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**Female Identity Crisis and Self-Recognition in Margaret Atwood's
*The Edible Woman (1969) and Surfacing (1972)***

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Dedication

" Some say, you never meet your heroes, but I say if you are really Blessed you get them as your parents. "

Laura Dern

To the apples of my eye,

To my guardian angels,

To the light of my life,

To my dearest parents.

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Abstract

In conformity with the second feminist wave inchoate stages, Atwood's *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing* shed light on female identity crisis and the perennial quest of self-recognition. The current study overarching concern, thus, purports to establish the distinction between the author's diverging approach in depicting female paths towards self-actualization. Hence, the extent of the heroines' propelled independence and, likewise, impediments thwarting such a pursuit are equally pursued. A major pre-supposition holds that progress has been made. However, recognition is all but complete in either novels. Through similar lines, it condemns patriarchy as the catalyst behind such a confusion. To corroborate such a hypothesis, a descriptive psycho-feminist approach is adopted for conducting the current comparative and qualitative study. Hereby, identity development is traced through Josselson's framework of identity statuses, which confers femaleness a central importance. Through analytical study the protagonists' point of departure and then final termination, along the road of recognition, are measurably indicated. The study has, indeed, yielded clear evidence for the heroines' outgrowth, yet the *Surfacer* seemed to overrun *The Edible*. Patriarchy, alongside capitalist urban life dynamics, has been jointly denounced as battling against the heroines' attempts towards self-realization in both settings.

Keywords: Female identity, Identity Crisis, Self-recognition, Identity Statuses, Postmodernism.

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

As gender equality activism infiltrated the 20th century political mainstream, the tide of the feminist waves flooded the literary shores. Accordingly, degrading and misogynous frame of thought were battled and incrementally eliminated. Since then, writers and critics have adeptly screened long invoiced female-related struggles, domestic violence and gender roles imposition as such. Chiefly, the long-standing codes of patriarchy had been digested. Female writers, in particular, through shedding light on sensitive and loaded topics, dismantled covert, overt and systematic gender-based discrimination. Traditionally single-handedly and oft-uncharted territories such motherhood, family setting and sexist work environments have eventually been scrutinized.

In tandem with contemporary struggles, questions about identity formation and its concomitant disorders have been widely imported into the feminist realm. After the ravages of the world wars, self-conception and identity, in general, no longer reflect a consistent and autonomous unity. While constructing a theoretical framework that caters to the essence of female self-hood, critics faced a twofold dilemma. The latter is manifested primarily in the perspective from which self-conception is tackled biological, sociological, or psychological, and, secondly, the inclusion of gender diversity as a vital variable in pre-existing male narrowed theories. Noteworthy, fragmentation, self-dissociation and estrangement are prominently distinguished and featured by postmodern female novelists.

Among the 20th century constellation of leading novelists, Margaret Atwood, whose work served as a perfect evocation of the period's struggles and its shades, has long carved a pioneering position. Mining into the dimensions of Anglo-American feminism, the Canadian novelist's work grapples with patriarchy, identity confusion and sexual politics. Notably, her early writing coincided with the rise of the second feminist wave by the late 60s till the 80s. Accordingly, Atwood's writing is mainly constructed around strong, often enigmatic, and

independence-striving female protagonists. Through language precision, non-linear style and self-reflexive mode, the Booker Prize winner has been among the first writers who flagged their heterogeneous views in favour of women empowerment.

Employing *The Edible Woman* (1969) and *Surfacing* (1972) as the fulcrum for this study, identity confusion and retrieval have been brought to the fore. The writer's first novels blaze trail Atwood's thematic sphere. Notwithstanding the differing plots, both protagonists reject the conventional social norms and gender stereotypes, undergoing a harrowing journey of self-assertion. While Marian, who finds herself a target of consumption, reassesses her position in a male-dominated society to regain her sense of self, *Surfacing's* anonymous heroine researches for her missing father to end up in amid of search of her very being. Hence Atwood's open-ended stories maps the heroines 'gradual detachment from reality and proceed with a glimpse of their willingness to retake control of their lives again.

2. Significance of the Study

Singling out Atwood's works, *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing*, is purposefully justifiable. To start with, in a postmodern world of multiplicity and uncertainty, who am I ? has become a challenging question for women, in particular. However, Margaret Atwood's selected novels offer an asymptote towards the answer. Moreover, the devoted diligence to her best-known work, *The Handmaid Tale*, imprisoned the novelist's vigorous artwork into a single tile of mosaic. *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing* thus offer a distinction, that is, novelty. Indeed, scarce research has been advanced on the author's differing approaches in tackling the notion of female identity crisis and none has been approached from Josselson's theory.

3. Objectives of the Study

The study under investigation aims to:

- 1- Trace the author's depiction of female identity in a postmodern society.

- 2- Centre attention on the social, cultural and political context that gloves the current century's perennial quest of self-hood
- 3- Accentuate the reasons behind the female identity crisis and confusion.
- 4- Enumerate the varying symptoms and corollaries of identity confusion.
- 5- Shed light on Margaret Atwood's differing attempts in approaching plausible ways for women to achieve self-actualization.

4. Research Questions

The inclusivity of identity confusion, destructive gender roles and women empowerment are amongst the salient issues tackled in Atwood's works, *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing*, which is why it is extremely essential to beg the following questions:

- 1- How is identity confusion portrayed in Margaret Atwood's *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing* ?
- 2- What are the dominant constraints behind each protagonists 'progression towards self-recognition ?
- 3- To what extent have both protagonists voiced self independence and recognition ?

5. Hypotheses

A plausible supposition for the above-posed questions could be summed in three focal points. First, identity confusion has been sketched throughout the literary works by highlighting the potency of one's surrounding circle in shaping one's inner self and, remarkably the influence of the society's cultural mores on individuals 'perception of their worth. Secondly, patriarchal shackles are the most apparent reasons behind the protagonists thwarted independence and lack of progression towards self-recognition. Finally, likely, both heroines have not yet fully achieved self-recognition, even though progress has been made.

6. Research Methodology

To appropriately dissect Atwood's reasoning behind the chaos brewing within the heroines, a descriptive psychological feminist approach is pursued. The methodological research paradigm will recall upon Eric Ericsson's and James Marcia's theoretical framework and subtly accentuate Ruthellen Josselson's theory of identity development.

7. Structure of the Research

The current thesis unfolds a fourfold division. The theoretical frame of thought will be detailed in the first two chapters. Accordingly, the conception of identity and identity crisis, with a particular account of the feminist stance, will be elucidated in the first chapter. The second chapter is dedicated to the feminist waves and the writer's background, literary style and affiliations. The third chapter leads to an analytical application of Josselson's theory in the first novel, *the Edible Woman*. Likewise, the last chapter on the second novel, *Surfacing*. Then, the general conclusion, will tie the knot between the four chapters shedding the light on the author's differing approaches in tackling identity crisis in the chosen novels.

CHAPTER ONE:

**Female Identity Crisis: Conceptual and
Theoretical Framework**

Chapter One: Female Identity Crisis: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Introduction

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Conclusion

Introduction

Human beings, curious as they are, have been in pursuit of self-knowledge since infinity. Self-definition and identity have engrossed researchers most of all. Diving into the depths of such an enigma, enormous publications are realised yearly. For a long epoch, men have been the axis of such an inquiry. Women, as scholars or a keyword of such studies, were denied an existence. Recently, identity studies pivoting around their development and peculiarities could be counted on one hand. Henceforth, an obvious starting point, this chapter lays the ground to the conception of identity and its nuanced implications in postmodernity. Particularly is the feminist critics integration of such a concept. Furthermore, identity crisis, its concomitant disorders and the theorisation of identity development are thoroughly detailed, respectively reviewing Erikson's findings passing to Marcia to only land on Josselson's feminist model.

1.1 Identity as Concept

Reflections and conceptions on the term of identity harken back to the olden times. Stemming from the Greco-Roman notions of persona, as Burkitt supposes (Hammack 13) or even much before, it had for a long time been confused, equated, falsified with and outweighed by kin terms such as character, personality and self. *The Oxford English Dictionary* tracks the derivational roots of the word as respectively derived from the late Latin 'identitas' and from the Latin 'idem', denoting the 'same'. Such an etymological, indication despite the term's conventionally held perception as standing for one's distinctiveness from others, prefigures the controversies and debates it has long stirred. Evidently, the paradox of sameness and difference, is one key step to approach and likely fathom the concept through.

The conception of identity seems to revolve around a trinity of one's perception of who is, the sort of person one is, and the way one belongs to others. Ranging from individuals'

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sense of being to his/her distinctive traits and then to the larger sense of social affiliation, identity appears as multileveled. Marcia defines the term as an inner psychological parameter conducting and managing one's physical and mental faculties "an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history" (159).

Rather than the conventional standpoint of identity as a confining or a defining margin to preserve, Clifford reconsiders the concept as a link of ongoing relations and transactions one is continuously occupied in (Fearon 5). Berger and Luckmann pinpoint the reciprocal relation binding identity and society. He subdivides identity constructed as solely shaped by the social structures or framed by interplay between 'organism', 'individual consciousness 'and' social structure'. The latter exerts a counter effect upon the given social structure, reshaping its contours (5).

The concept of identity is an unreachable shifting terminus, a thrive and proceeding for 'an image of totality', however untrainable (Bhabha 51). Along similar lines, Jenkins recognises identity as a process, a flexible continuum of 'becoming' or 'being'. Identification, thus, as a variable constantly becoming and evolving, connotes a video, never a picture, capturing individuals serially. Excluding stability and consistency as criteria, such a process is deciphered through contemplating the social paradigm of identity in interaction and institutionalism (5).

Over the recent decades, much ink has been spilled on identity studies in varied disciplines, namely sociology and psychology. Indeed, the width and wealth of the findings have long rendered the concept multifaceted, irreducible to a single definitive account and often a referent to binary of oppositions, such as "unitary" or "multiple", "real" or "constructed", "stable" or "fluid", "personal" or "social" (Vignoles 2018, 289). The vehement accumulation

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of researches, over time, seemingly has only offered the term a 'generic force', as Davis (105) dubbed it.

Under the sociological rubric, collective identity, is spotlighted. Accordingly, an identity resembles a categorization matrix, that locates individuals in columns with regard to one's role, group, social affiliation or personal traits. Duly, Identity denotes the stances rendering individuals and groups distinct from a differing individuals and groups in terms of social relations (Jenkins 4). It indicates a 'we-ness' incarnated by a members of collectivity common traits and similarities (Gerim 22). Moreover, Wendt elucidate upon the concept, which is social identities, as the abstract conceptions a member classifies himself/herself within, in reference to others' perspective (Fearon 5).

Nonetheless, in the psychological realm, the term commonly designates personal identity, that is linked to the individual's distinctive attributes (Cheek 275). Hereby, Erik Erikson who dubbed as the architect of modern identity theories, pinned down the "subjective sense of an invigorating sameness and continuity" (19) as characteristic determinants of identity. The German-American psychologist views identity as coordinating both a core configuration of personal character and one's consciousness of that configuration (Gardiner 350). Personal identity, in the words of Holland, glues relatively cohesive and relatable patters, such as one's job, race, and all that one calls 'me', in contrast to a notably fluctuating graph of accelerating social, economic and political transformations 'the whole pattern of sameness within change which is a human life ... there remains a continuing me who is the style that permeates all those changes' (452).

1.2 Definition of Postmodern Identity

In postmodernity's hyperrealistic, ultra-consumerist society, identity has become fluid, enigmatic and constantly on the move (Greenwood 5). Herein, identity considered as a

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nexus between one's personal and social world (Hammack 12). Alongside, its twin term the self, that is rather reduced to the individuals "internal and psychological realm" (Owens 206), identity is no longer confined to individuals' determinative traits. As a sequel to World Wars, decline of Soviet Union, globalization, proliferation of international factories and the fragmentation that enveloped the contemporary era, identity gained interdisciplinary, multifariousness and scholars' utmost importance. Browsing the PsycInfo database by 2009, Brinkmann clarifies that nearly 80% of all identity-articles have been published within the period of 2009 to 1989 (68). By fact, finding one's place in ceaselessly changing communities and sub-cultures, in which Watson marks the way individuals have been doomed foreigners within their very own cultures (Greenwood 5) has become the key step of the ongoing pursuit (Brinkmann 67).

Fluidity and lack of consistent labels, peculiarities, thus, are major criterions of postmodern subjects, rendering definitiveness of their very who-ness unattainable (68). Consumption, Commodification and representation have become the pioneering parameters of the subjects' identity (Greenwood 5). In line with the current situational identities, for a postmodern subjects to define themselves, Hartmut Rosa opts for the use of I do to indicate a mobility and an ongoing process pertinent to change, rather than the fixed I am. For instance I work as a teacher, and might not do in the near future, instead of the regular I am a teacher, in a postmodern world of inconstancy and part-time job swings, has relatively become more accurate (Brinkmann 78). Approaching such a problematic, Hall postulates the presence of the other, hence drawing on the differences, as a prerequisite to fathom the essence of any term, suchlike identity (Greenwood 4).

In keeping with David Lyon's assumptions, Postmodern media implied messages internalise 'frames', that form and constantly reshape identities through systematizing experiencing. They allude to a sense of reality, whilst diminishing the frontiers between the real and the image. Identity hence has become fluid and fragmented (Lyon quoted by Turnau).

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Flooded with the media images, subjects are imbibed with endless incoherent and disconnected discourse of the self, which becomes emotionally depthless. Baudrillard indicates that the self has been clouded by the hyperreal, which is an inevitable corollary of the prolific dissemination of media. Addictively appealing and inconstant images replaced the real physical and social world (Elliot 140).

Self has been macerated and veiled through masquerades and spurious impressions, thus, depersonalized. The image of a unique self is compensated with differing situation-fitting masks. On consonance, identity, as well, has been rendered to a multiple of fragments (Negrin 10). Dissimilar to modernity's focus on the motives behind identity formation, in Postmodern era as Mike Featherstone pinned, light is shed on sign values such as appearance and impressions (Featherstone 187–93; quoted by Negrin 9).

The introduction of postmodernity brought about detachment, and perfunctory cooperativeness under the label of risk-taking and self-reinvention. Social mores and cultural traditions fall apart, unleashing the self into fragments lacking any emotional adhesiveness. Resultants of such contemporary attitudes are remarkable deviation, drift and aberration, that Sennett entitled as, the corrosion of the self. Sennett holds that due to the dissolution of a consistent, contextually grounded and coherent narrative, 'the symbolic texture of the self' is fractured. Persistent selfhood is substituted by a kind of 'supermarket identity', enclosing shreds, ephemeral inclinations and pleasures, haphazard and incidental co-occurrences. The mechanisms of contemporary global capitalism, as Sennett posits, function effectively with the co-existence of "A pliant self ... open to the new experience" (133). A pliant self that is elastic to risk taking, part-time and short term job experiences. Capitalism accompanying phenomena, that are global transfer of finance, hi-tech normative production, anchored superficiality, fragmentation and precariousness of character as the fingerprints of the Postmodern era (Anthony Elliott 354.355).

1.3 Definition of Female Identity

It was until very recently that femaleness marked a presence in the theorisation of identity studies. By the 17th century, poets were not condemned to barefacedly boast that, "The souls of women are so small, that some believe they have none at all". Two centuries later, such a stream of thought have not truly witnessed a tangible detour. Notwithstanding Erikson breakthrough studies, Lichtenstein's valuable contribution and Holland's seminal work, the very being of women and uniqueness and identity had not gained an essential recognition. Even if enjoyed some, for all, a woman equated was still a vain image, a hollow body, never a core nor a meaningful existence.

Female identity had been immolated and compensated with normative feminine gender roles, due to successive inherent cultural, mythical and religious referents. Women, as Friedan Betty coined, are envisaged as 'feminine mystiques'. Left with a 'forfeited self 'in conformity with the passive housewives image, they lacked a personal identity (Cullen 65). Kate Millett's reflection on the Greek mythology and Judeo-Christian thread of thoughts, further demystifies the foundations of patriarchy and the way women, their being, have often elicited inferiority, an afterthought, a shadow, a deficient creature, men have to endure. A creature, who brought damnation and demise on mankind, and had paved the way to Adam's fall (Gunes and Akca 1). Such deep rooted beliefs seem to deprive women of their right to an identity, for such an identity is analogous with shame. Biological essentialism has almost been the axis of female identity discussions. Sandra Bartky accordingly clarifies that a woman's identity markers have always been reduced to the looks of her body and her assimilation to the female stereotypes (41).

Since 1920, the theme of "self-discovery " and "search for identity " have become female writers' and critics' catalyst (Showalter 13). Gender as a vital variable in identity theories had been at bay till the second half of the 20th century. Henceforth, feminist critics such as

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Beauvoir, Chodorow, and Gardiner have become the first to chart the identity studies with regard to the oft-dubbed the second gender. Since then, however, much have been compensated.

