solution. "Most cases are mixed cases" says William James, "and we should not treat our classification with too much respect."
 Perhaps it would be more correct to speak of directions of development than of types (NHG, p. 191).

Under the compliant solution, Horney lists two types; (i) self-effacing and (ii) morbidly dependent. For both types, "salvation lies in others" (NHG, p. 226). The self-effacing person in his move to others, "tends to subordinate himself, takes second place, leaving the limelight to others" (QIC, p. 52). He shuns "everything that is presumptuous, selfish and aggressive." He cultivates all qualities of helplessness and martyrdom and expects protection and love in return. He values attributes of goodness and usefulness. His bargain is that if he is good, loving and noble, he will be treated well by fate and other
people. But when he is not valued for these "lovable" qualities and his virtues are not rewarded, he retaliates. Since he is a self-effacing person, he cannot be violent. Therefore, he turns his anger inward and feels weak to fight in self-interest. This initiates his "shrinking process." So he despairs divine justice, indulges in self-pity, guilty feelings and personal inadequacy. When he cannot live up to the dictates of his solution, his inner rage threatens his self-image. Self-hate is generated. His 'shoulds' and neurotic claims give rise to tensions. He is torn by inner conflicts. It results, in extreme cases, in vindictiveness. It may take any form depending upon individual temperament and how much he is damaged.

Erotic love fascinates a morbidly dependent individual. For him, love is "the ticket to paradise, where all woes end: no more feeling lost, guilty, and unworthy; no more responsibility for self; no more struggle with a harsh world for which he feels helplessly unequipped" (NHG, p. 239). He is attracted to a masterful, expansive and proud person. This not only meets his need for surrender and safe expression of his aggressive tendencies but he also derives vicarious strength. Being an epitome of all lovable qualities, he feels hurt and disillusioned if his qualities are not recognised. It means total rejection of himself and
like self-effacing type, he also reacts in a self-destructive way.

In order to master life and to become successful, an aggressive type makes move against people and cultivates efficiency and resourcefulness. He becomes aggressive and self-aggrandized. There are three sub-types of this expansive solution: the Narcissistic; the perfectionists; and the arrogant-vindictive. They all "aim at mastering life. This is their way of conquering fears and anxieties; this gives meaning to their lives and gives them a certain zest for living" (NHG, p. 212). The narcissist seeks to master life by self-admiration and the exercise of charm. He believes he is the "anointed, the man of destiny, the prophet, the great giver, the benefactor of mankind" (NHG, P. 194). The perfectionist chases standards of perfection and excellence. His own perfection therefore is "not only a means to superiority but also one to control life" (NHG, p. 197). An arrogant vindictive person has a compulsive need for vindictive triumph. These aggressive types are proud of their self-sufficiency. They deny all softer feelings, compassion, consideration, loyalty and self-sacrifice. They do not depend on the world to reward them. They seek "callous pursuit of self-interest" and that is "the paramount law" (OIC, p. 64) for them. They are too certain
of achieving their aspirations if they remain true to their vision of life.

The basically detached person seeks neither love nor mastery. He wants to be left alone. He expects nothing and to have nothing expected of him. His bargain is that if he asks nothing, they will not bother him, that if he tries for nothing, he will not fail and that if he expects little of life, he will not be disappointed. He feels superior to others in his independence. But his freedom is meaningless because he is alienated from his spontaneous desires. This involves not only living in imagination but it shrinks his inner cravings. In order to resolve his basic conflict he draws a magic circle so that no one can penetrate. He resorts to "escape and hide." His resignation from active living gives him an "on looker" attitude but this is "no true solution because the compulsive cravings for closeness as well as for aggressive domination, exploitation, and excelling remain, and they keep harassing if not paralyzing their carrier" (OIC. p. 95). Thus, he develops contradictory set of values and this is self-destructive. This intensifies his original feelings of worthlessness and self-alienation and creates basic innerconflict which takes him away from his real self.
Horney stresses that when interpersonal strategies work to defend against basic anxiety, the intra-psychic forces are also active, they create problems for him. When he is gripped by self-hate and is weak because of self-alienation, he creates an idealized image of himself. He endows himself with "unlimited powers and with exalted faculties; he becomes a hero, a genius, a supreme lover, a saint, a god" (NHG, p. 22). In this, he poses superior, and is elevated in his sense of significance. His picture of himself depends upon his strategy. For example, a compliant person valuing love will picture himself as an epitome of all love. This gives him identity. For an aggressive individual, his heroism, leadership or strength give him identity. Thus harbouring his imaginary pictures, he strives to live up to them. He directs all his efforts towards actualizing a false image and forsaking the real self. The creation of the idealized image produces not only the search for glory but a whole structure of neurotic strategies. Strategies are self-glorification, neurotic claims, tyrannical shoulds and neurotic pride. Horney calls this structure of intra-psychic defence, "the pride system."

