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Recreation of History Through Art in Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost*

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This thesis entitled "**Recreation of History Through Art in Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost***" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Tika Ram Kandel has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* narrates the forgotten stories of those who were massacred in the mindless violence of Sri Lankan Civil War, particularly the common and downtrodden people. Presenting the central character, Anil, beyond the mainstream cultural, political and social scenarios, Ondaatje confirms his affinity to the underprivileged people. The pain and agony of war victims is clearly examined through the reconstruction of skeletons. The suppressed and unidentified past comes into existence which is the best way to renovate the native history within the literary text. Ondaatje historicizes those people who exist on the margin of canonical history. With this novel, he gives the voice to those who were unheard in official history, records them in art and literature as Sri Lankan artist Anand reconstructs the statue of Buddha.

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I. Introduction

History: Its Recreation through Art

History is the periodical conceptions of gender, race, class or institution and its study in relation to present. On the one hand, history is narrative about the past written in the here and now. On the other, it is the interpretation of past humans, families and societies as preserved primarily through written as well as artistic sources. The narrative construction of the past event by the historian reflects upon the objectivity and truth seeking nature of the exercise. This activity of the historian gives way to redefine what we do and broaden the scope of our activities. *Oxford Dictionary of English* defines history as "The study of past events, particularly in human affairs" (40). The activities of past are redefined in the present by the historians.

History is based on an analysis of its development over a period. Traditionally, the study of history was limited to the written and spoken words. However, the rise of academic professionalism and the creation of new scientific fields in the 19th and 20th centuries brought a flood of new information that challenged this notion. Thus history appears in new ways as the time changes.

Much of the debate on viewing history as the narrative construction of the historian is whether this judgement distorts or not in history. What history is, what historians do, and what it reflects upon the objectivity and the truth-seeking nature of this exercise are historical acts. In this context *Oxford Dictionary of English* defines history as "A continuous, typically chronological record of important or public events or particular events or particular trend or institution." Viewing this definition it can be said that history is the series of past events connected with a particular thing or person. History recollects the past events and records the present events.

Encyclopedia of Hutchinson defines history as "The record of development of human societies" (36). This definition of Hutchinson clarifies that history records those instances and activities of human beings throughout the time being.

We come to know that history is a systematic written account of events of a nation or institutions or human societies. But the study of the past has never been static. It changes as the rules changes. From the very beginning of human civilization, history began and changed as the power and rulers change in the nations. The new ruler defines his period in contrary to the past. The practice of history has witnessed many shifts and turns in the way it is thought and undertaken. Since 1960s, the discipline of history has experienced a social turn, cultural turn, religious turn and more. Each has remained a significant way for historians to reflect upon and write about change over the time. The new changing concept and interest of new thing, give way of reconstructing history.

As a literary form, the practice of writing history began with the Greek Herodotos (c.470 – 401 B.C.), who first passed beyond the limits of a purely national outlook. But as the time changes, different historians bring new ideas and write history about their contemporary truth in relation to the past. The events have been constructed and reconstructed by the historian to represent the fact of contemporary time. They are constructed, in the documents attesting to the occurrence of events, by interested parties commenting on the events or the documents, and by historians interest in giving a true account of what really happened in the past and distinguishing it from what may appear to have happened. It is the 'facts' that are unstable, subjects to revision and further interpretation, and even dismissible as illusions on sufficient ground.

Present reality can be felt and experienced by our senses but past is not actually felt and experienced by our senses in the present. Historical interpretation has evolved through contact with real historical world which is far beyond from mere reality. The reality of the past has left behind but historians try to reconstruct reality of the past events as historical representation.

Reconstruction is an attempt to construct new things obtaining complete description of what happened in the past. History, as we see, is the reconstructed work of the historians about past event and the present reality. Politics, religions and different theories bring the reconstruction of history. We can see that different periods are dominated by different philosophy where history was reconstructed representing the past. Such as medieval history was dominated by a religious philosophy imposed by the Church. This we can find in the work of the historian Bede (673 – 735). But renaissance reverify historical writing both by restoring the scene of textual criticism. It is the product of the new secular spirit.

Reformation furthered the cause of scientific history by sending controversialists back to the original documents, while in English the constitutional controversies of the 17th century performed similar function. 18th century enlightenment disposed of an attempt to express history in theological terms and produce history in a new way than the past. But they never forget to observe the past to define their present. They compared and contrasted with the past and tried to present themselves in a reconstructed way. Romanticism left its mark on historical writing in the introduction of a more colorful and dramatic style. But, in 20th century, history has been revolutionized, partly through the contributions of other disciplines such as science and anthropology. Anyway, historians of different periods review to

the past and present themselves new than the past though the medium of art and literature.

Art is a work to express the feelings and ideas of particular objects or beings. It is the expression or application of creative human skills and imagination typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing work to be appreciated primarily for their beauty and emotional power. *Oxford Dictionary* defines art as "a subject of study primarily concerned with human creativity and social life such as languages literature and history" (5). Art, therefore, is the power of performing certain actions acquired by experience, study or observation. It is also the skill in the adaptation of things in natural world to the uses of human life. Art is the image of the period when it is made up. It reflects the reality of the past. Looking at the art of different periods, historians get knowledge of the past and redefine their present. A work of art is the supreme value among human products precisely because it is self sufficient, and has no use or moral aim outside its own being. The end of a work of art is simply to exist in its formal perfection.

Art plays an important role in the recreation of history. Historians adopt the past reality observing the art of ancient period, which carries out the reality of past. So, it is the foundation of knowledge and creativity to carry out the past reality in present.

Postmodern history recognizes that it cannot escape its authorship. Although, the past is not just re-interpreted according to new evidence but also through self-conscious acts of rewriting as well. It is the ideology of historian that encompasses the past and present. Every historians write about present reality but the past cannot escape from them. They find themselves modern in relation to past to define here and now.

Michael Ondaatje, Sri Lankan born Canadian writer, writes about the historical facts of Sri Lanka fictionalizing them through literary art. His writing deals with the historical facts of Sri Lanka and its culture. As a mainstream postcolonial writer, he writes the historical facts of present era. His novel *The English Patient* 1992 records the scenario of world war second. This novel got Booker Prize and received the worldwide acclaim leading to its 1996 film adaptation where Ondaatje presents the political and historical experiment of that time. In his another novel *Running in the Family*, he tries an imaginative reconstruction of his family history that chronicles his attempt to gain insight into his own identity by understanding his parents and relatives. There is indeed a fact about family history as well as about the history of Sri Lanka but appeal of book depends on comic invention and fantasy.

Our concern in this research is with Ondaatje's novel *Anil's Ghost*, which is a subtle representation of creating history of the marginalized people. For that the novel at one level is read not only as the author's imaginative construct but also as the renovation of the people of Sri Lanka who were not associated in the official history. At another level, it is viewed as the written history of the marginalized people who were brutally killed in the course of Sri Lankan Civil War (1980-90). The real pain and agony is represented through this literary writing of the author.

Anil's Ghost which was published in 2000, talks of Civil War events. The protagonist of the novel, Anil Tissera 33, a forensic, anthropologist returns to Sri Lanka working under the United Nations. She has come to investigate the mass murders occurring in the ongoing civil war in Sri Lanka. She works with a local Sri Lankan archeologist, Sarath, to probe into human rights violation in the peninsula. She tries to find out about the missing people in Sri Lankan civil war. Anil, with government employee Sarath Diyasena, discovers the skeletons which were recently

buried in the ancient site. They give the name to first skeleton as sailor, which help them to continue their investigation. Skeleton's missing identity is being explored by the broken narrative in order to locate them in Sri Lankan history. To record the singularity, broken narratives genealogically seek their instances even in their absences. Those who were unrealized are being recorded. To counterbalance the mission and partiality of the historical master narrative, the alternative Ondaatje proposes is to privilege and celebrate a plurality of private and local narratives that give voice to the forgotten history. Ondaatje tries to allow the people finally to speak within the jealous pages of elitist historiography and, in so doing, to speak for or to sound the muted voices of the truly oppressed.

