HISTORICAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE POSTMODERN MIGRANT LITERATURE -- A Reading of the Select Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and Michael Ondaatje

Thesis submitted to the University of Calicut for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Literature

by

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DECLARATION

I, Lakshmi A.K., hereby declare that the thesis titled "HISTORICAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE POSTMODERN MIGRANT LITERATURE -- A Reading of the Select Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and Michael Ondaatje" is a bonafide research carried out by me under the supervision and guidance of Dr. W.S. Kottiswari and Dr. Praseedha G., and it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or any other similar title or recognition.

Place: Palakkad

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled "HISTORICAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE POSTMODERN MIGRANT LITERATURE -- A Reading of the Select Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and Michael Ondaatje" submitted to the University of Calicut for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is a work of bonafide research carried out by Lakshmi A.K. under our supervision and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship, or any other similar title or recognition.

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Dedication

To the memory of my father,

P. Ananthakrishna Pillai

(1935-2013)

ABBREVIATIONS

Artist	:	*An Artist of the Floating World*
Ghost	:	*Anil's Ghost*
Lion	:	*In the Skin of a Lion*
Orphans	:	*When We Were Orphans*
Patient	:	*The English Patient*
Remains	:	*The Remains of the Day*

CONTENTS

Preface

This Dissertation is submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Calicut. The research was conducted under the supervision of Dr. W.S. Kottiswari, Research Guide and HOD (Retired), Dept of English, Mercy College, Palakkad. The period of research was from 20 December 2012 till 19 December 2019, considering the Extension of a year permitted. To the best of my knowledge, this is an original study, except for the references and acknowledgements made to previous works. This dissertation has undergone a plagiarism check as prescribed by the University and is found worthy of submission. The dissertation, excluding the "Works Cited", consists of less than 67,000 words. The documentation of this thesis is done according to *MLA Handbook* Eighth Edition.

Chapter I

Introduction

> Somewhere in the back of Valerian's mind one hundred French chevaliers were roaming the hills on horses….Backs straight, shoulders high—alert but restful in the security of the Napoleonic Code.
>
> Somewhere in the back of Son's mind one hundred black men on one hundred unshod horses rode blind and naked through the hills and had done so for hundreds of years (Morrison 206-7).

The passage quoted above from *Tar Baby* relates to a scene of verbal encounter between Valerian Street, the white industrialist and Son Green, the black fugitive. Each person attempts to narrativize the "history" of the island space of Isle de Chevaliers on which both of them are intruders. The visual images that flash across their minds reflect their mutual power relations and explain the pattern of communication between them. It is evident that their symbolic negotiations of the island are dependent upon their particular socio-cultural and historical contexts.

However, when presented with two such versions of the same (hi)story, it is normal to assume that one of them is true, while the other is false. This is the problem of binaries to which even Morrison was susceptible. Traditional historiography, until the nineteenth century, would easily favour Valerian's version, precisely because Valerian is white, upper class, powerful and his discourse is political ("Napoleonic Code" and

"Chevalier"), it possesses an inner coherence, implies hero worship and privileges the Western civilization. At the same time, Son's discourse, being mythical, incoherent and illusory (how can blind and naked black men ride on "unshod horses" for "hundreds of years"?) would be dismissed into the realm of fiction and falsification. Such an analysis leads one to the crucial question of the proportion of reality and fiction permissible in historical narratives.

Until the twentieth century, historians maintained that history was a linear, "one-dimensional and diachronic concept of time" (Iggers 3) that dealt with the "real" events performed by great political personalities and privileged the Western culture. With the advent of Marxist and Parsonian analyses, the emphasis of historiography shifted from heroic individuals to social groups and from political events to socio-economic factors. However, both the traditionalists and the Marxists agreed that history was linear, continuous, progressive, coherent, singular, universal and essentially Western and that its methodology relied exclusively on the official documents of the state. Consensus had also been arrived at the empirical quality of the historical knowledge to which the historian's account should correspond. Despite their internal differences, all schools of historical thought, until the 1960s, believed in an objective reality independent of the historical researcher. In order to provide a coherent narrative to that empirical truth, the historian was compelled to adopt certain literary conventions that mixed his facts with some fiction. This was the notion that pervaded all historical writing right from the classical Greek tradition of Herodotus and Thucydides till the 1960s.

In the 1960s, historiography underwent a transformation caused by a sudden

consciousness of a crisis in the modern society and culture. The decade was marked by global socio-political upheavals like the counter-culture, widespread students' protests, civil rights movements such as the women's liberation movement and the gay rights movement, the emergence of the New Left and so on. The social repercussions of the Second World War, including the fall of the colonial empires and the awareness that non-Western people also had histories, problematized the "grand narratives" upon which history had hitherto structured itself. These grand narratives, or the "metanarratives" as Jean –Francois Lyotard chose to call them in his *The Postmodern Condition*, included the total explanations posited by religion, science and communism. The metanarratives were perceived with suspicion and incredulity by a generation which found such totalizing explanations insufficient and unsatisfactory.

In his *Mythologies*, Roland Barthes emphasized the need to challenge all that was believed to be natural, eternal or universal, thus augmenting a culture that celebrated interrogation as a positive value. According to the Saussurean linguistics, language was a self-contained system of signs that excluded the referent. The existence of the referent, thus bracketed, was not denied, while its accessibility through knowledge was problematized. Similarly, Jacques Derrida declared that nothing existed before or beyond the text and Michel Foucault substituted the "conventional, linear model of knowledge" (Woods 19) with a more diverse and pluralistic one. Thus, the age of skepticism received ample impetus from the critical theories of Saussure, Barthes, Derrida and Foucault, to name a few.

These lines of thought had profound implications for historiography as they

confront the historian's "truth claim" with an epistemological interrogation of the possibility of any such claim, the historian's object of enquiry being the absent past. By defying historical objectivity and by denying the existence of any empirical reality outside the text, the historian's dialogue with the past is reduced to a play of texts. The paradigm of professional history as proposed by Leopold von Ranke during the nineteenth century had resorted to equate the methodologies of history with those of science. This scientific outlook of history which presupposed an objective enquiry of the past was thus challenged by the increasing disillusionment with the quality of Western civilization. As a result, the Western civilization lost its prominence and "time in the Newtonian sense as an objective entity or in the Kantian sense of a universal category of thought" (Iggers 7) became untenable. History soon became plural, multiple and fragmented as the diversities in race, gender and ethnicity were incorporated into historiography. The scope of historiography expanded considerably with the increasing demand for the histories of those segments of population who had been hitherto excluded from historical narratives, such as women and ethnic minorities.

The postmodernist legacy refuses history to have any truth claim by "asserting that both history and fiction are discourses, human constructs, signifying systems" that "derive their major claim to truth from that identity" (Hutcheon 93). The past which really existed once, is accessible to the historian only through its textualized remnants such as documents, eye-witness reports and archives. For instance, in order to study the history of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, one cannot go back to the Britain of the seventeenth century, the actual milieu and moment of the said historical event. Instead,

one visits a library and browses through the volumes of historical texts written on it as well as the other documents such as letters, anecdotes and archives, themselves "texts" waiting to be read and interpreted.

It is the historian's task to reconstruct the past from these, not as an objective witness; but with an "explicitly and intensely partisan perspective" (91) that reveals his ideology. In short, all historiography is heavily implicated in ideological and institutional analyses. Accordingly, the 1857 Revolt in the Indian history was downplayed by the imperialist historians like Charles Ball, Sir John Kaye, T. Rice Holmes and so on as a mere "Sepoy Mutiny". Meanwhile, Karl Marx, a contemporary observer, compared it to the peasant uprising of the French Revolution and the post-independent government of India recognizes it as the "First War of Indian Independence", "an epoch-making event in India's struggle for freedom" (Somnath Chaterjee qtd. in Agarwal 47).

The postmodern historiographer Keith Jenkins distinguishes the "past", which forms the historian's object of enquiry, from "history", which comprises his interpretation of the past. While the past refers to everything that has gone before, Jenkins identifies history with historiography, that is, the discourse of the historian's writings of the past (6-12). Thus, the postmodern critique challenges the historian's exaggerated claims to objective truth, demonstrates the ideological assumptions that belie the dominant discourses of history, interrogates the fallacious notions of uniqueness, primacy and progress attributed to Western history and serves to abolish the distinction between fact and fiction, between history and literature. By severing the relation between word and world, the historical truth is reduced to a linguistic sign, "a self-referencing figure of

speech, incapable of accessing the phenomenal world" (Jenkins 36).

While Nietzche pointed out that the historian's subjectivity influenced his research, Barthes rejected the distinction between history and literature that had been in vogue since Aristotle's *Poetics*. Later, historians themselves like Hayden White called historical narratives "verbal fictions" that had more in common with literature than science (qtd. in Iggers 10). Quite in the same vein, Keith Jenkins argues that the hiatus between the past and the historical writing is an ontological one that cannot be surmounted by any amount of epistemological endeavour (23). He also declares that history is an "inter-textual, linguistic construct" (9), and like Michael Riffaterre, argues that history refers not to any real empirical world, but to another text (qtd. in Hutcheon 143). The postmodern perspective of history as an intertext already interpreted and textualized, a discursive account that appropriates the world of the past, a fictive and figurative construct that allows slippage between the word and the world it refers; thus becomes a valid inter-text upon which fiction draws as easily as it does upon other texts of literature.

Any contemporary discussion of intertextuality is associated with postmodernism, a dialogic term denoting the current social, political, cultural and historical era. In his oft-cited essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", Walter Benjamin observes that the aura of value associated with the original and authentic works of art in the pre-technological world remains shattered in the modern technological society that favours mass-productions and reproductions. This is more so in the postmodern era, where every artistic object is so clearly assembled from the

components of previously existing art. The notion of intertextuality is therefore central to the postmodern age which is dominated by the "simulacrum" or, a copy without the original, according to Jean Baudrillard.

The term "intertextuality" was coined by Julia Kristeva in the late 1960s, by combining the Saussurean and Bakhtinian theories of language and literature. Accordingly, a text, both literary and non-literary, is composed of systems, codes and traditions established by previously existing texts, so that the act of reading plunges one into a network of textual relations. As a result, textual interpretation becomes a process of moving between or among texts and meaning is generated in the relationship between a text and all other texts it refers and relates, thus moving out of the independent text into a network of textual relations. Such an intertextual reading challenges the traditional passive reading of a text from cover to cover. There is never a single, correct and unified reading of a text, since every reader brings with him different interests, experiences, perspectives and prior reading experiences (Allen 1-7).

The textuality and intertextuality of historiography having thus been established, it is easy to perceive that the history which appropriates the past is in turn appropriated by the subsequent historians and the authors of historical fiction who situate their texts in particular historical moments. As this thesis concerns itself with the appropriations of history in the postmodern migrant literature, a discussion of the concept of appropriation will be most pertinent now. Derived from the Latin word "*appropriare*" meaning "to make one's own" or "to keep aside", the term "appropriation" in law denotes both keeping aside of public funds for some special purpose and illegally seizing someone

else's private property for oneself. In art, The Oxford Dictionary defines the term as the "deliberate reworking of images and styles from earlier, well-known works of art" (77). Such recontextualizing of pre-existing objects and concepts may be traced back to the cubist collages of Picasso and Braque, the ready mades of Marcel Duchamp and the surrealist constructions of Salvador Dali. M. H. Abrams defines the act of appropriation in connection with New Historicism where readers, ideologically different from the author, interpret the text to "make it conform to their own cultural prepossessions" (251).

Appropriation, as a process, can be perceived as a sub-genre of the concept of "intertextuality" (already mentioned), associated with Julia Kristeva and that of "hypertextuality", associated with Gerard Genette. While Kristeva argues that all texts work and rework other texts to form "a rich and ever-evolving cultural mosaic" (Sanders 17), Genette bases his theory on those forms of literature that remain intentionally inter-textual. In *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, Genette defines hypertextuality as "any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the hypotext), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary" (Newman & Doubinsky 5). Thus, the hypotext is an earlier text or a source text, which is reworked in the hyper text, that is, a later text or an after text. For example, Homer's *Odyssey* is the hypotext of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (Allen 108).

Julie Sanders defines "appropriation" as "a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain", which "may or may

not involve a generic shift", with the result that "the appropriated text or texts occur in a far less straightforward context" than that of an adaptation (26). In her *Adaptation and Appropriation*, Sanders differentiates between two types of appropriations: the embedded appropriation where the hypertext explicitly appropriates the source text and the sustained appropriation where the act of appropriation is more "shadowy" so that it precariously swings between appropriation and plagiarism (26-41).

The effectiveness of any appropriation is dependent upon the readers' participation in the play of similarities and differences perceived between the hypotext and the hypertext. Hence it is important that the hypotext is familiar enough for the reader/ spectator and belongs to a "shared community of knowledge" (45) that has cross-cultural, even cross-historical readerships. This necessitates the employment of canonical texts such as Shakespeare, classics, mythology, history, folktale, arts and science as hypotexts. For instance, Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*, an appropriation of the classic Victorian novel *Jane Eyre*, "transports" Bertha Antoinette, the marginalized and suppressed first wife of *Jane Eyre*'s hero Rochester to the centre, and imparts her with a voice, face, shape, flesh, blood and character. Rhys succeeds in telling us a different story from the perspective of Bertha, a silenced female migrant in the source text. By liberating Bertha from her role of "madwoman in the attic", Rhys identifies Charlotte Bronte herself as a product of the British imperialist culture (Spivak 148). Viewed thus, appropriation becomes a process that both encourages and celebrates such interactions among a network of texts.

When the mainstream or authorized history becomes the hypotext, the result is a historical appropriation, as found in a number of texts including Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953), Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), E L Doctrow's *Ragtime* (1975), Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) and Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000). Each of these hypertexts presents a variety of possibilities in terms of theme, form and ideology. For example, Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible* had the gruesome public executions of the Salem witch-hunts of 1692 as its theme. Its publication coincided with the surveillance and anti-communist trials prevalent during the 1950s under the leadership of Senator Joe McCarthy, of which even Miller was a victim. Was Miller deliberately employing history to implicitly criticize the contemporary political regime? Or, was he merely suggesting that oppression by the dominant group is a continuing process having deep roots in the American society? All these are possibilities requiring serious investigation.

The impulse to appropriate the canon often originates from a desire to highlight the possible gaps, absences and silences within the authorized or canonical texts they revisit. As a result, the hypertexts strive to discover new angles, new routes and new perspectives on the familiar, thus establishing entirely novel possibilities. While the possibilities of each rewriting can vary according to the ideological and institutional preferences of its author, Jerome de Groot, in his influential study titled *The Historical Novel*, attempts to categorize the practice of historical appropriation thus: "The mainstream and repressive narratives" of history are challenged "by postcolonial authors to 'write back'; by lesbian and gay authors to reclaim marginalized identities; by

politicians and public figures to posit or explore new ideological positions" (3). The means and ends of such appropriations will be elaborated in the further chapters of this thesis.

At this juncture, we are provoked to an important question: Is historical appropriation the same as historical fiction? To answer this, we need to briefly explore the genre of historical fiction, which, contrary to the general understanding, is not limited to the historical novel alone. An engagement with history was visible in the great classical masters like Homer and Virgil. As a result of the Renaissance and its rekindling of classicism, increasing number of authors in the fourteenth century placed their works in history as the case of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. During the Elizabethan times, we had the historical plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Ben Jonson and others. In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton poeticized the human history, both social and biblical. However, Richard Maxwell informs us that the first historical novel to be published was Marie-Madeleine de Lafayette's *The Princess of Clevès* (1678) set during the reign of Henri II. In between, Gothic fiction also situated itself in the dark, chaotic and savage Middle Ages in order to terrify the present.

Sir Walter Scott, considered by many as the originator of the historical novel in Britain, was credited with the revival of the Scottish culture and lore for the English reading public. Caught between the binaries of realism and romance, rationality and passion, masculine England and feminized Scotland, Scott with his nationalistic perspective, clearly emphasized the English against the Scottish in his *Waverley* series. Despite the supposed glorification of the Scottish culture, Walter Scott's conservative

sympathies rested with the English sentiments, resulting in the subversion of the Highlanders. As the first British author to attain a widespread readership and global popularity, Walter Scott's historical novels influenced the later proponents of the genre including Charles Dickens, Pushkin, Tolstoy and Balzac. The mainstream model of historical fiction inaugurated by Scott soon became the touchstone for many of the nineteenth century historical novels.

Dickens' historical novels *Barnaby Rudge* and *A Tale of Two Cities* portrayed the fall of the Newgate prison and the aftermath of the French Revolution respectively. Dickens revealed his conservative stance by narrating mob-violence in a crisp, journalistic language, thereby deriding revolution in favour of maintaining the status quo. By depicting the bleak and the dark in history, he celebrated the noble middle class against the anarchist common man. George Eliot, however, refrained from historical trauma and instead, concentrated on the "unhistoric acts" performed by those who led "a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs" (*Middlemarch* 371). While Pushkin imitated Scott and attempted to rekindle nationalism, Tolstoy created an epic of pastness in his *War and Peace*, which was both historical and philosophical. Gustave Flaubert, on the other hand, considerably experimented with the traditions of conventional historical novel to shape a new, complex, non-linear and impressionistic novel, thus becoming the forerunner of both modernist and postmodernist novelists.

