I. In the Skin of a Lion as a Postcolonial Text

Main thrust of the study is to foreground the postcolonial discourse of memory represented by a mixed blood novelist Michael Ondaatje and the characters as well in *In the Skin of a Lion* by bringing Salman Rushdie's concept of memory that has a fallible nature of forgetfulness and fragmented like broken mirrors, but these "shards" of memory has the powerful expression in Michael Ondaatje's writings. It is hypothesized that Michael Ondaatje in *In the Skin of a Lion* recollects bits and fragments from his ancestral land in order to recreate the cultural identity and to overcome the sense of rootlessness haunting the immigrants like him. Michael Ondaatje in the opening of the novel writes:

> This is a story a young girl gathers in a car during the early hours of the morning. She listens and asks questions as the vehicle travels through darkness. Outside, the countryside is unbetrayed. The man who is driving could say, "In that field is a castle," and it would be possible for her to believe him. She listens to the man as he picks up and brings together various corners of the stories. (1)

At the end of the novel, it is discovered that the travellers in the car are Patrick and Hana. Novel published in 1987 shifts back to 1920s and 1930s condition of immigrants whose contributions to building Toronto never became part of the city's official history. The investments of these settlers in Canada remaining "outsider" to the mainstream society will be illuminated in relation with oral-narratives. This introductory paragraph anticipates the novels emphasis on oral memory culture.

In the Skin of a lion depicts and invents the sign of another world coexisting silently with Toronto's written history by de-familiarized habitual perception of Toronto vis-a-vis a reconstructed and imagined new world. Non-English-speaking

immigrants cross the boundaries and borders to another reality and a new language. In *In the Skin of a lion*, the emergence of the world of the other begins with a moment in the night. Unnamed world of the immigrants comes in fragments of oral history, conversation, and dream throughout the novel is associated with lights in the night. They are known in the absence of official history as the perception of reality.

Patrick as the protagonist in *In the Skin of a Lion* migrated to Toronto, can neither go to his past heritage nor can assimilate in the English speaking land. As a result, Patrick is compelled to create a space as an alternate identity through imagination with the help of his memory. In this regard, Gordo*n* Gamlin in "Michael Ondaatje's *'In the Skin of a Lion' and the Oral Narrative*", argues:

> *In the skin of a Lion* does not focus on the controlling centre but turns to the workers at the periphery. Their diversity is rendered best through oral narratives which defy conventional monomorphic presentations. In search of a narrative model, *In the Skin of a Lion* reverts to oral narrative strategies and to the beginnings of story- telling. In addition, Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* presents a number of thematic similarities to oral narratives, such as its emphasis on the tale-telling nature of the story. (68)

In Diaspora writings memory plays an immensely important role. As the emigrants are far distant from their native land, the only means that connects them with it is memory. Short vignettes are found in the text and it is so because of fallible memory. Fragmentary images are the characteristics of memory. According to Salman Rushdie: "when the Indian writer who writes from outside India tries to reflect that world, he is obliged to deal in broken mirrors, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost" (10-11).

Patrick Lewis, the central figure, the narrator in the novel, initially recollects his childhood memories. ‘Searching’ both in his childhood and maturity has been a recursive characteristic. Born and grown in a working class family, he knows the first hand toil of his father and people of the community he belonged to. Although he was born as a son of worker, he was given an inquisitive mind. He used to make a keen observation of the things that people generally suppose unimportant. Even the insects like bug, grasshoppers etc. were the things of importance to him: “Bugs, plant hoppers, grasshoppers, rush dark moths. Patrick gazes on these things, which have navigated the warm air above the surface of the earth and attached themselves to the mesh with a muted thanle” (9). Patrick mediates upon the insects and gives them fictional names which are more instructive to his life than so called realities of the official history.

Michael Ondaatje in *Anil’s Ghost* mentions: “some people let their ghost die, some don’t” (53). Here Ondaatje means to say that ghosts are memories in symbolic way which allows people to escape people from grief and fears.

Elleke Boehmer gives more importance to the cultural aspect in the course of colonization as well as independence. According to him, the restoration of political rights is not enough; rather one should get freedom from the colonization of mind: He says:

> Cultural representations were central first to the process of colonizing other lands and then again to the process of obtaining independence from colonizer. To assume control over a territory or a nation was not only to exert political or economic power, it also have imaginative command. (5)

It becomes clear with Boehmer's view that despite the political freedom, countries under British Empire are not free, since they are still under the "imaginative command" of the West.

In the Skin of a Lion talks about the cultural confusion and the quest of identity in a Postcolonial age. Radojka Vukcevic in "Memory and place in Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost"* argues:

> Writing his own history, Ondaatje gives form to disparate facts, puts pieces of memory and places together, fictionalizes then in *Anil's Ghost* (2000), a novel set in out in our time. The place is Srilanka (former Ceylon), a country forced into the late twentieth century by the ravages of civil war and the consequences of a country divided against itself. Anil Tissera, educated in the west, a forensic anthropologist sent by an international human-rights group to work with local officials, appears as a ghost to discover the source of the organized campaigns of murder engulfing the island. Bodies and skeletons are discovered, and one nicknamed "sailor". What follow is a novel of memories moved by specific places, a story about love, about family, about unknown in his and the guest to awaken all hidden past memories. (585)

The narrator of the initial scene that will be known later in the stories he relates is Patrick Lewis, who is shown with his slowly cognizance of other, foreign culture, a new knowledge for himself. The first encounter between two different worlds is set, like the opening vignette, in the darkness of the early morning hours. The lights of a "collection of strangers" of a "strange community" (7), appear in the darkness outside the window of a small boy's room: he "stands at the bedroom window and watches;

he can see three lanterns" (7). The name and identity of the boy, Patrick, emerge for us gradually, as the world of the other appears for him out of the darkness. When Patrick moves to 'other' world to an immigrant neighbourhood in Toronto, he catches up with the unknown stories about the world of the loggers, Patrick has encountered as a child.

The Diaspora people voluntarily or forcibly leave their homelands into new regions. In the new regions they feel forlorn as they could not assimilate themselves fully with the foreign culture. Then, they start looking back to their culture, which is far distant, but is closely tied up with their identity. Consequently, they are frequently haunted by some sense of loss. Actually, their identity is swinging like a pendulum since they can neither uphold the foreign culture as their own nor can they return to their homelands which they already left. So, they have some urge to reclaim and to look back their past. However, their physical alienation prevents them from reclaiming them fully and precisely.

Temelcoff's role is that of "spinner' in *In the Skin of a Lion* who links everyone" (34); Patrick eventually discovers that the man who saves Alice Gull's life when, during her time as a nun, she is blown of the Viaduct. Nicholas Temelcoff has never told this story, but once reminded of it by Patrick, he feels. "Patrick's gift, that arrow into the past, shows him the wealth in himself, how he has been sewn into history. Now he begins to tell stories. He is a tentative man, even with his family. That night in bed shyly he will tells his wife the story of the nun" (49).

The passing of the stories, the novel suggests, is the only way to ensure the histories of ordinary people, those without power, are sewn in history. With the help of his friend Patrick, Temelcoff is able to see his worth in roots that strengthen his identity.

In *Running in the Family*, Ondaatje tries to capture the world of his parents, rooted in Ceylon, in the early decades of the century, which he knew mainly from fragments of stories he had heard as a child. Milica Zivkovic in “Memory and Place in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family”* States:

> How am I then to read the “imaginary” family and homeland that Ondaatje portrayed for us: as a nostalgic reconstruction of Sri Lanka in the early 1920s? As someone's idealist dream of exotic mystery and power? Ondaatie's memoir will necessarily remain “incomplete” as history. But it does not matter much. The ultimate goal of the narrator's guest, the sense of identity with his land and his family has been achieved. (108)

In "The Representation of “Race” in Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion*, Lowry Glen, observes the text from the postcolonial perspective but his focus is the subject matter of the race as the contemporary issue. The dichotomy of white and non-white is the central issue of Lowry's concern. But the thing that is not clear with Lowry that where he posits Ondaatje in terms of white/non-whiteness.