Eventually, female identity has been figured prominently by postmodern feminists' psycho-social accounts. In her book *The Second Sex* (1973) Simone de Beauvoir broke the long-casted spell of biological determinism, declaring that "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (301). Beauvoir eviscerated the traditional definition of woman in reference to man, in which "He is the subject, he is absolute, she is the other" (xvi). Alongside such a thread of thought, Millett brings attention to the Judeo-Christian myth of Eve as twice removed from a male God, and Adam who stand for wholeness (Gunes and Akca 1).

Building her theories on a "social structurally induced psychological process" (Gardiner 351), Nancy Chodorow situates the relationship between the daughter and her mother as the bedrock of female identity formation. Subsequently, girls frame their identity in correspondence with their mothers, lacking separation, i.e. autonomy (Gardiner 356). Consequently, Chodorow's insights begs the need of emancipation from the prior conformity for females to achieve self-individuation. Herein, Ireland affirms the importance of friendship as a process through which woman selectively flags her self-image and identity markers. Friendship is a complementary and integrative experience that broadens her insights on adult life (12).

In *On Female Identity and Writing By Women*, Judith Gardiner dovetails Chodorow's presuppositions concluding that female identity, in fact, signifies a relational, fluid and progressive process (361). As a result, female identity displays the paradigm of female consciousness as a sequel of the female experience (360). By the same token, Anne Kiome Gatobu posits gender roles, which are usually very limited, and idealised male figures as the flotsam forming the female identity (4).

1.4 Definition of Identity Crisis

The concept, identity crisis, in its contemporary sense stems from Erikson's enduring work, *The Stages of Psychological Development*. Erikson maps eight developmental psychological stages spanning from infancy to adulthood. Crises, in this light, term the crossing points between each preceding and subsequent stage. Delineating both a strife to maintain a balance between forging an individuality whilst remaining adaptively 'fitting in' and an introspective scrutiny and inspection of one's standpoints of viewing the self (Rathus and Nevid 195), crises are a causality of new emerging demands (Hercelinskyj and Alexander 21).

Pursuant to Erikson's paradigm, a crisis is prefaced and followed by critical periods. The preceding critical period embodies a 'deceive encounter' between the subjects and their environment, leaving them in ferment and wrapping sense of confusion. The succeeding critical period, however, encompasses the incorporation of psychosocial supportive requirements for the mastery of each phase (Côté and Levine 280-281). Overpassing each conflict reinforces the ego, builds on to a solid identity development and endows, the Freudian termed concept, basic strength, such as competence, will and fidelity. Otherwise the subject recesses to a state of core pathology and mal-development (Fleming 7). In this context, positively responsive significant others are key impetus of the crisis resolution (Ewan 161).

Distinctive of those stages is the fifth. A conflict between forming an identity and a state of confusion. The task resides in the attempts of separation from the caregivers, terminating either with the acquisition of fidelity or a counterpart assimilation, that is repudiation. The latter is manifested either in defiance of authority or in a sense of resignation and despair, that Erikson worded as diffidence (Fleming 7). Erikson postulates that agents of identity crisis battle with a sense of dissociation and self-dissolution leading to and emanating from the disaccord and lack of reinforcement provided by socially ascribed roles (Ewan 166-167).

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Compulsory to the identity crisis occurrence, as clarified by Erikson, are four attendant pretexts. First, It is bound to a certain substantially achieved cognitive development . Secondly, puberty must have been proceeded. Then, a certain degree of physical maturation must be reached. Another pivotal impetus is the presence of an exerted cultural pressure leading one to an identity critical reassessment, reordering and amalgamation (Côté and Levine 279).

1.5 Identity Crisis: Psychological Disorders

1.5.1 Dissociation

Dissociation depicts a mental split between one's own self and reality (Gardiner 224). Hence, It stages a detachment of the person's mental faculties such as thought and memory and his/her sense of self, identity. Dissociation, in the words of Fisher, is associated to an infancy experience with an abusive caregiver, who materializes both a threat and a shelter simultaneously (105). In the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), three types of dissociations are marked. Firstly, depersonalization, that is rather than being the actors and the agents, patients are distanced from their selves, parts of their bodies and reality ,as if watching from afar. Then Dissociative Amnesia, and Dissociative Identity Disorder, in which at least two distinct personalities and memory gaps manifest, are listed. The DSM posits 'unbidden intrusions into awareness and behavior with losses of continuity in subjective experience as quintessential feature of Dissociation.

1.5.2 Fragmentation

Embodying the postmodern most ubiquitous zeitgeist, fragmentation is posited as both a defense mechanism and a disorder posterior to identity crisis. To clarify the symptoms, Fushs terms it as a rapid incoherent fluctuations "shifting view of oneself, with sharp discontinuities, rapidly changing roles and relationships and an underlying feeling of inner emptiness" (Fuchs 382). Delving into the depths of such an impairment, the individual's sense of

unity is shattered into fragments, in Kohut terms, "when traumatically disappointed by an idealised other" (Lynne Layton 108). Kernberg, in the other hand, pointed out, inability to negotiate needs for independence and dependence, separateness and attachment as the genesis of such a defect (108).

1.5.3 Estrangement

Building upon sociologists, the term made its first appearance in Hegel's *The phenomenology of Spirits*, as 'Entäußerung', and Marx's (1844) studies, as 'Entfremdung' (37), delineating 'the alienation of men's essence', loss of objectivity and disattachment from reality (as cited in Cech 283). In modern psychology, Seeman (1972), differentiates 'self-estrangement' from the rest of alienation varieties, that are powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and social isolation, through a tripartite definition :

- a. "the failure to satisfy postulated human needs";
- b. "to be engaged in activities that are not rewarding in themselves "and;
- c. "the individual's sense of a discrepancy between his ideal self and his actual self-image" (473).

The term seemingly encapsulates the sense of detachment and the loss of intrinsic motivation in work. The subject is no longer accomplished by the activities he/she undertakes (Seeman 790).

1.6 Theories of Identity Construction

The theoretical seeds of identity, in their inchoate and modern form, have been entrapped by the American psychologist Erik Erikson. Dubbed as the architect of identity, Erikson, in seven interrelated stages, mapped the psychological development of identity throughout the individual's lifespan. Such a break ground theoretical legacy generated a torrent

of criticism as well as continuation studies. A prominent secondary reflection has been Marcia's four identity statuses. Marcia grouped subjects in terms of exploration and commitment. Noteworthy in both frameworks, women have rather been an afterthought. Ruthellen Josselson adaptively adopted Marcia's four statuses to account for four pathways of female identity development.

1.6.1 Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychological Development

Erikson's tripartite approach, that is bio-psychosocial (Kivnick and Wells 41), revolutionised numerous disciplines in academia; Inter alia identity formation, personality development and life cycle development (Knight 3). Erikson enumerates a set series of eight developmental psychological stages. Each stage's conflict is funnelled and severely influenced by one's social surrounding, terminating in either a resolution or 'maldevelopment' (Erikson et.al. 21). The relation between the individual and society is best described by Rapaport "neither does the individual adapt to society nor does society mold him(sic) into its pattern; rather, society and individual form a unity within which a mutual regulation takes place "(104).

Recycling Freud's findings, Erikson endorsed, with reservation, the latter's irrational aspects of personality, infantile sexuality and biological orientation of psychoanalysis (Ewan 160). Erikson scheme of Psychological development, unlike Freud's, encompasses the individual's life span thoroughly. Erikson shifted Freud's presuppositions "upward in consciousness, outward to the social world, and forward throughout the complete life span" (Hoare 19). the ego-psychoanalytic continuum, his concept of identity is bound, yet not exclusive, to adolescence (Hammack 17). Erikson pinpoints the reciprocal relation between the biological (body), psychological (mind) and cultural (ethos) factors as the steering gear fuelling and regulating the development of those stages(26). Insofar, Erikson alludes to identity as the

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aftermath of a continual course of consequential psycho-social tasks to be overcome (Hammack 17).

A salient concept in Erikson's frame of work is Ego identity. Herein, the Ego transcends the Freudian conception, as solely a mediator between the superego and the id (Fleming 3). Erikson redefines the term as: "the accrued confidence that one's ability to maintaining inner sameness and continuity...is matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others " (94). Henceforth, its defensive mechanisms against inapt and harmful instincts and depression, the ego acts as key tool to accomplish the abovementioned tasks and as a result maintain a solid sense of identity (Ewan 160).

<i>Age</i>	<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Resolution or "Virtue"</i>	<i>Culmination in old age</i>
Infancy (0-1 year)	Basic trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Appreciation of interdependence and relatedness
Early childhood (1-3 years)	Autonomy vs. shame	Will	Acceptance of the cycle of life, from integration to disintegration
Play age (3-6 years)	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Humor; empathy; resilience
School age (6-12 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	Competence	Humility; acceptance of the course of one's life and unfulfilled hopes
Adolescence (12-19 years)	Identity vs. Confusion	Fidelity	Sense of complexity of life; merging of sensory, logical and aesthetic perception
Early adulthood (20-25 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love	Sense of the complexity of relationships; value of tenderness and loving freely
Adulthood (26-64 years)	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Caritas, caring for others, and agape, empathy and concern
Old age (65-death)	Integrity vs. Despair	Wisdom	Existential identity; a sense of integrity strong enough to withstand physical disintegration

Table 0-1 Erikson's psychosocial stages of identity development (Fleming, 2004)

1.6.2 Marcia's Ego-Identity Status

As an extension to Erikson's work of psychological development, the fifth stage of identity formation in particular, Marcia outlines four identity statuses. In lieu of identity achievement or diffusion, that are highlighted in Erikson's resultants, two vital variables, crisis

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and commitment, are itemized in Marcia's theoretical paradigm to realize a mature identity (Kasirath 2). Crisis pertains to the individual's critical period of adolescence, in which subjects are supposed to flag his/her standpoints within varied occupational and belief alternatives (Marcia 119). Commitment indicates the extent of personal involvement in a certain occupation or set of beliefs (Marcia 119). The four identity statuses are distinguished in rhythm with the degree of afforested variables as the following:

1.6.2.1 Foreclosure

Circles out individuals who have underlined their commitment albeit the absence of identity crisis. Thus far, such a commitment is based on presuppositions internalised by idealised others since childhood. No exploration, self-questioning or reflection is initiated by the subject. Due to the aforementioned traits, that are negligence of alternatives and avoidance of personal search "they must maintain their stances defensively and either deny or distort disconfirming information" (Kroger and Marcia 35).

1.6.2.2 Identity Diffusion

Brackets individuals, who have neither experienced a crisis, or an exploration phase, nor settled down to any commitment. A common criteria of such a category, Marcia marked, 'apathy and disinterest' in regards to occupational or ideological commitments. Particularly, no incorporation or synthesis, within their internal and external realms, is shown (Anderson 23). With a little sense of self-definition and deficiency to recognise future goals and purpose, such individuals drift aimlessly (Kroger and Marcia 35). They may become drifters or low-functioning society members who seem to be unable to recognise and seize available opportunities (Schwartz 13). They often make a recourse to the external world to make an image of themselves (Kroger and Marcia, 35).

1.6.2.3 Moratorium

Moratoriums are at the centre of the crisis. Conflicted as they are, Moratoriums are in ceaseless scrutiny of authoritarian normalised values. Refusing conformity, they are in relentless pursuit of arranging the puzzle pieces and forging a solid identity based on personal convictions and reflection (Kroger and Marcia 35).

1.6.2.4 Identity Achievement

This status covers those who have both undergone a crisis and reached a resolution on their own terms. Subsequently, such subjects demonstrate a stable personal commitment towards a particular vocation, religious affiliation and certain normative ethics. At this point, individuals has already figured out their tendencies and attitudes regarding sexuality (Kroger and Marcia 35).



Figure 0-1 The Four Identity States, Drawn from Marcia's Model

1.6.3 Josselson's Theory of Identity Development in Women

Firmly grounded on Marcia's model, Ruthellen Josselson unfolds an exclusively female version of former's four identity statuses. As women's identity formation peculiarities

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were tangential issue in both theories of Erikson and Mercia, Josselson conducts her research on 60 female college seniors, between 20 to 22 years old (Josselson 293). Notably, Josselson's was critical of Erikson's view that 'intimacy may precede identity for a woman ', hence, reducing and confining much of women's identity construction to the presence of and her connection with the 'mate-to-be '. (Josselson 22) . Erikson singles career achievements and independence as the codes of men's identity construction. Nonetheless, Josselson links the female version of identity formation to relationships, losses, conflicts and connections with intimate and close people (Revising, 208-209).

According to Josselson, identity development is not necessarily a rigid linear process. Each has their unique developmental pattern. Some may even stay cornered on a certain phase, never escaping to the next. Crisis, by Josselson words, is defined as the tipping point in which one, by last, grasps the possibility of and the necessity for change. Herein, alternatives are presented and heavily reflected upon (Revising 34). Under Josselson's frame of thought, four pathways are detailed. The criteria of dropping the individuals in such a pathways rely on the extent of exploration, such as surpassing an identity crisis, and the presence of commitment to a certain identity pattern (Paths 23). Under Josselson's frame of thought, four pathways are detailed .

1.6.3.1 Purveyors of the Heritage (Guardians)

Guardians withstand change, foreclosing on the chance to forge an autonomous, independent identity(Josselson 115). They skipped the critical phase, that is the developmental stage, in which pre-internalised norms and ideals are questioned and reshaped in accordance with one's accumulated experiences and reality (117). Confined by tradition and obedience, they are authoritarian who are ascribed, early on, an identity whilst seeking the idealised other's approval at all times (116)

1.6.3.2 Pavers of the Way (Pathmakers)

Women, who peeled the layers of their childhood identity, undergone a psychological individuation. Distinctive of this identity style is their ability to continuously incorporate and absorb their mounting understanding of their world into their being. As Josselson attributes, "identity for these women continued to be an act of charting and balancing" (32), Pathmakers are self-aware and equipped enough to take on challenges and withdraw from unfitting and limiting experiences (32). Josselson considers Marcia's distinction of this status as 'identity achievement' a mislabel, indeed, for identity construction and development have never been a trophy to hold but a rather prolonged continuous process of balancing (Paths, 25). Such individuals tend to be more culturally sophisticated and develop a high self-esteem.

1.6.3.3 Daughters of the Crisis (Searchers)

Searchers are relentlessly exploring, questioning and seeking to forge a distinct identity, with no recourse to childhood internalised norms (Josselson 159). On the road fork, i.e. identity crisis, they are torn between their primary environment ideology and demands and a will for liberation and self-actualization. They are in a centre of conflicted split selves. Pulling in opposite directions, each is in an attempt to over-dominate the rest (Josselson 158). To not commit to old patterns or drift stray, searchers are in need of others support (Josselson 158). Anxiety, thus, is highly figured in such a status as individuals are torn and clueless about the next direction, the next step.

1.6.3.4 Lost and Sometimes Found (Drifters)

Rather than engaging in a pursuit of identity formation, they are adrift, avoiding any entanglement (Josselson 206). Josselson details that a common trait of such a category is being impulsive. They are driven and guided by external forces. Their engagements are not stemming from inner passion. They do not seem to dedicate much thought to the outcomes of the engagements they undertake, "the voices of their inner selves were unintelligible, hard to translate into the language of plans, beliefs, or goals" (206). Peeling away from childhood ideology, they exhibit no intention to fill in any gaps.

(assessed as seniors in college)

		EXPLORATION	
		Yes	No
C O M M I T M E N T	Yes	<i>Pathmakers</i> Identity Achievers	<i>Guardians</i> Foreclosures
	No	<i>Searchers</i> Moratoriums	<i>Drifters</i> Diffusions

Table 0-2 Identity Status Categories (Josselson 2017, 23)

Conclusion

This chapter furnished a detailed literature on the concept of identity and its intersection with terms such as femaleness and postmodernity. Likewise Identity crisis, as stemming from Erikson's fifth stage is defined. Dissociation, estrangement and fragmentation as by-products of such a crisis are distinguished as well. It bridged the gap between Erikson's

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Marcia's and Josselson's psychological theories of identity construction and development. However central to this chapter and instrumental to the proceedings, has been the account on Josselson's feminist integration of identity status. Henceforth, the third chapter will have a recourse to such a theory, putting flesh on the bones.

CHAPTER TWO:

Postmodern Feminist Literature:

An Overview

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Introduction

This chapter is woven from the many accounts on the writer's background and concurring literary movements. It contextualises the preceding theoretical body and enshrines the essential desiderata, which are: postmodernity, feminism and the author's literary scope, to genuinely fathom the paradigm behind Atwood's female heroines construction. In addition to the glimpses on women's position and weight in the Canadian context, the Canadian literature and its prominent writers are generally brought to the fore. Atwood, here, is not presented solely as a female writer but as an architect and a leading Canadian figure, who provided the groundwork and set a differing feminist framework for next generations to follow. This chapter, correspondingly, zeros in on the Atwoodian peculiarities and techniques in incarnating such a realm.