Ondaatje presents different character to uncover the mystery of murder. Sarath's brother Gamini an amphetamine- addicted surgeon, spends his days and nights in the emergency room to the victims of bombing and other atrocities. Ananda, who is Srilankan artist reconstructs the face for sailor. The blind Palipana, Sarath's mentor and former teacher, lives in the ruins of Buddhist Monastery in the forest and shares with Anil and Sarath his unworldly perspective on Sri Lanka's ancient history and its violent present.

Michael Ondaatje adopts the materials for his novels that are recaptured from the past but examines through a different eye. Sometimes he uses his own experiences as the subject matter of the writing. But such presentation is not of the experiences 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 realistic truth. These types of dichotomy of fact and fiction are presented in this novel *Anil's Ghost*. This is a novel based on historical fact of Sri Lanka between the years 1988 to 1993, when more than forty thousand people were

massacred in a paroxysm of mindless violence, is presented through this fictional work. It seems as a blending of real event with the fictional lives. In this regard, in editorial review, publisher's weekly writes, "Ondaatje's novel satisfies one of the most exiled purposes of fiction; to illuminate the human condition through pity and terror" (1). This clarifies that Ondaatje's this novel brought back the victimized people into light.

Since the publication of this novel many critics studied, praised, appreciated and interpreted by different scholars with various perspectives. These approaches, no matter whether they are author oriented or language oriented have tried to reformulate the meaning of the text. Scanlon Margaret pays attention to both subject matter and the style of writing. He finds Ondaatje as a skilled person at configuring the post modern sense of time. Although this novel is more fragmented collection than Ondaatje's other fictional works. Scanlan sees the novel as an act of reconstruction, as he says:

Written in even more tightly condense fragments than his earlier books, the novel asks the reader to engage in an act of reconstruction, piecing together stories and psychologies as the Sri Lankan artist, Ananda, will piece together the ruined Buddha. Like Ananda's reconstruction the reader's will be imperfect a human artifact with visible sutures .(3)

In *Anil's Ghost*, temporal linearity is ruptured frequently in order to represent the broken and forgotten lives, which Ursula Heise called "Chronoschism." The Chronoschism in *Anil's Ghost* create a sense of forgiveness, to whom historical perspective is an alien luxury. Anil is presented to uncover the hidden past where other characters are presented as reconstructor of what has been destroyed.

Richard Seltzer, a book reviewer, perceives Ondaatje's writing as an act of reconstruction moreover he find this novel *Anil's Ghost* as a plot based page turner, where readers can find out what they want next. He minutely observes Ondaatje's writing as a reconstruction of a vibrant picture of past and hence present situation in many layers of modern complex world in historical context. He also finds the possibility of redemption through inspired reconstruction and love of what has been lost. He states:

It is a story that puts the local political situation into an international context just one more instance of massive government and rebel engineered "Disappearances", as in Argentina and elsewhere in Latin America. But at the same time, the author shows the possibility of redemption through inspired reconstruction and love of what has been lost. (2)

It is a complex political situation where there is chaos and murder everywhere. It is ridiculous to expect any kind of justice even if the details of the truth could be determined and proven with confidence. But through this story, Ondaatje tries to find out the identity through reconstruction of what has been lost. It gives the existence of those who were massacred in mindless violence.

All writing, being for him actually a process of self discovery and self creation, Ondaatje does not formally distinguish between writing fiction, biography and autobiography nor for that matter, between the rhetorical functions of author, narrator and to characters. Yet Ondaatje characteristically treats author, narrator and character merely as different manifestation of the same 'I'. Anil is presented as main character takes the great importance in the novel. Although Anil's tenderness towards the ancient footprints suggests wonder at the accidental preservation but she has no

impulse to put them into any explanatory framework, let alone a narrative. Indeed the novel's short chapters evoke her life through brief scenes and images, and Anil herself finds the greatest fidelity to experience in gestures and images: "There are no words Anil knows that can describe, even for just herself, the woman's face. But the grief of love in that shoulder she will not forget, still remembers" (7).

Peter Easingwood's comment on the novel *Anil's Ghost* is directed towards the author's ability to create the novel as a history of voiceless people through an art. For him, the Island of Sri Lanka, as Ondaatje represents is full of terror and beauty, art is always the site at which civilization and barbarism interlock. He further states: "*Anil's Ghost* develops the metaphor of the reconstruction of life from the skeleton in order to characterise the contemporary horror of civil war on that Island" (4). Metaphorically, this novel gives the voice to the voiceless people.

This novel has also been viewed from the dimension of fact and fiction. Daine Watson gets this novel more fictitious than Ondaatje's earlier novels. He comments this novel as a portrait with a fictional air. He analyzes the physical labour of the characters to find out the hidden truth to be recorded into the history. He comments Ondaatje as an historiographer. He further states: "In his novel, Ondaatje himself becomes a kind of historiographer and underscores the fact that the observer's impulse to articulate, an impulse experience almost as a physical drive, is necessary to history" (711).

All the characters are engaged to reconstruct the life of those missing instances. Metaphorically, they create the vibrant pictures of Buddha which were destroyed in war, represents the recreation of identity of missing people giving them the voices through the art of words. To record the horrific scene of different time, fragmented narrative structure is taken metaphorically.

Presenting the characters from different dimensions, Ondaatje is focusing the real event of his homeland Sri Lanka. Ondaatje presents a story of ordinary people caught up in war not of their own making and professional trying but with their effort to keep up with their consciousness. War and effort of the characters are presented as a way of life, where the tragedy, the terrible waste of life and horror of war is transformed into a kind of history.

Ondaatje himself has given the historical background of the novel under the "Authors' note". Ondaatje bridges the dichotomy of fact and fiction here. The author presents the historical fact of Sri Lanka during the years of civil war through this fictional work. It is a good blending of the real events with the fictitious lives. In brief authors' note Ondaatje explains: "*Anil's Ghost* is a fictional work set during this political time and historical moment. And while there existed organizations similar to those in this story, and similar events took place, the characters and incidents in the novel are invented" (5).

The scene of Sri Lankan civil war which Ondaatje presents to give the voices to the voiceless people is clearly presented into this work. All the acts which Ondaatje carries over link the *Anil's Ghost* with the history and politics of Sri Lanka. In general, novel records those instances who were undermined during the Shri Lankan civil war. The present research undertakes to focus on how Ondaatje reconstructs the history of Shri Lankan civil war.

The present research has been divided in to four chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outline of the present research work. A synopsis of entire work is figured out in this chapter. It begins with the aim of present research and continues through the political context of the world at the time of the publication of

the novel. This unit further develops with the spatio-temporal context the text talk about.

The second chapter of this present study will be concerned on discussing the theoretical modality that is going to apply in this research. Nietzschean idea about genealogy and some ideas of history will be discussed as a prime theoretical subject. Besides, Leela Gandhi's ideas about postcolonial theory and new historical concept will be support for the research.

The third chapter will be given a new historical reading being based on theoretical modality outlined in the second chapter. In the course of textual analysis, some lines form the text will be taken out as evidence to prove the hypothesis of this study. In this part, study will focus on the characters who are engaged to bring out the reconstructing work by their effort. For that, main characters; Anil, Sarath, Anand, Paliphna and their effort will be examined.

Fourth chapter is the concluding chapter. Whether the hypothesis comes under the justification or not will be the concern to show the novel as a historical reconstruction. It is hoped that study will be of interest to those readers who are interested in new historical and postcolonial reading and its parallel subjects as well as scholars involved in the contemporary theoretical inclination.