The story of the evolution of the historical novel until the twentieth century reveals that the great masters like Scott, Dickens and Pushkin were conservative in tone and structure, employed history as a background to their works which were both didactic

and moralistic, striving to instill such values as patriotism and nationalism. At the same time, there were deviations such as the Gothic novel that appropriated the artifacts of the past to haunt the present and Flaubert's historical novels which blatantly misappropriated historical authenticity. In between, when women like George Eliot and Virginia Woolf handled the genre, social and gendered others often featured in the textual fabric of historical fiction. To sum up, some authors of historical fiction did appropriate history to meet their own ends, whether aesthetic or didactic.

Here I would like to pause and move on to the next major component of the title of the thesis, namely, the "migrant". In "International Migration and Multicultural Policies", the UNESCO defines the migrant as "any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country". A simple definition of the term "migrant" refers to a person who has undergone migration at least once at any point of his lifetime and therefore, "migrant literature" denotes literature by and about migrants. The noun "migrant" is a derivative of the adjective "migrant", both originating from the Latin "*migrare*" meaning "to wander" or "to move". Traditionally, the noun form "migration" referred to the mass seasonal movements of birds and animals, as well as the geographical dislocation of people that resulted in the dispersal of the human race across the globe. Hence we may say that the history of migration is closely intertwined with that of human civilization.

Michael Samers, in his influential study named *Migration*, observes that the causes of migration are varied and wide-ranging and may include war, environmental stress,

chronic unemployment, restrictive government policies, socio-cultural and political marginalization of specific groups within the home state, social networks, gender expectations and oppression (15). Despite the incompatibility of nationally-collected data, it is estimated that the number of migrants (foreign-born nationals) worldwide is steadily accelerating from "176 million in 2000 to about 193 million in 2005" (Samers 21). As a result, the present age can rightly be called the "Age of Migration" (Castles and Miller). Fatemeh Pourjafari and Abdolali Vahidpour argue that this trend of accelerated migration commenced in the latter half of the twentieth century, as a result of the global events like the Second World War, the fall of the British Empire, the rise of totalitarian regimes and worldwide technological advancements. Such migrations are undertaken willingly with a view to better one's social and material conditions and to improve one's personal convenience.

According to the UNESCO, it is the free will of an individual to migrate, without external compulsions, that differentiates a migrant from refugees, exiles, dislocated and expatriates. Apart from the distinction of voluntary and forced migrations, the migrants are further classified into legal and illegal; unskilled, low-skilled and high-skilled; political, economic, religious, literary, scientific, educational and first, second and third generation migrants. Such overlapping categorizations are indicative of the growing research interest in the field of human migration. Whatever be the individual status of migrants, it is undeniable that all migration involves some degree of deculturation with the familiar and acculturation with the unfamiliar, both at the micro and the macro level. These very concerns are discernible in the literature of the migrants also.

In the introduction to *Migrant Voices in Literatures in English*, the editors Sheobhushan Shukla and Anu Shukla observe that much of the world's great literature is written by migrants such as Ovid, Dante, Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, Milan Kundera, Vladimir Nabokov, T. S. Eliot, Franz Kafka, Albert Camus, Salman Rushdie and so on. The trauma of losing the known ground and the agony of adapting to a new world of the host society often lead them to the hybrid space of in-betweenness. As a result, their literature portrays the perennial themes of uncertainty, insecurity, confusion, alienation, ambivalence and problems of communication; even though many of the contemporary migrant writers like Salman Rushdie, Timothy Mo, Kazuo Ishiguro, Ben Okri, Jamaica Kincaid, Michael Ondaatje, Rohinton Mistry and Bharati Mukherjee are comfortably settled in their adopted nations, as the elite who belong to "a section which can afford to take to writing as a profession" (7).

Because migration is in itself an act of spatial appropriation, the spatial considerations of migrant literature have been much theorized. Therefore, Shukla and Shukla point out that there are three possibilities of space in migrant literature, namely, those of "home", "host" and "third space". In fact, they identify all these spaces as the migrant's (search of) home and suggest that "home…is the axis on which the entire discourse of migrancy revolves" (8). Thus, while Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* portrays its author's country of origin, Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* is set in her country of residence, namely, the Unites States. At the same time, Amitav Ghosh's *In An Antique Land* depicts Egypt, which is neither the author's country of origin nor his country of residence. This is what Shukla and Shukla mean by the "third space", "a

space different from both (the migrant's) homeland and the land of adoption" (9).

Similarly, Graeme Dunphy, in an interesting article titled "Migrant, Emigrant, Immigrant: Recent Developments in Turkish-Dutch Literature", posits that the "migrant" is the third and final phase in the evolution of migration literature. The initial phase, called the "emigrant", is characterized by a "sense of rootlessness, disorientation and frustration" (20) when the author, highly critical of the host society, focuses on the state of origin. In the second phase, the author undergoes a loss of identity as a result of the tension he experiences between the two cultures—home and host. Here, the focus is on the state of residence, though "occasional wistful glances" thrown over the shoulder betray a confused, yet comfortable "immigrant". In the final phase, the "migrant" becomes independent of the abiding ties with his state of origin and his ghetto-mentality disappears, mostly due to intermarriage and professional success. This phase is characterized by a "socialization marked by a growing harmony with members of the majority population, a facility to own and manage two cultures confidently, and a sense that biculturality is enriching rather than threatening" (21).

Time, along with space, has remained a major concern with the migrants, especially since the 1980s, when world literature perceived a definite "turn to history", with a large number of writers evoking persons, places and events from history to constitute their fiction. For example, the Man Booker Prize has steadily recognized historical fiction since Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) till the very recent Anna Burns' *Milkman* (2018). Similarly, among the Nobel laureates of the past thirty years, we have authors like Kazuo Ishiguro, Mo Yan, Herta Muller, Orhan Pamuk,

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Toni Morrison and Seamus Heaney, who have frequently situated their work in history. Many migrant authors like Rushdie, Ondaatje, Amitav Ghosh and others respond to this trend and locate their works in the historical past.

Kazuo Ishiguro, the winner of the 2017 Nobel Prize in Literature, and Michael Ondaatje are both internationally acclaimed migrant writers and recipients of the Booker prize. In their historical appropriations, history becomes a construct—partially concealed and partially revealed—much as the identity of the migrant writer himself. Their novels on wartime and post war history offer observations of the war from the margins, attempting to retrieve those "marginalized and disenfranchised communities and individuals" (Sanders 140) whose histories have never been told before. However, this thesis concerns itself not with the past, but with the appropriations of authorized or mainstream history, which became the dominant historical discourse owing to purely ahistorical, but rather socio-political reasons.

Born in Nagasaki, Japan, in 1954, Kazuo Ishiguro migrated to Britain, along with his family, in 1960. The family settled in Guildford, Surrey and his father, an oceanographer, joined a British research project at the National Institute of Oceanography. The migration was initially intended to be temporary and so the parents prepared their children for a return to Japan. Thus, while attending the British schools, Ishiguro grew up speaking Japanese at home. Eventually, their migration proved to be permanent and Ishiguro became a naturalized British citizen in 1982. After his school education, he tried a number of jobs like the grouse-beater for the Queen Mother, a volunteer community worker and also travelled to the American west coast. On return,

he resumed his studies and graduated in 1978 from the University of Kent. He continued his social work in connection with housing the homeless, where he met his future wife Lorna MacDougal and married her in 1986. In 1980, he received a postgraduate degree in creative writing from the University of East Anglia, under the mentorship of Malcolm Bradbury and Angela Carter.

After a few short stories, Ishiguro published his first novel *A Pale View of Hills* in 1982, which tells the tale of a middle-aged Japanese female migrant in Britain, reminiscing her youth in the post-war Nagasaki. That novel displayed exquisite craftsmanship, won the Winifred Holtby Prize for regional fiction awarded by the Royal Society of Literature and included its author in the *Granta* Magazine's 1983 list of twenty best young British novelists with a future. His second novel *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986), set entirely in the post-war Japan, tells the story of a retired painter and was short listed for the Booker Prize and won the Whitbread Book of the Year award. Ishiguro attained international reputation with the publication of his third and most acclaimed novel *The Remains of the Day* (1989), which won the Booker Prize and was later filmed by the Merchant Ivory Productions in 1993. For his services to literature, he received the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1995 and Knighthood in 2018, the French decoration, *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* in 1998 and the Japanese decoration, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, in 2018.

His extensive fourth novel *The Unconsoled* (1995) is highly experimental in nature and has a surrealistic texture with dream-like sequences from the life of a concert

pianist in an unnamed European city. In his fifth novel *When We Were Orphans* (2000), Ishiguro once again returns to the pre and post World War history with the life of a detective vacillating between Britain and China. His sixth novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005) is a dystopian science fiction on human cloning, depicts an alternate world of the 1980s and was later adapted to a film of the same name in 2010. These two novels were also short-listed for the Booker Prize, thus making four Booker Prize nominations in all for Ishiguro. His latest, *The Buried Giant* (2015) is a historical fantasy novel that transports us back to the Britain of 450 A D, a supernatural world inhabited by ogres, pixies and dragons and humans pathetically forgetful of their own histories. Apart from novels, the author has several short stories, screen plays and song lyrics to his credit.

Michael Ondaatje was born in 1943, in Kegalle, Ceylon (present Sri Lanka) as the fourth child of Mervyn and Doris Ondaatje. After his parents' divorce in 1945, young Michael lived with his relatives in Colombo until he migrated to Britain in 1954 to join his mother and siblings in London. The story of his voyage from Colombo to London as an unaccompanied child migrant later featured in his recent work, *The Cat's Table* (2011). In 1962, Michael followed his brother and philanthropist Christopher Ondaatje to Canada and acquired citizenship there. He received his B.A. from the University of Toronto in 1965 and his M.A. from the Queen's University, Ontario in 1967. He took up teaching positions in various universities and published his first collection of poems, *The Dainty Monsters*, in 1967. Ondaatje's poetic collections include *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* (1970), *Rat Jelly* (1973), *Tin Roof* (1982), *The Cinnamon Peeler* (1991) and *Handwriting* (1998). In 1988, he was

made an officer of the Order of Canada and in 2005, the Sri Lankan Government honoured him with the Sri Lanka Rathna, for exceptional and outstanding service to the nation by foreigners or non-nationals.

Ondaatje had established himself as a successful poet much before his first novel came out in 1976, namely, *Coming Through Slaughter*, a fictionalized biography of the legendary jazz pioneer Buddy Bolden. The book completed his transition from a poet to a novelist and won the 1976 Books in Canada First Novel Award. He had a major critical success as a novelist with the appearance of *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987) which won all the major Canadian prizes including the Toronto Book Award, the Trillium Book Award and the Best Paperback in English Award. As an appropriation of the Canadian immigration history of 1917 to 1938, the novel celebrates the marginalized and ex-centric immigrant labourer who actually built the palatial monuments of Toronto and yet remained unacknowledged by the authorized history. However, it was his third novel, *The English Patient* (1992), set in an Italian villa of Tuscany towards the end of the Second World War, which established Ondaatje as an international author and co-winner of the Booker Prize with Barry Unsworth. The novel was adapted to an award winning film of the same name in 1996 and was voted the Golden Man Booker in 2018, a prize instituted to commemorate the half a century of Booker awards. In 2000, he published *Anil's Ghost*, portraying the civil war-torn Sri Lanka of the 1980s and in 2007, *Divisadero*, depicting the 1970s in the Northern California and the American west coast. Ondaatje was made a Companion of the Order of Canada in

2016. In 2018 came his latest novel *Warlight.* Besides poetry and fiction, Ondaatje's work includes autobiography, documentary and film.

The phrase "postmodern migrant literature", as employed in the title of the thesis, denotes the post-Second World War mass migrations and refers to those authors who lived and migrated during the postmodern age. At this juncture, it is worth explaining why this thesis insists on employing the term "migrant" instead of the cliché "diaspora". This is because the hegemony of the over-theorized diaspora discourse is insufficient to describe all the present day migrations. Also, the classical association of that term with the expulsion of the Jews from their "promised land" imparts a sense of victimhood to all diasporic experiences of migration. As Robin Cohen rightly asserts, the diaspora's "dispersal from an original centre is often accompanied by the memory of a single traumatic event that provides the folk memory of the great historic injustice that binds the group together" (6). According to Cohen, this is what categorizes the "victim diasporas" of Africans, Armenians, Irish and Palestinians along with the classical Jews.

William Safran, the notable diaspora theorist, in an attempt to define the contemporary concept of diaspora, identified its six features:

> 1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original "centre" to two or more "peripheral", or foreign, regions; 2) they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland—its physical location, history and achievements; 3) they believe that they are not—and perhaps cannot be—fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal

> home and as a place to which they or their descendents would (or should) eventually return—when conditions are appropriate; 5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and properity; and 6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship. (83-84)

The theories of Safran and Cohen indicate that the concept of diaspora is based on large numbers of people displaced from a central homeland across the world, who are victims of a traumatic event that remains in their collective memory, who yearn to escape into a utopian vision of a homeland away from a hostile host society where they are subalterns, their dispossession and their failure at reclamation of homeland being their only identity. When compared to the religiously coloured term "diaspora", the word "migrant" is relatively more neutral and emphasizes the experience of migration performed by the migrant, often by his personal choice. On the other hand, the diaspora may or may not have undergone migration and could possibly include the second and third generation migrants as well as the descendents of the previously settled migrants who have already become the citizens of the host nation.

The migrants (or the migrant authors under study here) do not belong to the diaspora because: (1) they have experienced migration during their lifetime; (2) they have settled in the host nations as naturalized citizens; (3) they are educated in the language of the states of residence (here, English), are themselves established writers in English

and are both recipients of the prestigious Booker Prize; (4) though they sometimes have placed their fiction in the locale of their nations of origin, neither of them plan a return there; (5) though they appropriate history, it is not a nostalgic return to the past; and (6) in the postmodern age that celebrates everything, they positively celebrate their own hybridity. They employ their liminality as a tool for empowerment instead of indulging in futile self-pity as some of their predecessors. By becoming citizens, their migrant status has ended politically, but because of having performed migration during their lifetime, they remain migrants culturally, despite their professed loyalties to the host nations.

Time and space will be major concerns of this thesis since the historical novel appropriates time and migrant author appropriates space of the host nation. For my study, I have selected three novels each of Ishiguro and Ondaatje, which, besides being historical appropriations, are also significant regarding their spatial attributes: Ishiguro's *An Artist of the Floating World* is set in Japan, his home nation; *The Remains of the Day* is set in Britain, his host nation and *When We Were Orphans* is set in China, a third space (nation), different from his home and host nations. Similarly, Ondaatje's nation of origin, Sri Lanka, is portrayed in his *Anil's Ghost*; his host nation, Canada, is seen in *In the Skin of a Lion* and the third space of Italy in *The English Patient*. This selection is based on a spatial consideration, following Shukla and Shukla, namely, that of the novels located in the home, host and third spaces of the respective migrant authors.

Hypothesis

The "unbelonging" migrant writer is revealed through the anachronistic protagonists, since both are out of context—one spatially and the other temporally—as time and space are the parameters of one's culture and identity. By applying the postmodern and migrant theories to the historical appropriations of Ishiguro and Ondaatje, the research investigation could undertake an in-depth analysis of the confluence of appropriation and their migrant situation.

Objectives of the proposed investigation

1. Application of the postmodern theory to the select novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and Michael Ondaatje
2. Analysis of the cultural and aesthetic politics behind the impulse to appropriate authorized history
3. A comparative study incorporating the similarities and differences of the selected novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and Michael Ondaatje
4. Exploration of the current global literary discourse of migrant writing through the selected novels.

Research Methodology

From the objectives listed above, it is evident that this thesis analyses the aesthetics and politics of historical appropriations. This necessitates the employment of an interdisciplinary approach which is neither purely aesthetic nor purely political, but an amalgamation of both. In order to view the historical appropriation as the migrant

authors' response to the essentializing practices of mainstream history, the theory adopted should be one that is capable of recognizing and exposing the myriad forms of domination, both implicit and explicit. Such a theory should be one that can accommodate the spatial dislocation of the migrant author as well as the temporal dislocation of his protagonist. It should also draw upon a broad network of interrelated disciplines such as geography, history, economics, literature, culture and politics, without rigidly subscribing to any of these academic disciplines. It is proposed that this thesis requires two different theories to frame its research, namely, the postmodern theory to examine the appropriating texts and an interdisciplinary theory concerning the different aspects of migration to study the migrant discourse.

Relevance of the proposed study

Migrant writers are found to negotiate dialogues between their homes and histories often by appropriating the canonical texts and the cultural phenomena they encounter in the host country. Historical texts, belonging to a "shared community of knowledge" (Sanders 45) provide a rich source for fictional appropriations. The means and ends of such appropriations are varied. Sometimes, history is evoked just for the purpose of comparison and contrast with the present, to show repetitive patterns and parallels that recur. At other times, the appropriation resorts to throw light on certain absences in the authorized version—to represent those marginalized individuals and communities whose histories have not been told before. By retelling the stories of marginalized characters who occupy the in-between spaces, the migrant writer voices his own experience of

alienation in the foreign soil. By reinventing history, he attempts to retrieve those voices he believes to have been suppressed by history as a formal discipline.

The Structure of the Thesis

Divided into five chapters, this thesis studies the selected novels at two levels: at the primary textual level, three novels of each author are grouped together and analyzed to detect the postmodern elements that facilitate them in the appropriation of the authorized history. At the secondary level, all the six novels are grouped into three, this time pairing them on the basis of their geographical locales, such as the home, host and third spaces of the migrant authors. Thus, the novels, *An Artist of the Floating World* of Ishiguro, set in Japan and *Anil's Ghost* of Ondaatje, set in Sri Lanka, are grouped and compared against each other to examine the writers' portrayal of their respective home spaces. Similarly, Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* and Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* are grouped to represent their host spaces, while *When We Were Orphans* of Ishiguro and *The English Patient* of Ondaatje are paired together to probe the third spaces. Such an analysis is designed to bring out the similarities and differences in these authors' delineation of spaces significant to the migrant discourse.