2.1 Postmodernism

Jencks unriddles the origins and the evolution of such a term profusely. It is derived from the Latin 'modo', he postulates that 'modern' stands for 'just now', hence, postmodernism, paradoxically, indicates 'post-present', in other words, 'just now plus in the future'. A complex concept, situated in the frontier between the present and the future, seemingly battles John Lukas' oft-known thread by 1990, 'The Isms have all become Warms' and sums the discrepancy ruling over the era. The 'posties', ranging from post-impressionism to post-industrial to post-modern, "rendered the up-to-dateness of the modern obsolete" (Jencks 20).

Jencks further points out the British artist John Watkins Chapman as the first who gave the term, postmodernism, an existence in the 1870s. Along similar lines, Cahoon links the first use of the term, as distinguishing the contemporary stage in 1917, to Rudolf Pannwitz (3-4). Whilst Arnold J. Toynbee, in 1939, assigned the concept to a certain historical ideology of revolution, by the dusk of the 19th century and the dawn of 20th century, that witnessed the reign of the European middle class (74), H.R Hays, in 1942, linked the term to new literary style

(Dorsey 211). Webster allocates the term wide spreading in the British and American terrains to the post-war era, circa the 1980s (124).

Even though the concept has often been described as "notoriously slippery and indefinable term" (Nicol 1) critics have to a certain extent delineated its contours. Fuchs defines Postmodernism as an ideology of an emerging class "of symbolic workers who specialize in self-referential techniques for manipulating signs, images, and multiple layers of representation" (58). Such workers are absorbed in an artificially computer-mediated world, obviously separated from reality, in which signs, hence, have become referents to other signs (Fuchs 58). Postmodernism, enlightened by recent accumulating insights, subjects modern philosophical postulates, presuppositions and intellectuals to scrutiny.

Postmodernism maintains the effacement of a once-rigid modern demarcation between high culture and popular one (Jameson 1). A change encompassing variety of fields and disciplines namely; art, cultural studies, literature, psychology, sociology, philosophy, women's studies and the like (Brown 61) to prove the existence of culture superior than that of modernism. Bauman alludes to postmodernism as the tipping point at which modern ideological promises have been proved futile and delusionary (Smith 15-16). Echoing the above ideas, Postmodernism purports a threefold implication. It refers to a period of time subsequent to that of modernism, a critique and reassessment of the modern age and a novel philosophical sphere.

2.1.1 Characteristics of Postmodernism

Postmodernism is most often defined by its prevalent patterns and enormous influence. Accordingly, fragmentation, hyper-reality, individualism, temporal distortion consumerism and anti-dualism are the keynotes of postmodernism.

2.1.1.1 Fragmentation

Fragmentation represents the relentless disincorporation and dissolution of political steadiness, social organisation, mass market salient economic mechanisms, harmonious self and a solid basis of knowledge. The fractured assemblage of media images and signs, for instance, among countless other incentives are held responsible (Brown 106). In Postmodern milieu, fragmentation is induced and incessantly reinforced by diverse of surrounding stimuli on daily basis. Conspicuously, individuals are susceptible to hundreds of disconnected few-minutes segments of advertisements. Advertisement, aiming to prepossess the spectators, is by fact a cacophony of discordant visuals, blazing colour and scenes (Firat 203). Moreover, fragmentation could be recognised in the spread of interdisciplinary and plethora of sub-divisions and forked branching of previously an all-broad-encompassing scopes.

2.1.1.2 Hyperreality

Hyperreality is discerned in the burgeoning of fantasy and surreal motifs, such as theme parks, virtual reality and computer games. Reality is substituted, overcrowded and often eclipsed by the proliferation of simulation and imitations (Brown 107). *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism* features Hyperreality as the adept eradication of 'distance', signs of removal and 'referentiality' between the real image and its copy (31). Subsequently, Hyperreality obliterates the already-thin-line between reality and fantasy. Distinction is no longer apprehensible. Baudrillard, further, formulates the term as a "meticulous reduplication," implemented with "macroscopic hyperfidelity" to ensure the disguise of any hints of its feignedness and inauthenticity (85).

2.1.1.3 Consumerism

Attempting to capture the spirit of the status-quo, Rattansi and Phoenix rewrote Descartes's dictum, 'I think therefore I am', as 'I shop; therefore, I am' (111). The emergence of

capitalism and globalization, in which each is a resultant and a catalyst of the other, led to a burgeoning in production and consequential increase in consumption. (Brown 213). Prior classification markers such as class, gender and race are substituted, as Valentine marked, by neo-tribes, a concept coined by the French sociologist Maffesoli. Standing for fleeting groups within the "flux of contemporary consumer societies", neo-tribes are centered and distributed in supermarkets, shops, stadia, concerts and the like (Rattansi and Phoenix quoted in Valentine, 45). Such a societies are "constructed as sensation-gathers, [individuals are] to seek and find" (180).

The consumer, whilst purchasing and picking materials, is to a certain extent puzzle piecing his/her sense of self. People's being is linked to their buying (48). Goods, in the contemporary context, are no longer possessed for use value solely. They are indicators of the owner's style, class and ideology as well (Valentine 45). Jean Baudrillard sets the mechanisms of consumerisms as the codes of today's society communicative language. Drawing on Baudrillard's observation, Todd regards purchases as a reflection of the individuals' 'innermost desires'. Consumption has become intricately linked to the psychological construction of the self (48). Similar to Cinderella's clothes transformation into a princess, Postmodern subjects through purchasing and makeover can be identified with their desired social positions (Todd 49).

2.1.1.4 Individualism

By the advance of postmodernism, the individualist philosophy becomes in the ascendant. The individuals' space, encompassing their aspirations, needs and desires, is sacred and overweighs the sovereignty of authorities and even society. The proliferation of such an inclination, individualism, is traced to the gradual decay of shared collective identities, social ties and cultural mores. The emergence of autonomous models, often publicised for through the media, whose life details are self-made, has a prominent contribution as well (Gustavsson 2).

2.1.1.5 Temporal Distortion

Bendixen brings attention to the fact that the present, as the term denotes, is no longer found in the current capitalist world. He elucidates that due to the ongoing financial mechanisms, individuals are in a continuous process of speculation and projection of what will and might be. The present is lived with a futuristic perspective (1). Bendixen elucidates that money is now earned even before the actual procedures of "production and delivery". Money nowadays is stirred based on "speculation, trading derivatives and currencies" (1).

2.1.1.6 Anti-Dualism

Duality, which was enshrined in the modern era, is denounced in Postmodernity. The latter, is boundary-defying and has widely celebrated pluralism and nuanced diversity, notably pertaining to gender roles. As a critique of the modern culture firm and excluding distinctions and classifications, all the grading shades of social aspects and attributes are bestowed equal recognition. In attempt to embrace all that had been otherised and distanced, boundaries markers have been increasingly erased "What is Postmodernism". For instance, the long reigning dichotomy of high and popular culture has been shattered (Jameson 1). Postmodern world intricate mechanisms are seemingly beyond the confines of binary oppositions.

2.2 Postmodern Literature

Postmodernism, as a term, has been imported to the literary terrains by Hoffman Reynolds Hays in 1942 as a referent to a novel form of literature (Dorsey 211). The concept has been since then one of the most nebulous and overlapping terms. The frontiers are so thin and vague that critics are unable to forge a consensus on the term. To tease apart the tangle behind such a confusion, light is shed on the fact that postmodernism is still an ongoing movement. It is still susceptible to reforms and changes. Furthermore, no distinct detour from the current trends has been noted so that a distinction might be drawn. Moreover, being the fountainhead of most

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avant-garde literary movements, modernism's lingering influence cannot be suddenly constrained or accurately distinguished from the patterns of postmodernity, for the latter is, as much as a reaction to the former, a continuation (552).

Emblematic and enigmatic as it is, however, postmodern literature, as McHale, Hutcheon and Jameson warned, must not be equated or confused with all that is contemporary. Ergo postmodernism rather labels a genre than a period of time (Bendixen 3-4). According to M. H. Abrams, in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, The inauguration of such a genre is tracked back to the post WWII writing, that is after 1945 (168). Under the postmodern umbrella, fragmentation, paradox, unreliable narrators and counter enlightenment principles are highlighted (Sharma and Chaudhary 189). Fedosova further adds the challenging of plot construction rigid conventions, hybridized genres, playful manipulation of the text and time and even towards the reader, 'pluralism of styles; a multilevel text organization', the affinity towards text interpretation multiplicity and 'a principle of reader's co-authorship' (79) as hallmarks of such a concept.

Postmodern literature seems to evade modern "technical newness, superior or elitist style, uniformity or virginity" (Dar 51), celebrating hybridity, mixture of genres and high and low styles. Unlike the modernist engrossment with poetry and strict temporality, has placed the emphasis on the narrative fiction genre (Connor 62). Prototypes of postmodern writing are spotted in the works of writers such as Margaret Atwood, Kurt Vonnegut, John Fowles, Toni Morrison (Fedosova 78). Sharma and Chaudhary itemize "metanarrative" and "little narrative", by Jean-François Lyotard, "play", by Jacques Derrida, and "simulacra", by Jean Baudrillard, as unifying and common milestones of the Postmodern Literature (189).

2.2.1 Characteristics of Postmodern Literature

Postmodern literature as a reaction to the modernist style is characterised by experimentation and a rejection of conventional forms of literature.

2.2.1.1 Temporal Distortion

The Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism expounds that "Where modernist literature worked on time, literary postmodernism would work in time" (Connor 63). Such a comparison draws attention to the postmodern loose manipulation of temporality. Indeed, temporal distortion, fragmentation and non-linearity are central to its narrative, mostly likely to suggest hints of irony (Sharma and Chaudhary 196). Breaking the confines of traditional conventions of narrative and its composition, as Fedosova notes, time traveling, shifting and playfulness are representatives of postmodernism. Time is accorded by a certain personality, indicating its subjectivity and liability for various interpretations in line with the differing readers (79).

However through incarnating the future within the present, the late capitalist literature exhibits another form of narrative that pivots solely on an "intensified present" (Bendixen 2). Postmodern literature, hence, bestows a unique reading experience that is deviated from the traditional proceeding of the temporal tripartite, from past, to the present and then to the future (Bendixen 2). At the extreme end of the temporal continuum, a tendency for chaos and polychromy, that is a total disregard of chronology accompanied by a heterogeneous temporality and anachronism, has particularly enchanted numerous postmodern writers (Fedosova 86). In consonance with such an affinity, techniques, such as non-sequential ordering, intentional dislocation of the present into the past, provision of new temporal experiences, render 'temporal and causal relationships' imperceptible and shrouded. The readers' task, hence, has become at times a challenging one (86).

2.2.1.2 Chicklit

Chicklit, a rather postmodern version of fairy tales that has been enlisted into the Oxford English Dictionary, is defined as a "for women, by women, about women" genre (Rende 3-2). Cathy Yardley enumerates numerous characteristics relevant to such an epidemic genre. To start with, a typical Chicklit settings would be in an urban environment 'fast-paced, high-toned lifestyle' (Yardley 10). The heroine holds a charming occupation such as fashion, and advertising, in which she is troubled by the evil boss whom she would comeuppance by the end (Yardley 11-12). A recurrent characters, however, are the wonderful going shopping gay friend, plus the typical gang of girlfriends, hanging in "a man-hunting expeditions" (Yardley 12-13). Moreover, involvement in a romantic relation with Mister wrong, and an aftermath of broken-heart are quite common as well (Yardley 13). At the heart of the plot, "life implosion syndrome", which is often implemented in form of a loss job, residence or romantic partner is repetitive throughout such genre (Yardley 14). Relevant to postmodern reader, references to pop culture events are often present (Yardley 15).

2.2.1.3 Gender Non-Binarism

Marvin Harris outlines the questioning of reality and oft-taken presuppositions as a salient principle in postmodernism (153). Similarly, Judeo-Christian view of gender-binarism has been under scrutiny through the recent decades (Sacha 6). Postmodern literature witnessed a burgeoning of gender queer issues. Postmodern discourse, through deconstruction of truth, seems to tolerate and embarrass non-binarism (19), which in recent times was portrayed as either a pathology or an optional life style (Lauretis iii). Under the pretences of queer theories and gender non-binarism, however, gender role confusion is ruling over. Neither men nor women or the 'third person' know what it means to be a man, a woman or a gay.

2.2.1.4 Canadian Postmodern literature

In 2002, the Book Prizer nomination parted the curtains on six works among which three were Canadians. The first Canadian work belonged to the American-born Shields, the rest were written by the Mumbai born Mistry and the Spanish-born Martel. At that time a subsequent concern engrossed the Canadian media. When to attribute the label of 'Canadianness' to a certain writer (Kröller 1) and what does Canadian literature precisely refer to and distinctly encompasses seemed to be confusing, let alone the postmodern one. Noteworthy, the Canadian literature, in attempts to shield itself from the sweeping expansive American culture, has for long taken pride in and identified itself within the shadows of the British one (Kolinská 141). Distinctively, Canadian literature is commonly divided into three remarkable sub-categories, that are Canadian English, Canadian French, Indigenous languages.

Since 1960, Canadian literature has gradually weaned itself away from dependency on British literature motifs, themes and techniques (Beutell 9), which freed it from the bubble of mere imitation and timidity. The Canadian literature reception no longer assigned with Douglas Bush words, by 1922, in *The Canadian Forum* that, 'No one reads a Canadian novel unless by mistake' (Staines 261). A form of nationalism, compatible with the deconstructive, decentralizing energies of postmodernity, that Kroetsch delineated, has emerged (Breitbach 291). Canadianness has gradually embarrassed all national myths and diversity such as in the integration of francophone aspects into the Anglophonic literature (Kolinská 142).

Commenting on the historical development of the Canadian literature, Kroetsch believes that within the Canadian territories, literature has vaulted over, from a Victorian mode into the Postmodern, with no interval in between (quoted in Breitbach 290). Bereft of national metanarratives, due to the country's inconspicuous identity, Rosenthal asserts that the Canadian milieu paves the way for postmodern totems of "polyvocality, ambiguity, ironic ruptures, and subversions" (quoted in Breitbach 290). Henceforth, Hutcheon's focus on irony, parody and

paradox are relatively commonplace in the postmodern Canadian literature. The "doubled structure" of such tropes mirrors the country's very unstable and haphazard dualities. (quoted in Breitbach 292).

Central to the Canadian postmodern literature, historiographic metafiction has been, as Hutcheon clarifies, the most prevalent genre. Such a historical novel, which is saturated with self-conscious, metafictional, and ironic hints, frames a subgenre that chronicles history with regards to the other's perspective, be it of marginalized groups or dissenters (Breitbach 293).

In the 1960s, political burdens and moral disaffections and challenges gained more visibility and fed most Canadian writing. Circa the 1970s, a poetics regarding the theory and the very notion of nationhood had predominated the scene. Waves of changes, through the proceeding decades, had erased the afore-widespread garrison literature. The 1990s shed light on Canada's hallmark, that is diversity. The country's minorities, immigrants and aborigines were given a voice to tell their part of the story.

Along similar lines, *The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature* tracks contemporary women writings. Accordingly, the early 1970s reflected themes relevant to the broader motifs of the feminist quest of women's literary and political position and its relation to their writing (Kröller 194). Canadian women's writing seemed to stand at the crossroads of the second feminist wave of North America and a thrive for a post-colonial nationalism (Kröller 195). The late 1960s and the 1970s alongside the 1980s, notably, unveiled a concern for gender politics and women pursuit of self-empowerment and realisation (Kröller 196). Such a themes for instance are deeply invested in Atwood's *The Edible Woman* (1969). A keynote of such a period is the of minorities' literature. The Canadian literary stage presented a mosaic encapsulating a diversity of races, ethnicities, and a concern for sexuality and nationality (Kröller

197) The tone of the 1980s has to certain extent moderated by Herk's visualization, in which "transgression" supplants "subversion" (Howells 203).

2.3 Second Wave of Feminism

The novel amalgam of ideas by the 1960s was credited a name in March 1968, by the journalist Martha Lear in her New York Times Magazine article, "*The Second Feminist Wave: What do These Women Want*" (Zeitiz 677). Indeed, The 1960s, 1970s witnessed an important sea change in the ongoing feminist pursuit. The climate of ideas outlined in the first wave had further been intensified and consolidated with new demands and insights. Whilst the first wave settled for women rights of suffrage and gender-based legal impediments, the second dared to shed light on sexual liberation, women's role in family and workplace, reproductive rights, domesticity and women quotas in public offices (677). The second wave had been a critique of psychoanalytic theory "on the grounds that it is biologically essentialist" (Phoca and Wright 11). The latter degraded women by conspiring with, adopting and reinforcing cultural stereotypes.