II. New Historicism, Genealogy and Postcolonial Writing

New Historicism

New historicism emerged in early 1980s as a turn to history in literary studies after the formalism of new criticism, structuralism and deconstruction. In place of dealing with a text in isolation from its historical context, new historicists attend primarily to the historical and cultural conditions of its production, its meanings, its effects, and also of its later critical interpretation and evaluations. The views and practices of the new historicists differ markedly from those of former scholars who had adverted to social and intellectual history as a background against which to set a work of literature as an independent entity or had viewed literature as a reflection of the world view characteristics of a period. New historicists conceive of a literary text as situated within the institutions, social practices, and discourses that constitute the overall culture of particular time and place, and with which the literary text interacts as both a product and a producer of cultural energies and codes. Thus, new historicists seek to identify hitherto unacknowledged contexts of semiotic exchange between literary and cultural history:

New historicism represents a sustained negotiation of those complex cultures, textual and political forces which intervene between present and past, then and now. Its central problem has thus to do dissociation. On the one hand, the part must be minimally intelligible for history to bear any meaning at all, on the other, intelligible always remains relative to the conditions in which interpretations are made. (59)

New historicism conjectures historical and literary vocabulary as they render power visible and enable marginal or unheard voices to emerge. Although new historicists borrow quite freely from diverse works in cultural history, Marxism, psychoanalyses,

theories of language and semiotics, the three key influences behind this approach to literature are the French historian of discourse Michael Foucault, the American social anthropologist Clifford Geertz and the revisionist Marxist thinker, Louis Althusser.

Foucault argued, in studies of the histories of 'madness', 'medicine', 'representation', 'punishment' and 'sexuality', that socially organizing vocabularies voiced and guaranteed by powerful institutions, have constituted the body of knowledge which constitutes western subjectivity. Michael Foucault views that:

The discourse of an era, instead of reflecting preexisting entities and orders, brings into being the concepts, oppositions, and hierarchies of which it speaks: that these elements are both products and propagators of power, or social forces; and that as a result, the particular discursive formations of an era determine what is at the time accounted knowledge and truth, as well as what is considered to be humanly normal as against what is considered to be criminal, or insane, or sexually deviant. (61)

Clifford Geertz views that a culture is constituted by distinctive set of signifying systems. His use of culture is constituted by distinctive sets of signifying systems and his use of what he calls "thick descriptions", "the close analysis or reading, or particular social production or event so as to recover the meaning it has for the people involved in it, as well as discover within the cultural system, the general pattern of conventions, codes and modes of thinking that invest the item with those meanings" (63).

Louis Althusser views that ideology manifests itself in different ways in the discourse of each of the semi-autonomous institution of an era, including literature and also the ideology operates covertly to form and position the users of language as

the subjective in a discourse, in a way that is fact subjects to the interests of the ruling classes. Stephen Greenblatt inaugurated the current level of new historicism in his introduction to a special issue of *Genre*, Volume 15 (1982). He prefers, however, to call his own critical enterprise cultural poetics, in order to highlight his concern with literature and the arts as integral with other social practices that, in their complex interactions, make up the general culture of an era. Greenblatt's essay entitled "Invisible Bullets in Shakespearean Negotiations" (1988) serves to exemplify the interpretive procedures of a leading exponent of this mode of criticism. Greenblatt begins by reading a selection from Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and true Report of Virginia* (1588) as a representative discourse of the English colonizers of America which, without its author's awareness, serves to confirm "the Machiavellian hypothesis of the origin to princely power in forces and fraud, yet nonetheless draws its' audience irresistibly towards the celebration of power (187). Greenblatt also asserts that "Harriot tests the English power structure that he attests by recording in his *Report* the count or voices of the American Indians who are being appropriated and oppressed by that power" (187).

He identifies parallel modes of power-discourse and counter discourse in the dialogues in Shakespeare's different dramas what he finds, the dialogue and events of dramas "reveal the degree to which princely power is based on predation, calculation, deceit and hypocrisy, at the same time, the plays do not scruple to record the dissonant and subversive voices of Elizabethan subcultures" (188). His thesis is that, in order to sustain its power, any durable political and cultural order not only to some degree allows, but actively fosters subversive elements and forces, yet in such a way as more effectively to contain such challenges to the existing order. This view of the general triumph of containment over the forces of subversion has been criticized as

pessimistic and quietest by new historicist who insist on the capacity of subversive ideas and practices including those manifested in their own critical writing to effect drastic social changes.

Feminist approaches to early modern literature have maintained a cautious, somewhat skeptical dialogue with new-historicism while sharing its concern to recover the marginal, excluded and oppressed. Notably, Lisa Jardine's *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (1983) took something of via media between these polarities, arguing that women experienced an increased domestic responsibility under Puritanism proportionate to their decline in power, "Such study underlined the need for close, nuanced investigations into the historical situations and experiences of women in Renaissance society and literature" (qtd in Wolf, Christ, Norris eds. 65). So, feminist historicism, must provide a sustainable critique of the political tendency to deny responsibility for the oppressed and to transfer to them culpability for their predicament. Thus, new historicism is a kind of pattern-making formalism, a criticism so devoted to creating its own picture perfect verbal structure that it lacks credibility as any reliable guide to the past.

Neither a school of critical thought nor a movement nor indeed even a methodology- new historicism remains difficult to be pinned down. Unease about its very name even among so-called practitioners warrants caution when summarizing its concerns. If the version containment debate is now regarded as sterile, it is yet unclear as to what a more sufficient and flexible vocabulary for literary historical analysis would look like:

The anti-humanist drift of much theory associated with Lacan, Althusser and Foucault - all to some extent precursors of new historicism - has tended to write off the possibility of human agency,

or at least circumscribe it heavily a mid wider structures of language, ideology and discourse. (69)

Lisa Jarine's work notwithstanding, remains a critical problem for those who read for signs of opposition of or contestation. No consensus seems yet to have emerged as to the after which new historicism awaits, though the ethical considerations it has raised may sustain the dialogue between Marxists, Humanists and feminists in future debates, but perhaps new historicism's most enduring legacy will be its recognition that languages discourses, vocabularies-call them what we will - work powerfully as effects and echoes in cultural history beyond the particular moment of their articulation. And that where those effects and echoes align in the very contingencies of language - in the unexpected contexts, fragments and anecdotes-the inequalities harbored in those discourses are most sharply disclosed. It also makes possible to some degree of insight in to the power configuration, especially in the aspect of class, gender, race, and ethnicity that prevail in the historicist's present culture.

Historiography

Historiography is the study of the practice of history. In a broad sense, it can refer to the methodology and practices of writing history. In a more specific sense, it can refer a specific body of hisotrical writing. As a metalevel analysis of description of past, this latter concept can relate to the former in that the analysis usually focuses on the interpretations, worldview, use of evidence, and the methods of presentation of other historians.

The study of historiography demands a critical approach that goes beyond the mere examination of historical fact. Sumit Sarkar in his book "Writing Social History" writes: "Historiographical studies consider the source, often by researching the author, his or her position in society, and the type of history being written at the time" (1).

Historiography that is considered controversial or extreme is often pejoratively labeled as historical revisionism.

Introspection about their own location in society has not been too common among historians. The historiographical essay tends to become bibliographies, surveys of trends or movements within the academic guild: "They turn around debates about assumptions, methods and ideologies position. Through these, historians get pigeon-holed into slots: Neo-colonial, Nationalist, communal, Marxist and subaltern" (1). The existence of not one but many levels of historical awareness attracts much less attention. But outside the world of metropolitan centers of learning and research, there are provincial universities and colleges, schoolteachers and immensely varied students population and, beyond these, vast number more or less untouched by formal courses, yet with notion about history and remembrance of the things past, the nature and origins of which it could be interesting to explore what is neglected is the whole question of the conditions of production and reception of academic knowledge, its relationship with different kinds of common sense.

There are so many arguments about the historiographical facts and its impact upon the tribe in which the research is leading towards. What is the quest for historical facticity has revealed is that history of own kind or another has come to occupy a position of exceptional importance in a variety of Native- American discourses, but that is the moulding of many histories the best scholars often have a vary limited role: "Historical consciousness, even then fairly organized, systematic, and far from spontaneous, evidently cannot be equated with the thinking of professional historians alone still less with that of its highest echelons" (2). Both the importance of history and its multiple levels require further movement.