"Introduction" or Chapter One has as an expository function as it introduces the terms and concepts that feature in the title and provides an overview of the hypothesis, objectives, research methodology and scope of the thesis. Chapter Two, titled "The Recovered Histories of Kazuo Ishiguro" analyses the three postmodern novels of Kazuo Ishiguro to identify the matter and manner of historical appropriations as found in them,

besides contextualizing the public history thus appropriated. This task is repeated in Chapter Three, named “The Recollected Histories of Michael Ondaatje” in the case of Ondaatje’s three select novels and their historical context. Chapter Four, “Trading Time for Space: A Review of Ishiguro and Ondaatje”, offers a comparative study of the two authors based on the motives of their appropriations as well as the three locations of home, host and third space manifest in the select novels. The fifth and the final chapter called “Conclusion”, winds up the dissertation by drawing attention to the contemporary migrant discourse, summarizing the analyses in the preceding chapters and consolidating all the findings.

Chapter II

The Recovered Histories of Kazuo Ishiguro

All appropriations are, in a sense, usurpations. However, to those who practise them, they are rather opportunities to reclaim, retrieve and recover the lost voices, spaces, times, tales and even worlds. In historical appropriations, such reclamations often result in the problematization of the mainstream history, which itself is a construct, structured by the dominant ideologies and subjective interpretations of particular narrators. By imparting a narratorial voice and focalizing agency to characters that were hitherto excluded from the formal discipline of history, they are empowered to perform and recount a past to which they had zero or limited access. Thus in the historical appropriations of Kazuo Ishiguro under consideration here, the history of the Second World War is accessed through the personal memories of the first person narrator-protagonists, who are neither professional historians nor military heroes privileged to do so. The histories they reconstruct are in a state of flux owing to their constant retellings, which enable them to recover, however partially, from the devastating experience of "the greatest man-made disaster in history" (Beevor 946), that is, the Second World War.

Despite recognizing the overt relationship an appropriation bears with its antecedent, this chapter refrains from a comparative study between them, owing to its suspicion of dualities often leading to Manichean oppositions. Consequently, it undertakes to have a structural and thematic analysis of the three select historical novels of Ishiguro,

namely, *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986), *The Remains of the Day* (1989) and *When We Were Orphans* (2000). Inspired by Linda Hutcheon's "double definition", the appropriation is perceived here as a process and a product. As a process of creation, it involves reconstruction and reinterpretation through its intertextual relations with the antecedent. As a product, an appropriation becomes an acknowledged transposition of the antecedent by means of a changed frame, perspective, emphasis, context, interpretation and so on. The chapter examines how these novels contextualize the history of the Second World War by appropriating it through the postmodern textual devices.

The Historical Context

A study of Ishiguro's novels reveals that each one of them offers at least two time schemes: the period of the text and the narrator, which is denoted by the dated entry at the beginning of each section and the period of his reminiscence, which refers to a time further past than that of the narrator's present. In his essay "Periodizing Postmodernism?" Noël Carroll introduces three time schemes such as "t1" to denote a historical narrative, "t2" to refer to its subsequent events and "t3" as the temporal location of the reporting historian, which enable him to "say what is significant about t1 in the light of t2" (qtd. in Cheng 130). Applied to Ishiguro, Chu-chueh Cheng substitutes Carroll's t1, t2 and t3 with the terms "narrated past" to refer to the reported past, "narrating present" to the reporting present and "authorial present" to refer to a time external to the text that characterizes the author's "real" time of writing and publishing the novel. For example, the narrating present of *The Remains of the Day*

can be established through the date of the narrative prologue, marked as "July 1956". While this period concurs with the historical event of the nationalization of the Suez Canal, which would have found its way in any of the historical documents portraying that age, it is completely obscured in the protagonist's narration (Lang 152), the major part of which is concerned with the inter-war period of the 1930s.

By "historical context", this chapter refers to the public history of the narrating present of the individual narrators and sees how far it is portrayed in the textual narrative of the select novels. Since the narrating present of all these three novels concerns the Second World War, a cursory glance of that period, as relevant to the texts at hand, would be most pertinent here. It was the Japanese postwar context that Ishiguro chose to commemorate in his *An Artist of the Floating World* through the random memories of the retired propaganda artist Masuji Ono. Both Brian Shaffer and Barry Lewis point out that the historical context of Ono, namely, the years following Japan's defeat in the Second World War and her unconditional surrender, was a period of immense transition when the nation was put under the control of General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP). This was the Allied Occupation of 1945-1952, commonly known as the American Occupation, which turned out to be Japan's first experience of a foreign invasion on its main islands. It was marked with a rigorous process of demilitarization and democratization of the imperial Japan, the twin principles on which the new Japanese constitution of 3rd May 1947 was constructed under the supervision of the SCAP. The constitution aimed at the reduction of Japan's war potential and the establishment of a pro-American democratic

system modelled according to Roosevelt's New Deal programmes of the 1930s.

Structured into four sections of first-person narratives dated as "October 1948", "April 1949", "November 1949" and "June 1950" respectively, the narrating present of *An Artist of the Floating World* corresponds to a specific two-year period in the Occupation history, punctuated by two political events, namely, the war crime trials of the erstwhile military heroes like General Tōjō and the beginning of the Korean War in June 1950. Whereas the text hints at the former incident through an oblique allusion to the execution of a much admired wartime general (22), the latter event is never mentioned even though the fourth section of the narrative clearly matches with that period. Yet, both these events were significant in shaping Japan's future, both politically and economically.

Under the auspices of the SCAP, the *International Military Tribunals for the Far East* in Ichigaya near Tokyo tried and executed seven top war criminals of Japan excluding Emperor Hirohito. The emperor was exonerated without trial and was regarded, along with his people, as a victim of the military leadership to which was attributed the responsibility of all war atrocities. The war-trials that began in May 1946 were called off in December 1948 owing to the cold war realpolitik that compelled the American authorities to restrict many of the changes they themselves had initiated in Japan. This resulted in a "reverse course" whereby the "anti-fascist purges" got transformed into a McCarthyist "Red Purge" targeting only the socialists and communists who had been previously acquitted from prisons (Dower 272-3). Further, with the intensification of the cold war, the Americans were also forced to obliterate the public

memory of Japan's war atrocities in order to establish the newly communist China as their archenemy (508). Carol Gluck describes this as a "neat moral calculus" whereby the Japanese "attack on Pearl Harbor was balanced by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki" (5). The gruesome tales of the Japanese aggression in China and Korea that were in circulation during the war were promptly suppressed to construct an alternate wartime history that would suit the image of the new Japan as a staunch US ally of the East.

The Korean War that broke out between the North and the South Koreas on June 25, 1950 was the first armed confrontation of the Cold War which exacerbated the tensions between the capitalist and communist blocs into a global scale. For Japan, the war occurred at a strategically opportune moment and had far-reaching political and economic implications. Initially, it threatened the political security of Japan owing to the nation's proximity to the Korean peninsula and the U.S. deployment of the Occupation troops for the defense of the South Korea against the invasion of the communist North Korea. Politically, it accelerated the Treaty of Peace with Japan, signed between Japan and 48 Allied nations on September 8, 1951 in San Francisco. According to the Treaty, Japan regained its sovereignty, paid war reparations to the Allies and was permitted to create a "self defense force" for its own protection. On the same day, Japan signed a Security Treaty with the U.S. by which the U.S. agreed to continue military assistance to Japan in the event of a foreign invasion. In return, Japan was to provide the U.S. with military bases in order to maintain peace in the Far East.

Financially, the war provided a major impetus to the Japanese economy by means

of the American procurement contracts for war-related goods. Before 1950, Japan had experienced payment deficits with the US despite the inflation curbing programmes implemented by the Dodge Plan. During the three years of the Korean War, the nation earned more than the value of American aid by way of military procurements and attained an "uninterrupted 10 percent annual growth in the Gross National Product". The war orders benefited the textile, construction, automotive, metal, communication and chemical industries so much that the index of industrial production steadily increased to 131 percent in May 1951 (Stueck 147-148).

Barry Lewis points out that during the period of Occupation, the social values of the imperial Japan underwent a U-turn within the span of a single generation (50). The decision of the military tribunal to exclude the emperor and blame a few top war-leaders dissuaded most Japanese from accepting their individual responsibility for the war (Gerteis & George 68). Nevertheless, the postwar public discourse was characterized by an "introspection boom" in which the older generations self consciously struggled with the guilt of bringing about inexplicable suffering to the younger ones who were "old enough to have suffered but young enough not to have inflicted suffering" (Kelly 197). In the popular imagination, those youngsters became the generation of the workaholic company-men who developed Japan into the world's largest foreign aid donor. This resulted in the incredulous transformation of the aggressively militaristic nation into an aggressively mercantile one, reaching the peak of its economic prowess in the 1980s.

If *Artist* portrays the transition of Japan from a devastated empire to an economic miracle, *Remains* depicts the fall of the British Empire in the postwar global

power scenario. As already stated, the historical context of the novel matches with the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company by the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser on July 26, 1956. As the Company was jointly owned and operated by the prewar super powers, namely, Britain and France, these two nations were infuriated by the unilateral decision of Nasser. Ever since its construction in 1869, this artificial canal connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea across the territory of Egypt had been the shortest trade route connecting Britain and her overseas colonies in Asia and Africa. With the decolonization of Asia after the Second World War, the Canal became the "highway of oil", shipping two-thirds of the European oil supply from the Middle East. Because of its strategic importance, the British troops had fervently guarded the Suez Canal during the two world wars.

However, following the Revolution of 1952 and the establishment of the Egyptian Republic, nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiments rose in Egypt against the British troops stationed at the Canal base. Hence, in 1954, Britain agreed to withdraw her forces from the Canal base by June 1956. Meanwhile, alarmed by Egypt's growing intimacy with the USSR, the UK and the US refused Nasser a loan from the World Bank to fund the construction of the Aswan High Dam on the river Nile. Nasser reacted by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company so that the revenue from the tolls could be utilized to finance the Dam project. It was declared that all the stockholders of the Company would be paid the price of their shares according to the day's closing price on the Paris Stock Exchange. A series of negotiations and conferences ensued as a result of the Suez crisis, aiming to re-open the canal to international traffic. Nasser,

who refused to budge, became the "new Mussolini" (Troen & Shemesh 82) in the British popular imagination and Anthony Eden, the then British Prime Minister, decided upon military action against Egypt.

Thus, a tripartite collusion was formed with "France as the instigator, Britain as a belated partner and Israel as a willing trigger" ("How Britain"). According to this, Israeli forces attacked Egypt on 29 October, 1956. Next day, Britain and France issued a joint ultimatum supposedly demanding both Israel and Egypt to cease-fire. As both the parties ignored this, British and French troops began their attack on Egypt on 31 October. The invasion proved an easy victory for the combined forces that succeeded in occupying considerable Egyptian territory pushing back Nasser's forces from Suez, Gaza and Sinai. However, the military victory soon turned to be an expensive political disaster that incurred international displeasure. The UN General Assembly passed a resolution that the United Nations' Emergency Force would replace Anglo-French forces to arbitrate the crisis. The US imposed economic sanctions on both Britain and France, its close European allies and the Soviet Union threatened to intervene on the Egyptian side with a nuclear holocaust. As a result, Eden ordered a cease-fire on 6th November and France was forced to follow suit. The Suez crisis finally came to an end with the withdrawal of the Israeli forces in March 1957, without realizing any of the tripartite objectives. Characterized as "the lion's last roar", "the Suez debacle marked the end of a certain kind of Britain" (Rushdie 246) and augmented a new era dominated by the US and the USSR as the superpowers.

While the unspoken narrating present of *Remains* relates to a disgraceful episode

in the British power struggle, the seven-part narrative structure of *Orphans* roughly spans across three decades, from 1930 to 1958. Of the seven dated sections, the first six encompass a seven-year period marked by the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, the establishment of a pro-Japanese puppet government there, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the occupation of Shanghai in 1937. Historians like Werner Gruhl argue that the Japanese military invasion of China initiated the Second World War. Gruhl does not find much difference between the German holocaust and the Japanese aggression which claimed one third of the human race by means of "terror killing, retribution, biological weapons and other violence against civilians throughout the invaded East Asia" (8). During the Japanese aggression, China proper was internally divided between the communists and Chiang Kai Shek's Kuomingtang forces. To Cheng, the final section of the narrative, dated "14 November 1958" pertains to the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis which was concluded by September 1958. Thus, the narrating present of *Orphans* presents a Sino-centric timetable of the World War ravages of China seen from a Westerner's perspective (117).

Taken individually, the dated entries of *Orphans* are as follows: 24th July 1930, 15th May 1931, 12th April 1937; 20th September 1937; 29th September 1937, 20th October 1937 and 14th November 1958. Whereas the first three and the last one are placed in London, the fourth, fifth and sixth happen in Shanghai. These dates roughly correspond with the British House of Commons' approval of the London Naval Treaty for the reduction of naval armament; the issuing of the Papal *Quadragesimo anno* for safeguarding human dignity and freedom through the principles of solidarity and

subsidiarity; the successful testing of a jet engine by the British engineer Frank Whittle and his team; Anthony Eden's speech at the League of Nations forewarning the Axis powers of the dangers of territorial expansion; the agreement of Nanking between Chiang Kai Shek and Mao Zedong to put aside their differences and join forces to fight against the Japanese invasion; the formation of the Japanese Tenth Army to reinforce and supplement the Japanese Shanghai Expeditionary Army after the Second Shanghai incident and the augmenting of the computer age with the exhibition of computers held at Earl's Court, London, the first of its kind in the world.

When compared to Ono and Stevens, Christopher Banks, the narrator-protagonist of *Orphans* possesses a greater awareness of his political zeitgeist. As a result, his narration reflects a few political and historical events of his narrating present, whereby, the Japanese invasion of China, Chinese civil strife between communists and nationalists as well as the repercussions of the illegal opium trade in China find their way into the text albeit through the distorted perspective of Banks. Thus, history is appropriated here by means of distortion, instead of suppression and oblique reference employed by the two earlier novels.

The Postmodern Text

In interviews and author-events, Kazuo Ishiguro has expressed considerable displeasure at the categorization of his fiction into various realms such as the symbolic, allusive, postmodern, postcolonial and psychoanalytic. To the critics who associate him with the postmodern, he says:

> I found that there was nothing much I could use from postmodernism.
>
> Thinking further about the characteristics of postmodern writing, I'm personally not interested in 'metafiction', in writing books about the nature of fiction. I've got nothing against such books, but for me there are more urgent questions than the nature of fiction. (Matthews 117)

Here, the author attempts to evade the postmodernist label by equating metafiction with the postmodern. This is a popular misconception. While metafiction is an important device of the postmodern self-reflexivity (see ch. 3), it is not to be confused with the postmodern itself. At best, it is just a highly effective tool; one of the many means to achieve the ends of the postmodern.

From the theoretical discussion in ch.1, it is evident that the postmodern literature evolved out of a contestation with the hegemony of liberal humanist culture and the homogenization of late capitalist mass culture. It maintains a contradictory relationship with the grand narratives of the past and endeavors to challenge them from within their own assumptions. The postmodernist reworking of the past is not a nostalgic return, but a critical and ironic dialogue with the universalizing assumptions that dominate our culture like myth, science, history, Marxism and religion. So far, such assumptions, by laying claim to rationality and objectivity, had provided totalizing explanations which imparted order and meaning to a world that yearned for a stable moral and aesthetic value system. The postmodern literature interrogates these grand narratives to expose the falsity and illusoriness of the order, meaning and stability they offer. This is often done by foregrounding the textual disunity and inconsistencies as well as by rewriting forms

and genres. Hence, we may conclude that the two major objectives of postmodern literature are, a challenge of master narratives and a critical reworking of the past. To achieve these ends, the postmodern literature employs a number of devices like irony, paradox, pastiche, parody, subversion, metafiction, deliberate contradictions and so on.

Ishiguro's novels typically fall into the category of "I-novels", a sub-genre of Japanese confessional literature, where parallels can be drawn between the events of the fictional narrative structured as a private journal and the individual experiences of its author. These first person narratives are usually divided into sections bearing dated entries suggesting the "narrating present" of the protagonist, while the narratives themselves depict apparently unrelated events as remembered from the personal past of the narrators. Though the narrators occasionally return to their personal present, all of them exhibit varying degrees of amnesia regarding the political and historical dimensions of their respective milieu and moment.

An Artist of the Floating World, the second novel of Kazuo Ishiguro, depicts the postwar Japan as a dystopia of war damage and traces the ups and downs in the artistic career of the retired painter Masuji Ono. In fact, the personal history of Ono parallels and even subordinates the public history of Japan, although both of them are tales of recuperation from the shock inflicted by the Second World War. At the outset of the novel, Ono presents himself as a veteran artist reminiscing about his (in)glorious past to an unnamed narratee. The war wrenched from him his only son Kenji who died fighting as a Japanese soldier in Manchuria and his wife Michiko who died of a freak air-raid in June 1945, just a couple of months before the end of the war. As a result,

Ono is left with his youngest daughter Noriko, whose marriage prospects have become the cause of serious worry to the whole family. However, these tragedies feature as mere understatements in the textual fabric of the novel, which chooses to elaborate upon the supposedly irrelevant details such as the acquisition and partial destruction of his house as well as the various acquaintances of his formative years.