> Reading *In the Skin of Lion* as a statement on the problematic of construction of “whiteness” rather that “color”, enables us to re-situates Ondaatje's work, and /or our interpretative performance of it, within a much more contradictory and contentious conception of Can lit as a space of “race”. (63)

Victoria Cook, in “Exploring Transnational Identities in Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost*,” terms Ondaatje having the experience of both Colonial and the Postcolonial present in his writings. So he writes from the in-between position.

> Born to Dutch parents, in what was then Ceylon and is now Sri- Lanka, his family ancestry has been described as a polygot mixture of Dutch, English, Sinhalese, and Tamil; his parental grandfather was a wealthy tea planter in Kegalle. At the age of ten, Ondaatje was sent to a Public school, Dulwich College in London and at nineteen followed his brother, Christopher, to Canada, Where he took citizenship, went to university, married and began his writing career. As a product of this somewhat “colonial” background, Ondaatje's position enables him to explore, in depth the conflicts and contradictions of the type of identity that incorporates a colonial past and a post- colonial present. (6)

*"*The Cost of Civilization: Constructing the City in Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion"* by Wojciech Kallas argues that the novel shed light on the complex human experience especially of the workers whose toil is responsible for the cost of the civilization, and lead the rural Canada into modern city.

> Central theme of the novel is the human cost of the process of transformation and what it means to be a worker constructing something magnificent artifacts of an emerging urban civilization . . . by depicting many jobs that often prove costly to the people performing them. (215)

In this way, Ondaatje and his texts have been read and examined until now. The most crucially examined aspects are: subject matter, position of the characters, and class of the characters they belong, nostalgic feelings of the characters and so on. Being an author of contemporary time and issue, there is no lack of critics to view his works with the contemporary approaches. Postcolonial issues of identity, belongingness,

resistance, migration, cultural plurality etc. are central in his writings as well as research for his writings.

Culture, being a term that bears very broad meaning, has been differently viewed in different periods by different thinkers. In its early usage, it used to refer to organic cultivation, of soil and crops, or to be a biological culture made in the laboratory and so, by extension to human accomplishment. It also used to refer to intellectual and artistic works or practices which in their very famous meanings define human society as socially constructed rather than natural one. The later usage of the term “culture” is different from its early usage. Fredric Jameson defines culture as a means of interaction between two groups. This means cultural identity of a group comes from its interaction with another group. He writes: "No group has a culture; all by itself culture is the nimbus perceived by one group when it comes into the contact with and observes another one [...] then a culture is the objectification of everything alien and strange about the contact group” (On Culture 271).

While defining culture Edward Said highlights it as “the source of identity”. He agrees with Matthew Arnold's view on culture as a means to differentiate “us” from “them”. Said further utilizes us them dichotomy and says it is the western invention “for dominating and reconstructing authority over the Orient”. (3)

Identity in relation to culture is not limited only to one's social exposition rather it is associatied to one's history and origin. This can be justified from Stuart Hall's words from *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*:

> Cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning. Hence, there is

> always a politics of identity, a politics of posting which has no absolute guarantee in an unproblematic, ‘transcendental law’ of origin. (49)

When Hall says "a politics of identity, a politics of position”, it refers to colonial and post-colonial western tendency to interiorize the non-west.

To say one's identity is in crises is a cultural crisis. One of the most powerful factors that have caused identity crisis is globalization. The globalization, in its long run, has caused the interfusing of identities, which can be termed as ‘the hybridity of cultural identifies’. Hybrid identities are the outcomes of the mixing, fusion and creolization, following the mixing and movements of cultures. The reference of hybridity in postcolonial theory and studies goes to race and ethnicity. This term is used to describe the newly composed, mixed or contradictory identities resulting from immigration, exile and migrancy.

“Cultural studies” as a genre can be traced back to the British cultural movement of 1960s. Cultural study of the time studied the nature of mass culture and the workings of cultural studies. Raymond William’s definition of culture as “a whole way of life” replaced the structuralize interpretation of the culture. Being inseparable with identity, culture has contributed a lot in the scope of post-colonial studies.

When Britain and other colonizers had been practicing the pinnacle of power, discourses produced that time had been the effective support for the European empire to dominate the native lands. Writings of all kinds were motivated by the theories concerning the superiority of European culture. They “misrepresented” the native culture and their lands as being inferior and interpreted the geography, religion, history and culture according to their imagination. Although colonization was supposes to be political phenomena its effect in culture cannot be ignored. Cultural

misrepresentation was the great challenge that the natives were facing in the colonial era.

Cultural confusion and identity crises, caused due to the colonization, are the most important aspects in the writings of postcolonial era. During the last two decades, as a major critical discourse in humanities, Postcolonialism has occupied its place among other theories like post structuralism, psychoanalysis, feminism etc. as a consequence of its diverse and interdisciplinary usage, it has generated numerous corpuses of specialized academic writings.

The publication of Edward Said's Orientalism (1978) is one of the major events in the development of postcolonial theory. Said's definition of orientalism as a discourse is based upon Foucaldean idea. Post- colonial theory and writings are marked by “ambivalence” Ambivalence refers to the complex mixture of attraction and repulsion while characterizing the relationship between colonizes and the colonized. It's a way of unsetting the colonial dominance. Bill Ashcroft in Key Concepts in Post Colonial Studies writes: "Ambivalence describes fluctuating relationship between mimicry and mockery" (13).

Postcolonial writings have always centered on to produce discourses of resistance by subverting and reevaluating the established tradition of literary and rhetorical practice. Those conscious and unconscious movements of resistance as seen in the texts of postcolonial world not only de-establish the colonial discourse of domination as pointed out by Said by they also create a new space and history to locate the new post colonial reality and experiences.

Identity is a discourse of culture. It is an acquisition out of power exercise. The powerful West continues the profoundly sexist and racist legacy of their predecessors. A large number of people have been culturally degraded and politically

oppressed. Discourse produces identity through supplying and enforcing a regulatory principle. Identity, in other word, is a subject in the process of being produced. Always being in the process of evolution, identity is never fully constituted.

Identity can never be fully totalized by the symbolic. Name, through an identity marker, is not a proper name but a social category. Hence a signifier that is capable of being interpreted in a number of divergent and conflicting ways. Disciplinary discourse does not unilaterally constitute a subject. The fixed subject becomes the place and occasion for a further making. Judith Butler a cultural critic writes: "A subject only remains a subject through a reiteration or rearticulation of itself as a subject. It may be that this dependency of the coherence of the subject on repetition constitutes the incoherence, the incomplete character of the subject" (242).

The repetition and reiteration becomes the non-place of supervision. In this way, subject gets established in the symbolic. But this establishment does not get permanence. Identity transforms from one category to another but he transformation is not finished project. Though an identity is formulated, there is a plurality of resistances. They can only exist in the strategic field of power relations. The discourse produces the possibility of its own subversions; these subversions are unanticipated effects of symbolic interpretation. Power not only consists of the reiterated elaboration of norms but power is productive, multiple, proliferative and conflictual. Power plays direct role in forming and reforming identity. Identity is not a transparent and unproblematic as we think. Instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, it should be thought as a production which is never complete. Identity is always constituted within representation.