Some present explanations, relating to the combination of production and disseminations of historical awareness in today's world, are fairly obvious, and helpful up to a point. The leading members of historians' guild write and teach mainly in English for interregional and international communication. The majority of universities and colleges have applied the regional languages and the historical common sense of the bulk of students and teachers is determined much more by text books of very poor quality, or media influences. After independence history and particularly narratives of the freedom struggle or the national movement became a major means of legitimizing ruling groups in the postcolonial nation state through claims of continuity with glorious past: "A very electric range of national heroes therefore had to be projected as knights in shining armor, abstract from real life contradictions and contextual pressures" (2). Through the media and the majority schools, the message that has been constantly broadcast is that history is valuable because it stimulates pride in one's country. The other meanings of history, in these days of objective tests and proliferating quiz culture, is of random facts and dates that have to be efficiently memorized. Patriotism and quiz culture combine to ensure a very low priority, in the bulk of history teaching to techniques of critical evaluation of narratives about the past and the development of questioning attitudes. History, in other words, tend to become hagiography and this open the way towards giving hagiography to the present day status of history.

Late-colonial histories were generally written by teachers for students or general readers. Very many of the topmost professional scholars also produce textbooks and most of them published original works both in English and in indigenous languages. There are therefore much less of gap that is evident now between the best and the worst or ever average histories. "But it would be dangerous

to romanticize: inadequate funding for full time research, confinement within national or regional parameters in the absence of opportunities for wider contacts, the restrictive aspects of a nationalistic paradigm shot through with unstated class and high class assumptions, all extorted a price" (3). The best scholarship of those times, with rare exceptions, appears unacceptably, limited, parochial and unself questioning today.

Post-independence historiographical developments, in contrast, have been marked by a dialectic which simultaneously enhanced standard vastly at elite levels, while paying for too little attention of histories being taught to the majority of college and school students as well as diffused through other means among the general public. "Advanced historical research has come to have as its intended audience one's academic peer group, research student of the best universities, and, increasingly, international conferences" (3). Meanwhile, very seriously dated historiography of the past generation has kept on getting reproduced and disseminated undiluted and crude forms, at other, interiorized and neglected levels.

Recent struggles and debates around the rather tentative concept of multiculturalism in the western democracies have often fuelled discussion of minority histories. As the writing of history has increasingly become entangled with the so-called politics and production of identity after the Second World War, the questions has arisen in all democracies of including in the history of the nation the histories of groups previously excluded. In the 1960s, this list usually contained names of subaltern social groups and classes like former slaves, working classes, convicts women etc. This come to be known in seventies as history from minorities. This tendency further increased as the history of minority during eighties and the historians had fought the exclusions and omissions of mainstream narratives of the nation. By

this result, a cult of pluralism developed and the concept of hierarchy is shattered.

Minority histories, thus, succeeded to get identity as the main stream history. Every genre of literature and history come into the light.

Nietzsche and Genealogy

German born philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche was one of the major contributors in the re-evaluation of western metaphysics. He opposed the linear history, which saw itself as tracing the development to culmination, implicitly outside of time, and based on the belief of an eternal truth, a standpoint from which all can be measured. He argued that everything that was thought to be immortal must be placed within history. He questioned the hitherto existing belief about history as unquestioningly and absolutely true. He defined history as a human construction that evolves from interpretation, theorizing, inference from data and record and subjective biases of the individuals who make it up. He radically rejects the traditional idea of history (which was continuous) in his book *On the Uses and Abuses of History for Life*.

At the time of Nietzsche's birth (1844), Hegel's ideas were flourished all over the Europe. Hegel's idea was that human beings are moving towards a point of perfection, which he calls the teleological point. Hegel and other idealist thinkers of that time thought that every movement is a new movement and every experience of life is new experience. Nietzsche's idea of historiography radically opposed such idea and conception about time and history. He charges Hegelian idea of being too abstract and says that there is no such superimposed idea that humanity in general is heading towards perfection. Idealist thinkers think of the 'origin' as the place of plenitude, presence and truth. But Nietzschean archeology can find the residual traces of malice, theft, greed and disparity at the start of human history. In other words s/he discovers

that a full prefigures and disfigures the purity of Genesis. This idea of genesis of unadulterated origins is shown as a supplement, or as a mythical compensation for an originary lack. Nietzsche writes, "We wish to awaken to the feeling of man's sovereignty by showing his divine birth: this faith is now forbidden, since a monkey stands at the entrance" (qtd. in Foucault, 79).

Nietzsche perceives the idealist's negation of impulse not more than a fallacy and says human creature is instinctively animalistic and lives basically on impulses. In fact, despite the suppression of the natural energies, the reality is that human beings make the best possible progress when all their potentials, the so called evils as those good are exploited. He celebrated the neglected aspects of things, which were supposed to be evil, immoral, and irrational and so on.

Nietzsche's destructive endeavor directly foreshadows the method and intent of contemporary deconstructive philosophy which scavenges in the forgotten archives of western humanism to reveal its suppressed inadequacies, ruptures and paradoxes. For Nietzsche, the outset of all emancipatory social discourse betrays the shared origins of morality and immorality.

The idealist's tendency to privilege the so-called rational is sharply criticized in his famous magnum opus *The Birth of Tragedy*. Here he has made a division between two modes of life: Apollonian and Dionysian. The Apollonian stands for order, clarity, reason etc. whereas Dionysian impulses the excitement of life of intoxication, chaos, darkness, madness and other irrational forces. He emphasized the importance of Dionysian impulses to live a healthy life that was neglected by the idealist philosophers. The contemporary supposition of history as the representation of truth no longer existed in Nietzsche because he says life can never be understood in terms of ultimate truths. He thought that the proper creative use of history is the only

useful use of it; otherwise it kills or destroys humanity in the long run. Reality is all the time revealed by suffering. He prefers the metaphoric language of poetry because poetry is the outcome of imagination.

The celebration of madness is another challenge posed by Nietzsche to the history of western metaphysics. One who tries to deviate from real life was considered to be mad. In his book *Anti-Christ*, he talks about the creeds of Christianity that are bad and destructive to life because it never gives us a chance to adventure. It gives us a herd morality. It gives shelter to those who are weak not only physically but also mentally because they try to search the alternative way but not a teleological point.

Thus Speak Zarathustre (1883-1885), One of the most controversial works of the time brought a revolutionary theory of superman. According to Nietzsche, the society of the time was suffering from the traditional values based on "slave morality." His powerful assertion 'God is dead' means that traditional morality was no longer relevant in people's lives. Nietzsche's Zarathustra teaches human beings to live a risky but a creative life. The originality of life comes through impulses or the animality. Creating Zarathustra, a character beyond the domain of fear he encourages people to come out from the existing slave - morality. Slave morality is a morality created by weak and restful individuals who encouraged such behaviour in the name of gentlemen and kindness because such behaviour served their interests. He claimed that new values could be created to replace the traditional ones, and his discussion of the possibility led to his concept of the superman.

Nietzsche's critique of historicism confronts with Hegelian idea. Against the idealists' assumption that the historical process is a rational process which, in Hegel's time, has ended in a absolute movement in Zenith, Nietzsche asserts that the historical process neither is nor can be finished since the completion of history is not merely

impossible but undesirable because it would lead to a degeneration of man and that history is not a rational process but is full of blindness and injustice.

It might, thus, appear that Nietzsche simply affects a return to a pre-Hegelian viewpoint which counters history as a realm of chance rather than a dimension of meaning. However, it does not mean that there is no point in which Nietzsche agrees with Hegel. His criticism on Hegel is based on a crucial area of agreement with Hegel. The implication of history for Nietzsche is not escape from the present or to deviate from life and action rather their service in the form of life and action rather their service. In the forewords of his 1873 text Nietzsche asserts:

We need history for life and action, not for a comfortable turning away from life and action or merely for glossing over the egotistical life it and the cowardly bad acts. We wish to use history only insofar as it serves living. But there is a degree of doing history and a valuing of it through which life atrophies and degenerates. (1)

In this essay, the issue of historicity is central. He begins this essay with the consideration of the animal life. According to Nietzsche what distinguishes human beings from animals is the awareness of history. Animals forget each moment as soon as it passes. To live entirely in the present without memory of the past, means to live unhistorical. Man remembers the past and can not escape from it. Every time man lives with the awareness of history. Such awareness of the past and the passing of the time make man to suffer. If man does not forget the past, it causes unhappiness in him for he would see only the flux and change and would have no fixed twits by which to take his bearings.

