



## CANADIAN VALUES AND IDENTITY: MONTGOMERY'S PORTRAYAL OF NATIONALISM AND PATRIOTISM IN THE 'ANNE' SERIES

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**Abstract:** This paper deals with how Lucy Maud Montgomery's 'Anne' series discloses the spirit of nationalism and patriotism promoting Canada's cultural identity. This research paper exhibits Montgomery's skillful weaving of nationalist and patriotic themes through the critical analysis of the 'Anne' series - *Anne of Green Gables*, *Anne of Avonlea*, and *Anne of the Island*. Montgomery's depiction of Prince Edward Island landscapes, tradition, and community values exemplifies Canadian identity. The novels commemorate Canadian culture, history, and buoyancy, cultivating national pride. Through examining Montgomery's works, this paper provides insights into Canada's cultural identity focuses on nationalism and patriotism in Canadian literature. The 'Anne' series endures as an essential part of Canada's literary heritage, abiding to stimulate national pride and identity.

**Index Terms** – L.M. Montgomery, 'Anne' series, nationalism, patriotism, Canadian identity.

Lucy Maud Montgomery (1874-1942) is a famous Canadian novelist who attains fame throughout her life because of her everlasting collection of works. Her writings not only reflect but also shape Canadian values of nationalism and patriotism. Lucy Maud Montgomery's views on nationalism and patriotism as a Canadian writer are complex and multifaceted. Montgomery establishes Canadian literature as distinct from British literature. Her works explore nationalist themes that influence subsequent Canadian writers. Montgomery's experiences during WWI influenced her to depict patriotism and nationalism in her works.

L.M. Montgomery's beloved Anne series has captivated readers worldwide with its endearing heroine, vivid descriptions of Prince Edward Island, and poignant portrayal of Canadian culture and history. The Anne series is published between 1908 and 1921, consists of eight novels that follow Anne Shirley's journey from a plucky, red-haired orphan to a confident, compassionate young woman. While the series has been widely acclaimed for its timeless themes and memorable characters, it also offers a unique window into the culture, history, and landscape of Canada during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

This article will explore how Montgomery's 'Anne' series reflects nationalism and patriotism and shapes Canadian identity, examining the ways in which the novels represent the country's history, culture, and natural landscape. It examines that Montgomery's 'Anne' series comprises the following crucial elements such as highlighting Canadian identity through Anne's experiences, appraising imperialism which underscores Canada's growing independence, celebrating Canadian culture, history, and traditions, accentuating community and national pride.

L.M. Montgomery's Anne series has been treasured by readers for generations, and its portrayal of Canadian culture, history, and landscape has played a significant role in shaping the country's identity. This paper reveals Montgomery's depiction of Prince Edward Island's landscape reflects the Canadian ideal of a connection to nature, and the series portrays Canadian history, including the country's role in World War I and the impact of immigration on Canadian culture, including its values, customs, and traditions, shaping the reader's understanding of Canadian identity.

Canadian nationalism refers to the sense of national identity, pride, and loyalty shared by Canadians. L.M. Montgomery's masterpiece of work, *Anne of Green Gables*, is a paradigm of the Canadian novel, published in 1908. The novel epitomizes the spirit of nationalism through its portrayal of Prince Edward Island's history, culture, and values. Montgomery's work of art apprehends the soul of Canadian identity, delving into the themes of belonging, community, and patriotism.

Montgomery's delineation of Prince Edward Island (PEI) serves as a microcosm of Canadian culture. One of the most striking aspects of the Anne series is its vivid depiction of Prince Edward Island's landscape. *Anne of Green Gables* describes the island's natural beauty, accentuating its red sand beaches, rolling hills, and picturesque landscapes. Montgomery's descriptions of the Island's rolling hills, red sand beaches, and lush forests are so evocative that they have become synonymous with the Canadian culture and history. "The Lake of Shining Waters was a glorious sight, shining and trembling and sparkling in the sunlight, its surface dotted with little sailboats and its shores fringed with birch and fir trees." (*Anne of Green Gables* 34). This idyllic setting

represents Canada's vast and diverse geography. Montgomery uses Prince Edward Island as a symbol of Canadian identity. Montgomery's vivid descriptions yield a sense of pride and possession, demonstrating the deep connection between Canadians and their land. The main protagonist, Anne Shirley says, "I'm so thankful for this house ... and for Prince Edward Island ... I've always felt that it's where I belong." (273).

The Anne series also offers a powerful portrayal of Canada's role in World War I. Montgomery's depiction of the war's impact on Canadian society, particularly on the young men who fought and died in the war, reflects the country's complex and often conflicted relationship with war and militarism. For example, the character of Gilbert Blythe, Anne's friend and eventual husband, serves as a powerful symbol of the sacrifices made by Canadian soldiers during the war.