Feminists had voiced their agenda through printing press, manifestations and marches. Patriarchal and commercial agendas that had reduced women to beautiful passive dolls, were disclosed. Demonstration banners had soared high throughout the 1970s and 1980s skies, as Freeman noted, "Boring Job: Woman Wanted" and "Low Pay: Woman Wanted" (Kroløkke and Sørensen 8). The second wave, having a theoretical base firmly rooted in neo-Marxist and psychoanalyst principles (Kroløkke and Sørensen 9), publicised slogans such as "Woman's struggle is class struggle" and "The personal is political" (Kroløkke and Sørensen 10). Pioneered by critics and writers such as Juliet Mitchell in *The Subjection of Women* (1970) and Shulamith Firestone in *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* (1970) (Kroløkke and Sørensen 9), women financial independence had been a focal goal. Distinctive of this feminist movement is that it is irreducible to one word, that is 'wave'. It was rather a sequence of apostasies in which one has to choose a wavelength out of full spectrum (Wood 106).

2.3.1 Betty Friedan

By 1963, Betty Friedan's colossal book, *The Feminine Mystique*, had entrapped the seeds of the second wave of feminism. To start with, Friedan's 'Mystique' stands for the artificial notion and prevalent stereotypes of femininity as passive creatures, leading life with a 'forfeited self' and compliant to socially internalised roles (Cullen 65). Hereby, the apex of woman's achievements is being a docile housewife and an accomplished mother. The first chapter, entitled as *The Problem That Has No Name*, implicitly labels a state of identity crisis, dissatisfaction, frustration overwhelming women due to the limited set of female roles. As Friedan states women are intrigued with "a problem of identity—a stunting or evasion of growth that is perpetuated by the feminine mystique" (65). Friedan brings about the pivotal role of advertisements in the promotion and dissemination of such a role in the 1960s (34). Even if the articles were written about actresses, they would be pictured as housewives rather than career holders (Friedan 53).

2.3.2 Kate Millet

Kate Millet, whom *Time* labelled as the 'Mao Tse-Tung of women's Liberation', conceives gender as the total of the caregivers', society's and cultural norms' roles ascription for each gender in terms of "way of temperament, character, interests, status, worth, gesture, and expression" (Millet 31). Such ascription entails women's subordination, passivity, ignorance and emotional sensitivity. Patriarchal societies are the outcome of socially learned feminine and masculine roles. Similar to that, balanced and equal societies pre-requisite the unlearning of such a role. She views the state as an "institution, in which the first half, that are males, are in command and authority of the second half, that are females" (Millet 25). The book elucidates that sexual politics grants males an all-empowering status and permits all forms of oppression (Millet 168).

In attempt to untangle the knots behind patriarchy, Millet recalls Greek myth of Pandora, in which the goddess, due to curiosity, disobeyed Zeus's orders to not open the jar. The goddess is held responsible of the release of olden age evils. The apparently innocent myth, is in fact a double coin for reinforcing patriarchy and providing pretexts for women's degradation, "the damnable race of women—a plague which men must live with" (Millet 37). Femeness continues to be a historical referent to shame, weakness and damnation. Millet further settles on the Judeo-Christianity, to remind that God and his first creation are males. Eve, seemingly, is an afterthought, a sinner and a disobedient helper who was behind the humanity's fall (Akca and Gunes 1).

2.3.3 Margret Atwood

2.3.3.1 Biographical Background

Margaret Atwood was born on 18th November 1939 in Ottawa, Canada. Her early life had been in northern Ontario, Quebec and Toronto. Atwood spent a large part of her childhood in the Northern wilderness where her father was conducting a research. Atwood began writing as early as five years old. In spite of the writing blockage she had experienced from 8 till 16 years old, she recovered her passion afterwards (Oates 15). She completed her bachelor's degree in 1961 from Victoria College, University of Toronto. Then she received her master's degree at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1962. Atwood also studied at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from 1962 to 1963 and from 1965 to 1967.

Margaret Atwood has been experimenting in variety of genres such as historical fictions, speculative fiction, climate fiction and dystopian fiction. Atwood combines both quality and quantity. She is a prolific and adept poet of over fifteen books of poems as such *Double Persephone* (1961), *The Circle Game* (1964), and *Power Politics* (1971). Likewise, she has written over novel, prominently *Cat's Eye* (1988), *the Edible Woman* (1969), *Surfacing* (1973)

and *The Handmaid Tale*. She is most acclaimed by her critical works such as *Second Words: Survival* (1972) *Selected Critical Prose* (1982), *On Writers and Writing* (2015). Children as well have been addressed by Atwood's works, in *Up In The Tree* (1978), *Anna's Pet* (1980) and the delightfully sketched *Princess Prunella* and *The Purple Peanut* (1995).

2.3.3.2 Literary Career

The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood differentiates three salient stages of Atwood's career. The first phase refers to the period spanning from 1961 until 1970. Her factious publications include *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing* (Staines 18). Herein, her reviewing was confined to the Canadian books. For Atwood Canada was a territory to be "explored, examined, and explained" (Staines 25), in which she was genuinely committed. She granted Canadian literature its first volume of criticism, *Survival*, dedicated for the general reader. The book as Hancock stated, is an attempt to distinguish and separate Canadian literature from the American and the British (Stains 19). Its publication secured Atwood a homeland support.

In the second phase, spanning from the early 1970s until 1985, Atwood published *Lady Oracle*, *Life Before Man*, *Bodily Harm* and notably her most acclaimed work, *The Handmaid's Tale* (Staines 20). During which, she started to review un-Canadian books. Atwood had last unfastened the shackles, and surpassed the narrow exploration of the "existence as Canadians" solely (Staines 25). In the mid of 70s, requests for reviews from publications, that are not Canadian, were offered to her. Accordingly, she was reviewing women, not exclusively Canadian ones however. Crossing the frontiers, she stated that she was reviewing, "Canadians for Americans and Americans for Canadians and sometimes Canadians for English and English for Canadians" (Stains 20). Atwood became an ambassador presenting her country for the rest of the world. Despite her always-present Canadian hints, her wit, humour and adeptness have imported her works into the international stage (Stains 20).

The third phase of her career, from the mid of 80s until the present, has witnessed the publication of *Cat's Eye*, *The Robber Bride*, *Alias Grace*, *The Blind Assassin*, *Bottle* and , most recently, *The Heart Goes Last* (Staines 23). On the contemporary planes, she is granting Canada and its literature a seat within canons of the world's literatures (Staines 25). Alongside her focus on contemporary Toronto in her fictitious works, she detailed criticism of Canadian literature that debated both Canada and the world. In 1991, Atwood presented four lectures at Oxford University under the Clarendon Lecture Series in English Literature program, published later as *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature*. By 2000, Atwood made another appearance at the British esteemed universities. She gave the Empson Lectures on the broad subject of "*Writing, or Being a Writer*" At Cambridge university (Staines 24).

2.4 Atwood and Feminism

The Cambridge Introduction to Margaret Atwood clarifies that the writer stands for the rights of 'Eternal women' or 'Woman' with a capital 'W' (Macpherson22), without being entangled in any form of 'ism' (Macpherson 23). Atwood eschews any bounding frame of rigid ideology, including feminism. She situates herself as an observer rather than a propagandist of any cause (Macpherson23). Nevertheless, she does not deny the triumphs and attainments such a movement, feminism, has along generated and goes further enumerating its empowering contribution in the literary terrains (Macpherson24). Atwood clarified that despite the fact that her works are rich materials and favourable adoptions for feminist critics and movement, she is not, in effect, a member (Macpherson 23). Such a distanced and neutral position, hence, grants Atwood a clear vision to even "explore the limits of feminism as a political force" (Macpherson 24).

2.4.1 Atwoodian Heroines

Atwood's heroines are often contemporary urban socially-profession holders. In *medius res* of a survival battle in male predominated society, they are in pursuit of self-achievement. They are victimized through silence, due to socially inherent complications and intricate political mechanisms (Kaur 511). Through the lenses of those protagonists female adult challenges are highlighted such as *Surfacing* protagonist's abortion, Elaine Risley's castaway by other women, and Offred's objectification into mere "viable ovaries" (Kaur 516). "Introversion, self-analysis and self-knowledge" are typical steps of the Atwoodian protagonists 'self-empowerment path (Kaur 511). The enemy of those protagonists, however, is not embodied in male characters solely. Female bodies, which are portrayed as a rather building block of their psyche than a separate entity, might turn to be one as well (Kaur 511).

2.4.2 Themes

Atwood thematic range is truly wide, varied and rich one. Numerous themes have been invested throughout her works, such as gender roles, identity, religion, nationalism, myth, the power of language, climate change. However, survival and power politics are recurrent and a rather Atwoodian scope.

2.4.3 Survival

Such a theme, as distinctive for the Canadian literature, has been examined by Margaret Atwood in her critical framework, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972). The volume, which has sold more than 100,000 copies (Staines 19), stands for survival of Canadian literature among other forms such as the English and American literatures. Atwood's major works, for instance *Surfacing* (1972), *Lady Oracle* (1976), *Bodily Harm* (1982), *Oryx and Crake* (2003) and *The Handmaid's Tale* (2017), posit the suggestive sense of the possibility that humanity may not survive (Wilson 177) and a victimization created through characterization,

setting and plot (Staines 18). Atwood's novels do not simply reflect characters 'self-development and growth but rather entail "multiple levels of survival" ' (Wilson 178).

2.4.4 Power Politics

In line with the feminist Carol Hanish's slogan 'the Personal is Political' by 1970, Atwood has been preoccupied with the theme of power politics. The novelist, during the 1970s and 1980s, in particular, has become a spokesperson for political concerns such as censorship, copyright law and the status of women (Sullivan 327). The term designating the impossibility of the separation of private life from that of the public, due to the current culture's closed system that is based and fed on power (Atwood7), is evident in numerous works. Such works are *Two-Headed Poems* (1978), *True Stories* (1981), *Bodily Harm* (1981), *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), *Morning in the Burned House* (1995) and *The Door* (2007). Atwood does not simply limit politics to the confines of elections. In fact, the term, for her, enlarges to include all forms of 'who gets to do what to whom' (Brans 149). Politics, accordingly, resides in the way societies are constructed and organized, power ascription and absolute poles of power (149). Noteworthy, she published a poetry collection by 1971 entitled 'Power Politics'.

2.4.5 Style

The literary style of Margaret Atwood, whom described her writing process as a 'downhill skier', has been a point of concern and analysis by numerous critics. Deconstructing Atwood's style, Palumbo singles out 'intertextual allusions', alongside the alternation of the narration point of view as the novelist's key method of mirroring the contradictory impulses of human self-construction (21). Furthermore, instead of abiding to the prescript of a single genre, she opts for a 'genre-bending' style (Wilson 179). The latter guarantees Atwood's writing a unique touch of brilliance and variety. Atwood construction, be it of a novel or poem, seems to in a form of "distorted reflections, or refractions" (Skibo-birney 50). Renowned by what Sherrill

Grace dubs 'violent dualities, Atwood displays a third thing' that presents an escape from the constructed and destructive polarities (27).

Conclusion

For a genuine understanding of Atwood's heavily imbued, suggestive and culture-bound works, the historical and literary context had been demystified along this chapter. In fact, the characteristics of postmodernism, be it a literary or historical referent, have been detailed. Particularly, the congruent feminist wave with Atwood's both works, *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing*, has been highlighted. Postmodern Canadian literature in general and the Atwood's background, career phases, literary themes, style and peculiarities are foregrounded.

CHAPTER THREE:

**The Representation of Identity Crisis and
Self-Recognition in *The Edible Woman*
Female Protagonist and Deuterogamist**

Chapter Three: The Representation of Identity Crisis and Self-Recognition in *The Edible Woman* Female Protagonist and Deuterogamist⁴

Introduction

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Introduction

The third chapter sets to bridge the gap between the theoretical framework and The Edible Woman context. First, it aims to locate Marian's primary and then final identity status within the continuum of Josselson's four categorizations. Ainsley's status and her influence on Marian's identity construction are spotlighted as well. A closer look on the protagonist identity crisis 'aspects and causes' will be dedicated.

3.1 The Representation of Identity Crisis in *The Edible Woman*

3.1.1 Marian McAlpin

Marian is the heroine and the titular character, who is Edible. A prototype of North American postmodern socially consumed female. She works at a marketing research firm, whilst living with her roommate, Ainsley. She is entangled in a romantic relationship with Peter, who has, at the outset, flagged his intention, that is any marriage engagements is implausible. As Marian loses the second chapter narration, it seems to lose her sense of self all along. Peter's long awaited and out-of-the-sudden marriage proposal has thrown her out of guard. She develops a sort of eating disorder, anorexia nervosa, an assemblage of psychological turmoil and becomes involved in unhealthy romantic relationship with a graduate student. However the breakdown seems only to create these fissures through which flashes of light seep through.

3.1.1.1 Initial Status

The novel's curtains are parted with the protagonist's first person narration. The protagonist, Marian, apparently is placed at the heart of a postmodern urban setting. Marian, through comparing herself with her friend Ainsley, seems to be a proud conservative and rather a decent girl who is caught on the socially good girl image that Josselson's attributes to the Guardians of Heritage, "they felt morally superior to those who partook of impulse and risk"

(115). Ainsley's liberal attitudes are already feeding Marian's ego, "complimenting myself on my moral superiority to her" (Atwood 2). Marian never fails to reinforce such an image of the good girl in every possible occasion. Marian's belief, that the old woman prefers addressing her instead of Ainsley due to their dressing, reflects her awareness of the culturally accepted codes and her happiness to be in conformity with such a rules, 'I suspect she's [the old woman] decided Ainsley isn't respectable, whereas I am. It's probably the way we dress' (Atwood 4). Echoing a similar thread of thought is Marian's compliance to the idea of men's superiority in job promotion. She contently professes that she "couldn't become one of the men upstairs" (Atwood 12). Even her choice of Peter seems to fulfil a social image. She perceives Peter through the words of others, "he was, as Clara had said, "good-looking"; that was probably what had first attracted me to him. People noticed him" (Atwood 59). He is handsome and has a stable job. Society conceives him as a good fit to settle with.

Marian's cherishing of the society accepted norms is further figured in her conversation with Ainsley about having children without getting married,

"You're a prude, Marian, and that's what's wrong with this whole society."

"Okay, I'm a prude," I said,... "But since the society is the way it is,... How are you going to support it and deal with other people's prejudices and so on?" (Atwood 37).

Seemingly, society's view is Marian's touchstone of weighing up acceptable and unacceptable decision, shutting down her genuine inner interests, needs and desires. In another stance, Marian seems to have a standpoint yet she is unable to defend it, for they are not hers 'right and wrong were givens, unquestionable, and provided them the backbone to stand their ground' (Josselson 115). She is simply leaning on the tenuous heap of the society's cultural mores of do and do-nots. The depth of Ainsley's thinking, stemming from personal

contemplation, has easily shaken her world, 'I was beginning to feel fuzzy in the brain. I knew Ainsley was wrong, but she sounded so rational. I thought I 'd better go to bed before she had convinced me against my better judgment.' (Atwood 38). It proves the extent to which Marian's mind-set and grounds are fragile.

She has never wandered or wondered. Marian is caught up behind the cultural bars imprisoning her mind. She is fully aware of such a fragility and in guard, taking preventive steps and being so cautious not to have her world shattered into pieces. Marian's attitudes are in complete congruence with Josselson's identity status of foreclosure. Marian is a guardian of cultural and social heritage handed down by her caregiver and surrounding environment. Marian has sidestepped the most critical, developmental and ticklish phase, in which pre-internalised beliefs and traditions are questioned and remodelled in correspondence with one's amassed experiences and reality (117). She is an authoritarian who has been dressed a form of identity, not fitting her size, whilst craving to maintain the idealised other's approval (Josselson 116). Marian's identity is built upon the quicksand of conformity to the norms. In spite of her low exploration, Marian is committed to her current life patterns, as such her job, her friendship with Clara, her good manners with the old lady downstairs and her relationship and devotion to Peter.

3.1.1.2 Identity Crisis

An identity crisis, in accordance with Erikson, is preceded and followed by critical periods. Precursory symptoms of the crisis, in Marian's case, are traced back to the very first lines, "if anything I was feeling more stolid than usual." (Atwood 1). Marian is already in the midst of an unemotional detachment. Nonetheless, the tangible flags of the crisis hovered after Marian's debate with Ainsley, in which she states, "I was beginning to feel fuzzy in the brain" (Atwood 38). Absolutely, Ainsley's reason, explanation and questions have triggered and targeted the gaps and inconsistencies of Marian's hand-me-down norms. Ainsley's arguments

evoked what Josselson terms as 'I have always been like this, but perhaps I could still be otherwise' (27). Marian's identity crisis is evidenced through the presence of an array of psychological disorders, which are dissociation, fragmentation and self-estrangement. Likewise, such a crisis has erupted due to mounting stimulus, such as patriarchy, capitalist system and consuming social relations.

