

Tribhuvan University

Ethnic Violence: Terrorism or War of Independence?

Reading Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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July, 2007

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Ethnic Violence: Terrorism or War of Independence?
Reading Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost*” submitted to the Central Department of English, T. U.,
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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I am whole heartedly grateful to my parents along with my other family members for their assistance in one way or other for helping me to get this state in my life.

I would like to extend my profound gratitude to my honorable teacher Dr. Beerendra Pandey, who, as my advisor, provided scholarly guidance and incessant encouragement to me in accomplishing this thesis. I am very grateful to him for his availability and patience. I express my sincere gratitude to him.

I am thankful to Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Head, Central Department of English, for granting me an opportunity to carry out this research work. I owe much to Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi, Dr. Arun Gupto, and Dr. Sanjeeb Upreti for their valuable contributions in shaping and directing my intellectual growth. Likewise I would like to thank Saroj Sharma Ghimire, Sadan Raj Adhikari, Ghanshyam Bhandari, and Pam Bahadur Gurung for their warm help.

I am highly indebted to the commendable help provided by my friends Binod, Sushil, Manoj and Manish. I am equally grateful to Bal Chandra, Sameer, Dipak and Sushma Regmi who helped me complete this research.

Last but not the least, I am grateful to writers, critics and editors of the source materials from which I've cited.

Pramesh Gyawali

July, 2007

Abstract

The present dissertation presents the ironic treatment of the Human Rights Mission. The UN, in the name of promoting social justice worldwide, has not been an entirely neutral and independent one in that effort; it certainly takes sides and promotes political, cultural and economic agendas in non-Western countries. Michael Ondaatje's use of the central character of the novel Anil represents classic Westerner whose perspective is colored by the typical agenda of the West as a mission. By presenting competitive protagonist Sarath, Ondaatje shows how her (Anil's) truth and justice with respect to the politics of another country cannot be determined all the time. The meaning of truth and justice is dependent on context and culture. In particular, the novel exposes the violence and terrorism of Sri Lanka set in Civil War period of 1980s and 90s. The novel successfully highlights that Western historical account is filled with false empathy and claim. The Western hero in this novel vanishes well before the ending of the novel, never making it onto the symbolic 'plane-above-the-clouds' that finishes off so many imperialist narratives of non-Western cultures.

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