*Anne of Green Gables* accentuates the significance of community and belonging in shaping Canadian identity. Avonlea, the close-knit society where neighbors support and care for one another, incarnates the Canadian values of cooperation, hospitality, and mutual respect. Anne reveals enthusiastically, "Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world." (*Anne of Green Gables* 123)

Anne's adoption and her arrival to Prince Edward Island symbolize Canada's openness to immigration and diversity. Anne states, "I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers ... It's been my experience that you can nearly always enjoy things if you make up your mind firmly that you will." (125). Anne Shirley's integration into this community illustrates the acceptance and inclusivity that define Canadian culture. Anne declares, "I'm glad, I'm a Canadian" (88) showcasing Anne's newfound national pride.

Anne's love for Canada and her adopted province is evident throughout the novel. Anne's loyalty is revealed when she defends of Canada against Rachel Lynde's criticism. Her fervor for Canadian literature, folklore, and traditions showcases Montgomery's own national pride. References to Canadian folklore like 'Maple Leaf' reinforce national identity, and it is mentioned as a part of the Prince Edward Island landscape. (125).

In *Anne of Avonlea* (1909), the sequel to *Anne of Green Gables*, Montgomery continues to explore the themes of Canadian nationalism, identity, and community. *Anne of Avonlea* reinforces the Nationalist themes introduced in the first book and also incorporates the New Nationalist themes. The nationalist themes such as Prince Edward Island's charm, community spirit, Canadian history and tradition. Anne admits, "There the rose of joy bloomed immortal by dale and stream; clouds never darkened the sunny sky; sweet bells never jangled out of tune; and kindred spirits abounded." (36)

*Anne of Avonlea* introduces New Nationalist themes like immigration and Identity, Indigenous-Settler Relations, Canadian education. The themes of immigration and identity are exposed when the arrival of immigrants in Avonlea triggers discussions about cultural assimilation, national identity, and the Canadian mosaic. (pp. 156-159). Indigenous-Settler Relations are portrayed visibly through subtle critiques of colonialism by Montgomery through Anne's interactions with the settlers, acknowledging Canada's complex Indigenous-settler history. Canadian education is signified when the novel emphasizes the importance of education in shaping Canadian identity, showing up the role of schools in nurturing the national values. Anne learns Canadian values like hard work, perseverance, and community spirit, essential to Canadian culture.

In *Anne of the Island* (1915), the third book of the Anne series, L.M. Montgomery continues to explore the themes of Canadian nationalism, identity, and community, with enhanced depth and complexity. *Anne of the Island* reinforces the nationalist themes – Prince Edward Island Enduring charm: Montgomery's descriptions of PEI's landscapes and traditions remain integral to the narrative. Canadian Education: The novel stresses the prominence of education in shaping Canadian identity, as Anne attends Redmond College in Kingsport, Nova Scotia. Community Spirit: The relationships between Anne and her friends, family, and community emphasize Canadian values of cooperation and mutual support.

*Anne of the Island* produces the New Nationalist themes such as Canadian Identity in Abroad, Imperialism and National Autonomy, Feminism and National Progress. Anne's experiences in Europe and United States allow Montgomery to explore Canadian identity beyond national borders. Anne's speech on Canadian History that they should preserve their Canadian traditions (*Anne of the Island* 192-194) demonstrates her knowledge and pride in Canadian history. The novel critiques Imperialism through Anne's interactions with British and American characters, accenting Canada's growing independence. Anne states "We are British, Phil, but we are Canadians too ..." (227). Montgomery portrays a strong, independent Canadian woman, signifying their contributions to national progress. "Women should have votes and help in making the laws..." (169). The novel's exploration of feminism and national progress reflects Montgomery's own experiences as a Canadian woman writer.

Montgomery's representation of Canadian culture, including its values, customs, and traditions, shapes the reader's understanding of Canadian identity. The Anne series is full of references to Canadian culture, from the character of Marilla Cuthbert's strict adherence to traditional Scottish customs to the portrayal of the Charlottetown social scene. Montgomery's depiction of these cultural practices and traditions reflects the country's complex and multifaceted cultural heritage and helps to shape the reader's understanding of what it means to be Canadian.

Montgomery integrates historical and cultural references specific to Canada, reinforcing her nationalist themes. The novel cites the Canadian Confederation, the Charlottetown Conference, and the loyalty to the British Crown, focusing on Canada's complex history and its evolution as a nation. "... the Charlottetown Conference, where the great question of Canadian Federation had been discussed ..." (*Anne of the Island* 27). It is cited as a pivotal Canadian historical event. Montgomery acknowledges PEI's Scottish and Irish roots, highlighting Canada's multicultural heritage.