But the problem with the man is that it is not possible to live without a memory of the past. Therefore, it needs man to maintain a balance between

remembering and forgetting which is most conducive to him to live as a man. If such balance is not maintained, it causes pain and suffering to man. Being a man, one cannot enjoy the forgetting as animals do. Such historical knowledge of man is surrounded by unhistorical atmosphere that limits his atmosphere, which envelop man if he is to endure.

Although Nietzsche has entitled essay as "Use and Abuse of History" he concerns more with abuses than the uses. He submits three kinds of way to analyze history. He names them as Monumental, Antiquarian and Critical history. He further clarifies how history can be misused in all the aforementioned ways of analysis.

Monumental history concerns with the creation of model of past greatness but deserves the potential danger to overshadow the greatness of present. This means the misuse of Monumental history makes man neglect the present in which he is living, for the sake of past. The reverence for the past which antiquarian history fosters cannot stultify the present. So we can say that the misuse of antiquarian history carries the danger to be uprooted. Critical history, although contains less chances to be misused is also not completely safe. It may fail to realize the extent to which men are the result of the past they seek to condemn. Nietzsche asserts the potential flaw of critical history:

For when its past is analyzed critically, then we grasp with a knife at its rots and go cruelly beyond all reverence. It is always a dangerous process, that is, dangerous process for life itself. And people or ages serving life in this way, by judging and destroying a past, are always dangerous and in danger. For since we are now the products of their aberrations, passions, mistakes and even crimes. (31)

Nietzsche, thus, challenges the pursuit of origin and absolute truth. His desire is to capture the exact essence of things, their purest possibilities and their carefully protected identities because this search assumes the existence of immobile for us that precede the external world of accident and success. To disclose an original identity, Nietzsche asks to go with every kind of mask. History for him is a discontinuous process. Nietzsche's three modalities of history are the best modalities for a true genealogist through which they can find the causes of what are not brought into light and ignored instances. So, genealogy defines those instances when they remained unrealized.

Postcolonial Theory

In the decade of 70s and 80s of 20th century, many theorists developed a new kind of theory, different from former theories, theory concerning colonialism to solve the problem created by colonialism. Viewing this concept, it can be said that 'postcolonial theory' is an attempt to understand the problems created by European colonization and aftermath. Postcolonial theory deals with the reading and writing of literature written previously or currently colonized countries, or literature written in colonizing countries which deals with colonization or colonized people. It focuses particularly on (i) the way in which literature by the colonizing culture distorts the experiences and realities, and inscribes the inferiority of colonized people; and (ii) the literature by colonized people, which attempts to articulate their identity and reclaim their past in the face of that past's inevitable 'otherness'. It can also deal with the way in which literature in colonizing countries appropriates the language, images, scenes, traditions and so forth of colonized countries. Leela Gandhi opines, "Although postcolonial theory is instrumental in bringing the matters of colony and empire in a prominence, it is not the only unique or inaugural in its academic concern with the

subject of imperialism and its consequences" (23). So, it is methodological and conceptually indebted to a variety of both earlier and more recent western theories. It is highly indebted to the intellectual tradition of Marxism, anti-imperialism thought and racial repute of western metaphysical tradition by post-structuralism and post-modernism. In this regard Gandhi says:

The intellectual history of postcolonial theory is marked by a dialectic between Marxism, on the one hand, and post-structuralism/postmodernism, on the other. So, this theoretical contestation informs the academic content of postcolonial analysis, manifesting itself in an ongoing debate between the competing claims of nationalism and internationalism, strategic essentialism and hybridity, solidarity and disposal, the politics of structure/totality and the politics of the fragment. (viii-ix)

Leela Gandhi through this statement warns to be aware of the diffusion and nebulous quality the term 'postcolonialism' has. Postcolonialism is also the therapeutic arrival of the colonial past, it needs to define itself as an area of study which is willing not to make, but also to gain the theoretical sense out of past. In this sense postcolonial studies has emerged both as a meeting point and battleground for a variety of discipline and theories. While it has enabled a complex interdisciplinary-dialogue within the humanities, its uneasy incorporation of mutually antagonistic theories-such as Marxism and post-structuralism-confounds and uniformity of approach. As a consequence, there is little consensus regarding the proper content, scope and relevance of postcolonial studies.

Another side of the debate lies on the semantic aspect of the term 'post-colonialism' as a decisive temporal marker of the decolonizing process, others

fiercely query the implied chronological separation between colonialism and its aftermath on the grounds that the unbroken term 'post-colonialism' is more sensitive to the long history of colonial consequences. The temporal indication, 'post' draws our attention away from present inequalities-political, economic and discursive in a global system. Post-colonial theory has been produced in all societies in which the imperial force of Europe has intruded, though not always in formal guise of theoretical texts. Regarding the subjects that are studied under post colonial theory, Bill Ascroft et al. say:

Post-colonial theory involves discussion about experiences of various kinds: migration, slavery, race, gender, place, and response to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being. (*Reader 2*)

By narrowing it down, we can say that postcolonial study directs its critics against the cultural hegemony of European knowledge in an attempt to reassert the epistemological value and agency of non-European world. It questions the problems of representation in colonial writing as superior/inferior, civilized/barbaric, us/them. It is a radical thinking reformation of western canonic representation. It particularly emphasizes the cultural and political problems of the non-western and African countries.

III. Facets of history in *Anil's Ghost*

In *Anil's Ghost*, Ondaatje foregrounds the Sri Lankan Civil War (1980-90) and the unheard voices during that war and flashes the light on those faces who were in the shadow of the empirical history ever written. By omitting the public events and historical details, Ondaatje idealizes the socio-political taboos to shatter the difference between power and powerless. Presenting the characters from different classes, Ondaatje tries to equate the history of minorities and majorities.

Anil Tissera, the protagonist of the novel, is a forensic anthropologist, born in Sri Lanka and educated in the west, returns to the country for the first time after fifteen years to investigate "Unknown extrajudicial executions" (19). Ondaatje focuses the historical account of the civil war in which innocent people were massacred into the mindless violence. Anil is teamed up with a local Sri Lankan archeologist, Sarath Diyasena to complete her mission assigned by the International Human Rights Organization. They work together in order to determine whether or not a recent skeleton can provide evidence that the Sri Lankan government has been systematically killing its own people in the campaign of murder. In this context, their investigation begins: "The first body they brought in was very recently dead, the man killed since she had flown in [. . .] she had to stop her hands from trembling" (13). Along with this, they find more skeletons in the mass graves who were recently killed. They search more and more and take four recently buried skeletons to test and identify the cause of their killing.

They bring those skeletons into labs and try to examine them. After that they move in different cities to investigate more skeletons which were buried and were not known to the people either they were killed or missed somewhere. Anil wants to find out the truth of the murder of those innocent people either by government or not. To

prove that mission, she is supported by Sarath. Sarath agrees to help her visiting different places to find out the government crime. He had the different philosophy than Anil and had to work in favour of government although he likes to help to Anil to find out the truth of violence and the crime upon the common people.

Anil stands with the western sense of finding truth in the novel. She arrives in Sri Lanka as an international human rights investigator. She arrives in Sri Lanka, as formal westerner bearing "A British Passport" to signal her new national affiliation (1). She has worked under the auspices of the United Nations. Anil says to Sarath "Mr. Diyasena, I do like to remind you that I came here as a part of human rights group as a forensic specialist. I do not work for you. I am not hired by you; I work for an international authority" (274). Anil thus entities her intention to visit Sri Lanka for the international authority although her investigation shades light to the suppressed victims.

Anil and Sarath worked together as two protagonist in a drama to find out the identity of skeletons, which they find into the archeological sites. They try to find out the state sponsored murder. When they find a new body buried among the excavations of a sixth-century archeological preserver, she expresses her desire to blame the state, "This is a recent skeleton, we can prove this, don't you see? This is an opportunity, its traceable. We found him is a place that only a government officials can get into" (52). This is the painful experience of Anil during the course of investigation in which her feelings develops with agonies of people and hatredness towards the government.