3.1.1.3 Dissociation

Out of the three types of dissociation noted in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), Depersonalization, that is separation from the self, body parts or reality, is figured prominently. It is apparent in the mysterious dream proceeding her withdrawal from Ainsley's conversation, least not be convinced, "The alarm clock startled me out of a dream in which I had looked down and seen my feet beginning to dissolve, like melting jelly,... the ends of my fingers were turning transparent." (Atwood 39) Similar to Marian's body parts in the dream, her idealised norms are deeply shaken and are gradually dissolving, melting and disappearing. Ainsley has unveiled what Marian was all the way covering, guarding and avoiding to question. What was dissolving is what Marian thought she is. She is gradually estranged on what she believed in. The old Marian is disappearing leaving space for a new version. Marian's sense of dissociation has peaked with the distortion of her perception of reality: 'I attuned myself to Peter's voice; it sounded as though it was coming from a distance' (Atwood 68). She is unable to fathom what she is perceiving, 'The quality of Peter's voice had changed; it was a voice I didn't recognize.' (Atwood 68). Her distortion of reality is further noticed, 'I studied the reflections of the other three...they were all chin and no eyes' (Atwood 69). With each passing second, Marian's world was becoming more chaotic, "gazing into a multitude of eyes. "You've got eight eyes, " I said softly" (Atwood 83).

Sense of dissociation is further intensified with her inability to control her mental abilities, senses and emotions. At first chance, Marian was alcoholic and partially unconscious, the consciousness that was repressing memories and concealing long due accumulated emotions, particularly anger, has last lapsed and let loose of such an impairment:

'After a while I noticed with mild curiosity that a large drop of something wet had materialized on the table near my hand. I poked it with my finger and smudged it around a little before I realized with horror that it was a tear. I must be crying then! Something inside me started to dash about in dithering mazes of panic, as though I had swallowed a tadpole. I was going to break down and make a scene, and I couldn't.' (Atwood 69).

Marian has become a mere spectator of herself, 'wept for several minutes. I couldn't understand what was happening, why I was doing this; I had never done anything like it before and it seemed to me absurd. "Get a grip on yourself," I whispered. "Don't make a fool of yourself."' (Atwood 69). 'I let go of Peter's arm and began to run' (Atwood 71), her unconsciousness was leading the way, 'I was running along the sidewalk. After the first minute I was surprised to find my feet moving, wondering how they had begun, but I didn't stop' (Atwood 72)

3.1.1.4 Fragmentation

As a defensive mechanism prior to identity crisis, fragmentation in the edible woman is Observed from the outset, 'I know I was all right on Friday when I got up; if anything I was feeling more stolid than usual' (Atwood 1). Marian words denote disengagement and detachment, which is prominent symptom of fragmentation in the postmodern world's 'underlying feeling of inner emptiness' (Fuchs 382). Emanating from what Kohut describes as, 'traumatic disappointment by 'idealised other" ' (Lynne Layton 108) be it caregivers or the norms they have along internalised, Marian is rediscovering, fragmenting and probing each piece of her beliefs heavily. Her sense of unity has dissolved, and this is witnessed in her use of the pronoun 'us' as

referring to herself amidst the crisis, "You 'll get us all killed!"...I must have been thinking of myself as plural" (Atwood 82).

Marian is rapidly changing 'roles and relationships'. Her attachment with Duncan and break up with Peter are out of a sudden, reflecting on Kernburg words on the inability of the fragmented subjects to fathom their needs for independence and dependence, separateness and attachment, as the root cause of such a disorder. Marian was longing to get proposed by Peter. Once he did, she developed a proclivity for separateness. Simultaneously, she built a new attachment with Duncan. Marian is unable to balance and merge her inner needs for the two feelings, separateness and attachment, for each is a coin with two sides. Separateness from Peter is equate to independence. At the same time, it is a harrowing process of breaking long standing norms of how things should be. Attachment with him brings about security and refines the good image girl yet for her it is equal to dependence and compliance as well.

3.1.1.5 Self-Estrangement

Self-estrangement is manifested in two ways, Marian's engagement in futile activities and her alienation from work. According to Seeman, self-estranged individuals have an inclination to participate and engage in activities that are not rewarding (473). Remarkably, Marian's relationship with Duncan reflects such a trait. Duncan is toxic and this is evident in his comments on her outlook appearance in the party, "You didn't tell me it was a masquerade," he said at last. "Who the hell are you supposed to be?" Marian let her shoulders sag with despair. So she didn't look absolutely marvellous after all.'(Atwood262). Besides, Duncan is promising no genuine relationship. His intentions are clear, 'he said earnestly, "I don 't want you to think that all this means anything. It never sort of does, for me..." and "You are just another substitute for the laundromat."'(Atwood153). Further evidence is his discouragement and accusations when Marian told him that she had broke up with Peter because she feels that he was consuming her,

"That's ridiculous," he said gravely. "Peter wasn't trying to destroy you. That's just something you made up. Actually you were trying to destroy him. "

I had a sinking feeling. "Is that true?" I asked.

"Search your soul," he said, gazing hypnotically at me from behind his hair (Atwood 307).

Nevertheless Marian is so invested on him. She is entangled in another fruitless relationship, for Duncan is offering neither emotional support nor commitment.

Furthermore, Marian's fright and hesitation to sign the pension contract reveals her "sense of detachment and the loss of intrinsic motivation in work" (Seeman 790), which is typical of self-estrangement, "I signed, but after Mrs. Grot had left I was suddenly quite depressed; it bothered me more than it should have. It wasn't only the feeling of being subject to rules I had no interest in and no part in making..." (Atwood 13)

Marian has clearly lost what Seeman words as 'intrinsic meaning or pride in work' (790), "When I got the job after graduation I considered myself lucky –it was better than many– but after four months its limits are still vaguely defined." (Atwood 11)

She is completely estranged and alienated from the true mechanism of the company leading to a sense of detachment and therefore she is no longer accomplished by the activities she is undertaking, "At times I 'm certain I 'm being groomed for something higher up, but as I have only hazy notions of the organizational structure of Seymour Syrvey I can't imagine what" (Atwood 11).

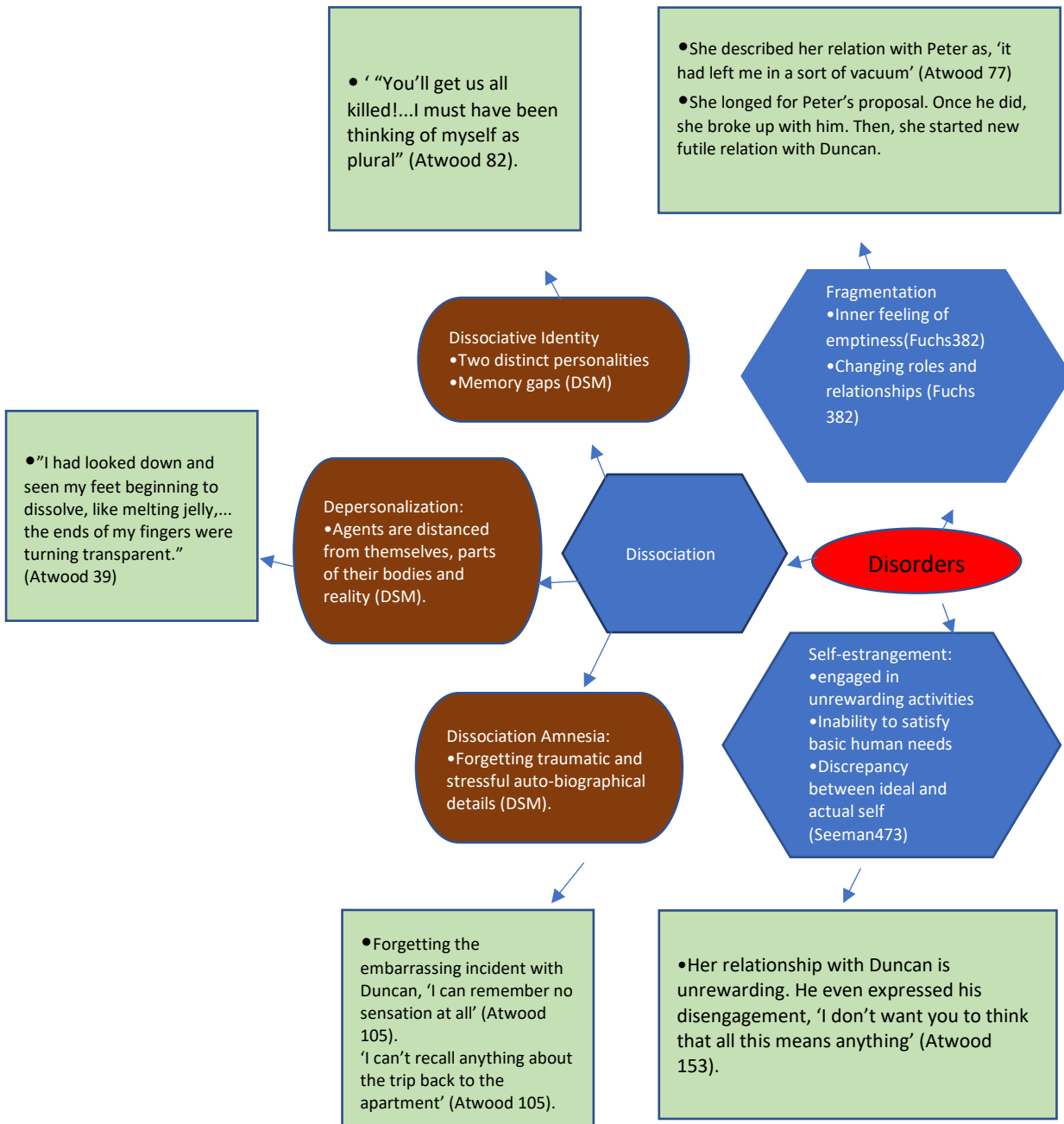


Figure 0-1 The Representation of Identity Crisis Disorders of Marian

3.1.1.6 Towards recognition

In the teeth of the crisis Marian was obsessed by an excessive and constant consideration of others 'speech, opinions and expectations of her, "He wasn't ignoring me, as perhaps I had felt (did that account for the ridiculous flight?) –he was depending on me!" (Atwood 70). Marian merely imagines and makes things up. She becomes meticulous, highly introspective and more sensitive, even a look, a change in voice tone, would render her suspicious of her very being; 'And Len had looked at me that way because he thought I was being self-effacing on purpose... Suddenly the panic swept back over me. I gripped the edge of the table' (Atwood 70-71). She adds, 'I could hear the fury in his [Peter] voice: this was the unforgivable sin, because it was public' (Atwood 72). She is totally consumed by others opinions about her. She is always in speculation about what they are thinking of her, which is typical of searchers, as Josselson clarifies, they are 'in an "identity crisis," Filled with conflict, torn between the demands and expectations of [others]' (158). Hence Anxiety is a further clue of such a status, which has been noticed by Ainsley, who commented on Marian's nails, 'looks like you've been biting them' (Atwood 242). Observable of the heroine is that the first precursors of the identity crisis singled her sporadic yet increasing attempts to break away from all previous commitments, patters and surrounding people and their judgement,

"she [Marian] had been trying to unsnarl herself from all the telephone lines in the city. They were prehensile, they were like snakes, they had a way of coiling back on you and getting you all wrapped up" (Atwood 141-142).

Indeed, great passages of the crisis are depicting Marian's escape from her close social circle. Peter, in particular, has become synonymous with commitment, oppression and the idealised other should-be norms,

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"I let go of Peter's arm and began to run.

The rest of them were so astonished they didn't do anything at all for a moment.

Then Peter yelled, "Marian! Where the hell do you think you 're going?"(Atwood 71-72)

Each lamp post as I passed it became a distance marker on my course: it seemed an achievement, an accomplishment of some kind to put them one by one behind me'(72). She is by now strong, confident and critical enough to form and cement her own views, and eventually face Ainsley, whom by the beginning of the novel was unable to argue with. Ainsley 'criticism of Marian's baking a symbolic woman-like cake as a part of cure to the felt self-consumption she endured from Peter, has not dimmed Marian's spirits. Her vision is clear to notice Ainsley's dominating and controlling attitudes as well, 'How did she [Ainsley] manage it, that stricken attitude, that high seriousness? She was almost as morally earnest as the lady down below'(Atwood 301)

Marian as means of separation has gone too far and started to otherize herself from the rest at varying levels, for instance spatially, "Though I was only two or three feet lower than the rest of them, I was thinking of the room as "up there." I myself was underground, I had dug myself a private burrow. I felt smug' (Atwood 76). Such a separation is in fact symbolic of her detachment from old patterns, 'I had broken out; from what, or into what, I didn't know... I had at least acted. Some kind of decision had been made, something had been finished. After that violence, that overt and suddenly to me embarrassing display, there could be no reconciliation' (Atwood 79).

She is in status where she has broken from old attachment and she is weighing up her options before moving on and making new commitments, "Living closer to their feelings than

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either the Pathmakers or the Guardians, they [Searchers] were reaching for a deep form of authenticity” (Josselson 158). Marian has become in harmony with her inner self and she is paying close attention to what it dictates. She is reaching to the deep, uncharted and dark corners of her psyche. This is shown in her longing for solitude and isolation, 'I began to find something very attractive about the dark cool space between the bed and the wall' (Atwood 76)

"A minute later I was wedged sideways between the bed and the wall, out of sight but not at all comfortable... I eased the bed out from the wall as noiselessly as I could, ... and slid myself in like a letter through a slot. It was a tight fit” ... “and the coolness and the solitude were pleasant” (Atwood 76).

The reconciliation with such a long dismissed and silenced stances of herself has led her to the second most prominent attribute of searchers or daughters of the crisis as Josselson merits, that is intensive assessment. Salient of Marian's new status, thus, in addition to the attempts of escaping, breaking away and liberating is adopting critical eyes. For the first time in the novel, instead of resorting to self-blaming, Marian has started to scrutinize, make reconsideration of her relationship with Peter and harken back to Ainsley's pieces of advice, 'My resentment at Peter for letting me remain crushed..., started me thinking about the past four months. All summer we had been moving in a certain direction, though it hadn't felt like movement: we had deluded ourselves into thinking we were static' (Atwood 77). She started to tie the links and face the reality she was evading, ‘Ainsley had warned me that Peter was monopolizing me; ... it had left me in a sort of vacuum. Peter and I had avoided talking about the future ... surely that was the explanation for the powder-room collapse and the flight. I was evading reality. Now, this very moment, I would have to face it. I would have to decide what I wanted to do. (Atwood 77).

Mysterious about Marian's process of ‘becoming’ is her relationship with Duncan, which is apparently as previously mentioned not rewarding. However, Ruthellen has expectedly

justified the case, searchers "felt too alone to exert much effort in the service of their own shaky desires and often tried to cling to a man to support or guide them" (Josselson 157). This accounts for Marian's attachment with Duncan. Amidst the all-encompassing break away and separations she is undergoing, she needed a solid thread to tie her to the ground, least not flight. She is steering away from all past patterns at once. She is avoiding new commitments, yet she needs support and guidance. Duncan somehow epitomises such an image. He is available all the time to discuss with her what she could not open with Peter. At the same time, he clearly states his refusal of any kind of commitment, 'Because really,' he said earnestly, "I don't want you to think that all this means anything. It never sort of does, for me. ... "You're just another substitute for the laundromat." (Atwood 153) He is so frank that Marian has at last to lay a question she was for long bypassing,

Marian wondered whether her feelings ought to be hurt, but decided that they were not: instead she was faintly relieved. "I wonder what you're a substitute for, then, "she said.' (Atwood 153). He is somehow further entrapping core questions for Marian to solve and Marian instant respond reinforces Josselson observation of such a group of women 'They sought Answers to their relentless questions, and they were more responsive to the cacophony of voices that surrounded them' (Atwood 159). For searchers 'seemed to be asking more of life than the other women' (Atwood 158).By the end of the novel, Marian has exhibited all indications to be fairly classified as a searcher within Josselson framework, ranging from individuation and autonomy to intensive assessment of her options and decisions. However, pertaining to this status, Ruthellen evokes a triggering question 'Would they [searchers] resolve their enigmas by turning away from the conflict, by going back to be the people they had been earlier in life? Or would they move forward to meld the contradictory aspects of themselves and create a life course that was truly theirs?' (Atwood 159)

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Acknowledgeable is, in the road toward recognition, further steps are still left for Marian to take to reach her final destination. Her steps might be heavy or quick, sporadic or consistent yet she seems to head forward a pathmaker status than a drifter, since she gathered the courage to break up with Peter, finally to stand up to Ainsley manipulation and take action to free and cure herself, 'It still was miraculous to me that I had attempted anything so daring and had succeeded' (Atwood 307), Duncan too most probably will soon be disclosed. Marian is still in the road fork. Her next step will be decisive. Since Atwood left the novel open-ended. Marian has either ways, going back to old patterns and getting involved with Duncan, who is as manipulative and unhealthy as Peter, or rendering him as just a yet second step in her path towards identity recognition. The indications are positive for Marian.