In the narrating present, Ono's actions comprise his visits to an old imperialist friend named Chishu Matsuda after a disagreement of three years; his failed attempts to reconcile with his former favourite pupil Kuroda; his drinking with an ex-pupil called Shintaro at Mrs. Kawakami's place, the only bar remaining at the devastated pleasure district; his "reaching out" to his grandson Ichiro by taking him to a monster movie and lunch; his vague confession at Noriko's *miai*; his ideological estrangement from Shintaro and his conversations with different members of his family on various occasions of his life. In between these episodes, Ono reverts to the narration of a past where he describes his childhood in Tsuruoka village, the three phases of his artistic career, namely, as a commercial artist at Takeda's studio, as a disciple of Seiji Moriyama and as a propaganda artist for Japanese imperialism; the acquisition of his present house on account of an eccentric "auction of prestige"; the respect he commanded over his pupils at the Migi-Hidari bar; the extent of his political influence revealed in securing a job for Shintaro's brother, avenging Kuroda and the re-establishment of Migi-Hidari.

The character of Ono and the unreliability of his narrative have been subject to much critical analyses till date. Attempts have been made to reconcile the gaps and inconsistencies inherent in his narration with realistic interpretations having historical,

sociological and psychological dimensions. While Lewis identifies the war-trials to be "the unspoken background" (49) of Ono's confessional narrative, Cheng perceives parallels between "the public investigation [of Tōjō] and private repentance [of Ono]" (109). Wai-chew Sim and Cynthia F. Wong attribute Ono's narrative inconsistencies to an imbalance in the teacher-student paradigm or the apprentice relationships on which the highly hierarchical Japanese society is built upon. Wong further appends that the narrator is possessed by "a process of self-bereavement" (43) concerning the loss of an old individual self, the passing off of the imperialist era and the personal grief regarding the untimely deaths of his wife and son. The disproportionate amount of guilt displayed by Ono is similarly explained by a general sense of shame and guilt prevalent among the Japanese older generation for causing the misery of nuclear warfare upon their progeny (Benedict 222-223). One may easily conclude that Ono, the middle-aged artist is an enigma, rightly described by Wong as the very "embodiment of fictionalization", one who is "both profoundly aware and ignorant of his condition" (39).

Of these varied interpretations and explanations, this chapter is mostly concerned with the historical aspect. It is forewarned that the clues to the puzzles offered by Ishiguro's hypertexts are not to be searched in the authorized version of history that forms the hypotext. The authorized version is offered here not as a solution to the enigma posited by the novel, but as a totalizing master narrative that is built upon the concrete structures of narrative paradigm and informed by the politics of exclusion. The very incoherence and inexplicable discrepancies of the narrative are meant to problematize the naturally given and widely accepted truisms of the authorized version.

The authority wielded by the authorized or mainstream version is challenged by the fictional narrative devoid of unity, coherence and closure. History is treated as a loose collection of fragments rather than a progress to a better state, for example, from imperialism to democracy, as propagated by the SCAP concerning Japan's rehabilitation since the Second World War.

Moreover, the concern of this chapter is not an explication of Ono's character or his selective memory. It is interested in the narrative of the protagonist along with its gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies. It is not what Ono remembers and why he does so; rather what Ono narrates to the unnamed narratee and what impression he wishes to construct in the minds of the narratee as well as the readers. It perceives Ono as a crafty individual capable of manipulating and preparing the reader/narratee to the slow unravelling of the hideous tale he wishes to relate. The incongruities of the narrative are retained instead of reconciled with according to the postmodern tradition which refuses to find a coherent order behind the problematized and subverted plot.

Variously described as emblematic of the English identity (Neagu 275), an allegory of the declining British Empire and an interrogation of the English values (Lewis 73-100) and "a major act of cultural ventriloquism" (Guth 136), *The Remains of the Day* is the most celebrated and critically acclaimed of Ishiguro's novels. Much of its appeal comes from some of the perennial themes it handles, such as the possibility of a romance that could have taken place, of a life that might have been, of opportunities missed and wasted and of a hero who realizes his mistakes and acknowledges them to himself and to the reader, however late.

The narrating present of *Remains* constitutes a road trip from Oxfordshire to Weymouth undertaken by Mr. Stevens the butler at Darlington Hall, a country mansion that belonged to Lord Darlington until his death three years before. At present the house is acquired by Mr. Farraday, an American gentleman who wishes to retain the house's staff which has now dwindled to a meager one of four, including the butler. As a result, Stevens, in his sixties, passes into the employment of the American as "the part of the package" (242). In fact, this very motor-trip is Farraday's idea of giving Stevens a break for a few days: he encourages the latter to go for a holiday in his Ford car and offers to pay for the fuel. Meanwhile, Stevens receives a letter from Miss Kenton, a previous housekeeper who left Darlington Hall upon marriage in 1936. Stevens, who has been working with a constraining staff plan, reads this letter as her willingness to return to Darlington Hall and decides to direct his road-trip to the West Country, where Miss Kenton is now residing as Mrs. Benn.

The narrative takes the form of a journal kept by Stevens during his six days' trip in which each day's events are summarized analeptically, at the end of the day. These events are mostly minor and uneventful such as sightseeing, saving a hen, checking into inns, car running out of water and fuel, accepting the hospitality of a few villagers and so on. But they trigger complex memories to Stevens for whom the road journey becomes a trip down the memory lane. The simple pleasures of life in which Stevens indulges on the road are contrasted with his stoic and solemn life devoted to professional obligations and servility towards his former employer, the late Lord Darlington. Raised by a stern father who held outdated notions of service and servitude,

Stevens came to believe that the dignity of a butler remained with his ability to effectively hide his true emotions. Today, he understands that much of what he anchored on has become obsolete with the deaths of his father and his former employer. Slowly, it is unravelled that Stevens is a tragic hero of Homeric and Shakespearean dimensions who recognizes his errors and would like to correct them, had he the chance to do so. Despite being as unreliable like Ishiguro's other protagonists, Stevens succeeds in truly opening up before the reader, and goes to the extent of disclosing his heartbreak towards the climax of the novel. To Cynthia Wong, Stevens lacks the composure of Ono and is rather vulnerable enough to reveal his feelings and share them with his love, with himself and with the readers.

Ishiguro's fifth novel, *When We Were Orphans*, tells the emotional story of an English private detective, Christopher Banks, who attempts to solve the case of his parents' mysterious disappearance from Shanghai, that happened years ago, during his childhood. Banks is under the curious assumption that the solution to this private case has implications of greater magnitude such as the preemption of the Second World War. Set in the nineteen thirties, the narrating present of *Orphans* coincides with the narrated past of *Remains* with the result that while Lord Darlington organized dinners and conferences to forestall the Second World War, Banks was busily solving murders and other mysteries with a similar intention.

Spanning across a period of twenty-eight years from 24th July 1930 to 14th November 1958, the narrated past and the narrating present of *Orphans* overlap to such an extent that they interpolate into each other in quick succession. Here, it is to

be noted that the first dated entry of 24th July 1930 begins with the summer of 1923, when Banks, a Cambridge graduate, rented a flat in Kensington. The events between that period and the narrating present of July 1930 are summarized within the three chapters of Part One. Consequentially, we have two separate time schemes of the narrated past, namely, the distant past and the contemporary past. By distant past we mean those events that happened prior to the textual narration of the first dated journal entry, such as Banks' early childhood in Shanghai where the crime took place and his school days in Britain where he lived with the memory of it, which are retrieved by means of his random memories and flashback narration. On the other hand, the contemporary narrated past refers to the events that occur within the textual time, that are summarized within the narrative. For example, twenty-one years pass between the sixth and the last entries, while just nine days elapse between the fourth and the fifth entries. When events, pertaining to a short span of nine days are compressed together, the narrating present and the narrated past overlap with each other.

However, for the sake of convenience, one can pinpoint the narrating present to the day or date of the dated entry in Banks' life that prompts the protagonist to embark on this narrative, like the Meredith Foundation dinner given to honour Sir Cecil Medhurst; a London bus ride with Sarah Hemmings after a lunch party; Banks' decision to leave for Shanghai as revealed to Miss Givens; his investigations of crimes in Shanghai; his request seeking an interview with the Yellow Snake, Shanghai's notorious Communist informer; his meeting with Uncle Philip and his retired life in London in 1958. As stated already, the contemporary narrated past links all these dated entries,

summarizing the detective's circuitous path to the resolution of his personal case as well as the establishment of his career as a private detective and a social butterfly.

In all the three novels, dates bear little connection with the entries below them. Such discrepancy between narrating present and narrated past in which the characters either ignore or are unconscious of their narrating present helps to collapse the temporal and genre boundaries. How come diary entries referring to a particular day portray events that took place months and years before the day entered in the diary? A cursory glance at the plots of the select novels would explain this further.

Ishiguro's narrator-protagonists are mostly politically insignificant ordinary men like an artist, a butler and a detective, incongruous to their zeitgeist. They are poetic and fictional characters cast onto a pseudo-realistic setting as in the case of Christopher Banks, a Quixotian and Holmesian hero compelled to solve the twentieth century political problems for which he is unfit. Similarly, their narratives constitute and foreground personal memory filled with gaps, digressions and inconsistencies at the expense of factual details. Such narratives are characterized by a lack of unity and coherence wherein the authorized history is suppressed, distorted or obliquely referred to. Besides, elisions and double events (doppelganger) increase difference between reality and representation. The settings of these novels follow those of the nineteenth century historical fiction which portray a transitional period in history, namely, the shift from imperialism to democracy depicting an obsolete character that looks back to an imperialistic past during which he supposedly wielded more power. By means of aesthetic distance, estrangement effects and alienation with the unreliable narrator, the

text encourages the readers' incredulity in the story by establishing multiple narrative versions, thus shattering the monolithic notions of a singular and universal truth.

In addition to the digressions and flashbacks that shuttle the reader back and forth in time, these novels are rampant with a number of contradictions, unexplained paradoxes and other discrepancies that result in thematic disunity. Ishiguro achieves this mostly by offering multiple interpretations, versions and retellings of the same events. For example, quite early in *Artist*, the hostile and high-handed "auction of prestige" conducted by the Sugimura family in selling their house was an offensive insult to Mrs. Ono while Ono himself regarded it as a recognition of his artistic capabilities. Further, after the war, Ono claims to have repaired his damaged house all by himself (12) whereas, in the very next page, Noriko contradicts this when she says that he received external help in restoring the house and accuses her father of moping around all day. As we move further into the plot, incongruities become discernible within a single sentence of Ono such as "I have never at any point in my life been very aware of my own social standing, and even now, I am often surprised afresh when some event, or something someone may say, reminds me of the rather high esteem in which I am held" (19). Here, while the first part of his statement denies his awareness of his own "social standing", the second part emphasizes on his knowledge of the "rather high esteem" he enjoyed in the past. Similarly, Mrs. Kawakami's bar, which was a warm, cosy and intimate place amidst a war dystopia to Ono in page 26, becomes "small, shabby and out of place" a hundred pages later, in page 126. Although such perceptional changes might be attributed to the corresponding alterations in the protagonist's attitude towards

life, how can we account for the misrepresentations such as the Migi-Hidari bar being the symbol of the new spirit of the rising patriotism in the imperial Japan? (63-64)

The crux of the novel resides in Ono's reconciliation with his personal past, which includes his coming to terms with people like Dr Saito, Kuroda, Matsuda and Mori-san. Although Ono insists that he was prompted to do this by his elder daughter Setsuko's advice, (49 & 85) which in turn, was necessitated by the bright wedding prospects of Noriko, Setsuko herself denies having ever made any such suggestions (191). Also, in the next couple of pages, she goes on to discount her father's artistic career as something too insignificant and non-influential to cause any serious problem to the marriage negotiations of Noriko. Because of Ono's prior references to the deceased composer Mr. Naguchi in pages 154, 155 and 192, the reader is likely to assume that Setsuko was deliberately doing this to dissuade her father from the contemplation of an apologetic suicide such as that of Naguchi. However, Ono betrays himself by his repeated attempts to prove his credentials, this time by stressing his familiarity with Dr Saito, the father of Noriko's groom and a distinguished art critic.

The nature of Ono's acquaintance and relationship with Dr Saito thus becomes a complicated issue especially because of the variant references to it throughout the text. Saito is introduced in the novel in page 80 when he travelled with Ono and Ichiro in the tram to the town. The marriage negotiations between his son Taro Saito and Noriko having just started and Saitos being a "family of prestige", Ono is anxious not to lose this proposal. He speaks of his relation with Dr Saito thus, "although Dr Saito and I were not properly acquainted before, I had always known of his activities in the world

of the arts, and for years, whenever we had passed in the street, we had exchanged greetings politely to acknowledge our familiarity with each other's reputations" (80). In page 117, during Noriko's *miai*, Ono improves upon this when he states that despite never being formally introduced to each other in the past, they were on greeting-terms and had "mutual recognition of" their "respective reputations". After these two correlative episodes, Ono "remembers" his first meeting with Saito, sixteen years back on the day after he moved into his new house. According to Ono, Saito had in fact "recognized" his newly inscribed name on the gatepost thus,

> 'So you are Mr Ono,' he remarked. 'Well now, this is a real honour. A real honour to have someone of your stature here in our neighbourhood. I am myself, you see, involved in the world of fine art. My name is Saito, from the Imperial City University.'
>
> 'Dr Saito? Why, this is a great privilege. I have heard much about you, sir.' (131)

If this narrative is true, then Saito and Ono were more than familiar with each other and had in fact closely followed their mutual careers. However, all these references to Saito's familiarity with Ono are subverted and contradicted by Setsuko when she says that Saito knew Ono only as a neighbour and not as an artist; that "he was unaware that Father was connected with the art world at all until last year when the negotiations began" (193). Upon hindsight, the reader is compelled to wonder if Saito had actually "recognized" Ono's name on the gatepost or was he just "reading" it out. Was Ono attaching undue importance to a polite conversation that should at best

be treated as light small talk between two new neighbours? Just how much of Ono's narrative has actually taken place and how much of it is imagined by him? Such mysteries are never fully resolved in the text.

On some such occasions, Ishiguro introduces certain abrupt and seemingly misplaced allusions to nature as veiled stage directions to demarcate the real from the imaginary. For example, after a rather tense exchange between Ono and Setsuko where the latter vehemently denies having given any precautionary advice of reconciliation, Setsuko stops amidst to admire the maple trees and Ono responds appropriately. This brief, out of place exchange pertaining to the "here and now" of the narrating present suggests that some part of that conversation is imagined by Ono. At certain other times, his fellow participants remain uncharacteristically silent and unresponsive, as if they have no role in the episode being described. For instance, after Ono makes Taro say that Dr Saito and himself knew each other and ascertains that this conversation is heard by Setsuko as proof to Ono's artistic excellence, Setsuko "showed no sign at all of registering the significance of Taro's words" (190). Similarly, Ono's first bedside chat with Ichiro is marked with a total silence and stiffness on Ichiro's part so that the whole conversation appears to be one of Ono's internal monologues. In between his supposed conversation with Ichiro, Ono moves towards the window, upon which, owing to the growing darkness outside, he can only see his own reflection and the room behind himself (38). This sudden allusion to seemingly insignificant external atmosphere could be considered as the suggestion that Ono's lines form a self reflexive monologue rather than a real dialogue with his frustrated grandson. Besides, this episode is

drastically contrastive with the warm, active and intimate exchanges of their second bedside chat (187-189), where both Ichiro and Ono appear kind, loving and considerate to each other.

Similar contradictions exist in the case of *Remains* also. Just as Ono upholds Setsuko's advice as the trigger for his reconciliation project, Stevens props his journey on a letter received from Miss Kenton which contains "distinct hints of her desire to return" (9) to the Darlington Hall. In page 48 Stevens remarks that the letter "unambiguously" conveys the end of Miss Kenton's marriage, who, is presently "pondering with regret decisions made in the far-off past that have now left, her, deep in middle age, so alone and desolate". He gives us the impression that she is now a homeless divorcee for whom a return to employment at the Darlington Hall will offer genuine consolation and a welcome distraction from her present problems and empty future. However, Miss Kenton denies any of these in her final poignant meeting with Stevens when she assures him that for her, future offers a grandchild and her husband's early retirement.

One of the two major political events of Stevens' narrated personal past was the March 1923 conference held at the Darlington Hall in order to review the Versailles treaty. While Stevens described the elaborate preparations for such a historical conference as "a general might prepare for a battle" (77), Miss Kenton, like Noriko, accused him of simply wandering about the house "bothering others with gratuitous comments" (79). Although Stevens casually dismissed his housekeeper's accusations as "childish" behaviour owing to her inexperience and her mounting tensions of the

impending international conference, Stevens' tall claims to his own greatness as a butler came under question as Lord Darlington entrusted him with the rather trivial mission of communicating the "facts of life" to his godson Reginald Cardinal. If the conference was one of such a magnitude and if Stevens was to play such a significant role in it where a single error on his part would have had "repercussions of unimaginable largeness" (77), why would the lord think of distracting his butler with such a minor task? Does this mean Stevens, being only a butler, was not expected to undertake much responsibilities as he himself would want us to imagine? On the other hand, if Darlington considered the "facts of life" business as one of utmost importance to be discharged amidst the pressures of the conference, why did not he follow it up with Stevens? Stevens' failed attempts to communicate the same to the young Cardinal offers some comic relief to the escalating pressures of the Conference. It also provides Stevens with the necessary alibi for remaining ignorant of the arrival of M. Dupont, the most distinguished guest of the conference.