Ondaatje, in this novel, states the idea through historical perspectives. The reality of political crisis is clearly presented as the writer's main achievement. We can see, Anil, main character of this novel, narrating the story of past, the past which was undermine by history but alive as the imprint to the mind of Sri Lankan people, which

was saved by the art. On the other hand, Palipna, an archeologist in Sri Lankan history is knowledgeable about the context of ancient culture. "Palipna saw his country in fathoms and colour, and Europe simply as a handmass on the end of the peninsula of Asia" (79). This shows that the aura of genuine culture is faded due to the mixture and tiltness towards the western culture. Adopting this aura, westerners express their superiority upon the eastern countries.

Anil holds the western sense of truth of anything else. She and Sarath find skeletons in Bandarawela states and labeled the name as tinker, tailor, soldier and sailor. This is an act of identifying missing skeletons. Sarath is helping Anil to fulfill the mission of Anil. Sarath asks, "Can you imagine how many bodies must be buried all over the island?" (51). They try to prove either it is murder or political killing. Anil wants to prove the skeleton as recent one which she found in the course of investigation. This statement gives her search for objective truth:

She began to examine the skeleton again under sulphur light, summarizing the facts of his death so far, the permanent truths, same for Colombo as for try. One free arm broken partial burning, vertebrate damage in the neck. The possibility of small bullet wounds in the skull entrance and exist. (65)

Examining the bodies, she tries to find out the truth about how the people are killed. The measurable condition of buried skeleton gives knowledge to continue her investigation through which she traces the identity of missing people.

Anil and Sarath finally investigate Sailor's name, and date of abduction. During the course of investigation, they continue it by giving name to each skeletons and date of abduction in which Sailor is the first and foremost skeleton through which they develop the ideas to other skeletons' investigation. Anil feels that by attempting

to establish the identity of the skeleton as 'sailor' and find the family to whom it belongs, she will be locating all those who sailor represents: "Who was this skeleton? This representative of all those lost voices. To give him a name would name the rest" (56). In this sense to be nameless is to be without an identity, a lost voice that must be called back into existence. 'Sailor' is representative of all who cannot name themselves and who rely on others to locate them, or call them into being. It shows that names and identities are not fixed entities rather cultural and ideological construction which can be recorded into the span of time.

Anil's investigation is to create the truth over Sri Lanka. Anil's distrust of Sarath's political motives leads her to take matters into her own hands. She rushes towards different places. In those places she gets the help of Sarath to find out the truth of the people murder and real identity of the skeletons. Sarath vows to Anil that as an archeologist he "Would have given his life for the truth of the truth were of any use. In the same way he would give his life for a precious artifact" (157).

Sarath lives a reclusive life returning to the "intricacies of the public world, with various truths", although he knows "he would not be forgiven that" (279). Sarath has a multidimensional views of truth, which is expressed in both past and present and in both objective and personal understandings. During an archeological expedition, Sarath and Palipna encounter cave images of a woman bending over a child. Sarath connects past truth of the mother's mixture of grief and affection for her child with present truth of grief and affection for his homeland. For him "The country existed in a rocking, self-burying motion" (157), "Truth, thus, comes finally in to the light. It's in the bones and sediment. It's in character and nuance and mood not in simplicity" (259). Sarath concludes that truth lies in to the skeletons which is the historical fact.

Palipna, a Sri Lankan blind archeologist, treats history and truth as multifaceted artifact. For him history is not a lifeless artifact rather is "ever present around him. The stone remnants of royal bathing pools and water gardens, the buried cities, the nationalistic fervour he rode and used gave him and those who worked with him, including Sarath, limited her subjects to record and interpret" (80). The things they find as the art can give the idea to find out past truth. They can be the subject to interpret the present.

Moreover, Palipna is true interdisciplinaria:

As a historian and a scientist he approaches every problem with many hands. He is more likely to work beside a stonemason or listen to a *dhobi* woman washing clothes at a newly discovered rock pool than with a professor from the University of Peradeniya. He approached runes not with a historical text but with the pragmatic awareness of locally inherited skills. His eyes recognized how a fault line in a rock wall might have insisted on the composure of a painted shoulder. (82)

This shows the relation between history and art. Art is ever-present in history. History can be strengthened with the touch of art. "Palipna began to see as truth things that could only be guessed at. In no way did this feel to him like forgery or falsification" (83). Simply because Palipna guesses at the truth does not mean that he does not concern himself with it. Although Palipna tells Anil Tissera, "We have never had the truth. Not even with your work on bones. They use the bone to search for it. The truth shall set you free. I believe that "most of the time in our world, truth is just opinion" (102). This observation shows that for Palipna, the truth is not simply irrelevant or merely fabricated, rather truth must be understood as extended through time and composed of many different elements, objective and subjective. Palipna's historical evocations give

way to Anil and Sarath. Furthermore, Palipna adheres to them that history and art are two related parts to record the human instincts. Palipna, thus, is the person who can prophesize the past and explain the present. Even Palipna found history in different stones, arts and images:

Every historical pillar he came to in a field he stood beside and embraced as if it were a person he had known in the past. Most of his life he had found history in stones and carvings. In the last few years he had found the hidden histories, intentionally lost, that altered the perspective and knowledge of earlier times. It was how one hid or wrote the truth when it was necessary to lie. (105)

Art keeps the things and images alive, gives the ideas about the past through which the present can be explained. Consistent with his interdisciplinary approach, Palipna suggests Anil, a forensic scientist, to call Ananda Udagama for help, an alcoholic gem pit worker who used to be an 'artificer', a ceremonial painter of the sacred eyes on Buddha statues. Anand's skills are treasured because, Palipna explains, "Without the eyes there is not just blindness, there is nothing. There is no existence. The artificer brings to life sight and truth and presence" (99). Because the artificer is forbidden to look directly in to the eye of the statue and must instead work with a mirror, he is well versed in imagery and the study of souls which would be essential in reconstructing the 'essence' of a human being.

Anil and Sarath went towards the south and hired a minor named Ananda to construct the skeleton's head, so that the victim can be identified. They work together to find out the essence of missing skeletons. They want to find out the existence of that skeleton which they named 'sailor' could represent other missing people. Feeling the importance of an artist to construct the head and skull of a skeleton they search for

Anand who was a real artist. With great effort Anand reconstruct the head for skeleton to make it "identifiable" (166). Anil watches the artician act of Anand keenly:

She recognized the technique of face construction. He had marked several pits with red paint to represent the various thicknesses of the flesh over the bone, and then placed a thin layer of plasticine on the skull, thinning or thickening at according to the marks on the pins.

Eventually he would press finer layers of rubber eraser onto the clay to build the face. (167)

She gets the importance of art and labour to reconstruct the skeleton.

Anil and Sarath find the importance of art to record the history of missing people. They have only the skeletons of the victims but not the existence. With the recommendation of Palipna, they find Anand, an artist, to identify their skeleton by rebuilding its face. Anand's task, then, is to produce a reasonable approximation of the victim's face from his skull, a task that indifferent circumstances might be accomplished with a computer – generated model. What he produces, however, is not the face of Ruwan Kumara but a younger face from which radiates what both Sarath and Anil recognizes as "a peacefulness he wanted for any victim" (187). Watching Ananda at work, Anil realizes that he is squatting in a painful way that is bound to produce a permanent mark on the bone.

Most of the characters are engaged on reconstructing act of skeleton to identify of victims. They discover the skeletons in different cites and reconstruct them to give essence which show them the way to find out other missing essence. The latter skeleton, arbitrarily named sailor, is seized by Anil as the means by which to level some measure of regime complicity and thereafter culpability "to give him a name that would name the rest" (56). So this can be representative of all those lost voices.

Lost voices were undermined and scattered everywhere. To record them, this can be a bold step.