The disciplinary apparatus of the state operate through the totalizing production of individuals. This tantalization of the individuals extends the jurisdiction

of the state by transforming individuals into subject of state. It is remaking of subjectivity beyond the shackles of the juridical law. Judith Butler says: "Identity politics is produced by a state which can only allocate recognition and rights to subjects totalized by the particularities that constitutes their plaintiff status" (242).

By inventing negative stereotypes, especially the West practices identity politics upon the East. The texts written during the colonial period showed the natives as heathen, demonic, exotic, barbarian and feminine. It was white man's burden to uplift the uncivilized natives. In order to provide pious justification to their oppression the colonizer's invented certain identity markers to denote the so-called inferior and 'Other'. Identity politics is not so simple to understand. Directly and indirectly, it is related with power.

Colonial writing is noted for revealing the ways in which that world system could represent the degradation of other human beings as natural, an innate part of their degenerate or barbarian state. The blacks representing the African, Yellow, Brown and Red were represented as less human, less civilized, as child or savage or heedless mass. They were depicted as inferior only because they were different from the whites. When imperialism was at its Zenith, the writers cherished the idea of white superiority. They maintained and celebrated the dichotomy between 'us' and 'them'. They represented the 'whites' as the civilizer of the world and apostle of light and the 'blacks' as degenerate, barbaric and in need of European masters to civilize and to uplift them out of their filthy ditch. Elleke Boehmer in her book *Colonial and postcolonial Literature* writes: "Stereotypes of the other as indolent maligners shirkers, good for nothings, layabouts, degenerate versions of the pastoral idler, were the stock-in trade of colonialist writing. In contrast, the white man represented himself as the archetypal worker and provident profit-maker" (38).

An interesting issue that really draws an attention of the postcolonial critics is the rejection of colonizing people to include indigenous people and to reject them any significant role. If any role is given, that is always a negative one laden with stereotypes and injurious terms. Such kind of strategy is governed and guided by the ethos of identity politics.

The hegemonic culture mobilizes the classic syndromes of purity and danger and acts out a kind of defence of the boundaries of the primary group against this threat perceived to be inherent in the other's very existence. Group loathing in the form of modern racism is a political programme. Negative stereotypes are developed out of racial hatred. Stereotypes are imaginary entities. No individual mind is able to intuit it concretely. Stereotype is the place of an illicit surplus of meaning. Stereotype is the abstraction by virtue of which our individuality is allegorized and turned into an abusive illustration of something else, something not concrete and non individual. In this regard Fredric Jameson says:

> For group loathing the group must be abstracted or fantasized, on the basis of discrete individual contacts and experiences which can never be generalized in anything but abusive fashion. The relations between groups are always stereotypical in so far as they must always involve collective abstractions of the other group, not matter how sanitize, no matter how liberally censored and imbued with respect. ("On Culture" 274)

Loathing and envy are very precisely the affective expressions of the relations of groups to one another. So group loathing is also nothing more than a form of identity politics.

As a conclusion, what we can confidently say is, in reality there is no identity only identification, either with the institution itself or with other subjects by the intermediary of the institution. Identity is only the ideal goal in the process of identification. Identity is an imaginary referent.

Ondaatje adopts the materials for his novels that are recaptured from the past but examines them through a different eye. Sometimes he uses his own experience the subject matter of the writing. But such presentation is not of the experience in crude form rather with some kind of distortion. He sometimes begins with the historical facts and continues them through fictionalization and such blending of fact and fiction gives a magic realist touch. Like in Salman Rushdie's *Imaginary Homelands* and *Midnight's Children* Ondaatje bridges the dichotomy of fact and fiction. His latest novel *Anil's Ghost (*2000) is the prime example of this. It is a fiction based on the historical fact of Sri Lanka between the years 1988 to 1993 when more than forty thousand people were massacre in a paroxysm of mindless violence. The novel seems more like a travelogue rather than a work of fiction. And in the case with *In the Skin of a Lion* too, there is a good blending of the real events with the fictional lives.

Michael Ondaatje's work represents in many ways the best of contemporary Canadian literature in English not only in the context of Canada itself but also on the international scene. In this it not without significance that Ondaatje is an immigrant to Canada and that much of his writing is about identity, history and about people of "in-between", Identity, whether that of a individual or that of a people, history, are of great relevance in the age of globalization, disappearing border, and the migration of people whether for economic, political or other, reasons, this is one of the main reason that Ondaatje's texts raise much interest among readers of fiction as well of in Scholarship.

This project focuses on Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987), a story of immigrants in 1920s Toronto. In particular, it explores the shards of memory of the immigrants whose contribution to building Toronto in the 1920s never became part of the city's official history. This proposal aims at illustrating the investment of these settlers in Canada, through memory while remaining "outsiders" to the mainstream society. Intimate relationship between memory and the politics of cultural identity is highlighted in *In the Skin of a Lion*.

Important aspect of the novel is its depiction of Toronto. Prominence is given to the construction of Toronto landmarks, such as the prince Edward viaduct, commonly known as the blood street viaduct, water Treatment plant, political suppression of police chief Draper, and the murder of labour union organizers Rosvall and Voutilainen. These incidents spotlight on the plights of the immigrants by bringing shards of memory and politics of cultural identity at the centre. So, the objective is to foreground the Postcolonial discourse of memory represented by the characters in *In the Skin of a Lion*

There is not any person anywhere without narrative. It is the narrative that sustains culture, Material referents of cultures such as bridge, water stations are subject to decay but narrative, travelling through time from subject to subject, has been always able to generations. Being the immigrant, Patrick is constantly burdened and also has no any alternatives to overcome the sense of rootlessness that haunts him like a ghost. Memory is the only means to overcome that loss. In this sense, Patrick is able to get identity from the culture where he is located. In the novel Patrick is seen as preserving the narratives and sharing those stories with Hana. This very act not only confirms his identity instead confirm the narrative of the ex-centric who are his colleagues. Thus the purpose of the study is achieved.

Although this study makes significant use of concepts developed in colonial and postcolonial scholarship, it does not offer a comprehensive analysis of theory. Rather, an analysis of memory in relation with marginalized characters remains the primary tool of analysis. Postcolonial issues as: migration, local narratives, nostalgia and alienation would be describes in the considerable length. Some concepts as 'history as a redefinable present', 'fact and fiction' and 'unfixed identity' are the terms developed in postmodernism. These concepts would be drawn to confirm the origin and imagination as moral force that has no interest in dismantling the identity rather to confirm it. Given the nature of research, available time and resources, this study does not offer biography of the author and the other terms which would definitely contribute towards unearthing issues related with roots.

II. Memory and Cultural Politics of Identity in *In the Skin of a Lion*

Forgotten world of the immigrants emerge in fragments of oral history in Michael Ondaatje's *In the skin of a Lion*. Civic accounts of the Toronto's city planners and corporations shade the stories of the exploited workers whose toil made the immense and profitable civil engineering projects of early twentieth century Toronto possible. Similarly, *In the skin of a Lion* sets up a relationship between teller and listeners before beginning the story proper. At the end to the novel, we are returned to the frame story, and learners that the travellers in the car are Patrick and Hana. This introductory paragraph anticipates the novel's emphasis on oral telling. As the Epic of *Gilgamesh*, Ondaatje's book is also preoccupied with written language; the narrator of the epic tells us that Gilgamesh inscribed the story of his journey on clay tablets, so that what we are reading is a retelling of the hero's written narrative. The prologue seems to guarantee the truth of the story through appeal to Gilgamesh's own recorded words, but at the same time it draws attention to the fact that this is only one of many possible tellings. This double gesture in replicated in Ondaatije's text.

At the beginning, Patrick is seen as an attentive listener and then he realized the importance of sharing experience. It is Hana, sixteen years old girl, to whom Patrick passes on his stories and stories of his co-workers, trying to recapture the stories he knew from fragments of stories he had heard as a child.