Josselson's Conceptualisation	Marian's Status	Deduced Identity Status
<p>Initial Identity Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'they felt morally superior to those who partook of impulse and risk' (Josselson 115) • 'right and wrong were givens, unquestionable,' (Josselson 115) • 'A longing for security and safety kept them from ventures that might imperil the inner certainty they had' (Josselson 115). • 'people become authoritarian and approval-seeking' (Josselson 116). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "complimenting myself on my moral superiority to her" (Atwood 2). • "“You're a prude, Marian...” “Okay, I'm a prude,” I said,... “But ... How are you going to ... deal with other people's prejudices...?”(Atwood 37). • 'I was beginning to feel fuzzy in the brain... she sounded so rational. I thought I'd better go to bed before she had convinced me' (Atwood 38). • 'I suspect she's [the old woman] decided Ainsley isn't respectable, whereas I am. It's probably the way we dress' (Atwood 4). 	<p>Foreclosure (Guardian)</p>
<p>Final Identity Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'they are ... Filled with conflict, torn between the demands and expectations of [others]' (Josselson 158). • 'felt too alone to exert much effort ... and often tried to cling to a man to support or guide them' (Josselson 157). • 'They sought Answers to their relentless questions, and they were more responsive to the cacophony of voices that surrounded them' (Josselson 159). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Len had looked at me that way because he thought I was being self-effacing on purpose... Suddenly the panic swept back over me (70-71). • Marian's relationship to Duncan despite its futility. • Peter and I had avoided talking about the future... I was evading reality. Now, this very moment, I would have to face it. I would have to decide what I wanted to do (Atwood 77). 	<p>Searcher (Daughter of the crisis)</p>

Table 0-1 Marian's Identity Statures

3.2 Ainsley Tewce

Marian is surrounded by a cast of female characters. Prominently, Ainsley, the deuterogamist character, is her roommate. Ainsley is an outspoken, educated, radical feminist young woman. Determinant and independent as she is, Ainsley disregards the society's referral in

her life, particularly males, fearing that it might 'be treated like a thing' (Atwood 32). Comparing her with Marian, Ainsley is the opposite side of the coin. She determines that she is 'not going to get married... [for her] The thing that ruins families these days is the husbands' (Atwood 34-35). She is in pursuit of bearing a child without being trapped in a martial cage. Halfway the journey, however, she ends up in tolerance of marriage as a bedrock to the child's healthy psychological development.

3.2.1.1 Identity Status

Atwood's *The Edible Woman* introduces Ainsley as a mismatch to the settings 'still prevailing cultural mores. She is fuelled by self-impulse and her own convictions. Such a trait is apparent in Ainsley's oft-used expressions in her debates with her roommate, Marian, "Don't you feel you need a sense of purpose?" (Atwood 36). Ainsley's decisions, regardless of their reasonability, they are self-baked and the fruit of self-contemplation. Ainsley never inserts other's view as a variable in determining and weighing up her options, "You're a prude ... and that's what's wrong with this whole society" (Atwood 37). She is in authority of her life, such a proof is her self-made decision of bearing a child despite the society's disapproval, 'As for why now, well, I've been considering this for some time' (Atwood 36). She is in pursuit of bearing a child without being trapped in a martial cage. Ainsley is neither a passive nor solely a resistant, but a fighter who intends to bring about change, 'How is the society ever going to change,' said Ainsley with the dignity of a crusader, "if some individuals in it don't lead the way?' (Atwood 37). Ainsley to a certain extent correspondences with the Path makers traits they are leaders who aspire to inspire, 'I will simply tell the truth. I know I 'll have trouble here and there, but some people will be quite tolerant about it, I 'm sure, even here' (Atwood 37).

Through the journey, however, Ainsley changes directions. Ainsley is not afraid to test, reform and recondition her own philosophy, she adaptively adopts her accumulated

experiences and knowledge. Despite her earlier voiced radical feminist affiliations, once she has learned the importance of the father's presence on the child's psychological welfare, she is not afraid to make a detour. At the same time, she is not hesitant at all to remind the society of its hypocrisy and air her views, 'You're a bourgeois fraud, you have no real convictions at all, you're just worried about what the neighbours will say. Your precious reputation. Well, I consider that kind of thing immoral' (Atwood 244).

Apparently, Ainsley is still self-determined and free-spirited and this is has been expressed through Marian's words, commenting on Ainsley's sudden marriage with Fisher, "At least," I said, "she's got what she thinks she wants, and I suppose that's something" (Atwood 306). Nevertheless, Ainsley remains a rash and impulsive person. Ainsley has rather assimilated certain conservative attributes from Marian, yet such gained attributes are not a hand-me-down, but acquired through observation and self-assessment. Ainsley previous stand seems solely a reaction to social gender roles imposition.

By the end of the novel, Ainsley seems courageous enough to cross the other side. Ainsley is not perfect, after all a Pathmaker's 'path was not necessarily a revolutionary path or even, often, a highly original one, but it was clearly their own' (Josselson 32), but she has got a purpose, and self-made mind-set. She is in a continuous process of balancing and charting.

3.2.2 Friendship

Women, in their identity construction, are genuinely influenced and shaped by their relations with surrounding and intimate people (Josselson 208). In *The Edible Woman*, neither the mother nor the father are privileged a presence. It is Ainsley's role that has been foregrounded all along. Indeed, for 'Friends may also be identity-transforming in offering a new context for a woman to think through her life' (Josselson 235). Marian's accumulated and

stagnant thoughts have been stirred first and foremost by Ainsley's reasoning. Marian's friend has unconsciously been her inspiration and driving power towards change.

3.2.3 Identity Recognition Barriers

3.2.3.1 Patriarchy

A varying amalgam of accumulated reason are behind Marian collapse and identity crisis of which patriarchy is apparent. The Edible Woman displays a cast of males who absolutely find themselves entitled to control and demean females. Patriarchy in Atwood's masterpiece is not a simple individual attempts. It is entrapped at numerous levels. It is institutionalised as well. Women themselves are unconsciously involved in reinforcing such a mechanism. At the individual level, it is observed via characters such as Marian's fiancé, Peter.

3.2.3.2 Marian vs. Peter

Peter is monopolizing, as Ainsley marked, and making Marian perceive herself, and females in general, as a threat and predators who are trying to take of men's life whilst he is the actual aggressor. He succeeded to convince Marian, against her will, that females are the profiteers of the institution of marriage, 'Then he attacked the bride, accusing her of being predatory and malicious and of sucking poor Trigger into the domestic void' (Atwood 63).

his is further shown in Marian frown after Peter's best friend marriage. She became very careful very calculating of her words and was in complete sympathy with Peter. Marian is always the one who has to make the efforts and assimilate in their relationships

"Has something happened?"...."Trigger's getting married."..."Oh," I said. I thought of saying "That's too bad," but it didn't seem adequate. ... "Would you like me to come with you? "I asked, offering support. "God no," he said, "that would be even worse. ... " (Atwood 19-20)

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Peter has already succeeded to convince Marian, against her wishes, to never expect a marriage proposal, 'The most obvious one was that Peter would need careful handling the next evening' (Atwood 20), and conceive her self as a threat to his freedom, 'I knew I would have to be wary. If the other two marriages had been any indication, he 'd start seeing me after two or three drinks as a version of the designing siren who had carried off Trigger.' (Atwood 20)

Despite Marian's caring attitude, he does not hesitate to demean her even in the presence of others . Particularly, typical female roles are obligatory,

"Why can 't you ever cook anything? " he said petulantly. I was hurt: I considered this unfair. ... I was about to make a sharp comment, but repressed it' (Atwood 62-63).

Peter is constantly reinforcing his dominance over her physically and mentally even in the slightest moves and conversations, 'He brought his other hand over and placed it on top of mine. I was going to bring my other hand up and place it on top of his, but I thought if I did then mine would be on top and he 'd have to take his arm out from underneath' (Atwood 64)

His main strategy for maintaining such a dominance mentally is threefold, first, telling her implicitly that she is inferior. Then repeating such a message until it has been internalised. Last, comparing her with other women. In doing so he will make her feel superior to them if she obeyed him and completely inferior if she didn't, ' "Darling, you don 't understand these things," Peter said; "you 've led a sheltered life." ' (Atwood 156)

Marian has finally succumbed and offered him what he has along wanted, compliance, 'she had fallen into the habit in the last month or so of letting him choose for her. ... she never knew what she wanted to have. But Peter could make up their minds right away' (Atwood 155-156). Worst still, the success of Peter's manipulation is evident in the restaurant, where Marian was trying to pick her preferences on the menu as then she described an inner faint voice telling

her otherwise. 'But instead I heard a soft flannelly voice I barely recognized, saying, "I 'd rather have you decide that. I'd rather leave the big decisions up to you." I was astounded at myself' (Atwood 93).

Despite his hate for Ainsley, suddenly Peter is portraying her for Marian as a superior example, simply, to subjugate Marian, "Ainsley behaved herself properly, why couldn't you? The trouble with you is," he said savagely, "you 're just rejecting your femininity" (Atwood 81).

Peter's bigotry is shown most in his accusation to Ainsley as 'radical' and 'uncivilized' since she is a woman and to his surprise she is strong and confident enough to have her own mentality and convictions and brutally defend them. He is obviously unable to dominate her or provide enough proof to change her mind. The substitute plan is labelling her as uncivilized,

'He had met Ainsley before and hadn't liked her, suspecting her of holding what he called "wishy-washy radical" views because she had favoured him with a theoretical speech about liberating the Id. Politically Peter is conservative. She had offended him too by calling one of his opinions "conventional" and he had retaliated by calling one of hers "uncivilized"' (Atwood 66)

3.2.3.3 Marian vs. Institutional Patriarchy

Two scenes expose the atrocity of institutional patriarchy in *The Edible Woman*. First, Marian's description of the Seymour Surveys three building flats. At the top, which has a further symbolic sense, Marian describes a lavishly furnished offices, which are inclusive to men solely, the executives and the psychologists. They have the highest rank in the company and 'referred to as the men upstairs' (Atwood 11). The second floor, where Marian is working, is

mixed. The one below is inclusive to housewives. They are dedicated to plain manual works and are poorly paid. Marian has clearly stated her hopes and aspirations to better her position, but she admitted the bitter reality that a promotion means ascending to the upper floor, which is unreachable since she is a woman. Second, Marian's awareness of the nearing of her last days in the company since she is getting involved in marital life and Mrs. Dodge removal from the office due to her pregnancy are a perfect evocation of the 60s prevailing patriarchy, ' "Marian," she said with a sigh of resignation, "I 'm afraid Mrs. Dodge in Kamloops will have to be removed. She's pregnant. "Mrs. Bogue frowned slightly: she regards pregnancy as an act of disloyalty to the company' (Atwood 17).

3.2.3.4 Marian vs Capitalist Mechanism

Capitalist ubiquitous presence has handcuffed and cornered the heroine throughout the novel. Her hopes for improvement and advancement in work, which are a nationally human right and inclination, are dashed. She is oblivious of the company mechanisms. She has been obviously told only that would let her function properly in her humble current position. Any further information that would feed her aspirations or render her a threat to the owners is concealed,

"At times I 'm certain I 'm being groomed for something higher up, but as I have only hazy notions of the organizational structure of Seymour Surveys I can't imagine what.'..."but after four months its limits are still vaguely defined" (Atwood 11).

Marian's free will and self-made decision are robbed and undervalued. She is constrained and subdued through legal papers. This is noted in her refusal to sign the pension plan, yet she has been obliged to. She has given her approval signature on legal papers in spite of her actual disapproval. She is bound by law,

"I don 't think I 'd like to join the Pension Plan, " I said. "Thank you anyway."

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"Yes, well, but it's obligatory, you see," she said ...I signed, but after Mrs. Grot had left I was suddenly quite depressed;... . It wasn't only the feeling of being subject to rules I had no interest in and no part in making ... the fact that I had actually signed my name, ... seemed to bind me to a future Somewhere in front of me a self was waiting, pre-formed, a self who had worked during innumerable years for Seymour Surveys" (Atwood 13).

The Edible Woman pictures a world drowned with advertisements, that are shaping and directing the subjects desires, opinions and needs. Everywhere Marian heads she is faced with advertisements, be it home, the bus, the hospital, the street, 'on the bus I stared for a long time at an advertisement with a picture of a nurse in a white cap and dress' (Atwood 105). A similar incident is observed on the bus as well, 'We didn't talk on the bus; I don't like talking on buses, I would rather look at the advertisements' (Atwood 6). In the car, she adds, 'though on the opposite sides of the car, and I sat reading the advertisements as well as I could through the screen of lurching bodies' (Atwood 23). Likewise, Marian describes, "Beside the column of print there was an advertisement: a little girl with pigtails on a beach, clutching a spaniel. "Treasure It Forever," the caption read' (Atwood 253). Marian is thoroughly surrounded with that sending images of how her body have to be and what she should wear and buy, 'A blonde woman with enormous breasts spoke to her from the back cover: "Girls! Be Successful! If you want to really Go Places, Develop Your Bust"' (Atwood 229).

Advertisement were catering a non-existing and unattainably perfect images that render the subject thriving for to achieve a sense of accomplishment. This reflected on Marian's speculation about the telephone guy, "Perhaps his otherwise normal mind had been crazed into frenzy by the girdle advertisements ... Society flaunted these slender laughing rubberized women before his eyes, urging, practically forcing upon him their flexible blandishments, and then refused to supply him with any" (Atwood 121). Advertisements, in Marian's words are inappropriate, distorting the acceptable and to a certain extent violating the society moral values

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at the same time establishing standards; "I must admit to being, against my will, slightly scandalized by those advertisements. ... For the next few blocks I thought about the dictum I 'd read somewhere that no well-dressed woman is ever without her girdle. I considered the possibilities suggested by the word "ever" (Atwood 96). Another incident provides for the advertisement effects are sanitary-napkin survey Marian has announced her embarrassment and shock from the questions being asked.

Conclusion

This chapter has evidenced for Marian's progression from Foreclosure towards the Searcher status. In the same manner, Ainsley's role as a pathmaker has been clarified. Passages exhibiting Marian's dissociation, self-estrangement and fragmentation have been extracted. To piece the segments of the puzzle, barriers that have delayed the heroine's individuation have been illustrated.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Representation of Identity Crisis and Self-recognition in *Serfacing* Female Protagonists and Deutragonists

Chapter Four: The Representation of Identity Crisis and Self-recognition in *Surfacing* Female Protagonists and Deutragonists

Introduction

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Conclusion

Introduction

The fourth chapter views Atwood's *Surfacing* through the prism of previously elucidated theoretical passages, namely Josselson's identity statuses. The protagonist initial and final statuses are to be delineated, in hopes to attentively measure the extent of achieved progression. Likewise, the deuteragonist's identity status is trailed. In this prospect, quintessential importance is to be shed on key empowering relations, throughout this prolonged identity journey, that is friendship. Similar to the supporting impetus, impediments, hindering the recognition process, are to be pointed, patriarchy as such. The heroine's identity crisis is further to be evidenced through tracing the presence of common psychological disorders.

4.1 Surfacing

4.1.1 Surfacing protagonist

The Surfacer or the unnamed narrator is the protagonist and a commercial artist. She had been married and shortly divorced after a distressing abortion. She is in trip from the city to her father's small, solitary and deserted island, due to his sudden absence. She is, then, in a gruelling encounter with childhood memories. Whilst she goes in search of her father, The Surfacer surrenders herself to nature, healing and releasing her past traumas.

4.1.1.1 Initial Status

Tracking both variables, commitment and exploration, The Surfacer showed none. To pinpoint the surfacer initial identity status within Josselson four categorizations, foreclosure status is firmly excluded. Through the heroine's account of her secular view and disregard of her parents' interference in her life and disobedience to what they believed unacceptable concerning both her marriage and divorce, the surfacer detachment and independence from the idealised other are explicit. The proceeding passages further elucidate the Surfacer's lack of commitment.

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Prominently, her questions to Anna on the secret behind her nine years lasting marriage, which the surfer failed to maintain, protrude such a missing trait, "She said you just had to make an emotional commitment, it was like skiing, ... For me it hadn't been like skiing, it was more like jumping off a cliff. That was the feeling I had all the time I was married; in the air, going down, waiting for the smash at the bottom." (Atwood 41). Whilst Anna opts for "skiing" as metaphoric of marriage, which demands both sticking on and continuity i.e. commitment, the Surfer resorts to "jumping", that rather alludes to inconsistency and escapism.