Ondaatje wishes his reader not only to read the story merely but also encourages them to visualize it. This asks the reader to engage in the act of reconstruction, pricing together the stories and psychologies as Sri Lankan artist, Ananda, piece together the ruined Buddha. Like Ananda's reconstruction, the reader's can be imperfect, a human artifact with visible sutures. We can see all his energy goes into creating "composure" we see in his reconstruction of Ruwan Kumara's skull and Buddha's face and head. (187)

Anil and Sarath work as researcher for the skeletons. They reveal the scene which bring the light to the missing lives of Sri Lanka. They visit different places and find many scattered beings who were not given importance in the history. They take some skeletons from those sites to examine the cause of killing. They are stricken with the scene around them. Sarath says, "We have seen so many heads struck on poles here, these last few years. It was at its worst a couple of years ago. You'd see them in the early mornings, somebody's night work, before the families heard about them and came and removed them and took them home" (184). This shows that the bodies which are missing in the war are not recorded properly. In such situation, Anil and Sarath try to bring them into light with the help of artistic work of some artist like Anand.

In metaphoric level, the search of truth and reconstruction of skeletons' skull and head, attempt to create new history of that land. Everything are new for them when they travel in different places. They find different images and carves in their journey which give the beginning of new historical thinking. Palipna is the good researcher who can advocate past and present. He was once a leading member of the

first generation of Sri Lankan archeologists, who wished to preserve what was left of their cultural heritage. He moves like a romantic historian to fill the imagined whole. "Palipna could move within archeological sites as if they were his own historical homes from past lives – he was able to guess the existence of a water garden's location unearthen it, reconstruct its blanks, fill it with white lotus" (191). Palipna could instruct to new researcher about the past historical situations. He has the good knowledge about archeological sites of that land where he could investigate the scattered lives successfully. This becomes the road map for Anil and Sarath to take their mission ahead.

In *Anil's Ghost*, Ondaatje defamiliarizes habitual perception of Sri Lanka by super imposing a reconstructed and imagined new world. Presenting the protagonist with the image of returning to a country she'd once been a part of it and now finding a stranger in that place herself. He wants to assimilate forgotten beings in to the Sri Lankan history. This is the Ondaatje's assimilation to the main stream history reconstructing the history through the representation of the different kinds of ideas. It is the past history in which the writer wants to associate his identity. His diaspora identity, in which, himself feels a state of statelessness, so, he wants to make an outlet through the recuperation of the history which is his objective of searching his identity.

As a forensic anthropologist, Anil has worked in places that make her acutely aware of the billions of years in which contemporary cosmology calculates the age of earth and universe. One of her "tenderest discoveries" was the "almost four million year old footsteps of a pig, a hyena, a rhinoceros and a bird at laetoli in Tanzania" (55). Her tenderness toward the ancient footprints suggests wonder at their accidental preservation but she has no impulse to put them into any explanatory framework, let alone a narrative. Indeed the short chapters of this novel evoke her life through brief

scene and images and Anil herself finds the greatest fidelity experience in gestures and images, "There are no words Anil knows that can describe, even for just herself, the woman's face. But the grief of love in that shoulder she will not forget, still remembers" (7). To record the scattered lives, Anil takes the bold step keeping her own life in danger.

Indeed there seems to be an inverse relationship between the scale of catastrophe and what can be said about it. The anthropologists' paradox is that "the most precisely recorded moments of history lay adjacent to the extreme actions of nature or civilization . . . Pompeii. Laetoli. Hiroshima . . . Tectonic slips brutal human violence provided random time capsules of unhistorical lives" (55). Brutal violence was there although there was small place for the unhistorical lives. Anil and Sarath work to find out that place for the unhistorical lives which is the gift of nature.

Anil, Palipna, Sarath and even Ananda all focused on history, or on forensic anthropology but Gamini the surgeon "has chosen not to deal with the dead. He avoided the southwing corridors, where they brought the torture victims to be identified" (212). The bodies have to be identified to place them in national history. Finally, Gamini treats to the war victim, "Hundreds of victims had died under Gamini's care. Thousand couldn't walk or use their bowels anymore still. He is a doctor" (220). Gamini knows thousands of political victims who bear no existence in Sri Lankan history rather were slammed into the houses and dark rooms. To identify those political victims and innocent faces, Anil and Sarath ask help with Gamini.

Moreover, a brief look at Sri Lanka's recent history suggests that Ondaatje's unwillingness to take sides or offer solutions may owe as much to local conditions as to postmodernist theory. The politics and political violence of Sri Lanka seem to reflect back post-modern notion of the collapse of grand narratives. It also seems as

the forgility and impermanence of identity of minority who are not safe from the political violence. It also fails to provide with a coherent account of the origin to the common people. Ondaatje also points to a sharp ethnic split between a largely Hindu, Tamil speaking minority and Buddhist speakers of Sinhala. The sinhala majority government redicalized the Tamil opposition by declaring Sinhala the nation's only official language. Thus the violence began in that land where many people belongs to minority were killed and buried in mass graves without proper rituals.

Ondaatje provides more scenes of political violence which is on going with so many parties to the conflict. It is the violence on property and people which with private quarrels and purposes "Undisciplined police and armed forces carried out murders and robberies while marquarding as guerillas" (147). Violence is widespread that it is often difficult to establish the certainty who the agents of specific killing. In such a condition to identify the victims whose bodies are sometimes grossly mutilated, burned to useless on transported to long distances, is difficult. Although Anil confronts heysset to find out the real condition of that violence with the given authority by International Human Rights group.

Sarath is much more known about Sri Lankan land:

He can read a bucket of soil as if it were a complex historical novel. As a well trained archeologist, he can examines every events clearly as Anil. But as metaphor suggests, he is much more of a humanist, considering an archeologist the link between the mortality of flesh and one and the immortality of an image on rock. (278)

Where Anil looks for permanent truths in the chemical traces that survive in bones. But her competitive protagonist Sarath insists that truth is inseparable from life. Anil is forensic experts, conducts the exhumation in the appropriate scientific manners.

Forensic experts analyze the skeletons' remains to examine the physical characteristics of the victim, together with the cause, manner, time, and place of death with a view to asserting the victim's identity. In doing so, they use techniques of pathology, ontology, radiology etc. Anthropological studies may be undertaken to determine the skeleton's death, sex and race.

Anil studied in the west and by chance returns to her own homeland as an International Human Rights investigator to investigate the violence. She investigates hundreds of victims with the help of Sarath. They also try to find the government enemies list to prevent them from being slaughtered. They bring skeletons in to the Colombo city to investigate. But officials immediately separate her from the skeleton, and although she is permitted to report to some counter-insurgency experts in an anti-terrorism unit. In this context, she realizes that without evidence her findings will have no real value. After fifteen years' absence she has finally begun to identify with Sri Lankans. She says, "I think you murdered hundreds of us" (272). She wants to include herself into the minority history equating her with them.

Ondaatje, confirming Anil as the central character of the novel allots much space to narrate his history yet he is equally conscious to present the details of the other characters as well. The entire novel is narrated simultaneously to the two layers of audiences. In one level, he is unfolding his own story through Anil, and in another level his audiences are the readers. Rejecting the history as a chain of events in a linear sequence, the plot of the novel jumps up from one event to another. After introducing Anil and her arrival in Sri Lanka, the plot of the novel shifts to another event that the search of skeletons and their reconstruction. Anil knows that "this was the place of a complete crime. Heads separated from bodies. Hands broken off. None of the bodies remains all the statutory had been removed . . . (12). To search the

skeletons in such a horrific land, Anil dares knowing that minorities can get the power and voice for their existence.

Sarath has not gone over to the government side, he has planned a way for Anil to escape with some of the findings. He even wheels off the skeletons as she can recognize quickly. He had always been a pragmatist, "as an archeologist he believed in truth as a principle. That is, he would have given his life for the truth if the truth were of any use" (157). In Assisting Anil's research and her flights he has taken an irrevocable step, "he had returned to the intricacies of the public world with its various truth. He knew he would not be forgives that" (279). He interrogates Anil from his position in the audience because he is able to see what she can't.

When Anil disappears from the investigating room, the narrative moves to Gamini, in his office, turning through the black and white photographs of victims that a civil rights organizations brings to him. When he reaches to the third photograph, he recognizes his brother's body by its "innocent wounds", "the scars from a childhood biking accident and a fight with a cricket stump. And though he is a man who has chosen not to deal with the dead, Gamini realizes that he must do so now, that if he does not talk to his brother at this moment, his brother disappear from his life" (288). So he begins a "permanent conversation" with his brother who had always been his rival, but who in death is simply what he is "no longer a counter of argument, no longer an opinion that Gamini refused to accept" (289). The metaphor of the piesta, conveys grief and love towards his brother. He saw that "there are many piestas of every kind" (288). This reflects the love and life as the story of Hindu princess Sabitra.