Throughout the text, Stevens reiterates his allegiance to Lord Darlington and claims to be proud and grateful for having the privilege to serve humanity by being attached to such a distinguished household. Yet on two occasions in the narrating present, he denies having worked for or even having known Lord Darlington: to Mrs. Wakefield, the American guest of Mr. Farraday and to the Colonel's batman whom he meets on the road. Even during his final meeting with Miss Kenton, he states that they mentioned Lord Darlington only once during the course of their two hours' conversation. Why is Stevens, whose personal past was so closely entwined with that of his employer for

whom he dedicated thirty-five years of service, embarrassed by any reference to Lord Darlington in the present? Stevens' justification that he shall not listen to further tarnishing of his late employer's public image does not hold good ground as much as his guilt at failing to save his lord from his misjudgment.

In page 136, Stevens says that Lord Darlington was not the only Englishman to be fooled by the Germans. He argues that the German Ambassador Herr Ribbentrop was a guest of honour in many a distinguished British household during the 1930s. He rejects the allegations that his lordship was a sole Nazi sympathizer, beguiled by the treacherous intentions of Hitler's troupe, on the basis of the guest lists of the great houses of both Britain and Germany during those days. However, in the later pages, the young Cardinal contradicts Stevens' argument by stating that Lord Darlington has been fooled by the Nazis into becoming "the singlemost useful pawn" (224) of Hitler's propaganda tricks. He gives us the distinct impression that the British foreign policy of German appeasement was not all-pervasive and that there were many in Britain during that time that refused to adhere to it and trust the German intentions, "No one with good judgment could persist in believing anything Herr Hitler says after the Rhineland" (225). As to himself, the young Cardinal's states, "I've done a lot of investigating, I know the situation in Germany now as well as anyone in this country, and I tell you, his lordship is being made a fool of" (222).

There are many other occasions in the text where Stevens contradicts his own words. For example, in page 114, Stevens establishes that a good, careerist and ambitious butler should be aware of the moral status of his employer and should aim to

serve a gentleman who "has made an undeniable contribution to the future well-being of the empire". Whatever talents a butler may acquire, if he does not work for a great gentleman belonging to a truly distinguished household, all his skills will be wasteful. Throughout the novel, Stevens continues to reiterate with pride and gratefulness that it was because he worked for Lord Darlington that he was able to "come as close to the great hub of things as any butler could wish" (227). However, in page 199, we find Stevens contradicting himself as he says that a good butler's duty is to provide the best possible service to his employer without "scrutinizing the latter's motives" (200) and meddling in the great affairs of his nation. A butler should refrain from the disloyalty of constant reappraisal of his employer and should instead offer an unquestioning allegiance to the good judgment of the latter. Having thus chosen to limit himself to his professional realm, it becomes quite easy for Stevens to skillfully wash his hands off the political errors committed by Darlington. It also saves him from the guilt of not having guided his employer from "deep waters" despite the prompt and timely warning of the young Cardinal, to whom Stevens firmly proclaims his trust in the good judgement of his lordship. The young Cardinal at least succeeds in problematizing Stevens' sense of loyalty by foregrounding it with the greater allegiance to one's nation, to the peril of which his employer is headed at in the company of the Germans.

By deciding to spend his professional life with Darlington, Stevens chooses to give up a personal life with Miss Kenton. In his narrating present, he understands that these two actions formed the costly mistakes of his life. After his lordship's ignominious death, he attempts to rectify his latter decision by bringing back Miss Kenton to the Darlington

Hall. Towards the end of the novel, we learn that it was this thought that prompted his motor-trip in the first place. Incidentally, the night during which Kenton accepted Mr. Benn's marriage proposal turned out to be the night of the second international meeting that occurred in the Darlington Hall. On more than one occasion during that night, Miss Kenton accused Stevens of creating commotion in the kitchen and of "stamping back and forth" (216) outside her parlour in order to catch her attention and dissuade her from leaving him. Even the young Cardinal noted that Stevens looked unwell and Stevens himself admits to the readers that his mood on that evening was "somewhat downcast" (227). Although he does not give us any proper explanation regarding his weird behaviour, one wonders if Stevens wass really worried of Miss Kenton's imminent departure or was it Kenton's wishful thinking.

In *Orphans*, the protagonist Christopher Banks is likewise a detective of contradictions. For him, life itself is a mystery to be solved by a confused hero such as himself. Much discrepancy arises out of Banks' self image and the opinions of his friends and acquaintances such as James Osborne, Anthony Morgan and Colonel Chamberlain about him. Similar discrepancy exists between his friends of the present such as Sarah. Right at the first paragraph of the novel, Banks presents himself as one who has deliberately chosen a solitary life: "After years of being surrounded by fellows, both at school and at Cambridge, I took great pleasure in my own company" (3). We get the idea that despite having been a popular student, Banks prefers to lead a quiet, traditional and sophisticated English gentleman's life in his adulthood. This notion begins to fall apart when he meets his school friend James Osborne who labels Banks as an

"odd bird at school" (5) that used to interrogate him mercilessly of his well-connectedness. However, Banks claims to have "blended perfectly" with his English school life, having deliberately mastered a few mannerisms prevalent among school children during that time. In between, despite having done his best not to reveal more than he intended regarding his desires and ambitions, he remembers two school incidents when his classmates deciphered his ambition to become a detective and his own puzzlement at how unwittingly he gave himself away. Thus, Banks establishes himself as an unreliable narrator very much like Ono and Stevens.

In the second chapter, Banks introduces us to Colonel Chamberlain who escorted him to England as a "heroic guardian". Whereas the Colonel remembers him as a snivelling little squirt "withdrawn and moody, liable to burst into tears at the slightest thing", Banks "remembers" himself as one who "adapted very ably to the changed realities" of his life (27). The discrepancy between Banks' memories of his own childhood and that of his associates is carried forward with the entry of another school friend, Anthony Morgan, who, by the time Banks meets him in Shanghai, has been living there for eleven years as an employee of the Jardine Matheson firm. According to Morgan, both Banks and he were "miserable loners" who were left out at school and suggests that they should have teamed up more as a matching pair. While Banks remembers Morgan as "an unhappy and lonely boy" (181) who refused to join in with other students, he resents thinking of himself as such and attributes Morgan's remark to his own self delusion.

It is Morgan who takes Banks to the latter's childhood home in Shanghai which

is presently occupied by the Lin family. From Morgan's behaviour, we conclude that this is part of a pre-decided arrangement. Yet, Banks appears totally clueless regarding any such plan and quite accidentally stumbles upon it on their arrival there. Instead of being thankful to Morgan for gifting him with such a thoughtful and deeply personal experience, we find Banks quarrelling with his schoolfriend on their return, for mixing things up. Was Banks really a lonely and miserable odd boy at school as these friends suggest? After speaking with each of these persons, Banks gets angry. Does that mean they were reminding him of a past which he would rather forget? Or were all their memories coloured by an awareness of Banks' unfortunate circumstances? If we are to assume that Banks is right, how are we to explain the matching observations of his two school friends and that of Colonel? All these questions point to an absence of credibility on the part of the narrator.

Banks' narratorial unreliability concerning his narrated past extends to his narrating present with the introduction of Sarah Hemmings, the female lead of the novel and the female counterpart of Stevens in her ambition to make a significant contribution to the world and humanity. During the initial days of their relationship, Sarah according to Banks remained cold, aloof and indifferent towards him and so he kept away from her. Yet, in page 38 Sarah claims that Banks promised to take her to the Meredith Foundation Dinner while Banks denies it. Did Banks ever make such a promise in an elided narrative sequence? Was this Sarah's wishful thinking or Banks' failing memory? Even during the days of their friendship, Banks exercises unnatural caution at revealing to Sarah about his childhood, his friend Akira and Uncle Philip. He says Sarah's

mentioning of Akira slightly alarmed him and rummages through his mind for any details of Uncle Philip that he unwittingly let out to her during their bus ride. When Sarah tells Banks that she and her husband are planning to go to Shanghai to solve the problems there, Banks feels a strange kind of relief and views that conversation as her rebuke for his procrastination of the case of his parents' missing. Here we find Banks attributing his own personal motives and attachments to other characters who do not share them.

As the narrative moves backward to describe his childhood in Shanghai, we find the little Banks trying hard to keep up appearances as his words and actions fail to correlate. For example, in page 71, he claims that he was never perturbed by his parents' occasional fights and their longer bouts of mutual silence that lasted many weeks. Yet, we find him confiding this to Akira in the later pages (72-73). On several occasions, we find Banks unreasonably bullied by groups of people. When Akira was sent to study in Japan, he suffered such treatment at the hands of a few English boys of his neighbourhood. Also, at a wedding reception in England, we find one of the hosts called Roderick, attempting to "rescue" Banks from the bullying of a gang of guests, all the while Banks insisting that he has not taken them seriously.

Many characters entertain unrealistic notions of the sphere of a detective and celebrate him as a saviour of the world. It seems the cleric named Canon Moorly whom he meets at the Royal Geographical Society lecture believes that a private detective was an international spy of some sort who could solve problems in China and avert the maelstrom of another world war. Similar sentiments are shared by the grey-haired lady whom Banks meets at the ballroom of the Palace Hotel in Shanghai as she

tells him, "…do you have any idea at all how relieved we all feel now that you're finally with us?... I tell you, Mr Banks, when news of your impending arrival reached us, that was the first good news we'd had here in months" (159). Such opinions expressed by the general public are incongruous with the possible relevance of this old case to them. Just how did Banks succeed in convincing the people of Shanghai, the British Consulate and the Shanghai Municipal Council that the solving of a single private crime from his distant personal past had so much public significance as to avert a global war remains another unsolved mystery of the novel. From the general attitude of the public voiced above, we may assume that they are deluded as much as Banks to believe that the detective's investigational endeavours are beneficial to their collective safety and security. The link between his investigation of a few contemporary murders in Shanghai and the identity of the Yellow Snake also remains a further mystery.

Once in Shanghai, Banks tries to solve his parents' case with a feverish urgency all the while blaming himself of procrastination. Yet, his concerns are mainly trivial such as the reception and accommodation of his parents after their release from captivity. Such ruminations undoubtedly cast him as an immature and unreasonable quixotian figure. Despite making such elaborate plans, we find Banks losing his sense of purpose in agreeing to elope with Sarah to Macau. He abandons her a second time when he decides to find his parents during the final few minutes left for them till their boat picks them up. At the police station, he attributes his haste to "there is a lady waiting, even as we speak" (233). This lady could be any of the three important women of his life, namely, his mother, Sarah or Jenny. Banks becomes totally irrational when he fails to

understand the constraints of the policemen, whom he censures quite unjustifiably.

However, the gradual regression of his logical balance becomes a good excuse for Banks to mistake an unknown Japanese soldier as his childhood friend Akira. It is Banks who claims to have "recognized" him as Akira, while the soldier who initially refuses to acknowledge him, later co-operates with him for saving his life and because of a lack of proper means of communication between them. Banks thus describes how Akira lowers his resistance: "I took my eyes off the crowd, and turning fully to him, shone the torch into my face again. Then when I clicked it off, I saw for the first time the beginnings of recognition on his face" (251). How can Akira "recognize" him in the darkness, where he failed to do so even in the torchlight? From the Japanese soldier's contemplations of his home village where he was born and of his five-year-old son in Japan (256-62), it becomes clear that he is not the Akira who was born in the International Settlement. Why was Banks under so much pressure to find the house of the blind actor Yeh Chen? What made him imagine that his parents were still held captive in a house opposite to it? It is extremely unconvincing to think that a detective will have such a temporal disorientation as to assume that his parents will remain in a frozen state. At the house, his behaviour becomes ludicrous to the extent that he takes out his magnifying glass to examine the protruding bone of a corpse on the floor, seemingly unable to apprehend that the global violence of a world war is beyond his professional capacity as a private detective.

"Had I not been expecting to see him, it is perfectly possible I would have failed to recognize Uncle Philip" (284): how did Banks zero in on the identity of Yellow

Snake as Uncle Philip? If he possesses so many talents as he claims, how can he explain the ludicrous behaviour he exhibited in the previous section where he went following a gothic and macabre trail, in a futile search for his parents? Contrary to his professed life-goal of rescuing his parents, Banks neither brings home his mother nor introduces himself as her son, when at last he finds her in Hong Kong. These are some of the mysteries and paradoxes that trouble us even after perusing the whole text.

As Linda Hutcheon points out, one of the initial concerns of postmodern historical fiction is to critically rework the past in order to prove that all that was readily and unthinkingly accepted as natural and universal was, in fact, constructed and manufactured with ideological agenda. By historicizing and de-naturalizing the dominant assumptions and automatic responses hitherto taken for granted, their validity and authority over social psyche are both challenged and problematized. Thus, there is no stable and universal truth; only contingent aphorisms that constantly shift their positions. All paradigms of wisdom that were showered upon us are thus subtle strategies at oppression and frameworks that successfully restricted individual freedom.

In his novels, Ishiguro proves that many of the dominant constructs of the wartime become untenable in the coming years. For example, the narration of the "Hirayama boy" incident in the early part of the *Artist* challenges many of our supposedly stable assumptions on loyalty, patriotism and nationalism. The fifty year old idiot known as the Hirayama boy used to sing verses from war songs and lines from patriotic speeches exhorting the Japanese to sacrifice their lives for the emperor. While he was encouraged with food and money before and during the wartime for his patriotism, in the post war

world he receives thrashing for singing the same songs. If the songs, singer and the listeners have not changed, what has brought about this changed response? Although the poor idiot has failed to grasp the passage of time, it is easy to understand that the changed political climate has brought about the transformation in the aesthetic sense of the listeners. His experience is proof enough to suggest that patriotism and nationalism are not perennial qualities, but constructs whose criteria change according to the transitions in the dominant political climate. What was once well appreciated has now become the reminder of misery and therefore rejected contemptuously. Loyalty to the emperor is no longer considered fashionable; it is regretted and depreciated as a reminder of one's folly in the modern age of democracy and economic prowess. It is suggested that someone ought to teach the idiot new songs appropriate to the new political age, or else his life will be endangered. The political correctness is something that eludes the Hirayama boy who remains an anachronism as much as Ono, even though Ono is clever enough to hide his allegiances in the new age.

From patriotism, Ishiguro goes on to problematize its opposite, namely, the notion of traitor or treachery. Whereas the term "traitor" is a somber word mostly found in the political discourse alluding to a person who gives away the secrets of his country, Ono uses it among artistic circles to suggest an artist's disloyalty to his master's principles. During Ono's first year at Mori-san's villa, the teacher's leading pupil Sasaki interpreted his teacher's principles for the benefit of the less experienced pupils. It was Sasaki who fanatically persecuted and condemned as treacherous any artistic endeavour slightly deviant from that of "the modern Utamaro" (140). By the second year, the same Sasaki

found himself in the position of a traitor on account of holding views divergent to the aesthetics of his teacher. Very soon, he was turned out of the villa after the confiscation of all his paintings. Following his departure, Sasaki's name was never mentioned in the villa except as "the traitor". Within seven years, it was Ono's turn to be called the traitor as the Tortoise turns him in. Later, just before the war, Ono misused his political influence to get Kuroda arrested as a traitor to the new imperialist spirit of Japan. Thus, three illustrious artists like Sasaki, Ono and Kuroda qualify for the title of the traitor at various points of their careers, thereby illustrating that "traitor" is a label constructed to suppress deviant and independent behaviour among artistic pupils. Likewise, the term "Tortoise" or the weakling becomes a construct that represents four different persons in the text namely, one of Ono's colleagues named Yasunari Nakahara and his student Shintaro as well as two other persons known to Taro Saito.

If "traitor" and "Tortoise" become constructs by referring to different persons, "loyalty" does that through various interpretations. To Sasaki, during Ono's early years at the villa, close imitation of the teacher's style was loyalty, while any variation meant revolution. To the slow colleague nicknamed as Tortoise, leaving a firm for another was a sure sign of disloyalty, while Ono called this ambition. During his Migi-Hidari days, Ono proclaimed that loyalty ought to be earned by the master and not to be blindly given by the pupil. Although he declared that ambition is better than blind loyalty, it was undivided allegiance that he demanded of Kuroda during their later years.

Appropriate to its title, *Artist* offers lengthy discussions on the nature of art, its purpose and the changes that come over the public opinion as well as the aesthetic

sensibilities of both the artists and their patrons. Ishiguro points out that despite its universal claims, all art is subject to the changes in the political climate that shape both the artist and the aesthete. For example, at Master Takeda's studio where Ono initially worked as a commissioned artist, an artist's quality was judged by his "ability to provide a high number of paintings at very short notice" (66). The quality of the paintings never mattered as long as they met the deadlines and catered to a foreign audience who always demanded "Japanese-looking" themes such as geishas, temples, cherry trees and swimming pools. However, Ono's next teacher Seiji Moriyama firmly believed that the purpose of great art was to depict the floating world (*Ukiyo*) or the transient night life of the Japanese pleasure district with all its fragile beauty and intangible charm. Although his themes earned him the title "the modern Utamaro", in his technique Mori-san deviated from the classic Utamaro fashion and imbibed Western influences in his application of subdued colours and introduction of the feel of a lantern light.