Patrick Lewis made himself the absent protagonist of his narrating multiple narrative voices in the novel provides the reader with different perspectives, he does not exclude other angles of looking at reality. *In the skin of a Lion* reminds us of the extent to which the rational, empirical and pragmatic view had Obliterates all other modes of experiencing reality; the imaginative that is, the visionary and creative has been reduced to the imaginary, that is, the false and the unreal. Unlike the historian

who forces one to believe literally in what he/she says, yet ironically depending on fiction in his historiography practices, *In the Skin of a Lion* is not going to reproduce reality as it appears to the objective eye Instead this text focuses on rumours and unverified stories of the characters that guarantees the identity and unexpectedly brings a heightened sense of authenticity. The authenticity in Patrick Lewis's narrative springs from a genuine faculty of his imagination, a sufficient degree of reality or truth in assing the past fragmented narratives to Hana in general and to the larger future generations in particular.

Ondaatje's retelling of hitherto unwritten history emphasizes especially the problem of immigration and the continual struggle for an acceptable division of power within changing social constructs. Ultimately, the novel allows an egalitarian voicing of previously marginalized perspectives. One of the workers who helps build Toronto's infrastructure and whose story sheds a new light on conventional civic histories is Ondaatje's protagonist Patrick Lewis. Inspired by Alice and her political activism, he acts out her will and gets to "the centre of the city" (29). Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion is* intent on seeking a correspondence between narration and the acquisition of identity, on the other hand, reader is encouraged to enter the fictional realm, seek and discover knowledge, and finally, carry that knowledge into the real world.

Post structural theorists such as Jacques Lacan and Roland Barthes have continually reminded that we are always involved, consciously and unconsciously, in reading the world and narrating our experience. As Barthes states: "narrative begins with the very history of humanity; there is not, there has never been, any people anywhere without narrative" (Semiotic 95). Our memories, conclusions, dreams, fantasies, careers and our projected visions of our futures appear most coherent to us

when we can consciously situate them within narratives. According to Lacan, narration is motivated by the unconscious search to reinstate the unity of the self that is imagined to have existed prior to the acquisition of language.

First of all Ondaatje intends the reader to seek to identify with Patrick Lewis, who is the pivotal figure in Ondaatie's novel and use him as a guide throughout the text. The narrative is dependent upon Patrick's ever increasing awareness of the world.

The first chapter, “Little Seeds,” in the novel begins with Patrick looking out at the world trying to situate himself in the "pale green and nameless"(10), backwoods of northern Ontario, one the other hand, there is very little knowledge of the world available to him, Patrick uses the few resources he has to feed his imagination and give voice to his thoughts. He studies the moths and insects attracted by the kitchen light giving them fictional names and recording their visits in a notebook. He opens his geography book and whispers the exotic names of "Caspian, Nepal. Durango"(9).

Any feelings of alienation that Patrick experiences, either in the wilderness or in Toronto, arise from withdrawal from the world. His desire is not to seek silence, but to break out of it. The names he creates and reads from maps serve his desire to frame his private experience. And this begins the naming motif that runs throughout the text. By naming the world even if only in whispers and in his imagination, Patrick displays his desire to create his own private narrative.

Patrick's textualizing of his life is presented as a concealed act, something he does not do in the presence of his father. He waits until his father is asleep, and this furthers the isolation of his desire to narrate his experience. Hazen Lewis, being an "abashed man, withdrawn from the work . . . uninterested in the habit of civilization" (15), is clearly of no help to Patrick's quest.

There is very little conversation between Patrick and his father; in fact, there are only two moments in the novel in which there is dialogue between them. Hazen's words to Patrick, “I’m going under now" (12), are significant in that they imply that the end result of remaining silent to be left in obscurity and this is exactly what happens to Patrick's father. Hazan's silence denies Patrick the opportunity to vocalize his experience. He wants conversion in his life; only by sharing experiences of his past with other will he be able to “leap . . . over the wall of this place" (10). By being restricted to a concealed articulation of experience, Patrick's desire to situate himself in the world is severely hampered.

After this very brief introduction the novel leaps through time and Patrick is now employed as a searcher in the chapter “The Searcher”. There is a specific irony in his trying to discover the whereabouts of Ambrose Small in that, unlike Patrick who desires to name and situate himself within a community, Small has purposely fashioned a network of false names in order to become invisible. It is also ironic that while searching for someone so determined to erase himself from history, Patrick should find the very person who initiates his self-identity.

As we read the novel, we are aware that Patrick's narrative is destined to encounter the other narratives that have been interlaced with his. His contact with Clara can be understood as a necessary step in preparing his entrance into the whole context of the novel. As the novel progresses Patrick's narrative becomes more and more imbricated with the other narratives - he and the reader are gradually moving from a private and isolated space to an interpersonal relationship with Clara, which in turn will lead to the collective site of the immigrant community. Clara's function is to bridge the space between personal and social narrative. The origins of Patrick's

infatuation, at least from the points of view of narrative, stem from her ability of articulate and educate Patrick in the intimate details of personal history:

> He loved the eroticism of her history, the knowledge of where she sat in the classroom, her favourite brand of pencil at the age of nine. Details flooded his heart . . . he found he had become interested only in her, her childhood, her radio work, this landscape in which she had grown up. (69)

By listening to Clara narrate her past; Patrick learns a valuable and practical lesson regarding the importance of maintaining personal history. By becoming an engaged listener- an activity that corresponds to the reader's entanglement with narrative- Patrick begins to understand that his own history has significance, and that there are forces outside of himself that have shaped his life, however, when encouraged to narrate his own life, he is still incapable of speech:

> He defended himself for most of the time with a habit of vagueness . . . . There was a wall in him that no one reached…. A tiny stone swallowed years back that had grown with him and which he carried around because he could not shed it … Patrick and his small unimportant stone. It had entered him at the wrong time in his life. (71)

The isolation of his youth and the silence of his father are obstacles which even Clara's history cannot overcome.

After two years of living in almost total silence, Patrick finally becomes situated within Toronto's Macedonian community. It is important to note that his initiation into this cultural site is precipitated by his having learned and employed the Macedonian word for iguana: "A living creature, a gooshter" (112).

Furthermore, this one new word leads to a vast network of “new words” (113) that” “he must now remember” (114). At this point in the novel Patrick's acceptance into the Macedonian community is dependent upon his ability to articulate some aspect of his character that aligns him with the cultural expectations of the community. In order for him to become a trusted member of this society, and more importantly, for him to feel he truly belongs within their ranks, he needs to prove his competence, as much to himself as to the community at large. Of course, Patrick’s admmitance into the Macedonian community is easily achieved since both parties share the common narrative of displacement.

Patrick is given access to a vast history of cultural experience. This is the first time he has come in contact with a collective narrative that is older than any living individual. There are roots here that he has never imagined before, and he begins to love the historicity of culture, It should be noted that Macedonia and Epic of *Gilgamesh*- which, like Ondaatije's novel, is also a narrative of tribal solidarity are culturally and geographically inseparable, and by using them as referents in the novel Ondaatje is explicitly drawing attention to narrative as the primal structure for making meaning and, perhaps more importantly, sustaining culture.