In his search for glory, the individual feels "he is entitled to be treated by others, or by fate, in accord with his grandiose notions about himself" (NHG, p. 41). He not only nourishes grandiose notions about himself but makes
neurotic claims on others too. As Horney says the function of neurotic claims is to perpetuate the individual's "illusions about himself, and to shift responsibility to factors outside himself" (NHG, p. 63). Though these are illusions he is harbouring about himself, he is unaware of it. The result is that they increase his vulnerability and "prevent him from squaring himself with his difficulties" (NHG, p. 63). They perpetuate rather than alleviate the individual's difficulties. Side by side his shoulds make a claim on him. He "should" be as he visualises himself to be. These inner dictates set standards for him. All his energies which should take a normal person towards self-actualization, drag him to actualize the idealized self.

The "shoulds" and the neurotic claims are very damaging. They shatter in face of realities of life. When they are shattered, the neurotic pride suffers a blow and tension mounts. In order to restore his pride, the neurotic takes recourse to various methods, depending upon his temperament. Sometimes he hits harder or sometimes he tries to forget the incident. It is clear that both ways his idealized self creates an impossible situation for him. To live up to his glorified image, he makes tremendous efforts but when he fails he feels the onslaught of self-hate.
Healthy pride is important for the self but neurotic pride is "the climax and consolidation of the process initiated with the search of glory" (NHG, p. 109). It is not only based on illusions and self-deception but also on his imagined attributes. This pride system is, in fact, his defence against self-hate. Threats to it produce anxiety and hostility. Its collapse results in self-hate. Feelings of shame and humiliation overpower him. He indulges in self hate. Self hate is essentially the rage that the idealised self feels towards the actual self for not being what it should. Horney contends that the neurotic has to counter four selves; the real self which is already banished; idealised self which is impossible to attain, the despised self and actual self that he is at a given moment. According to Horney, when real self is forsaken, alienation takes hold of a person. Self-hate and inner-conflict produce a rift in the personality and inner war starts. Unable to bear the onslaught of self-condemnation, self-accusation and self-hate, he snaps his bonds with reality. There is no spontaneous integration. He cannot lead a goal-directed life and fights a desperate battle against the world. He goes to hell within himself and it leads to tragic results. Karen Horney views neurotic development as a process of becoming alienated from the real self. What Horney terms real self, Mathew Arnold calls it the "best self" which
culture nourishes. It unites us in harmony with ourselves. "This is the very self which culture, or the study of perfection, seeks to develop in us; at the expense of our old untransformed self, taking pleasure only in doing what it likes or is used to do and exposing us to the risk of clashing with everyone who is doing the same." It is, therefore, essential to seek our best self and affirm it with all our strength.

Karen Horney's theory has provided us a tool for psycho-analytic study of characters. Paris affirms that "Third Force" is a powerful tool of critical, biographical and cultural analysis. In literary criticism, these theories can be employed in "three ways: to analyse literary characters in motivational terms; to analyse the implied authors of individual works, showing their inner conflicts and blind spots; and to analyse the possibility of the author as it can be inferred from all his works." When psychology is used to interpret literature, critics often question the viability of this approach. They contend that by bringing in extra-literary material to understand literature we are failing to read a novel as a novel. Psychological critics on the other hand assert that in a psychological approach we may bring material outside of literary studies, but we use it within the frame work of a literary form. According to a critic, by using the tool of
psychology we enlarge and deepen our conception of human nature by understanding human emotions and motivations. We cannot understand, a critic says, "the meaning of literary works without an extensive knowledge of human emotions and motivations." A realistic novel creates a fictional world of its own with the help of representation and interpretation. While the former governs the rhetoric, the latter deals with the mimesis of the work. To comprehend a character, his motives and actions, a critic must recognize the disparity between representation and interpretation, rhetoric and mimesis. Horneyan tenets can illuminate us by enabling us to recognize the inconsistencies without rationalization or reduction.

Margaret Atwood’s characters have often been called neurotics, but it would be unjust to dump them all under one category. They are after all human beings. Some of them are accomplished artists whose needs and demands should be admitted. In the following chapters in which I would discuss six novels of Atwood, namely: *The Edible Woman, Surfacing, Lady Oracle, Life Before Man, Bodily Harm, Cat’s Eye*, I shall endeavour to understand the intra-psychic and interpersonal problems of the characters and to see them as human beings.
Notes and References


42. Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, 2nd ed. (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1968), p. 50. Further references are to this edition and will be cited as TPB along with pagination.