Once again when she is presented with a chance to be committed, she strongly declines it. The surfer's refusal to Joe's, her boyfriend, marriage proposal due to the absence of love between them, ' "We should get married," Joe said. He'd got the order wrong, he'd never asked whether I loved him, that was supposed to come first, "No I said, the only answer to logic"' (Atwood 81). That reflects her absurd and meaningless pursuits. It harkens Josselson's notes on the Drifters as "both crave and fear intense closeness..., the Drifters both long to lose themselves in another and are terrified that this may happen" (242). Her insistence on love as prerequisite to marriage is bitterly contradictory with her real life actions, "Perhaps it's not only his body I like, perhaps it's his failure; that also has a kind of purity" (Atwood 51). She is absolutely conscious that Joe's body and failure are the traits that she likes, yet she is pinpointing love as core stone for marriage. She seems unable to recognise the contradictions she is feeding, "their hopes were fantasies rather than linked to any action that might translate them into reality" (Josselson 206). The surfer's lack of logic and consistency remain critical points throughout the novel foreshadowing Josselson's observation, "the Drifters presented a haphazard sequence of events in which logic and motivation were difficult to discern. The dynamics of decision-making, where choice grows out of what one already is, were obscured" (147-148). X-raying the heroine's speech, dialogues and monologues, the majority of narration and memories are

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incoherent for the drifters "mode of talking about themselves differs from the other groups—the contradiction, the trailing off, the incomplete thoughts, the stories that make no point" (Josselson 208).

The Surfacer whole story revolves around abortion, marriage then divorce and the loss of family members, which is typical of drifters, "their histories, at least through their thirties, tend to be accounts of wrapping their lives around a pursuit or a relationship, abandoning it, and then being swept off into yet another all-absorbing centre" (Josselson 153). She is completely engrossed and absorbed by her tragedies, which are mostly a result of either lack of appropriate calculation or the inability to move on, learn and integrate those failures into her identity formation. Similar to the Surfacer's life narrative is one of Josselson's study samples, Yvonne who is drifter. Her story life "was centered on the trauma of having been abandoned by her partner after the birth of their child who, born prematurely and very ill, died several months later" (207-208). Drifters life narrative is often stories of disappointment, failure and frustration (209), which is evident in the Surfacer's discourse: "I would always be able to say what I'd just finished saying: I've tried and failed, I'm inoculated, exempt, classified as wounded" (Atwood 82). In another stance; she adds, "I no longer fought back because I never won" (Atwood 130). Strikingly, the heroine is known as an independent and a feminist prone person, yet her unconcern, refusal to help Anna, unemotional involvement while questioning David and last her statement, "I said "I think men ought to be superior." (Atwood 106), reflects Josselson's words, "In addition to having no clear goals, their [drifters] value systems were equally diffuse" (206).

Moving to the second variable, exploration, a closer examination shows that what the Surfacer has along labelled as decisions and experience taking are in fact mere hasty impulses, "they [drifters] set about realizing themselves in impulsivity, in the pleasures of the moment, even in the pleasures of despair" (Josselson 207). The first experience taken is marriage then

followed by divorce. The heroine's comments on her parents disapproval of her decisions as, "they didn't understand the divorce; I don't think they even understood the marriage, which wasn't surprising since I didn't understand it myself. What upset them was the way I did it, so suddenly, and then running off and leaving my husband and child" (Atwood 22), reflects the suddenness of the events. Worst still, her confession on her inability to fathom the motives and grounds behind undertaking such a choice is an absolute proof of the reign of impulsivity over her life. Identical with the drifters attitudes, after hopping from a place to another the surfacer returns home and refuses to leave in hopes to cement an essence; "Some Drifters, often bouncing from place to place, return home in search of a lost part of themselves, hoping to find a feeling of settlement ... some effort to reclaim the past and to take in something they could internalize and keep for their own" (Josselson 241-242). In her return to her home, she repeatedly expresses; "I was not completed yet; there had to be a gift from each of them" (Atwood 144), hoping that what she failed to accomplish would be gratified by the big other.

4.1.1.2 Identity Crisis

The narrative is centred on three milestone, that are a failed marriage, a bitter divorce and loss of family members. Although part of such disappointments seem to emanate from the surfacer identity position, drifting, that is described best by the narrator's words; "The only defence was flight, invisibility" (Atwood 130). Such a tragedies have caused numerous psychological disorders to name few self-estrangement, fragmentation and especially dissociation, with its three types, are conspicuous. No wonder the surfacer is in ferment. Moreover, the surfacer initial status of identity, psychologically, is synonymous with dissociation. Josselson posits; "Crisis in identity can be spurred either by inner change or social dislocation. We might arrive at periods in our lives where our past ways of being feel no longer gratifying" (28). Notably, at a certain point, the heroine has started to grasp her social

dislocation. The first part of the novel depicts her resentment, resistance and disapproval of civility, urban life and the city. However, she, later, gradually comes to the realization that the countryside lifestyle she has been raised in throughout her childhood is no longer valid. They simply belong to another period of time, another place and circumstances. She has to move on, not necessarily surrender, but adapt accordingly. Such a realization has brought the heroine into conflict. She is in confrontation with what she believed and what is realizing, "no longer maintain our customary position in relation to others by being just as we have always been. What is acceptable and valued in one place and time may be scorned in another" (Atwood 29).

4.1.1.3 Dissociation

Throughout the novel, dissociation, along other disorders, reigns over the heroine's life. Symptoms of depersonalization, associative Amnesia and Dissociative Identity Disorder are manifested. The Surfacers develop a mental split between self and reality. Although she is long ago divorced, she keeps the marriage ring on her hand. Her fluctuations considering her father's death or survival, reflects her inability to distinguish between her personal suppositions and wishes and reality. Mental faculties, inter alia thought, memory and sight are severely distorted. Her perception is hazy: "I glance up at him and his face dissolves and re-forms" (Atwood 22). In another stance, she adds; "But there was not one canoe, there were two, the canoe had twinned or I was seeing double" (Atwood 137).

Whenever she sets eyes on something, her description is either blurred or disfigured, "I was dizzy, my vision was beginning to cloud, while I rested my ribs panted, I ought to pause, half an hour at least; but I was elated, it was down there, I would find it. Reckless I balanced and plunged" (Atwood 136). Her memories are leaving her mind in ferment. She is confusing incidents from the past with the present moments, "at first I thought it was my drowned brother,

hair floating around the face, image I'd kept from before I was born; but it couldn't be him, he had not drowned after all" (Atwood 137). Depersonalization is visible in the heroine's estrangement from parts of herself and body, "Whatever it is, part of myself or a separate creature, I killed it. It wasn't a child but it could have been one, I didn't allow it" (Atwood 138). The novel, weaving a narration of past memories and new adventures, is a stage/sight to numerous aspects of Dissociative Amnesia. Particularly, the narrator seems unable to recognise the source of her memories. A questionable is were those memories experienced by her first-hand or told to her by someone else, "It was before I was born but I can remember it as clearly as if I saw it, and perhaps I did see it" (Atwood 26) In another segment, two distinct personalities could be distinguished as a proof of the Surfacers' Dissociative Identity Disorder; "I'm trying to tell the truth," I said. The voice wasn't mine, it came from someone dressed as me, imitating me" (Atwood 101). Such a phenomenon is further evident in the Surfacers' constant fluctuations of values and self-image.

4.1.1.4 Fragmentation

Fragmentation, a relatively diffuse psychological malfunction among postmodern subjects, is predominating the Surfacers' life. Ranging from impassiveness to inconsistency, the novel presents plentiful related cases. To start with, the heinous incident Anna endured has not generated any sympathy in the heroine's heart and exposed her emotional detachment and stolidity. In fact, she was very calm and uninvolved whilst discussing the event with David, "Why did you do that? "My voice was neutral" (Atwood132) and "I was impersonal as a wall, a confessional, and that reassured him" (Atwood 132). Emotions for the surfacers does not seem as natural and innate instincts. For her, they demand effort and practice, "I rehearsed emotions, naming them: joy, peace, guilt, release, love and hate, react, relate; what to feel was like what to wear" (Atwood 106). Moreover, her marriage and divorce ,then her intimate relationship with

Joe and her decline of his marriage proposal, if anything, are indications of her inability to articulate her needs for dependence and independence. The Surfacer is fragmented and conflicted with a sense of incoherent fluctuations, shifting views and discontinuities, especially, when her father is involved or mentioned. Losing him has been an altering point in her life course. She simply swings between belief and disbelief. At the start of the novel, she admits his death calmly, "But now I've admitted he's dead I might as well find out what he left for me" (Atwood 53). However, the more she dives and marches into the pursuit of retrieving her senses and the vividly of her emotions, the more she denies such a fact and opts to cling on hopeful possibilities, "What I'm afraid of is my father, hidden on the island somewhere and attracted by the light perhaps, looming up at the window like a huge ragged moth" (Atwood 55). She once adds; "Paul, I said, lowering my voice, "the reason I can't sell is that my father's still alive" (Atwood 90). By the end, she rather resorts to mythic suppositions, believing in reincarnation, as a way of soothing the emotional pain; "I see now that although it isn't my father it is what my father has become. I knew he wasn't dead" (Atwood 183). Probing her speech and monologues, it becomes apparent that her sense of unity is shattered; "I touched him on the arm with my hand. My hand touched his arm. Hand touched arm. Language divides us into fragments, I wanted to be whole" (Atwood 141). Unconsciously, she perceives herself as a separate fragments, "We both wait for my answer" (Atwood 158). She is overwhelmed by an underlying feeling of inner emptiness, "I was emptied, amputated; I stank of salt and antiseptic, they had planted death in me like a seed" (Atwood 139).

4.1.1.5 Self-estrangement

An array of symptoms could be ascribed to self-estrangement. The protagonist displays detachment from reality and people surrounding her, in numerous times. When she was Looking up at Joe, she expressed: "it was as though I was seeing him through a smeared window

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or glossy paper" (Atwood 141). In another occasion she describes herself as, "I'm ice-clear, transparent, my bones and the child inside me showing through the green webs of my flesh" (Atwood 177). In her isolation in the forest, she exhibits a failure to satisfy, sense or react to urgent human needs such as food and belonging; "I haven't had time to be hungry and even now the hunger is detached from me, it does not insist" (Atwood 182). Moreover, she is engaged in activities that are not rewarding. She does not love Joe, yet she is living with him. She identifies him as her boyfriend, yet she declines his marriage proposal. Commenting on her job, she does not display any passion or sentimental commitment as well. No intrinsic motivation in work is noted. It is not her choice, but a pragmatic calculation by her former husband, "the career I suddenly found myself having, I didn't intend to... I'm what they call a commercial artist,... . For a while I was going to be a real artist; he thought that was cute but misguided, he said I should study something I'd be able to use because there have never been any important woman artists" (Atwood 46). Spotlighted is her seemingly intentional attempts to conceal parts of her personality and life. A discrepancy between her ideal and actual self-image is observable in her claim of Joe as her husband at times and her of aborted child; "I've never told her about the baby; I haven't told Joe either, there's no reason to. He won't find out the usual way, I have to behave as though it doesn't exist, because for me it can't" (Atwood 42). She is alienated and estranged from others and the rest of the society as a whole: "They are talking, their voices are distinct but they penetrate my ears as sounds only, foreign radio" (Atwood 180).

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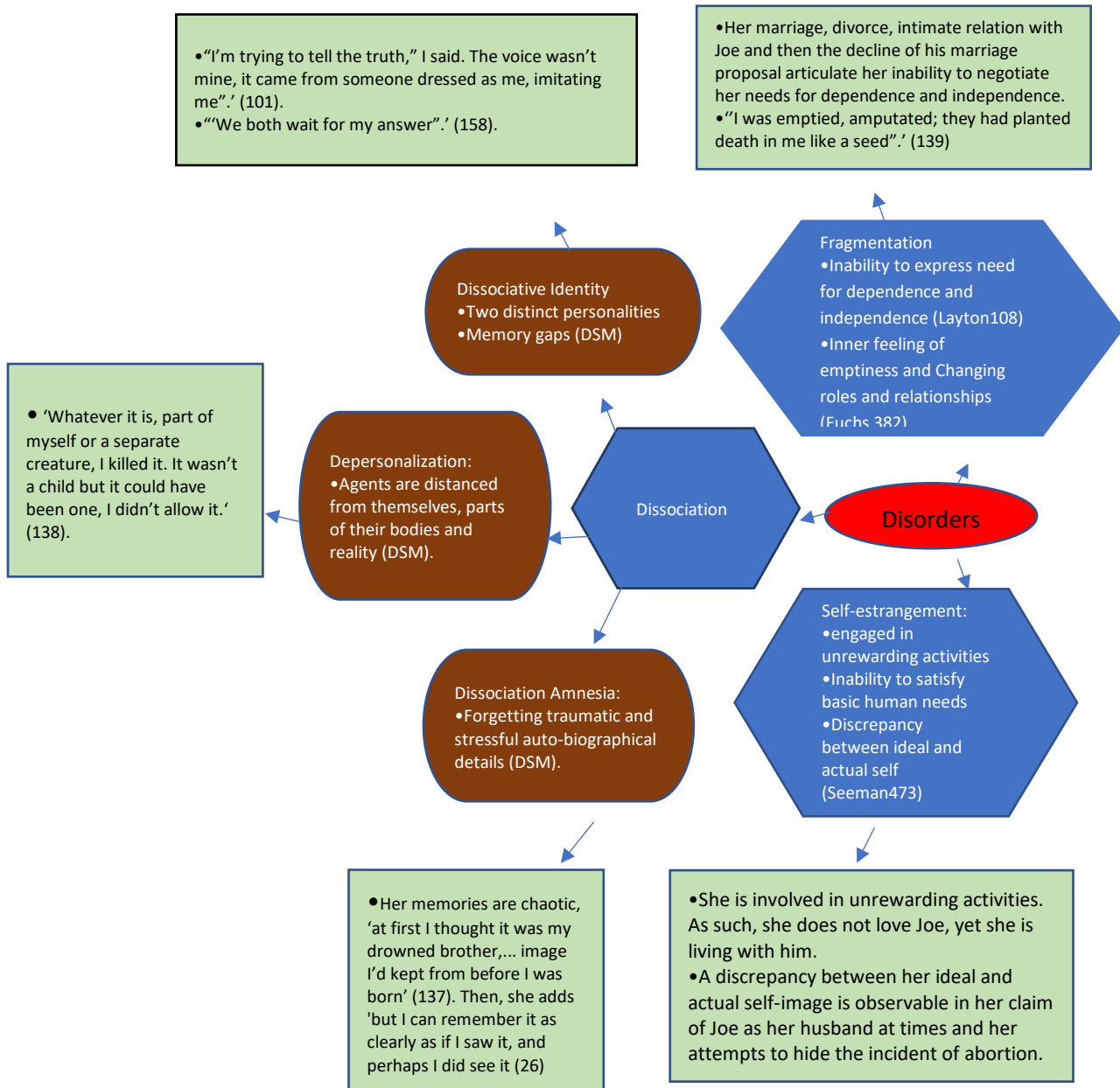


Figure 4-1The Representation of Identity Crisis Disorders of the Surfacers

4.1.1.6 Towards recognition

A shift is discerned towards the end of the novel. The Surfacer is forging a distinct pattern. She is at last taking actions. The first steps of change are observed in her defence about and help to Anna through drowning the insulating and demeaning camera tapes David was preserving, "David is kneeling, his hands fishing in the water, pulling up the film in spaghetti handfuls though he must know it's futile, everything has escaped" (Atwood 162). She has become true to her beliefs and values. Nothing to fear anymore. She is weaving a solution instead of her usual flight and escape. The Surfacer who has been grappling with psychological disorders is even undertaking the responsibility of healing and saving herself, "I rehearsed emotions, naming them: joy, peace, guilt, release, love and hate, react, relate; what to feel was like what to wear" (Atwood 106). She is no longer surrendering. Against her previous conviction, "I no longer fought back because I never won" (Atwood 130), she is fighting again and her fight is already rewarding, "I'm crying finally, it's the first time, I watch myself doing" (Atwood 168). She is gradually loosening the numbness and stolidity of her emotions. Her next step is "I must stop being in the mirror.

I look for the last time at my distorted glass face ... Not to see myself but to see" (Atwood 171). The last look on the mirror, before departing to the forest and inaugurating her rehab-like stage, is a metaphoric to a medical examination or a kind of assessment. The Surfacer was as if calculating what is missing. She was detecting and pinpointing the deficiencies that needed maintenance. With each further step, she is empowered and inspired. The narrative is no longer contributing to the previous image of a helpless, passive woman; "I unfasten the window and go out; at once the fear leaves me like a hand lifting from my throat" (Atwood 171). The chains of the past are shattered, smashed and wracked, "Everything I can't break,... I throw on the floor. After that I use the big knife to slash once through ... my own clothes and my mother's

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grey leather jacket, my father's grey felt hat, the raincoats: these husks are not needed any longer, I abolish them, I have to clear a space" (Atwood 173). She is breaking away past attachments, failures and disappointments. She is finally cutting all the tangles and throwing the burdens of the past afar. Likewise, pathmakers do not claim the authority of the past whilst considering their options and moulding their decisions (Josselson 32). The Surfacer is clearing the way and emptying the room for a new self to emerge and be forged.