However, when Mori-san later discovered Ono to be similarly experimenting with the themes and colours of the "authentic Utamaro", he severely admonished his most accomplished pupil to be serious about his artistic ventures. He denounced Ono's artistic efforts as "superficial interests" and demanded more commitment to his own style of art. Instead of his teacher's blend of the eastern and western styles, Ono preferred a return to the bold colours, hard outlines and vigorous brush strokes of the traditional Japanese art.

Consequently, during the prewar age of nationalist upsurge, Ono's art symbolized

nationalism, patriotism and loyalty to the imperialist regime which recompensed him with the Shigeta Foundation Award and membership in various governmental committees. As a result, at the peak of his influence in the late thirties, Ono witnesses Moriyama's art going out of favour and being condemned as "unpatriotic" due to its European influences. His political influence also enabled Ono to incriminate Kuroda for pursuing "unpatriotic activities" so that the art works of the latter were confiscated and burnt as "bad paintings". Nevertheless, when Kuroda got released after the war, "his years in prison gave him strong credentials" (108) and won him the favour of the postwar government that rewarded him with the post of an art professor at Uemachi College. What Ono deems as "responsible art" becomes propaganda for Mori-san; while Kuroda's experimentation turns out to be "curious avenues" of deviation for Ono. In a society where art and politics are so closely intertwined, artistic deviations are politically punished and political adherence is rewarded with awards and teaching positions in the artistic fields. Thus, both the goodness and badness of a given piece of art become constructs determined by the political fluctuations in the society.

Family values are likewise problematized when Ono's employed younger daughter Noriko voices opinions and attitudes different from those of her father. Quite unlike her more conventional and diplomatic elder sister Setsuko, Noriko condemns Ono's pruning of garden plants as "meddling" in "poor taste"; thwarts his idea for a family outing, overrules his desire to introduce sake to Ichiro and is more forthright in handling her frustration at her lost marriage proposal. Between his two daughters, Ono realizes the changes that have come over in the position of women within the Japanese society. In

other words, Ono's aesthetic capabilities as well as his domestic authority are both fallible, contingent and constructed upon his power as the head of his family.

In *Remains*, Stevens an inhabitant of an insular world, becomes the embodiment of old world constructs such as "greatness" and "dignity", the very same attributes that remained epithets of the British colonial empire for a number of centuries. Stevens' England is constructed from an obsolete road atlas published during the 1930s and comprising artists' sketches instead of verified figures and statistical diagrams. He strongly recommends it to us solely on the basis of his admiration for its author having profusely praised his service during her frequent visits to the Darlington Hall before the war. His blind preference for Symons' book is suggestive of his great faith in the wonder that was England before the war, before the Suez crisis of the narratorial present. The title of the atlas, namely, *The Wonder of England*, becomes a shattered construct in the post imperialist world. This concept, that would have been valid during the 1930s, is now as obsolete as Symons' book, especially in the changed political climate of the Suez crisis, which struck the last nail onto the imperialist coffin of the "Great" Britain. Before the war, millions like Stevens firmly believed in the elaborately constructed lie of the greatness and wonder of England as revealed through the "marvelous descriptions" (12) and evocative sketches depicted in the books and atlases about England. Instead of first hand knowledge, Steven possesses only bookish knowledge that too outmoded by a quarter century and lacking verified statistics. To him, the book published during the 1930s is still valid despite the war and the German bombing: "I do not imagine German bombs have altered our countryside so significantly"

(11). The atlas as such is unreliable as it belonged to an era before the German bombs scourged the British geography in the Second World War.

Despite having no first hand knowledge of the spectacular scenes of the other corners of the world, he confidently proclaims that "the English landscape at its finest possesses a quality" that is "best summed up by the term 'greatness'" (28). How can Stevens make such tall claims for a modest, ordinary and everyday view of the English countryside? The attribution of greatness to the English countryside is further applied to the greatness of the butler and he goes on to convince his readers that both the butler and the countryside derive their greatness from "a sense of restraint", "a lack of obvious drama or spectacle" and "an undemonstrativeness", (28, 29) which, when translated into the personality of the butler, demonstrates itself as a severe repression of one's personal life and emotions. Thus the description of the English countryside becomes the major premise of Stevens' argumentative logic. The countryside, lacking drama, is great. So would be a butler if he lacks drama and remains staunch in his allegiance to his master. If we are to concede him his view of the countryside, we should accept what he says about the butler who possesses a similar quality.

Throughout the text, the British nation of Stevens' narration remains an intangible construct as the values attributed to her are continually subverted and problematized by his experience. Despite Stevens' overstatement, it is his American employer who turns to be more humane, trusting and warm-hearted towards his employees than Lord Darlington. Darlington, despite his much eulogized nobility and gentlemanly behaviour, is inconsiderate towards his employees, an aspect revealed in his unreasonable dismissal of

the Jewish maids and exposure of his butler's ignorance before his friends in a late-night summon. On the other hand, Mr Farraday sends Stevens out on a holiday motoring trip at his own expense, whereas under Lord Darlington, Stevens led a restricted life unable to venture forth "touring the countryside and visiting picturesque sites". Stevens, because of such an incarcerated existence, was unable to appreciate the tangible beauties of his nation, a deprivation he strove to compensate by idolizing its abstract qualities such as nobility, dignity and greatness: "It has been my privilege to see the best of England over the years, sir, within these very walls" (4).

However, it is this idea of a great and dignified nation that crumbles during his meeting with the strongly opinionated villagers of Moscombe who, despite their professed political awareness, their faith and pride in freedom, dignity and democracy, are misguided idealists and die-hard imperialists, whose lofty principles are not applicable to the colonies of Britain. The freedom for which they bravely fought Hitler belongs to the British citizen and not to the citizens of the colonies. In spite of their high ideals, they are peace-loving people who wish to lead quiet lives and resist revolutions.

If "dignity" to Stevens means "not removing one's clothing in public" (210), to Harry Smith, "there's no dignity to be had in being a slave" (186) and to Dr. Carlisle, a committed socialist, it is socialism that allows people to live with dignity (210). Smith, for example, as Carlisle points out, is a confused mixture between a Communist and a true blue Tory. Even while campaigning for the lofty ideals of freedom, dignity and democracy, Smith takes pride in the British Empire and is against the freedom of colonies. Thus his ideals are narrow and of double standards, as much as that of

Stevens', who, despite enjoying a life of abject slavery, poses as an influential rich man to the villagers.

Stevens's hyperbolic construction of the dignity and greatness of the English countryside very soon becomes the corollary to the butler's own greatness. What Stevens describes as modesty, dignity and greatness is actually plainness of features and the stiff upper lip that was associated with the Englishness which itself became a construct during the narratorial present of the Suez crisis and its ensuing humiliation. Stevens uses the construct of English greatness as the basis of his further construct of a great butler's identity—an identity that best suits him as a sublimation of his own deficiency, his inability to own up his emotions and be responsible for his own life. Stevens feels all wrong emotions; for example whenever he finds himself unable to express his emotions properly, instead of humiliation, he feels a swelling sense of achievement of having pushed aside his personal life for the greater goodness of his duty. By sublimating thus onto his official capacity, he strives to make up for his inability in the private sphere. To Stevens, the dignity of a butler is largely dependent on the "moral status" of his employer. As a criterion, moral status is not as verifiable as wealth or the number of staff at one's disposal and so becomes a vague and inexact concept or just another construct.

Both professionalism and amateurism become constructs owing to the contradictory definitions given to them by the lord and the American statesman Mr Lewis. While the European statesmen condemned Lewis of deceit, audacity and abominable manipulation, Lewis himself explained his behaviour as diplomacy and professionalism, qualities most

appropriate to the contemporary political scenario. He, on his part, called the Europeans "naïve dreamers" and "gentlemen amateurs" who were too noble, decent, honest and well-meaning to solve the problems of the world. However, Lewis' opinions were not shared by Lord Darlington, who defended himself by translating the American's notion of amateurism into "honour", goodness and a "desire to see justice prevail in the world" (103). Although Stevens narrates this incident with great pride, emphasizing upon his lordship's sound judgement and argument, in practice, we find that Stevens' professionalism is more in keeping with Lewis' concept than that was expounded by the lord. This is revealed when Stevens eavesdropped the conversation between Lewis and Dupont under the pretext of his professionalism and reported the same to his employer.

Duty becomes a construct for Stevens as he overemphasizes his professional duties at the cost of his personal ones: towards his dying father, towards the woman he loved and towards himself and his own ideals. To serve his employer, he forgets to serve his own needs and desires. During his youth, he used to feel a sense of achievement at sacrificing his personal needs and duties for the sake of his employer. But towards the end of the novel, we find Stevens quite unsure whether he has properly discharged his duty towards his employer of which he has been proud for a long time. This is because, despite his tall claims, he failed to use his influence on the lord and forewarn the latter when his steps faltered. From the words of the Young Cardinal, we feel that Stevens' duty and loyalty were for the sake of self-preservation and not even for the benefit of his employer. For example, he refuses to voice his opinion regarding the sacking of the two Jewish maids merely on account of their

religion. If Stevens revealed his heart, as Kenton points out, the lord may have had a second thinking. But Stevens blindly obeys his employer on many occasions and displays a lack of essential self respect when he is called upon in the middle of the night to make a fool of himself. His tragedy is caused by his decision to serve the unimportant moments in the lives of important people instead of serving the important moments of his own unimportant existence.

Similarly, loyalty becomes a construct as the Young Cardinal points out to Stevens that it is not mere blind obedience to his lordship. To Cardinal, loyalty does not refer to blind trust; one has a moral obligation to prevent one's loved ones from going astray. Despite the young man's repeated warnings, Stevens gave a blind eye and refused to see sense in it. By declaring his trust in the good judgement of his employer, Stevens absolved himself of the duty to correct his master. Cardinal also suggested that, by such uncritical allegiance, Stevens was also being disloyal to his nation and monarchy, because the nobility of the lord made him an easy prey to the sinister manipulations of the enemy German forces. If Hitler got an access to UK because of Lord Darlington, the latter, because of his naivety would be giving away his nation to the dictator. By knowingly allowing the master to fall off such a dangerous precipice, Stevens and Cardinal were party to the lord's crimes.

When we come to *Orphans*, the idea of a detective as a saviour hero becomes the primary construct. Any reference to the profession of a detective invariably leads one to think of Sherlock Holmes, the celebrated fictional hero. Hence, Banks' school friends opined, "But surely he's rather too short to be a Sherlock" (10), thus comparing

him to the legendary figure, whose physical features were merely matters of speculation. To be a detective, height is hardly a criterion. If little children should think in such lines, how much ingrained must be the constructs of fictional characters in their minds? Banks, at every stage of his life, too compares himself with Holmes, with his magnifying glass, remaining a social recluse, his decision to lead a bachelor life. In fact, Banks is more a combination of Holmes and Watson.

Womanhood as represented by Miss Sarah Hemmings becomes a construct in *Orphans*, as she places herself to a subservient position like the Stevens of *Remains*. Both of them aim to serve humanity only by serving great men who would make significant contributions to the world. Assigning themselves to the inferior positions of a butler and a wife, they both claim lofty ambitions, but they seek indirect means to carry them out. To this end, Sarah presents herself as a prize for the truly successful man and is in turn portrayed as a predatory woman, ready to stoop to any level to catch such a husband. Despite her talents and intelligence, she never stops to think if she could directly contribute to the betterment of the world, instead of beating an almost dead horse to do so. In this respect, her character is constructed according to the female heroines of Jane Austen's family dramas, where women, whatever be their achievements, set their eyes solely on getting married.

Home becomes a construct in the novel when Banks, while leaving for England with Colonel Chamberlain, shared none of the enthusiasm of the Colonel in returning to the homeland of his parents. While the Colonel felt eight years is the maximum he could spend in Shanghai, to Banks it was his birthplace to which he felt he would eventually

return. Ishiguro problematizes the notion of "home" in the words of young Banks: "As I saw it, I was bound for a strange land where I did not know a soul, while the city steadily receding before me contained all I knew" (28). Banks, like Stevens, accessed England through books such as *The Wind in the Willows* and the Conan Doyle mysteries and from the new British employees of Morganbrook and Byatt whom the Banks family was obliged to board as "house guests". He lost and hoped to find his parents in Shanghai, vowing to return to it some day to finish the business of investigation, which he started off with Akira. If Banks missed Shanghai, his adopted daughter Jenny missed England when she was marooned in Canada. This shows that home, as a space of sanctuary, is different for different persons, thus establishing itself into a construct.

Along with home, house becomes a construct, when Banks returns to Shanghai to visit the house in the International Settlement where he lived with his parents. He remembers that during his childhood, the house, which was actually the property of the Morganbrook and Byatt, did not belong to the Banks family. Yet, they kept it according to the English standards, with a carefully tended English lawn or a lawn modelled according to the English style, where he played with Akira. Akira's house, on the other hand, was next door and was constructed by the same British firm some twenty years earlier along with Banks'. Yet, while the Banks family attempted to anglicize their Chinese house, Akira's family tried to Japanize it thus forming a parody of what existed in their original homelands. Ishiguro tries to view Japanese culture and interior from British perspective thus:

> Rugs I would have expected to see on floors were hung on walls; chairs would be at odd heights to tables; lamps would totter under overly large shades. Most remarkable were the pair of 'replica' Japanese rooms Akira's parents had created at the top of the house. These were small but uncluttered rooms with Japanese tatami mats fitted over the floors, and paper panels fixed to the walls, so that once inside—at least according to Akira—one could not tell one was not in an authentic Japanese house made of wood and paper. I can remember the doors to these rooms being especially curious; on the outer, 'Western' side, they were oak-panelled with shining brass knobs; on the inner, 'Japanese' side, delicate paper with lacquer inlays. (72)

The house to which Banks had felt such belongingness turns out to be a stranger to him on his adult visit to it. He understands that the English house where his family had resided has turned into a Chinese one, according to the needs of the Lin family that presently occupied it. Ishiguro portrays the peoples' attachment to houses and articles which do not legally belong to them, yet to which they belong.

If the house is a construct, then xenophobia or the fear of the stranger forms another construct, as revealed in the irrational fear of the children towards Akira's Chinese manservant Ling Tien. To justify his fear, Akira was compelled to fantasize the crimes committed by Ling Tien such as severing human limbs to transform them into spiders. Akira's world of fantasies remained a construct throughout their childhood, the preservation of which became the requirement of both the children. Similarly, constructs like nationalism, internationalism and cosmopolitanism, the British value system upheld by

Banks' mother, parental and saviour figures like Mei Li, Uncle Philip and Inspector Kung who failed in saving his mother, the Chinese warlord Wang Ku who funded Christopher's life and education in the place of a parent, martyrdom, soldier's duty towards his nation, the concept of traitor as propounded by the Yellow Snake and the unknown Japanese soldier whom Banks befriends on his way to Chapei are all constructs that collapse in the postmodern age of interrogation and critical thinking.

Apart from historical and thematic discrepancies, the select novels of Ishiguro bear a complex relationship with the literary texts, genres and conventions they appropriate. The structure of a journal or diary enables Ishiguro's first-person narrators to juxtapose their current thoughts and past experiences onto certain dates, without offering any explanation as to why the entries are absent for the other dates. According to Chu-chueh Cheng,

> A diary novel hence tempts the reader to speculate what prompts the diarist to write; why the diary encompasses a particular period of time; how its entries are structured; how ordinary occurrences depicted in an entry are related to the monumental event(s) associated with the specific date; and what correlation these entries disclose of current happenings in the diarist's private lives, noteworthy issues in his or her contemporary society, and earlier monumental events alluded to. (117)

As its title suggests, *Artist* lays claim upon a distinct period in Japanese art history, namely the "ukiyo" or the floating world. Historically located in the Edo period of 1600 to 1868, it related to the fleeting amusements practised by the courtesans,

artists, musicians and kabuki players, whose transient lifestyle got portrayed in the genre called "ukiyo-e", in the form of paintings and wood-block prints popularized by artists like Kitagawa Utamaro. The general emotions portrayed by the floating world were those of a poignant transience, a delicate world of elusive fragility. Despite being an artist of the floating world patronized by Mori-san the "modern Utamaro" of the text, Ono spurns it in favour of the military propagandist art put forward by Matsuda. Through this, he strives for a more permanent artistic position than that of the floating world inhabitant. However, by labelling Ono as the artist of the floating world, Ishiguro brings out the ironical transience of his political ambitions and the ethereality of his propaganda-art efforts; the "real" world of the Japanese economic and military aspirations that he embraces rejecting the "stereotypically bohemian world" (Shaffer 52) of Mori-san is as untenable as that of the unreally aesthetic. By rejecting both the strands of hyperaestheticism and militarism for their impermanence, the novel effectively appropriates the "double metaphor" of Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, the seminal anthropological text that for a long time dictated the Western impressions of Japan. In the place of its timeless attributes and the ethnicity-based explanations, Ishiguro locates and contextualizes Japanese historical actions which are prompted by that nation's intelligible reasons of self-interest (Sim *Kazuo Ishiguro* 4- 5).

Intratextually, this leads to the appropriation of art in four separate instances, namely, the reworking of the hare and tortoise fable, Ichiro's reworking of the monster movie, Ono's reworking of his painting "Complacency" and Kuroda's representation of a bar scene as patriotism. The classical fable is appropriated with the result that instead

of emphasizing the tortoise's perseverance, it (or the characters nicknamed as Tortoise) is condemned for its meanness, treachery and dishonesty. Despite hiding inside his raincoat during the most part of the movie, Ichiro appropriated the film and reconstructed its plot and his self image as a young adult and a brave masculine figure. Similarly, Ono reworked a painting of his own named "Complacency" from his villa days into a political and propagandist print called "Eyes to the Horizon" exhorting the imperialist Japan to take up arms. Finally, during their Migi-Hidari days, Kuroda painted a bar-scene depicting their boisterous revelries with the title, "The Patriotic Spirit".