Material referents of culture - bridges, water stations - have always been subject to decay but narrative, travelling through time from subject to subject, has always been able to carry cultural identity to future generations. As Fredeic Jameson states:

> Personal identity is itself the effect of a certain temporal unification of past and future with one's present; and . . . such active temporal unification is itself a function of language, or better still of the sentence . . . If we are unable to unify the past, present, and future of the

> sentence, then we are similarly unable to unify . . . our own biographical experience. (324)

Patrick's newly-acquired social experience of the world also unites his narrative with the inner-narratives that have woven their separate paths throughout the novel. We have anticipated the merging of these narratives to be a sort of joyful reunion for Patrick. Although this wholeness is achieved, the joy that Patrick experience is only temporary. Patrick's growing attachment to Alice and Hana, and the regularize of his life within immigrant culture, represent the kind of imaginative celebration of wholeness that we seek as readers. However, Alice's role - to “veer” Patrick “to some reality” (88) - is clearly meant to foil the celebration that one wish is for Patrick.

Her primary function is to activate the political implications that are always already attached to all discours. It is Alice who bursts Patrick's bubble by educating him-as Clara, though in a different capacity has done earlier - in the hard world of political expediency. “I'll tell you about the rich” (132), she says to him, and Patrick stubbornly begins to realize that language is also a powerful political weapon, and that the power in Alice's words is dangerous and necessary. By becoming a subject within the discourse of the marginalized, he has unknowingly and unavoidably situated himself in opposition to dominant culture as Patrick feels being made inferior by the civic history

Patrick begins to conceal his identity from his employers so he can join Alice in bringing down the authority of the elite. Like Ambrose Small, Temelcott, and his father, Patrick begins to make himself as invisible as possible. Just as Enkidu in the Gilgamesh narrative struggles to correct the abuse of authority, so too must Patrick attempt to bring justice to his world.

Although Alice initiates Patrick into the politics of signification, it is through the printed word that he becomes fully acquainted with the barbaric treatment of immigrant workers. By reading Cato's letters, and the, "official histories " (145) wherein only the elite are credited with the construction of their cultural monuments, Patrick realizes that the vibrant history and the contribution of the immigrants has not been, and will not be, properly documented for prosperity; the depth and warmth of the very community in which he has become a subject will be erased from history - its narratives will become invisible.

When Alice is accidentally killed by a bomb that has likely been made by Patrick, his anger with himself is displaced to the rich. His immediate response is to retreat into silence - an attempt to cast off the irresolvable turmoil which surrounds him and to reclaim the wonderment and innocence of his youth. But his entrance into immigrant society has altered him; he can never return to his past. It is important to note that from the time of Alice's death and Patrick's encounter with Harris, Patrick never express remarks. And it is during this time that he becomes personally involved in destruction activities.

But nowhere is there any sense of the innocence that was so much a part of Patrick's early years of isolation in the Ontario wilderness. His romanticized attachment to nature has been shattered by the ideological implications inscribed in language and his indoctrination into the constant turmoil of civilization. As in all encounters where innocence is defeated by experience, there is no way to retrieve the past.

His militant activism is largely due to his inability to speak of his involvement in Alice's death. Silence and violence have become the only channels through which he can attempt to mediate his loss. In short, Patrick is literally tongue-tied because he

has yet to assume responsibility for the creation of his own narrative. Unlike Clara's open and detailed history, Alice's past "remains source less" (74), and her body is filled with suppressed energy" (75). By relying on Alice, Patrick has become an extension of her militant story. He has yet to find his own space, or kind of 'skin' that will grant him the means to express his own identity.

Four years later, in the chapter "Maritime Theatre", Patrick appears when released from prison. And, he enters the Plant through the Water intake intending to blow up. Patrick's encounter with Harris in the water plant can be viewed as his ultimate confrontation. First of all, the encounter creates a wonderful sense of the unifying potential of narrative; there is a distinct archetypal pattern here as first Harris, and then Patrick, reveal their intimate narratives in the dark and cavelike space that surrounds them.

Harris begins defending himself by narrating the visions he had in dreams. He tells Patrick that "we need excess, something to live up to" (236), and that the only reason the elite exist is because people like Patrick reject the responsibility of power, and therefore allow "bland fools" to speak for them. He tells Patrick that what he is" looking for is a Villain" (237), and because Harris's narrative is not founded on political power, but on a personal vision of beauty, Patrick is unable to view Harris as a figure of evil.

It is now Patrick's turn to tell his private narrative, but, as with Clara, he is still reluctant to speak. Again another ironic shift occurs as Harris, who we might have supposed to symbolize the authority of dominant culture, becomes the agent who insists that Patrick not remain silent. When Patrick balks at speaking of Alice's death "I don't want to talk about this anymore" (239) – "Harris tells him his life will always be a nightmare" (238), if he refuses to speak.

Giving voice to private experience, and sharing it within a community of listeners even if that community is made of only a speaking subject and a single listener - provides both Patrick and Harris the opportunity to be heard, understood, and also to frame experience into a coherent narrative pattern. The darkness of the scene shuts out the real world, and we are left with two individuals struggling with language.

The theme of breaking silence, of giving voice to what lies beneth the surface of events, is too important an issue in the novel, and Patrick's silence is much less and act of denial than an inability to articulate grief. When Harris realizes the danger in Patrick's incredible entry into the building - “My God he swarm here . . . what vision, what dream was that?” (241) - he is stunned by Patrick's selfless devotion to his ideals. By listening to each other they have become obligated to the common ground expressed in their personal narratives. If Harris hands Patrick over to the authorities, he knows he is also rejecting the vision that has guided his own life.

Patrick now knows his role is not that of an anarchist and his life is “no longer a single story but part of a mural . . . a wondrous web” (145) that must be preserved. And finally, he has come to the point of taking responsibility for his own narrative. He is now able to interpret Alice’s favourite quotation from Joseph Conrad - “let me re- emphasize the extreme looseness of the structure of all objects" (135) - on his own. He no longer believes, as Alice did, that Conrad is calling for the destruction of the centres of authority. He now realizes that what Conrad is really stating is that all ideological structure are inherently vulnerable and they will all be replaced by other structures that are similarly flawed. And the only cultural objects that can withstand the rise and fall of these loose ideological objects are the narratives of its history.

As Dennis Duffy, states the novel “makes use of ancient, durable monuments and thereby demonstrates the power of the fragile medium of paper finally to encompass them" (132). These “durable monuments” are in ironic juxtaposition similarly to the seemingly fleeting and unstable nature of language. As the novel closes we realize the entire story has been told by Patrick while he and Hana are driving to reunite with Clara. Patrick will never be silent again, and by sharing his narrative with Hana his story and the stories of the immigrant workers will be carried into the future. Patrick remains the focus of the novel, but on a figurative level Hana, at the age of sixteen, can be see as a sort of mythic regenerator of narrative, whose role is to gather, incubate, and safeguard what she hears. If this story had been a fairy tale we would have no difficulty viewing Hana as the embodiment of an ideal. But her gender, age, and purity make her an idyllic figure for the safeguarding and regeneration of narratives. What Patrick passes on to her is not an "official history" and it is only one of the living narratives, Hana will use to positon herself in the world. The colsing image of Patrick and Hana driving toward the rising sun once again opens readers’ imaginations to the possibility that the identity we seek in narrative may still be achieved.

By joining in Patrick's quest we gain a fuller understanding of what it means to be an attentive listener and we also become better acquainted with the importance attached to sharing our experiences. In fact, every time we become entangled in narrative we are, in a sense re-enacting Patrick’s and Harris’ intimate struggles to be heard and understood: we read, pay attention, ask questions - we feel the life within the pages. Literature constantly reminds us who we are, who we were, and who we might become.

As Robert Kroetsch states, “we haven't got an identity until somebody tells our story. The fiction makes us real" (63). In the case of Ondaatje's novel, the text draws our attention to the role narration plays in inscribing and sustaining meaning. In other words, the novel calls attention to the value of narration, and specifically, it reminds us that stories are the fundamental mode of transferring cultural knowledge.