"When I am clean I come up out of the lake, leaving my false body floated on the surface, a cloth decoy" (Atwood 174). Some kind of self is being skinned, that is the past failures and disappointments. Finally, she is face to face with her impulsive and uncalculated decisions, "In any case I can't stay here forever, there isn't enough food. The garden won't last and the tins and bottles will give out; the link between me and the factories is broken, I have no money" (Atwood 185). She is no longer floating. She is on the ground counting her steps tentatively. She has gained conspicuous attitudes such as "stepping up to new challenges, backing off from what was too daunting" (Josselson 32). As soon as she grasped the futility of her stay in the forest and sensed that such a residence is no longer serving her pursuit well, she is not afraid to withdraw and make a detour in her course.

A powerful achieved progress is her consciousness and resolution to decline the authority of the past on her life, "They'll never appear to me again, I can't afford it; from now on I'll have to live in the usual way, defining them by their absence; and love by its failures, power by its loss, its renunciation. I regret them; but they give only one kind of truth, one hand" (Atwood 185). With the last step, she turns the mirror again, "I turn the mirror around" (Atwood 186). She finally stopped the flight and escape that dominated her life decisions. She faces the reality. She gazes, in the mirror, at her reflection to only realise the strength of the shadow she sets eyes on. The whole suffering, fight and the harrowing process she endured has a meaning,

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"This above all, to refuse to be a victim" (Atwood 187). With such a declaration, a new chapter is written under the title I Am All Powerful. No recourse to past tragedies will ever occur. No memories will rule over her will. She has restored the authority of her life, "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" (Atwood 187).

She is reclaiming her authority. She is at last trail blazing some kind of a pathway. The heroine has showed what Josselson singled out as unique trait of Pathmakers which is the "capacity to integrate aspects of themselves with their growing understanding of their world" (32). Similar to Debbie in Josselson's study, the surfacer "had found a meaningful path that she could follow. She showed me that Drifters, too, could become Pathmakers—with a lot of effort, insight, good fortune, and—maybe—good therapy" (258).

Josselson's Conceptualisation	The Surfacers' Status	Deduced Identity Status
<p>Initial Identity Status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'both crave and fear intense closeness' (Josselson 242) • 'their histories ... tend to be accounts... around a pursuit or a relationship, abandoning it, and then being swept off into yet another' (Josselson 153). • their life "was centered on the trauma" (Josselson 153) • 'Drifters life narrative is often stories of disappointment, failure and frustration' (Josselson 209) 	<p>Searcher</p>
<p>Final Identity Status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'stepping up to new challenges, backing off from what was too daunting' (Josselson 32) • 'had found a meaningful path that she could follow... Drifters, too, could become Pathmakers—with a lot of effort, insight,... good therapy' (Josselson 258) 	<p>Pathmaker</p>

Table 0-1 The Surfacers' Identity Statures

4.1.2 Anna

Totally absorbed by her marital struggles, Anna is a submissive wife and The protagonist's friend since two months. As the novel unfolds, Anna pours her heart and discloses the true colours of the sugar-coated and seemingly successful marriage. She is under constant humiliation and abasement by her manipulative and controlling husband. He never fails to remind Anna of her mental and moral inferiority.

4.1.2.1 Identity status

David oft-repeated expressions with Anna such as "like a good girl" (Atwood 130), reflects the confined realm she is a hostage to. She is as Josselson describes, "authoritarian and approval-seeking" (116). She shows the typical attitudes manifested by Guardians. Indeed, she succeeded to Guard and maintain her marriage for nine years but at expense of herself. Anna's idealised other in *Surfacing* is not her parents, but David. Anna whilst exhibiting a little exploration to none, she is highly committed. When the surfer was wondering about the success behind Anna's marriage, she explained, "you just had to make an emotional commitment... you couldn't see in advance what would happen but you had to let go. Let go of what, I wanted to ask her" (Atwood 41).

In fact, she let go of her inner desires, wishes and goals. She simply tamed and silenced her inner whispers to suit and gain David's approval, for Guardians "had learned, growing up, to silence inner wishes that did not meet others "approval, orienting themselves to please, to be "good" (115). Throughout the novel Anna and her husband represent the traditional dynamics of the dominant and the submissive. He is bluntly and ceaselessly voicing his expectations of her, such as "That's what I like, service." (Atwood 29) and "Anna, you're eating too much" (Atwood 93).

She, in the other hand, is tentatively picking up such orders as building bricks in her identity formation, her "own sense of identity was merged with this idealized other person who seemed to know best. ... sense of self were phrased in terms of earning and maintaining that person's love or approval (Josselson 116). When Anna seeks solace and recounts the sufferings she is enduring from David, the Surfer logically suggests, "Maybe you should leave," I said, offering my solution, "or get a divorce" (Atwood 117), but Anna does even comment on such a suggestion. For a guardian any form of rebellion is not a possibility. Towards the end of the

novel, Anna has wasted the chance to break away and further reinforced her identity status as a Guardian. When The Surfacer has helped her and drowned the humiliating tapes, Anna could have escaped with her, but again she has proved how submissive she is. She simply denied her engagement in such a revolutionary act, "She dumped out your film," Anna says behind me... David says, "... why the shit didn't you stop her?" (Atwood 162).

4.1.3 Friendship

Reasonable of a woman who has lost family members and has been failed by a husband is forging a friendship to resort to. The Surfacer and Anna's friendship has been an implicit catalyst behind the former's identity status ascendance, in spite of the latter's submissive nature. The heroine, along the lines, heads to Anna for advice and most eminently to draw comparison and deduce lessons, that her primary environment had not catered, "I was measuring myself against what she was saying. Maybe that was why I failed, because I didn't know what I had to let go of" (Atwood 41). Indeed, as Josselson clarifies, "Friends are there to compare and contrast the self" (232). In fact, the sacredness of such of a relation resides in that, "Friends are a source from which identity possibilities spring" (Josselson 232)

4.1.4 Identity Recognition Barriers

4.1.4.1 The Surfacer vs Patriarchy

The heroine's identity crisis is chiefly stemming from the patriarchal impositions, restrictions and handicaps. She, in line with the patriarchal, has been objectified and commoditized. The Surfacer's free will has been stripped, "I never identified it (child) as mine; ... It was my husband's, he imposed it on me,... I felt like an incubator... he wanted a replica of himself; after it was born I was no more use" (Atwood 28). Along similar lines, she describes an incident from her wedding day, "He was talking to me as though I was an invalid, not a bride"

(Atwood 83). Whilst choosing her career, her husband, likewise, is the one who sets the direction. In accordance with the rise of feminism and liberalism, men's manipulative mechanisms are becoming more elusive as well. David, instead of offending the protagonist by degrading the feminist movement, asserts, "but I'm all for the equality of women; she just doesn't happen to be equal and that's not my fault, is it?" (Josselson 133). A quirky way to fasten his grip, he sets Anna apart as an exception.

4.1.4.2 The Surfacer vs Family Members Loss

The heroine's sense of identity, as Josselson postulates (208), is established, nourished and strengthened in a direct relation to her close circle. Unsurprisingly then is the Surfacer's fragile identity grounds and psychological impairments following the loss of her child, husband and then father. The loss of such a pillars or rather a cornerstones have wrecked her identity construction and inner dynamics. The surfacer is haunted by their absence, "I was emptied, amputated; ... they had planted death in me like a seed" (Atwood 139).

In the loss of her child-could be she adds, "Whatever it is, part of myself or a separate creature, I killed it. It wasn't a child but it could have been one, I didn't allow it" (Atwood 138). Such a deep sorrow is further sensed in her observation, "I envy people whose parents died when they were young, that's easier to remember, they stay unchanged" (Atwood 3). Similar to child loss narrative, the word "amputate" is used to term the aftermath of the divorce, "A divorce is like an amputation, you survive but there's less of you." (Atwood 36). With each loss the narrator seems to dim, resolve and fade. In an attempt to fill such a vacuum, she tries to have another child by the end of the novel.

4.1.4.3 The Surfacers vs Urban Life

A source of turmoil was the protagonist loss of agency due to the urban life mechanisms. Looming large over her life, she does not hold the absolute authority over her life. Such a motif is evident in her stay in the hospital, "they tie your hands down ... they want you to believe it's their power, not yours" (Josselson 74). She develops three reactions, adaption, such in "It's pre-dawn, earlier than the traffic starts in the city, but I've learned to sleep through that" (Atwood 35), resistance, witnessed in her of her name, "my name. It's too late, I no longer have a name. I tried for all those years to be civilized but I'm not and I'm through pretending" (Atwood 164), and by the end surrender, "then back to the city and the pervasive menace,"(Atwood 185).

Conclusion

The chapter served as a proof of the Surfacers's heavy yet decisive steps towards self-articulation. Friendship, to which the protagonist owes a great deal of gratitude, has been an implicit nexus towards the new acclaimed status. In addition, the chapter brings light on challenges facing females, not exclusive of Surfacing's solely but the post-modern era in general, amidst the path of recognition.

General Conclusion

Concomitant of the 20th century contemporary arising challenges, much questions on female identity construction, in the literary terrains, arose of their own accord. Margaret Atwood, whose works address issues of patriarchy, female loss of agency and identity confusion, has been a prominent figure in the postmodern literary arena. The first phase of her career circa the late 60s coincided with the emergence of the second feminist wave. *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing* are particularly centred around motifs of identity crisis and recognition and psychological disorders such as fragmentation and self dissociation. Margaret Atwood's female protagonists reject the 20th century orthodox social norms and gender stereotypes, undergoing a laborious journey of self-assertion.

In the light of the above mentioned context, the current thesis, so long, has sought to march a number of pertaining milestones. First and foremost, it aimed to distinguish Atwood's peculiar styling of postmodern female identity formation. In keeping with this pursuit, the social, cultural and political markers controlling such a process are accentuated. It, further, set to evidence the occurrence of identity crisis in both novels through tracing the presence of accompanying disorders such as self-estrangement. Likewise, it set to tease apart the reasons behind the heroines 'identity crisis. Correspondingly, the Canadian writer's differing approach in routing female identity recognition paths in the *edible woman* and *Surfacing* are to be deduced.

For the most part, the first chapter makes a familiarity with the conception of identity in general and postmodern female identity in particular. To fathom the core of the latter, light is shed on its formation, development and contributing and regulating factors rather than the concept per se, lend to its nature as a developmental perpetual process. Due to female identity multifaceted formative parameters and scholars differing suppositions, the term's essence seems to escape nevertheless the aura is captured. As the puzzle pieces are put together, the second chapter focused on the literary characteristics of postmodernism. Postmodern Canadian literature, Atwood's literary realm, themes and style are an indispensable part of the chapter.

Having the essential theoretical foundations well grounded, the novels representation of identity crisis and recognition are adeptly traced.

For outreach the research aims, three questions were posited. The first, examines the depiction of identity confusion in Atwood's *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing*. The second investigates the focal preventives behind each protagonists' progression towards self-recognition. Then, the third sets to determine the extent to which each protagonist has achieved self independence and recognition. Such questions brought about three corresponding hypothesis. Both novels present identity crisis, in toto, as an accumulation of one's relationships with his/ her close circle and the society's dominant cultural values. Conspicuously, patriarchy is held as chiefly responsible for the heroines' delay and sporadic blockages towards self-recognition, in both settings *The Edible Woman* and *Surfacing*. Finally, neither Marian nor the Surfacers have truly found their long search about trove treasure, that is self-recognition.

To probe the properness and the precision of such a hypotheses, Josselson's framework has been favoured, as it is considerate of femaleness as a variable and offers an accurate mechanism for measuring progression. The practical part is handled with a twofold pursuit. First determining the protagonists initial and final identity statuses, and, thus, drawing on any plausible achievement in terms of recognition. In between the four identity statuses shifts, proofs of identity crisis occurrence are gathered. A feasible trajectory to follow was through tracing the presence of identity crisis accompanying disorders such as association, fragmentation and self-estrangement. Equally important, the heroines' female friends' identity statuses are specified with the purpose to later deduce the contribution of friendship in female identity construction. In all cases, quote and comment method is approached to account for the preventives the protagonists encountered amidst the road towards self-recognition.

The point of departure have been quite different for both heroines. Whilst Marian had been a Guardian, the Surfacers identified as a Drifter. Accordingly, their pace and path

towards recognition were dissimilar. Marian did not wean her self away from her surrounding relations at once. She was deriving power from such a ties, yet she was a Searcher who is still assessing and gradually dismantling one tie at a time. She was step-by-step altering her surrounding environment. Along the road, she was shedding and lighting needless weight and baggage of past burdens. The Surfacer, otherwise, has declined all her surrounding relations, headed to the forest, isolated herself and took nature as a refuge. She loosened the stolidity and rigidity that dominated her life, with the intention to adaptively integrate into the civil world. Distinctive of Surfacing, Atwood goes further to suggest that if intimate relations have failed woman, nature will not. Women are still all powerful to claim the responsibility of regaining their identity and charting their authentic self. Weighing up both novels, identity crisis is equally valued as a pre-requisite and stepping stone towards recognition. If the heroine is to reach her destined heights, she is to face all the fears she sidestepped. They have to cease feeling reality and begin to change it. They have to learned inquire into the pretensions of life, and equally to reject its usurpation.

The deliberate focus on friendship was relatively a commonplace in both works. The protagonist as a lone swimmer battling against a ceaseless tide of social struggles and patriarchal obstacles needed a stable trustworthy relation, a safety valve, to which she would reside. Although friendship has been a driving motive towards self-recognition, Atwood has fashioned such a relationship quite differently in the both settings. Indeed, Marian, ignoring the direction where the truth obviously resides, needed a trailblazer a Pathmaker to stir her stagnant and always-have-been thoughts. The surfacer, who is already in ferment, lacked a female version that has just marched the exact opposite path of hers, to compare, consult, confirm and calm down the uncertainties that have devoured her. Anna has brought harmony out of dissonance in the Surfacer's life. As a result Ainsley and Anna are each antithesis of the other, for they have been appointed to serve different roles and cater for dissimilar needs. In either case, nevertheless,

Atwood proved that friendship is a necessity for female Identity recognition, which is rather a rough road to travel.

Numerous factors urged and equally catapulted the heroines into such a critical crisis. Atwood in either novels creates settings in which patriarchy is seemingly banned but implicitly tolerated. Coupled with such a struggle, they are simultaneously caught in the web of postmodernity. Marian is implicitly battling against and utterly chained by the capitalist system, this is, in fact, mirrored in the Surfacers' refusal of urban life and her struggle in the city as well. Both heroines seemed to be clouded with the euphoria of postmodern life, that is for instance maintaining stable jobs, unaware that their essence has resolved along the way. A striking divergence is that the Surfacers have further endured the loss of family members and relatives. Her aborted child, Her divorced husband, her dead parents seemed to leave incurable scars and dug wholes in her very being. Wholes and scars she was unable to mend again, for a woman's identity is not easily weaned and detachment from such a substantial links

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ملخص

تماشياً مع بدايات الموجة النسوية الثانية، سلطت الروائيتان "المرأة المهضومة" و "الطفو الضوء" للكاتبة مارغريت أتوود الضوء على أزمة الهوية الأنثوية والسعي الدائم للاعتراف بالذات. وبالتالي، فإن الاهتمام الشامل في الدراسة الحالية يهدف إلى تحديد التمييز بين نهج المؤلف المتباين في تصوير المسارات الأنثوية نحو تحقيق الذات. ومن ثم، فإن مدى استقلالية البطلات المدفوع، وبالمثل، العوائق التي تعرقل مثل هذا السعي يتم متابعتها على قدم المساواة. من الافتراضات الرئيسية أن التقدم قد تم إحرازه. ومع ذلك، فإن الاعتراف يكتمل في أي من الروائيتين. من خلال خطوط مماثلة، فإنه يدين النظام الأبوي باعتباره العامل المساعد وراء مثل هذا الالتباس. لتأكيد مثل هذه الفرضية، تم اعتماد نهج وصفي نفساني نسوي لإجراء الدراسة المقارنة والنوعية الحالية. بموجب هذا، يتم تتبع تطور الهوية من خلال إطار جوسيلسون لأوضاع الهوية، والتي تمنح الأنوثة أهمية مركزية. من خلال الدراسة التحليلية، يتم تحديد نقطة انطلاق الشخصيات الرئيسية ثم النهاية النهائية، على طول طريق التعرف. لقد أسفرت الدراسة، في الواقع، عن دليل واضح على تقدم البطلات نحو تحقيق الذات، ومع ذلك يبدو أن بطلة الطفو تجاوزت المرأة المهضومة. تم التنديد بالبطريركية، جنباً إلى جنب مع ديناميكيات الحياة الحضرية الرأسمالية، باعتبارها تحارب محاولات البطلات نحو تحقيق الذات في كلا الوضعين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهوية الأنثوية، أزمة الهوية، تحقيق الذات، أوضاع الهوية، ما بعد الحداثة.