L.M. Montgomery weaves the patriotic themes throughout the 'Anne' series. Montgomery embodies the spirit of patriotism through its portrayal of Prince Edward Island's culture, history, and values. The specific patriotic themes are love for the land, community spirit, Canadian history and tradition, and national identity. *Anne of the Island* remarks on significant Canadian events

and folklore. Anne's adoption and her journey to self-discovery denote the formation of Canadian identity. The novel mentions Canadian achievements in literature, art, and science. Anne's speech on Canadian literature illustrates her knowledge and pride in Canadian literature. (pp.192-194). The debate in Redmond College showcases Canadian intellectual and cultural achievements. (pp. 235-238).

Montgomery employs symbolism and imagery to express patriotic sentiments. The Canadian flag is cited; the flag's presence at Avonlea school (*Anne of Green Gables* 311) symbolizes national unity and pride. The Avonlea Community represents Canada's small towns and rural landscapes. Green Gables, the house, symbolizes Canadian hospitality and warmth. Montgomery weaves skillful characters such as Anne Shirley, Marilla Cuthbert, and Rachel Lynde to exemplify patriotic values. Anne's love for Canada and Prince Edward Island ascertains the passion and loyalty that define her patriotic feeling. Marilla's strong sense of community and tradition illustrates Canadian values. Rachel's warmth and hospitality represent Canadian culture.

The male protagonists, like Gilbert Blythe, Charlie Sloane, Mr. Irving, Dr. Blythe, and Roy Gardner in the 'Anne' series, also reflect nationalist sentiments and patriotic feelings. In *Anne of Avonlea*, Gilbert's patriotic speech at the Avonlea school showcases his national pride. (pp. 234-235). In *Anne of the Island*, Gilbert's discussion on Canadian confederation demonstrates his interest in Canadian politics. Charlie Sloane in *Anne of Avonlea* recites a patriotic poem that showcases his national pride. (95). In *Anne of the Island*, Charlie's critical thinking on national issues is revealed in a debate on Canadian imperialism. (pp. 240-242).

Mr. Irving's patriotic lessons promote Canadian national pride in *Anne of Green Gables* (228). Dr. Blythe's stories of Canadian history in *Anne of Avonlea* exemplify Dr. Blythe's patriotism and love for Canadian history. In *Anne of the Island* Roy Gardner's discussion on Canadian literature demonstrates his interest in Canadian literature. His patriotic speech at Redmond College in *Anne of the Island* reveals his national pride. (pp. 73-74). All these incidents express nationalist and patriotic sentiments that highlight national pride and loyalty, and interest in Canadian politics and history, and critique of imperialism and colonialism.

Montgomery is a pioneering female writer in a predominantly male-dominated literary scene. Her writing career demonstrates women's capabilities and independence. Her works often explore women's roles, challenges, and empowerment. Her impact on Canadian nationalism and patriotism, women's history, and Prince Edward Island's cultural significance remains profound. Her work continues to inspire feminist scholarship and activism.

Montgomery lives during a period of significant social change for women. Her work reflects and contributes to the growing women's movement in Canada. Montgomery holds a significant place in Women's History in Canada. Montgomery is one of the first Canadian women to achieve international literary success. Her Anne series has sold millions of copies, making her one of the most popular authors of her time. Montgomery supports herself through writing, demonstrating women's capabilities. She focuses on women's education, women's empowerment, domesticity and motherhood. She advocates for women's access to education throughout her career. Her character, like Anne Shirley, embodies independence and self-reliance. Montgomery explores women's roles and challenges in domestic spheres.

Montgomery fights for women's rights and supports women's suffrage. She advocates for women's right to vote. As a member of the National Council of Women, she participates in organizations promoting women's rights. She depicts challenging social norms throughout her life career. Her works feature strong unmarried female characters. Her stories explore women's professional aspirations. She addresses women's mental health and well-being. Montgomery influences notable Canadian authors such as Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro. Her works continue to inspire and empower young women worldwide.

L.M. Montgomery's 'Anne' series engages with the themes of nationalism, patriotism, diversity, and inclusivity, proposing a nuanced discovery of Canadian identity. It covers the common themes like community, natural beauty, cultural values, and national pride. The series follows Anne Shirley, a spirited and imaginative young orphan, as she navigates adolescence, community, and national identity in Prince Edward Island, Canada.

In conclusion, L.M. Montgomery's Anne series offers a powerful and nuanced portrayal of Canadian culture, history, and landscape. Through its vivid depiction of Prince Edward Island's landscape, its portrayal of Canadian history, including the country's role in World War I and the impact of immigration on Canadian society, and its representation of Canadian culture, including its values, customs, and traditions, the series reflects the complexities and challenges of Canadian identity. As such, it remains a beloved and important part of Canadian heritage.

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