Barry Lewis argues that in the construction of the character of Stevens of *Remains*, Ishiguro draws upon a number of stock butler characters from previous literature including Lane in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), Crichton in J. M. Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* (1902), Bullivant in Ivy Compton-Burnett's *Manservant and Maidservant* (1947) and most importantly, Jeeves of P. G. Wodehouse's Jeeves series. To Terrence Rafferty, Stevens parodies and subverts Jeeves being gauche and reticent while the latter is garrulous and resourceful; whereas to Norman Page and William Hutchings, Stevens is more Alfred Prufrock than Jeeves, being "unvaryingly deferential, meticulous and…glad to be 'of use'" (qtd. in Lewis 75). Meanwhile, Bo G. Ekelund identifies five "complicitous genres" in the novel in his essay "Misrecognizing History: Complicitous Genres in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*", namely, travelogue, political memoir, country house romance, farce, and an essay on values. He also compares *Remains* with a number of hypotexts such as Lord Halifax's political memoir called *The Fulness of Days* (1957), the classical English

detective story with its notion of guilt, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* for Stevens' confessions and Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in its treatment of the master-servant relationship.

In her "Ishiguro's *Remains of the Day*: The Empire Strikes Back", Meera Tamaya relates the text to a number of Shakespearean plays such as *The Tempest* in the portrayal of the master-slave relationship, *Macbeth* and *As You Like It* in the metaphors of acting and clothing, *Henry IV Part I* in the display of the servant's ignorance for the purpose of entertainment as in "Prince Hal's demonstration of the waiter Francis' illiteracy" (51). She also labels *Remains* as a novel of manners, a "consummately economical British literary form" that enables its author "to deconstruct the British society and its imperial history" (45). To this, Adriana Neagu appends that through the character of the very English butler, Ishiguro subverts all such attributes immediately associated with the English character as the protestant ethic, gentlemanliness, self restraint, pretence, dissimulation, decorum, good manners, the cult of tradition, dignity and duty, distrust of foreigners, distaste for self-analysis, the relentless quest for separating the public and the private, propensity for self-delusion and repression, and nostalgia over the past (275).

Based on the portrayal of evil in *Orphans*, Tim Christensen suggests that the heavy concentration of metaphors of disease and monstrosity, of veiling and masking, of the Biblical references to serpents and temptation and the need to save the decent, unsuspecting common man from the clutches of ingeniously hidden evil forces lurking in the fringes by one of the few clever ones who constantly police the peripheries of the

empire are sure signs of a classic detective novel in the Holmsian tradition. In Holmes' case, the "rooting out of evil" takes the form of resolution of the crimes committed by the Mormon polygamists and the Indian savage rebels so that order may be restored and the citizens of London be protected. Further, the novel's connection with Conan Doyle mysteries could be unambiguously established by the repeated allusions to the legendary detective, both by the protagonist and the supporting characters of the novel.

Following this logic, it is easy to see that a classic detective novel is conventional in nature and aims at the restoration of the status quo when a crime tears apart the seemingly smooth social fabric of civilized life. By appropriating and thus subverting this genre, Ishiguro succeeds in ridiculing the heroes as well as their readers who hoped to be saved of their "real life" problems by such individualistic, outlandish and purely fictional characters. As a result, the props, settings and characters intrinsic to the classic detective novel are critically perceived to reveal their hollowness and dysfunctionality. Although he claims to be a recluse like Holmes, Banks starts his career as a dandy, a frequenter at the balls, banquets and the social circles of London's fashionable society. Even before his final interview with Uncle Philip who totally exposes the futility of his vocation, readers get a glimpse of it in the portrayal of the devastated Chinese family near Chapei, where Banks, out of sheer habit, pulls out his magnifying glass to examine the corpse of a dead woman: "Her stump looked peculiarly clean; the bone protruding out of the flesh was a shiny white, almost as though someone had been polishing it" (272). The grandiose myth of the elitist private detective shatters before such abject situations of grim reality and Banks turns out to be "a man deformed into genre"

(James Wood qtd. in Döring 72). Further, in Banks' self introduction, "My name is Banks, Christopher Banks" (274), Tobias Döring locates the popular catchphrase from James Bond series, thus tracing his literary ancestry to the English popular heroes. Likewise, while describing his childhood in Shanghai, Banks suggests that much of his knowledge of England came from "the foggy streets of the Conan Doyle mysteries" (52). The words "foggy" and "mysteries" suggest ambiguity and obscurity of the distortion of knowledge. Along with the foggy territory of Banks' childhood now accessible only through his defective memory and unreliable narration, his own knowledge of Britain, in the absence of first hand information is equally cloudy.

If Banks was prompted by Conan Doyle mysteries in embarking upon his profession of a private detective, this attribute brings him closer to another fictional character, Don Quixote, who, influenced by the chivalrous romances that he perused vowed to defend the helpless and destroy the wicked. In the place of Sancho Panza, Banks has his childhood friend Akira; when the don steals a barber's basin, Banks does his first theft, that of a bottle belonging to Akira's servant Ling Tien; to justify this theft, both Akira and Banks have to keep alive dreadful tales of crimes supposedly committed by the poor Chinaman, just as the don mistakes an innkeeper to be the keeper of a castle and flocks of sheep to be great armies; both Panza and the don believe that their troubles are caused by don's violation of his vow to maintain a strict lifestyle until he gets a new helmet, just as Banks superstitiously believes that his inability to return Tien's bottle causes the mysterious kidnap of his father; between the heroes and their companions, the companions, Akira and Panza, show greater common sense

and are prone to warn their heroes, although they ultimately follow the instructions of the heroes rather than following their own sound counsel. If the don abandons a boy to be beaten by an evil farmer, Uncle Philip abandons Banks during his boyhood only to save him from Wang Ku. Finally, we find the don die of fever after foreswearing all his chivalric deeds whereas Banks recovers from his feverish reverie to resume his investigative work.

In his doctoral thesis on Ishiguro, Wai Chew Sim suggests that the theft-cum-restitution imagery which threads along the detective novel could be traced in the Victorian novel of *Great Expectations*, by Charles Dickens. To Sim, the surrogate fatherhood that Uncle Philip and Wang Ku have in connection with Banks is similar to that of Magwitch in relation to Pip. Prior to the climactic scene, like Pip who believed Miss Havisham to be his benefactor, Banks too had assumed that his legacy came from his aunt in Shropshire. The revelation that they were living off illegally begotten money of two criminals cause both of them to suffer a breakdown. Likewise, Ishiguro's depiction of the high society London of the 1930s appropriates Jane Austen's Comedies of Manners which, by means of stereotypes and stock characters, ridiculed the manners and affectations of their contemporary social setting. Thus, the supposed heroine of the novel, Sarah Hemmings becomes a typical Austen heroine, who, prompted by her desire to get married, regularly mixes with the elite of London, haunting balls and banquets in search of a husband. Her subsequent elopement to Macau also is reminiscent of the domestic novels of Austen. Thus, in *Orphans*, the classic English detective fiction is mixed with Jane Austen style Comedy of Manners, realistic fiction like Dickens' *Great*

Expectations and the historical romance of *Don Quixote*.

Having thus established the appropriation of both literary and historical conventions in the select novels of Ishiguro, we may now proceed to the postmodern devices employed in these texts such as irony, parody, subversion, self reflexivity and contrived closure. In the novels of Ishiguro, irony constitutes a double codedness where two probable explanations are given for a single problem. This is brought out in the form of difference between what is told and what is revealed; between what the narrator says and what happens in the end; between the perspectives of the narrator and that of the author and the reader with the result that the author and reader are conspiring against the narrator, thus revealing his unreliability. Irony also manifests itself in the form of the reversal of roles and situations, hyperbole, understatement and doppelganger.

In *Artist*, all the talk of artistic integrity at Master Takeda's studio turned out to be ironical as the products of that firm were hardly artistic. Theirs was an institution that undertook commissioned painting jobs and supplied artworks that looked Japanese to the foreigners; it was a place where quantity mattered more than quality and where artists perspired to meet deadlines as in a multinational corporation. Speaking about his Takeda days, Ono claims to have acquired "the ability to think and judge for" himself, "even if it meant going against the sway of those around him" (69). A few pages later, he tells his disciples that the Takeda experience taught him "never to follow the crowd blindly, but…to rise above the sway of things" (73). Despite all such tall claims, we find him fall an easy prey to the propagandist art serving the interests of the Japanese imperialist government. Similarly, the statement, "bad paintings make bad smoke" (184),

is as ironical as Frost's "Good fences make good neighbors" ("Mending Wall" line 26). In page 201, "two old men with sticks, standing by the pond" are comparable to the "two small boys playing with fishing poles at the water's edge" (197), mentioned earlier. The two old men who wielded considerable power during their youth seem powerless and objectified from the perspective of the neighbour boy. Only then do they realize that they never possessed any proper power, but were in fact, objects at the hands of the more powerful.

In *Remains*, Stevens' deliberate jokes backfire, while his serious ruminations trigger laughter among his readers. Thus, his serious debates concerning the greatness of butlers, his deliberate attempts to learn witticisms from wireless programmes (130-131) and his reading of sentimental romances for the purpose of enhancing his command over English language create ludicrous effects. Stevens the Senior's story of a butler's murder of a tiger is described as "an apparently true one" (36), thereby undermining its authenticity. All his speeches of objectivity end in subjectivity as revealed through his subjective love of the English countryside and through the portrayal of his own father as a paragon of dignity. In page 64, his father's room seems a prison cell to Stevens. In page 165, it is Stevens' room that looks like a prison cell to Miss Kenton. Stevens feels "pride and gratitude" (74) towards the Lord for trusting him enough as to not conceal anything from himself. Ishiguro does not inform us whether this is pure trust or the Lord's knowledge that Stevens is too stupid to be capable of any political treason. Roles shift as Young Cardinal who was serious before the first conference (84-90) turns light-hearted in 108, whereas Stevens whose light-hearted vein of the previous incident

turns serious in page 108, following the decease of his father.

Stevens, who enjoys reading about people falling in love and expressing their feelings, cannot do so in real life. It is ironical that the people of Moscombe mistake Stevens for a fine gentleman despite Harry Smith's statement, "You can tell a true gentleman from a false one that's just dressed in finery. Take yourself, sir. It's not just the cut of your clothes, nor is it even the fine way you've got of speaking. There's something else that marks you out as a gentleman" (184-5). Despite Stevens' claims to have effectively covered up, his true emotions are correctly understood by Lord Darlington and the Young Cardinal twice during the two international conferences that take place in the Darlington Hall.

Sarah Hemmings of *Orphans*, despite being choosy, ends up in reckless marriages, first to an old man and then to a count of obscure prospects. Despite her orthodox pretensions, she ends up in a freakish lifestyle. Regarding Banks, she says he is not "utterly dependable" (45). Although this statement was made in connection with the Meredith Foundation Dinner to which she expected him to invite her, this proves true in the long run as he backs off at the eleventh hour from their joined plan to elope to Macau. Despite Banks being a British boy, Akira thrusts wrong pronunciation on to him in page 52. In page 120, the image of "bird of prey" is used to refer to Uncle Philip who shifts positions from persecutor to victim to rescuer as he prompts little Banks to leave his guard and go with him to prey upon a piano accordion. Only later does Banks come to know that by baiting him, Philip was really rescuing him from a hard life with Wang Ku. Morganbrook and Byatt's sacking of employees from the

Shantung province on account of the opium addiction prevalent there becomes ironical as the company has a shady business of selling opium to the Chinese. Equally ironical are Mrs. Banks' anti-opium campaigns even while remaining the wife of an official whose firm is notorious for the opium business; her naïve ignorance of all her wealth being ill-begotten as they come from the exploitation of the colonies and her failure to grasp that opium trade (which she called un-Christian and un-British in page 61) is not the only example of colonial exploitation. Likewise, the father who was believed to be kidnapped actually eloped with his mistress and the mother who was remembered as a headstrong matriarch easily succumbed to a life of concubinage with the Chinese warlord.

If irony stresses on difference, parody incorporates similarity and difference, change and continuity, thereby being the most privileged postmodern strategy of setting up a dialogic relation between identification and distance. The Greek prefix "para" meaning both "against" and "beside" enables Hutcheon to redefine "parody" as "repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signaling of difference at the very heart of similarity" (Hutcheon 26). When applied to *Artist*, parody reveals itself in the art forms like the imitation art pieces of Takeda's studio and the recent modifications of the Western-styled Kasuga Park Hotel parodying a saleable Japanese ethnicity, Kuroda's painting parodying the fake patriotic spirit of his age, Ichiro's painting and narrative parodying the monster and the movie he has not seen, his parodic reinventions of the American cowboy culture (28-36) and Popeye the Sailor as "Popeye Sailorman" (152).

Right from the beginning of *Remains*, Stevens' "presumptuous speech" (4)

abounds with expressions like “expedition”, “errors”, “alarmist theories”, “a faulty staff plan”, “a preoccupation with…professional matters” (5), as “a general might prepare for a battle”, giving “the staff a military-style ‘pep talk’” (77), thereby parodying the military metaphors and phraseology. Only at the end of page 5 do we realize that the protagonist is a butler rather than a military professional. Likewise, the English butler and the Darlington Hall become parodies of an authentic British culture in Stevens’ negation of both (123-124), while Stevens himself parodies “a true gentleman” before the villagers of Moscombe. Whereas the villagers’ talk amongst themselves may be seen as a parody of the British Parliament with its diverse opinions, Harry Smith, personally becomes the parody of an ideal democrat, who demands Britain’s freedom at the cost of that of the colonies.

In *Orphans*, Banks himself becomes a clever emotional parody of the classic detective heroes like Holmes while his rented house in Kensington furnished after the Victorian tradition parodies a traditional lifestyle boasted by Britain. His meeting with Sarah at the phonograph shop becomes a self conscious parody of a love-scene on the silver screen:

> Then we were kissing—just like, I suppose, a couple on the cinema screen. It was almost exactly as I had always imagined it would be, except there was something oddly inelegant about our embrace, and I tried more than once to adjust my posture; but my right foot was hard against a heavy box and I could not quite negotiate the necessary turn without risking my balance. (222)

By comparing themselves to a couple on the cinema screen, Banks invalidates his

relationship with Sarah, the phrase “almost exactly” both legitimates as well as subverts the self conscious couple who cannot but constantly compare their posture to the Hollywood examples. Similarly, the cities of Shanghai and Hong Kong in the fifties become a grotesque parody of the city of Shanghai as remembered by Banks, the Yamashita house parodies Japanese houses (71-72), Ling Tien episode allegorically parodies the greater narrative of colonialism, while the rescue games played by Banks and Akira (107-112) are later parodied by Grayson (158-159).

The subversion of realistic, mimetic or meaning-making conventions after their inscription or legitimation is a prominent feature of the postmodern. In *Artist*, an initial description of the splendour of Sugimura’s house and the Pleasure District are closely followed by references to their war damage. After professing about the need to interrogate authority during their Migi-Hidari days (73-74), it is stated that those with disagreeable views will be squeezed out of the bar. Enchi subverts Ono after inscribing him as an honoured guest. After a sympathetic inscription of Moriyama as an artist and a teacher, he is cast down as a mean, petty-minded, jealous and vindictive old man (136-8). All that Ono speaks of his great artistic career and his immense political influence gets subverted by Setsuko’s statement, “Father was simply a painter. He must stop believing he has done some great wrong” (193). All his claims of lofty ambition, faith and convictions stand subverted by his petty contemplation of sweet revenge towards his fallen former teacher Mori-san (202-3).

Although he claims of finding “recruits of a satisfactory standard” who are “worthy of a grand old English house” (*Remains* 6), Stevens ends up in hiring two maids based

on Mrs. Clements' recommendation. After some formal passages on greatness and dignity, Stevens points out his own father as the personification of both these qualities, thereby undermining the objectivity and credibility of his argument. After stating the story of an English butler in India which Stevens the Senior enjoyed repeating, Stevens remarks that "it is of little importance whether or not this story is true" (37), thereby undermining everything he said before this. If the story is false, how can he use it as a proof of his father's lofty ideals? Just by repeating a rather fantastic story, can Stevens the Senior lay claims to such standards? And what are these standards that are revealed in the tale which stresses on removing all "discernible traces" of killing the tiger languishing in the dining room? More than that of his father, this story is analogical to Stevens' own ideals, of covering up the unwanted, of shoving things under the carpet.

Appearances of people turn deceptive as Mr Lewis who was introduced as "a gentleman of generous dimensions with a genial smile" turns out to be one of duplicitous character (100-101). Later we find Young Cardinal reinscribing Lewis' ideals as against those of the Lord. Thus Lewis is inscribed, subverted and further inscribed in the text. Despite offering allegiance to the Lord, Stevens denies having known or having worked for him. After vehemently refuting all charges of anti-Semitism levelled against the lord, he narrates the incident of sacking the two Jewish maids merely on account of their religion as well as two minor incidents that bring out his anti-Semitism. Similarly, the political consciousness of the villagers of Moscombe gets subverted by the words of Dr Carlisle.