Critique of Postmodern Self

More concerned with the nature of meaning than with the definitional literary function of finding meaning, postmodern criticism usually does not reward the reader with new and fresh insights or perspectives into the ways of questioning and repudiation of dogmatic thought which it proclaims as its highest goal. Instead, critical interpretations seem to reiterate the well known premises on which postmodern theory rests: there can be no true or fixed identity, there is no origin or original, no singular author, no ultimate knowledge, and representation is no longer a matter of veracity or accuracy. Notions of truth and authenticity are outdated.

And yet, within certain discourses (multicultural writing is one of them) there is a need for affirmation of self and origin, there is integrity in authenticity. There is a desire to strengthen one's identity through the act of writing and reading, and lived experience plays an integral role in this. This essay is about this kind of literature whose theme is not the process of dispersal of the self into a number of subject positions but the transformation of the subject back into the individual. The emphasis that Ondaatje places on the importance of particularity, individual life and imagination as moral force shows that he has no interest in dismantling his identity but instead wants to confirm it, albeit in its hyphenated form.

One theory that is central to post-modernism is the idea that there is no one grand narrative in history, and by his attempt to reconstruct an unofficial history of

Toronto, Ondaatje reveals his tendency to accept a post-modernist idea to solve a post-colonial dilemma. First, Patricia Waugh says, “central to the ‘postmodern condition’ . . . is a recognition and account of the way in which the ‘grand narratives’ of Western history and, in particular, enlightened modernity, have broken down” (5).

Second, Ondaatje reevaluates the ‘grand’ narrative idea in a post-colonial context, especially if we take into account what Tiffin had said earlier: that "the history of post-colonial territories was, until recently, largely a narrative constructed by the colonizers" (173). And Ondaatje's attempt to question whether one official history of a colonial society in Toronto ever existed reveals how post-modernism and post-colonialism merge in his novel.

One way Ondaatje deconstructs Toronto's official history is in his attempt to subvert linear notions of causation, which is a post-modernists reaction to the traditional Aristotelian linear narrative form. One example from the novel that attempts to subvert the traditional linear narrative and replace it with Ondaatje's post-modernists idea happens between Patrick and Clara. Patrick in the beginning of the novel has no sense of history, but this only remains so until Clare initiates him into a new sense of history:

> . . . He bent down and put his mouth on hers. He took it, the white character, and they passed it back and forth between them till it no longer existed, till they didn’t know who had him like a lost planet somewhere in a body . . . . He loved the eroticism of her history. (69)

Gamlin claims that Clare is associated with this new sense of history, oral narrative, and that the “oral exchange of the seed makes the mouths wombs for a process of origination which subverts linear notions of causation” (71). Furthermore, the story Patrick begins to tell Hana at the end of the novel is "linked" to this moment with

Clara, and by doing so, Ondaatje designs Clara as an “intersection,” where people, who pass through her, learn her story instead of an “official” history.

Clara and Alice first initiate Patrick into this intersecting story when they “magically” draw a mural of him. We are told, “They begin to draw hard and quickly, as if copying down a blueprint in a foreign country . . . they draw upon all they know or can guess about him” (75). Later in the novel Patrick partially recognizes the significance of the mural on his sense of history when he mentions that 'something about her cast a spell on me . . . I don"t know what it is” (93). And later on, he finally comes to understand its full implications when his “own life was no longer a single story but part of a mural, which was a falling together of accomplices” (145). Patrick is charmed into learning a new sense of history and that history or a “collective” history that is made present with the two accomplices, Clara and Alice.

As Clara initiates Patrick into a social-erotic sense of history, Alice is there to initiate Patrick into a political sense of history. And by Ondaatje choosing to do so, he reveals another important element of post-modernism that he finds appealing. First, Gamlin agrees that "Alice later achieves her objectives, and Patrick is surprised when he learns that Alice has made him into a political activist" (74). In addition, Ondaatje's choice to construct Alice and Clara into mapping out Patrick's story reveals his tendency toward a post-modernist idea. The two characters of Alice and Clara to a certain extent embody either Freudian psychoanalysis or Marxist ideology as ways of liberating Patrick from his respective oppressions.

For Alice's part, she turns Patrick's story into a power struggle defending the workers on the "periphery" against the owners of capital at the "centre." Patrick's political liberation happens while attending a play put on by Alice at the Waterworks. Gamlin says that the show "demonstrates how the language barriers prevents the

access of so-called ethnic minorities [the marginal] to society's institutions [the centre] . . . and requires audience participation for its resolution" (73). The night Patrick attends the play, he finds that it is he who must participate in "The grand cause" against the centre, and so as it happens that night the "centre" is symbolically represented by Alice's character in that play. After the performance, Alice talks to Patrick and confirms this:

> -- Someone always comes out of the audience to stop me, Patrick. This time it was you. My old pal.
> -I don't think you will covert me.
> -Yes. I can (125).

Furthermore, she, doubly, represents the controlling individuals in her community. First, on the ironic or dramatic level, the part played by Alice is distinguished from the others. She dramatically represents that centre. And Ondaatje, ironically through Alice, inverts the centre to the marginal. Of course, the prime agent for the centre in the novel is Harris, who also she might be representing too, and Gamlin says that in this climatic confrontation the value of the periphery opposes the value of the centre (71). Second, on the social and political level of the novel, Alice leads her community in the struggle against the centre of power. By doing so, she then initiates Patrick into becoming the principal agent in the novel against the centre of power. Alice even provides Patrick with a strategy. She says, "You name the enemy and destroy the power. Start with their luxuries-their select clubs, [and] their summer mansions"(124-25).

Patrick eventually follows the advice of Alice on how to destroy the center, and in doing so, he feels somewhat liberated. First, his conversion is evident when he begins to destroy "their luxuries," and their "select clubs." This happens when he attempts to destroy the Muskoka Hotel. He sets it on fire and bombs the dock. But he

"knows he will be caught, probably imprisoned, but for now he thrills to this brief freedom" (173). Afterward, he is caught and imprisoned, but he does not give up the struggle. When he is released, Patrick sets out to “destroy the power”of the centre, and that centre is represented by Harris’ water tunnel project and Harris himself.

Patrick's confrontation with Harris at the waterworks is the final completion of Alice's strategy, but more than that, his confrontation with Harris is symbolic of the power struggle between the marginal and the centre. And furthermore, Patrick's confrontation with Harris at the end of the novel adds an ironic twist perhaps because this same confrontation is a symbolic confrontation with a European authority. This is made evident when Harris quotes Greek literature as his defence.

Nevertheless, Gamlin does say that Harris evokes classical literature to avoid Patrick's criticism and to stay in power (69). When Patrick reiterates Alice's phrase to Harris, “In a rich man's house there is nowhere to spit except in his face,” Harris responds by naming the source, i.e. Diogenes. Diogenes was a philosopher who despised social conventions. His aim in life was to “deface the coinage of his time.” Harris is well aware of Diogenes, unlike Patrick, because Patrick returns with “I don’t know” (239).

Patrick's struggle with Harris fails, not because he lacked the power to kill Harris, but Patrick's failure happens on the level of language. This brings to mind what Rushdie had said earlier, that language was the beginning point of the struggle, but furthermore that a “writer who is out-of-country and even out-of-language may experience this loss.” If this is so, then Patrick has failed because he has failed to “conquer” the language.

Not only does the writer fuse together various parts of different meta-fiction into one integrated whole, he also, through language, fuses “memory”to a present

reality to create one integrated whole. This happens in the novel shortly after Ambrose Small sets Patrick on fire. Clare comes to his rescue at his Hotel. She then nurses him back to health, and in the middle of the night, around “three in the morning she felt his body against her. They touched, both moving careful of his wounds, all over each other as if meeting in a dream” (99).