Ondaatje insists that throughout the account of contemporary reality, old realities must be reconfigured. Global citizens, such as Anil, are new model of human

beings. Ondaatje quotes a line from the poet Robert Duncan, "The drama of our time is the coming of all men into one fate" (203). The boundary between history and human body is not fix which is flexible as the changing scenario. Ondaatje even quotes the line of North American writer, Anne Carson: "I wanted to find out on law to cover all of living. I found fear . . ." (35). This shows that there is not the fix law to bound the people of every century but the history which can assimilate every being of every centuries be recorded in history. They can have different life styles and philophies which can be their way of life.

The section in *Anil's Ghost* under title "Distance" begins with the high statue of Buddha being reconstructed which is, "The statue 120-foot high statue had stood in a field of Bunduravagala for several generations" (299). Ananda continues his artistic work through which missing voices can get the identity. They can be recorded in the life history. Ananda has been commissioned to paint the eyes in the reconstructed Buddha. But there is no sense of perfect restoration. He has rejected an early plan to fure the rock and "homogenize the stone"; instead he has left it looking "scarred" and "damaged" (302, 307). All his energy goes into creating the "composure" we saw in his reconstruction of Ruwan Kamara's skull.

Ananda continues to be an "artificer" because if he did not, "he would become a demon", one of the "specters of relation" that keep the war going around him (304). As he climbs the ladder to the Buddha's head, he is wearing of an old shirt of Sarath's with his Sarong, a recognition that "he and the woman Anil would always carry the ghost of Sarath Diyasena" (305). We cannot simply say what is Sarath's ghost, but surely he is partly the ghost of history and that is also the "irony of history" with which his brother associated him (272). Anyway, the mission of historicizing to historyless people continued and got succeeded.

Ondaatje's juxtaposition of temporal scale, the prehistoric footprint and satellite transmission of voices across continents, reflects the postmodern reality. But traditional Buddhist culture also suggests the necessity of the eccentric perspective and the celerity of the spirit's movement. Sarath and Anil bring Ananda to an old country house, a *Walawwa*, to reconstruct the victim's face. "It had once belonged to an artist, who lived there for a time, and Anil will always be able to recognize the *Wallawas'* aesthetic when she sees it in one of the artist's drawings" (202). Ananda chooses to work in a room where two Sinhala words are written on the wall, suggesting that they characterize the aesthetic of "*Makamkruka*" and "*Mandanaraga*" (165). Sarath explains, "*Makamkruka* is a *chuyrner*, an agitator. Someone who perhaps sees things more truly by turning everything upside down." Though in some sense he's almost a "devil", he "guards the sacred spot in a temple ground" (165). As for "*Madnanaga*", it is a word from ancient romances that means "with the speed of love, sexual arouser" (165). These two artistic words remind the historical sense of that past time. Looking at these words, people can guess about the earlier historical situation.

Reconstruction of the statue of Buddha symbolically refers to the reconstruction of the history of the past. The statue was devastated or destroyed by armed forces and now has been reconstructed. Similarly, the history of the minority is being reconstructed which was destroyed by the political civil war. When the story ends, it carries out a kind of shape like Ananda's reconstructed statue of Buddha. Like an art, the novel stands as that art. It confirms the circularity of history. As a believer of genealogy, the author has presented the snapshots of the history of the characters. Even the story of Anil and her historical background, whose historical evidences run from the beginning to the end of the novel, is not in a linear temporal sequence. The history of

characters, Ondaatje writes here, is not in traditional form rather it's "The drama of our time . . ." as Ondaatje asserts in this novel (203).

As a novel written in the version of post-colonial college, it offers a non-linear and highly cinematic plot. Ondaatje presents several stories that weave into each other, expectedly, and suggests multitudes of ways in which multitude of stories can be shared.

Ondaatje presents the characters as idiom notable although their identity in the official history is under the shadow. He assumes the historical multiple narratives in attempt to protect the unheard voices substituting the grand narrative. However, this manipulation also becomes structurally significant because it allows Ondaatje himself to enter the novel and reminds us that if it the omniscient author who is indeed the puppeteer with ultimate control over the patterns and paths which the characters follow.

Presenting the artist's ability to identify the fragments of beauty and nobility, Ondaatje makes the novel a reconstructed history of down trodden people. It also restores them to the foreground of history by giving them a voice. At the same time Ondaatje reminds us that history is, like art, the construction as Palipna says, "The artificer brings life sight and truth and presence" (99). Thus the unheard history of the minority people is recuperated through the medium of art. This art is the lively image which conveys all the hidden and unheard ideas which are silenced by the canonical history.

IV. Conclusion

Anil's Ghost is the subtle representation of the marginalized history in Sri Lanka where victimized people are being recorded. History created by official people and the history of marginal people has been clearly presented here. Presenting the central character beyond the mainstream political, economical and social scenario Ondaatje confirms his affinity to the down trodden people. He minimizes the vast gap between appearance and reality of colonial history with the help of literary text to clarify the hidden truth. The violence and murder which was the most horrible and painful scenario of Srilankan common people now come into existence through this text. It is also an opportunity for Srilankan people to know the hidden and suppressed history through the literary artifact.

In Native-Sri Lankan history, marginalized people who are powerless are victimized and not recorded. They bear the panic condition among other people. They were massacred and buried in to the mass graves without any rituals and records. The central character, Anil, searches who are buried into the mass graves. This search and test to identify them is one step of history to be reconstructed. The crime of Sri Lankan government is revealed through this literary text.

In this fictional work, Ondaatje presents the real scenario of Sri Lankan civil war. Condition of the victimized people is revealed by the search of human rights group. The narrative structure of the novel focuses on a historical temporarily. Anil with the help of Sarath, searched the human instances into the forgotten archaic. Their investigation brought back the skeletons of war victims into being with the reconstructing act of Anand. They search the skeleton and give the name to the first skeleton which gave them the way to search and identify thousands of disappearances. Forgetting marginalized individuals and communities are re-mapped in the text. In

doing so, not only the search of archeologists Anil and Sarath, but also Palipna and Anand remind the importance of art to trace the history. Symbolically, the novel reminds us that the monuments of the nation bear existence into the course of history of the historyless people. Thus, we can say *Anil's Ghost* destabilizes linear historical views of canonical Sri Lankan society dominated by western European nations.

To include the ethnic minorities and forgotten working class people in the official history, Ondaatje simply expands the parameters of Sri Lankan literature challenging the western discourse of grand narrative. He presents the fragmented narrative to refer the different voices of the society through which one can unite those voices to give a complete shape. He presents the critical time when common people's death was not counted and the death of the people become as the death of animals. Thus, the cruelty of government was inhuman which can not be done if the human have the consciousness of the rights of the person.

Ondaatje presents the fragmented history in both factual as well as imaginative manner. He gives a voice to those who were silenced by the society in order to rectify their absence from current historical recording. Human instances are being recorded even in their absence. He abandons the use of linear time as a basis for the sequencing of events to move away from the governing conversion of history. Reconstructing act of Anand, symbolically gives shape to the fragmented instances of human being. Minority history is reconstructed through this novel *Anil's Ghost*. Silenced voices get voice in mainstream history. In this way, making the novel *Anil's Ghost* a means, Ondaatje historicizes those people who exist on the margins of everyday history, but not in a conventional fashion. The history he unfolds before the readers deserves infinite possibilities. With this novel, he fulfills more than one purpose; gives a voice to those whose voices were unheard in official history, speaks his own voice, recreates

the history of minority and re-maps the scenario of Sri Lanka giving a kind of shape as Sri Lankan Artist reconstructed big old and devastated statue of Buddha to give a shape. He also shapes the scattered beings to record them in the history. What Anil does is the important act to reconstruct the new history of minorities which is the way Ondaatje presents here to shape the scattered beings in Sri Lankan land.

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