When Alice returns the following day to Ambrose's hotel, she is caught up in the “memory” of the love making the night before with Patrick. While experiencing this “memory,” Ambrose arrives shortly after to complete the fusion of memory with a present reality: Not knowing what was happening now at the hotel, that with the light Patrick had awakened to find the sheets thick with blood which had escaped from his dressing, from their moving together in the darkness, discovering even the print of her hand perfect on the wallpaper, a print of blood on the English flowers of his bedroom where she leaned to balance herself in their lovemaking . . . .The dressing hung off him like a limp white rib while Ambrose came down from the house and saw her sitting there thinking, looking at Patrick's river.

Linda Hutcheon is not the only post-colonial writer who strives to recast history as a “redefinable” present, for even Michael Ondaatje in his book *In the Skin of a Lion* also attempts to reconstruct history in a “redifenable” present too. Gamlin helps clarify this idea when he says that, “Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* revises Toronto's civic history. While official accounts mention chiefly the town's city planners and corporations, Ondaatje's allots less narrative space to such functionaries and their visions and concentrates on those who built the city and their stories instead” (68).

Ondaatje is also burdened by his post-colonial dilemmas, but in a fashion that reveals a post-colonial writer's drift towards ideas of post-modernism. For Ondaatje's

part, he re-evaluates history, the marginalized, the power struggle between the center and the periphery, and finally language as a source of power in a post-colonial context. Ondaatje uses material for the novel recaptured from the past. First, Ondaatje questions the validity of the notion that an official history actually exists. For example, his novel begins with the unofficial history of a small community in Toronto:" This is a story a young girl gathers in a car during the early hours of the morning. She listens and asks questions as the vehicle travels through darkness . . . . Driving the four hours to Marmora under six stars and a moon. She stays awake to keep him company."

The end of Ondaatje's story brings us back to this event, as if Patrick has told history not only to the young girl Hana, but, ultimately, to us. But "What Patrick passes on to her [and therefore us] is not an 'official history," and there are no statistics attached to it; and it is only one of the living narratives Hana will use to position herself in the world" (19).

Michael Ondaatje has grasped toward the ideas of post-modernism in reverse for his respective post-colonial aims. Furthermore, the stylistic devices of post-modernism used by Ondaatje is manipulated to enhance the aesthetic of his novel, and not to "control" the novels meaning, nor do the ideas of post-modernism preoccupy the authors from their respective purposes. However, it seems ironic that post-colonial writers would embrace elements of a system that had for centuries controlled them. Tiffin recognizes this irony too when she says, "it is ironic that the label of post-modern" is increasingly being applied to hegemonically, to cultures and texts outside Europe, assimilating post-colonial works whose political orientations and experimental formations have been deliberately designed to counteract such European appropriation" (170).

Transformative Space in *In the Skin of a Lion*

"I will wander through the wilderness" reads the first epigraph of *In the Skin of a Lion*, and it captures a story of wanderings, or, in other words, of migration. Almost all characters in the novel engage in some form of migration from the Finnish loggers in Patrick's childhood to Ambrose Small, Clara and, of course, the immigrant community Patrick encounters in Toronto. Migrations are also journeys towards forming identities during which the characters struggle to find their place in Canadian society and come to terms with their initial feelings of displacement. In *In the Skin of a Lion* forming identities reflected in the characters' migrations in symbolic spaces they are located in.

In the Skin of a Lion's theme of migration is most prominently embodied in the characters of Patrick Lewis and Nicholas Temelcoff whose migration experiences act as a foil for one another. While Temelcoff immigrates to Canada from Macedonia,

Patrick's move from rural Ontario to Toronto is also presented as an immegration experience when he is referred to as an "immigrant to the city" (53). Patrick's immigration is further emphasized when he begins to live in Toronto's immigrant quarter in which he is identified as an "alien" (113) so that he becomes a foreigner in his own country.

As Simone Vauthier comments, "By a neat inversion, Patrick Lewis, who by virtue of his birth and native tongue, not to mention gender, belongs to the dominant group, is made an outsider" (72). To Patrick, entering the immigrant community is like metaphorically migrating to another country even though he never left his home country. While Patrick's immigration is thus not entirely real because he does not move from one country to another, certainly is an entering into transnational social space.

As a result, both Patrick and Temelcoff find themselves in socially and culturally different places and initially struggle with similar questions of identity, which are mostly expressed through their use of language. They cannot connect to the new communities surrounding them at first because they lack the language to do so and are isolated from others. This is expressed in both characters' unawareness of the people surrounding them. Temelcoff believes no one can hear or see him while he works on the bridge, just as for Patrick his neighbours in Toronto's immigrant quarter are merely "dark blinds on his street, their street" (113).

Consequently, this 'linguistic and cultural exile' leads to an impaired self-understanding, which can be seen in Temelcoff's being described as having "no portrait of himself" (42) while Patrick is "new even to himself" (54). They are not sure anymore who they are and where they belong. There is certainly no sense of developing identities here but on the contrary a strong sense of general dislocation, a character who is not a real migrant is also affected by this.

There has been much criticism of the equation of Patrick's and Temelcoff's situations, especially since Patrick, in an attempt to become part of the immigrant community, conceals his identity as a Canadian and does not speak around the English-speaking overseers at work. Therefore, some have pointed out that Patrick is in a privileged position because he has a choice not to speak while the immigrants' inability to communicate is involuntary because they do not know English (73). Others are offended that Patrick feels 'deliriously Anonymous' in his exile, which they see as self-imposed whereas for the immigrants it is a harsh reality from which they cannot escape.

Dennis Duffy consequently argues that the immigrants' anonymity makes them "disenfranchised" and "vulnerable" to the authorities (134) and Jody Mason

accuses Ondaatje of "effac[ing] important differences among kinds of travel and degrees of agency" (75). According to her, Temelcoff and Patrick's travels are "clearly radically different" (Mason 70) because Patrick has "greater agency than any of the other migrant characters in the novel" since he was born in Canada (Mason 72). This, however, is not entirely true and their juxtaposition is much more subtle and subversive.

Patrick obviously has more rights and opportunities than the immigrants because he can be categorized as a citizen of the state. The immigrants do not seem to have citizenship which makes them dependent on the goodwill of the authorities. In addition, while the immigrants' inability to speak English certainly poses a disadvantage for them and denies them the means to be heard and thus to establish some sense of connectedness to their new country, Patrick's knowledge of the language theoretically allows him to speak up, connect and become part of the English-speaking majority.

Yet, in practice this is not the case and Patrick is as disconnected from his co-nationals as from the immigrants. Patrick is generally "'inexpressive' in his relationships with others" which is mentioned repeatedly in the text when even in situations with English-speaking people Patrick keeps his distance from them. During his relationship with Clara "[h]e liked to sleep separate, in his own world" (65), and he feels that he is always "on the verge" (97). Moreover, there is continued emphasis on the fact that "[th]ere was a wall in him that no one reached" (71), "a terrible horizon in him beyond which he couldn't leap" (157). Patrick is separated from others by a boundary which he cannot cross.

When he attempts to overcome this barrier that separates him from others, he uses non-verbal ways of communication instead of speech, but also does not mind his

"lack of language" (133). It is only logical then that he does not feel uncomfortable when he is part of a nonspeaking community again. His silence and anonymity very soon make Patrick feel no longer "deliriously anonymous" (112), though, but "utterly alone" when the Macedonians and Finns talk in their own language around him so that he is excluded (115). In order to actually be able to use his theoretically greater agency he would thus just like the immigrants have to learn to use language.

Unlike the immigrants Patrick does not know how to make the necessary changes and adjustments. He needs to rely on others to make him feel connected. He admits that within him there was "[s]omething hollow, so when alone, when not aligned with another – whether it was Ambrose or Clara or Alice – he could hear the rattle within that suggested a space between him and community" (157).

While Alice thinks that Patrick can be solitary because he is "self-sufficient" (123), this self-sufficiency clearly is not of much use to him since there are things he is unable to do such as overcoming his sense of displacement that resulted from his immigration. Temelcoff, on the contrary, is well prepared for establishing new connections in Canada, which is not surprising since he is part of a transnational network that helps him deal with the problems of immigration. Thus Temelcoff met others who have migrated even before he left Macedonia and knows that there will be people from his village in Toronto who he can go to for help (46). Temelcoff is fully aware of what is needed to be successful and, for example, knows that "[i]f he did not learn the language he would be lost" (46) and quickly finds work in several Macedonian bakeries because of his connections. Patrick, on the other hand, is utterly alone.

This extreme difference between the two characters is illustrated in the novel's use of light and darkness. Raphael, Ingelbien shows that light and darkness in *In the*

Skin of a Lion function as metaphors of which light is connected with consciousness and empowerment whereas darkness stands for powerlessness and alienation. Temelcoff's transnational connectedness is therefore further highlighted by the description of him as someone who "came to this country like a torch on fire and he swallowed air as he walked forward and he gave out light. Energy poured through him" (149). In addition, light in the novel is also often associated with naming, which in turn "is a necessary step in the process leading to social and cultural recognition" (Ingelbien 34-35).

To be able to name something is to be able to identify oneself and others, thereby asserting one's self understanding and also one's place in one's social location. Accordingly, if Temelcoff arrives 'like a torch on fire' it indicates that he has already started his process of integration into the host country before his arrival. His social space thus is made up of a transnational network which provides assistance in his migration which then leads to his greater agency, mobility and flexibility and in turn to a higher chance of successful integration.

Patrick on the other hand is not part of such a network and instead lacks connectedness of any kind as shown above. This is strongly reflected in his migration experience which is not only not the same as Temelcoff's but in a way even more difficult. This is again reflected in the use of light and darkness. Contrary to Temelcoff, Patrick is frequently situated in utter darkness and as Ingelbien points out "mainly passive, looking for light without producing any" (34) which stresses his inability to make connections.

The metaphor of darkness, goes to extreme in Patrick's case because he is not only in the dark, but also associated with blindness. For example, he is described as "a searcher gazing into the darkness of his own country, a blind man dressing the

heroine" (157). Hence, while his father once commented that the Finnish loggers of Patrick's childhood "*don't know where they are*" (133), Patrick realizes only through prolonged contact with the immigrant community in Toronto that they know more about his native country than he does (157). Knowledge of their rich heritage additionally leads to his awareness that it is him who does not know where he is.

He is further associated with blindness when he attempts to impress Clara by "blindfold[ed]" movement (79), as 'guided' by Hana through the immigrant quarter like a blind man who needs to be lead and by his possession of a blind pet iguana. All this clearly shows that Temelcoff is much better equipped to adjust to their new situation whereas Patrick is overwhelmed when faced with similar situations.

Almost all the characters in the novel engage in some sort of journey from one place to another or in other words, they are migrated to an alien space. Toronto became 'New Land' to them. As they belong neither to their homeland nor to the foreign land, their identity at once becomes plural and partial. Migration plays vital role in shaping their identity in a splited form though they seek for cultural root that is severally hampered. In such critical movement of rootlessness, they have an urge to rely on memory as an imaginative force to recreate cultural belongingness. Nostalgia towards the home country always haunts them. It is memory through which they recreate their cultural identity in this novel though gap in space and time distort reality. In this context Rushdie mentions that "the interior space of our imagination is a theatre that can never be closed down; the images created their make up a movie that can never be destroyed" (Ibid 13).

III. Search for Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is expressed in writing among other things. People both consciously and unconsciously, and both explicitly and implicitly express their cultural identity through writing. This sense of articulation of the identity appears to be more rigorously and endlessly expressed when people find their identity in question. In the novel, *In the Skin of a Lion,* the central character is haunted by cultural belongingness and is expressing his trauma of cultural belongingness; it is presumed that the problem of cultural identity appears in the situation where people are culturally dislocated, and when they try to create their unified cultural identity. The idea of cultural and belonging calls forth the issue of nostalgia of the past cultural values.

In today's world, culture has become a defining principle of people. Because of immigration, mass media and other elements most notably globalization, cultural shapes have been fading up. People are facing the problem of cultural identity and belonging, and as a result, they need its expression. Cultural values have been transferred to other cultural groups and the cultural loss appears to be a dominant problem among people. People have been alienated and dislocated, and that sense always hunts them. When Ondaatje became aware of himself and his place in the world around him, he has never thought of his future except as a writer. Culture, thus, finds a powerful expression in his writings.

Culture as a source of identity appears to be critical and important throughout history, providing a sense of belongingness. People get sense of relief whenever they are in it or with it. The role of culture is considerably important in defining the behaviours of the people who face it. The characters in the novel also embody the attributes of the real man. The culture which they confront shapes them. When they

find themselves in a new culture, geography and people, their identity becomes more important. A sense of nostalgia, therefore, always haunts them since they find a great division between the past and present. Culture, thus, is a shaping force that shapes our thinking and consequently our action. Whenever we find ourselves detached from our culture, we feel a sense of alienation as the characters in *In the Skin of a Lion* do.

The loss, nostalgia and the continuous sense of hatred toward other culture appear, and we as individual suffers them. This problem of cultural identity is vigorously felt elsewhere.

Culture is also the source of binding and dividing people. People belonging to the same nation cannot feel being the citizen of their own state when it is the matter of cultural difference. People think that there is no meaning of life without culture. It gives us a sense of living. Thus, we consider the situation that to be cut off from civilization is to be without future. Then, we can ask these questions in relation to the novel scrutinized in the present study: do they (the characters) have no future? Are they living a life away from future? Do they have their life or not? The change in the time suggests that there is the inevitability of future that it must loom. The characters in the novel find themselves in a new land and culture that gives them a sense of loss. They seek for belonging but they do not find it. Nor do they succeed in establishing their meaning of having been there. So, it appeared to them as an unsolvable problem created by culture.

The cultural theory used in the present research shows the suffering of the people who are facing the sentence of history – subjugation, domination, diaspora and displacement. Ondaatje himself can be culturally understood as a rootless citizen of the world, who has been forever displaced from his origin. An individual is a sum total formation of historicity. Identity in this case resembling his characters is a

dynamic process developed out of historicity. So, it is fluid instead of fixed. It is a diasporic to get fascinated by others' culture that in preliminary phase is alien and foreign. In course of cultural mixing the boundaries blur and disappear.

Ondaatje, as a novelist doesn't pass judgment on cultures. He grants freedom to his characters to articulate themselves from their own cultural and social position. He just presents them. There is no categorization of superior and inferior culture. In this sense, he nullifies the hierarchy of master/marginal culture. His characters come out of the restricted arena of a particular culture and engage at the frontier of cultures. A sense of nostalgia always haunts the characters since they find a great division between past and present. Everywhere it is found that Ondaatjean characters bear the burden of culture with an unstable cultural identity aspiring to form new identity, but the formation of new cultural identity is not accomplished. So they remain swinging at the frontier. In the novel Patrick belongs to nowhere belonging to both his Ontario origin and metropolitan West. Hana and Caravaggio,Patrick, Temelcoff all of them diasporas. Their culture does not take essentialist position. Patrick also speaks of himself in the first person, sometimes in the third. It is symbolic to his factured identity. Their cultural identity without concrete shape, in the present research has been analyzed at different levels of cultural components, namely: religion, nationalism, costume, language and so on.

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