In *Orphans*, Banks' claims of having blended well into the English school life get

subverted by the opinions of his friends about him as an odd bird. At first, Banks says that Akira was awed by Mrs. Banks because of her beauty. In the very next page, he negates this by saying that Akira's awe stemmed out of witnessing the scene between Mrs Banks and the health inspector when she steadfastly held on to her ideals. Such subversion enables Ishiguro to present Mrs. Banks as a beautiful, yet courageous woman with high ideals. Like Mr Lewis of *Remains*, the image of Uncle Philip, initially inscribed as a surrogate father, gets subverted and shattered as he abandons Banks, only to be reinscribed in the final confession scene where it is explained that the abandonment was in fact a rescue action to save Banks from Wang Ku. After establishing himself as a guardian to Jennifer, Banks leaves her to Shanghai for an inordinate length of time, thus subverting himself from the role of a responsible adult. Similarly, "Akira's obsession with the prowess of his race" (78) which he establishes through his dreadful arm-locks, gets subverted by the ostracism he experiences in Japan due to his foreign manners. While this prompts a morbid fear in Akira of being sent to Japan, it causes Banks to act with extreme cautiousness of not revealing himself in England.

Postmodern fiction is self reflexive in nature. Self reflexivity is given an objective correlative in *Artist* in the scene of Ono's first conversation with Ichiro. As already stated, Ono's speech here becomes a monologue without any contribution from his supposedly sulking grandson. Another dominant example of self reflexivity comes from the Tortoise's self portrait. Despite Ono's contempt for the slow colleague, he speaks high of that painting which correctly brings out the earnestness and timidity of the

person, “I cannot recall any colleague who could paint a self-portrait with absolute honesty; however accurately one may fill in the surface details of one’s mirror reflection, the personality represented rarely comes near the truth as others would see it” (67).

In between, Ono self reflexively wonders about his ability to remember, confesses his absent mindedness, his suspicion of retrospective memory, his inability to recall what he did for several minutes, his confusion between the words of Miyake and Suichi and his inability to recollect his own words as well as those of other characters in conversations. For example, he at first attributes the phrase “exploring curious avenues” to Mori-san (177) during their parting conversation in the Takami pavilion. But upon further consideration, he comes to the view that that phrase could as well be used by himself in the same venue, in connection with his last conversation with Kuroda, which is elided in the text. Ono even uses the very structure of historical appropriation self reflexively to serve his ends and to justify his personal actions. By defending Mori-san in his mistreatment of Sasaki and himself, Ono is able to prepare the ground for the narration of his own betrayal of Kuroda, the consequences of which are all that is shown in the text.

Like Ono, Stevens also foregrounds lapses and gaps in his memory by wrongly attributing speeches to different characters, thereby establishing his own unreliability as a narrator. For instance, according to Stevens’ narrative, it was Miss Kenton who forewarned him of reconsidering the duties assigned to his father. But as soon as he said that, Stevens becomes aware of the fact that such authoritative demands could not have ensued from Miss Kenton, but from Lord Darlington himself. To this end, Stevens

alters his memory and gives us a new narreme of the same. Besides, he is also aware of the impression of bias he creates in the listener when he says that his father belonged to the rare category of truly great and dignified butlers (*Remains* 34) and a few pages hence, "for it strikes me I may have given the impression earlier that I treated him (his father) rather bluntly over his declining abilities" (69-70). Also his constant worry of turning points, hindsight which colours memory and missing of crucial precious moments in life are also evident in the novel.

We find Banks more frank and forthright in taking the confidence of his readers with the result that he confides in us how he was intrigued by Sarah's compliment of him so that he almost raises himself to her bait (*Orphans* 33); how at the Meredith Foundation Dinner he was too charmed by her to reject her (37). He often complains of his fading memory, the aid for which he writes his journal, as he forgets many details related to the dinner which he attended during the day previous to the journal. He understands that his memory is dependent on what others remember and narrate, as in the case of his mother's encounter with the health inspector of which Banks says, "I cannot be sure today how much of my memory of that morning derives from what I actually witnessed from the landing, and to what extent it has merged over time with my mother's accounts of the episode" (58). At times, he fails to explain himself to the readers as in "I have no idea what it was that caused me suddenly to start talking to her of such matters" (64), when he impulsively disclosed about his childhood to Sarah. Sometimes, his confusion goes to such an extent that he fails to gather his thoughts and communicate them properly: "Because what I am talking of here is so nebulous, it is

not easy to recall instances to serve as clear illustrations" (134). At the same time, he is aware of the quarrels he commits with people like Morgan and MacDonald, due to his own lack of concentration.

Another feature of these novels is their abrupt, forced, contrived and unnatural closure which does not seem to be the natural and logical result of the events that passed before it. For example, *Artist* ends with Ono's sudden faith in Japan's economic future which does not feature anywhere in the text before this climactic moment. In the case of *Remains*, Stevens, despite reiterating that bantering is hardly his cup of tea, suddenly decides to learn the art of bantering and surprise his new employer Farraday. Among the three protagonists, it is Christopher Banks who feels a tinge of remorse for having chased "the shadows of vanished parents" (*Orphans* 313). Left with a small flat in London to spend the rest of his life, occasionally reminded of his glorious past by his few acquaintances, his unsettled adopted daughter with a slim future, his mother and Sarah both having died, he understands that he has very little to look forward to. Still, he closes his narrative with a fake optimism of having found his "home" in London, the city he despised throughout his life. Thus, all these three novels seem to have "manipulated happy endings" instead of traditional ones, where the realist author strives to conceal his technique in order to present a natural, logical and reasonable climax.

From the above analysis it is evident that while the narrating present of these novels are the post-war 1950s, their narrated past denotes the pre-war 1930s. Even *Orphans*, the narrating present of which spans across an extended period of twenty-

eight years, is built around the Second World War, its sixth and seventh dated entries belonging to 1937 and 1958 respectively, thus carefully eliding the authorized history of the War from 1939 to 1945. This chosen silence concerning the War may be seen as a form of resistance or defiance offered by the narrator-protagonists representing the common man. It is the common man who bears the brunt of the war most severely, having no say in the decision-making process of his nation. The statesmen and the diplomats who decide the war, often on behalf of the credulous and unsuspecting commoner, are the least tormented by it as in the case of the privileged white elite at the International Settlement who watch the war as an entertaining spectacle of "shooting stars" (*Orphans*).

It is curious to note that all the three protagonists exhibit varying degrees of guilt at having failed to prevent the war, although none of them were powerful enough to do so. There are at least once victim of an irresponsible military maneuver in each of them: Ono's son Kenji, Stevens' elder brother Leonard and the unknown Japanese soldier whom Banks christens as Akira. There are characters like Suichi, Young Cardinal and Banks himself who voice their bitter protest against the loss of such lives, the futility of war and the irresponsibility and shamelessness of the authorities who bring about unspeakable suffering to their subjects. However, the dominant version of history is more concerned with the impersonal factuality of military victories and acquisition of territories than the personal grief and losses, which it either dismisses as fiction or keeps quiet about. Thus, the phrase "recovered histories" mentioned in the title of this chapter varyingly refers to those histories that are recovered/retrieved from the domination of the

authorized version, narrated by people who have just recovered from the shock inflicted by the war and those histories that remain untold despite all possible appropriations, that are re-covered thanks to the omissions and inconsistencies of the postmodern plot as well as Ishiguro's literary style that half reveals and half conceals.

Chapter III

The Recollected Histories of Michael Ondaatje

The discipline of history relies heavily on the methodology of collection and recollection of data for its sustenance. While "collection" represents the physically preserved source of historical knowledge, "recollection", belonging to the realm of memory, forms the basis of most oral historical narratives. Yet both are subjected to a process of selection and interpretation at the hands of the historian who decides their intrinsic merit for inclusion into the historical discourse. For centuries, the Western historical discourse had prioritized written history over oral history on account of the assumed rationality of the former and the subjectivity of the latter. However, with the advent of postmodernism which revolutionized much thinking, philosophy, theory and history, historiography underwent a sea change. Thus, many hitherto neglected fields of history got illuminated such as oral history, people's history and histories from below like the narratives of the politically insignificant, religious minorities, civilians, ethnic, black, female, gay, migrant and so on. For the marginalized to enter the arena fervently guarded by the mainstream history, they need to revolutionize some of the processes and practices of the existing history making and writing. This includes a reinstatement of oral histories accessed through memory or recollection.

Equally important is a re-collection of data to suit the perspective of the postmodern narrator/protagonist. Having been previously marginalized, his story needs a new point of view with data collected, selected and placed in a new order. Also in the

modern and postmodern novels which make use of fragmentation, a further re-collection becomes necessary, to accommodate and gather together the fragmented mini-narratives that appropriate the linear, conventional history. To what ends are such re-collections pointed shall be dealt with in the next chapter, which specializes on the ideology of such re-collected and re-covered texts. Thus the epithet "recollected" used in the title denotes the fragmentation of these texts, the process of re-collecting the historical data which are foregrounded by historiographic metafiction and recollection meaning memory, the basis of oral history, one of the earliest forms of historiography since Herodotus and Thucydides. Hence the term stands for the process of remembrance, the process of textual production and the resultant text which itself is fragmented, so as to challenge the monolithic primacy of traditional historiography.

This chapter, like the previous one, is divided into two parts: historical context and the postmodern text. While the former describes rather succinctly the moment and milieu in which the select texts are placed, the latter analyzes the appropriation of history in terms of their postmodern devices. The three novels under consideration here are Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987), *The English Patient* (1992) and *Anil's Ghost* (2000). As all of them fall into the category of historiographic metafiction as exemplified by the Canadian postmodern theorist Linda Hutcheon, this chapter employs her theory as the framework to analyse the postmodern historical appropriation performed by these texts. It shall be argued that Michael Ondaatje appropriates mainstream history through his novels which are simultaneously popular and elitist.

The Historical Context

Unlike Ishiguro, whose select fiction is located entirely in and around the Second World War, the three select novels of Ondaatje are placed in different historical times and places. *In the Skin of a Lion* deals with the civic history of construction; of the other two, *The English Patient* with the last phase of the Second World War and *Anil's Ghost* with the Sri Lankan civil war. In all three, Ondaatje offers a revised version of the authorized history viewed from the perspective of the subordinate groups like the women, the working class and the immigrants. The historical contexts thus appropriated are located in Canada, Italy and Sri Lanka, the first and third being the host and home spaces of the author.

As a history of construction, *In the Skin of a Lion* deals with the building of Canadian cities foregrounding the efforts of the poor labourers who endangered their lives and yet were obliterated from the annals of the official history. By celebrating the unofficial histories of the migrant labourers at the periphery, the novel appropriates the official history of Canada from 1917 to 1938 and becomes the voice of the grassroots. The Canadian cultural history is chequered with multiple waves of immigration from the British Isles and France, the European continent, the South Asia and so on. The fictional narrative of the novel coincides with the third wave of immigration to Canada from Europe which transformed the land to a "mosaic world" of white settler colony. During the first half of the twentieth century, the Canadian construction industry was dominated by an unskilled labour force comprising the Greeks, the Italians, the Finns, the Poles and the Macedonians. It was they who rebuilt the city of Toronto following

the Great Fire of 1904.

The Prince Edward Viaduct, commonly known as the Bloor Street Viaduct that connected Bloor Street with Danforth Avenue across the Don valley was one of the earliest ambitious projects of R. C. Harris, the then Commissioner of Public Works. Upon its completion in 1918, this massive three-hinged concrete arch bridge, designed by Edmund Burke, considerably reduced the city's traffic problem and led to the development of the eastern parts of Toronto. This was followed by the construction of R. C. Harris Water Treatment Plant, nicknamed as the "Palace of Purification" because of its architectural opulence, which filtered the water from Lake Ontario to quench the thirst of the city dwellers. While the mainstream history celebrated Burke and Harris as the architect and builder of the bridge, it remained silent about the underpaid migrant labourers who actually risked their lives in order to construct it. Along with the bridge and the waterworks, the migrants contributed to the work culture of Toronto as tanners and dyers of slaughterhouses, small time thieves, the agricultural labourers and so on.

As Ondaatje himself points out, much of early historiography ignored the human factor of the migrant workforce in Canadian urbanization. Almost a century has to pass by before they crept into the annals of the mainstream history, that too in the form of a Canadian working-class history:

> [The] immigrants infiltrated the entire industry, working on building sites erecting residential, industrial and commercial structures and on engineering projects building roads, bridges and sewage systems. Their daily work life was daunting. "Sandhogs" (tunnellers) on sewage and hydro-sites worked deep underground.

> Others quickly earned the scars, sore backs, and gnarled hands of ditchdiggers, digging trenches for the installation of gas mains or sewers. Braced against early winter winds or the soaring heat of summer, workers faced daily the risk of injury, including death by cave-ins. Men on road-building and paving sites were exposed to gas leaks and explosions that could maim or kill. The oral testimonies of Italian construction workers unleash painful memories of injuries experienced or witnessed: men's limbs impaled on pipes; backs broken from falls from poorly assembled scaffolds, skyscraper beams, or elevator shafts; hands and feet cracked and frozen from exposure; and faces cut from shattered glass. (Mac Dowell & Radforth 363)

It is this working class history of the marginalized migrant labourers that Ondaatje chooses to valorize in his novel, thereby successfully bridging a gap in the mainstream history.

Located in Italy, the site of both fascism and Renaissance, *The English Patient* is the depiction of war from the fringes, as experienced by a nurse, an archeologist, a thief, a Sikh sapper and so on, figures unlikely to be qualified as the narrators of conventional history. The ever encompassing nature of a global warfare is revealed through this cast of multiple protagonists. This forms the narrating present of the novel which is temporally situated at the final few months of the global war, that is, from April 1945 to August 1945. In public history, this period pertains to the stretch from the execution of Benito Mussolini on 28th April to the official surrender of Japan on 15th August following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While the

former event goes unmentioned in the text, the latter event, or more precisely, the news about the atomic bombings forms the climax of the novel. In between, the text bears occasional references to other periods in history such as the inter-war period of the 1930s where one lived under constant suspicion and surveillance unable to differentiate between friend and foe, the Libyan desert of the 1940s that became a major arena of the North African Campaign, of the Operation Sunflower led by the legendary German Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, of the Operation Salam under the leadership of the desert explorer Count László de Almásy and to the post-war world of the late 1950s by means of a final authorial montage.

By establishing the identity of the English Patient to be that of the legendary Hungarian explorer Almásy who discovered the Oasis of Zerzura and guided the German spy Eppler to Egypt and by locating the text geographically in the Axis territories of Italy and Libya, the novel necessitates a brief description of the world war from the Axis side. Territorial expansionist interests prompted Germany, Italy and Japan to join hands as the leading Axis powers by means of a series of pacts such as the Anti-Comintern Pact of November 1936, the Pact of Steel of 1939 and the Tripartite Pact of September 1940. Ideologically, all these three nations aimed at the defeat of both communism and the plutocratic Western powers through political variations of fascism, militarism and economic self sufficiency. The goal of self sufficiency or autarky meant territorial expansion to the Axis powers, which attributed their present insufficiency to the restrictions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles in the case of Germany and the excessive dependence on international trade in the cases of Italy and Japan. Whereas

Germany politically explained her expansionist strategies on the grounds of *lebensraum* (living space) and Italy through *spazio vitale* (vital space), Japan did the same via Pan-Asianism built upon the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere against the European Imperial Powers. As a result, they indulged in widespread aggression across the world even before the official beginning of the Second World War in September 1939.

The Italian participation in the War as an Axis power was comparatively brief from June 1940 till September 1943, after which it joined the Allies. During the first phase of the World War, the armed performance of the nation pathetically failed to match the imperialist ambitions of the fascist regime in what turned out to be "Fascist Italy's last war". As a military power, Italy received huge setbacks in Greece, Yugoslavia and Africa, losing much of the territories she had annexed during the 30s, with the result that she was compelled to accept German aid, interference and a military status subordinated to that of Germany, in the form of a burdensome ally. This brought about widespread discontentment and dissent amidst the Italian factory workers, civil servants and the royal household against war and the fascist government headed by Mussolini. Simultaneously, following their victory in the North Africa, the Allies turned their attention to the Italian mainland and captured Sicily. This led to the swift signing of the Armistice of Cassibile on 3 September 1943 by which the Kingdom of Italy officially surrendered to the Allies, agreeing to fight the war from the Allied side. Meanwhile, the Germans, who had long suspected such a defection, were planning to interfere and subjugate Italy if she changed allegiances. As a result, they rescued Mussolini who had been deposed by the king, setting him up as the duce of the

German-controlled puppet state called the Italian Social Republic in northern Italy. Thus the second phase of the Italian warfare continued between the Allies and the Axis powers for many more months till the execution of Mussolini in April 1945 and the official surrender of the German forces deployed in Italy on 2nd May. However, much of the action in the narrating present of the text concerns itself not with actual fighting and destruction but with the reconstruction of a war-torn Italy through the defusing of mines and the re-building of cities and bridges by the British sapper unit of which Kip is a member.

If *The English Patient* deals with reconstruction after a global war, *Anil's Ghost* deals with the tripartite civil war in Sri Lanka from 1983 to 2009 which was still in progress during the publication of the novel. Contextualized by a forensic investigation on an unsettling episode of Sri Lankan national history, the presentness of the strife, the absence of a normal life and decent existence, the violence of all three sides, namely, of the government, the antigovernment insurgents in the south and the separatist guerrillas in the north are spelled clearly by this novel. Lee Spinks points out that the historical time of *Ghost* refers to the second phase of the civil war, that is, after 1987 when the People's Liberation Front or the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) entered the two-sided conflict between the Tamil separatists headed by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sinhala government.

Tracing the history and downfall of the LTTE as a terrorist organization, the Sri Lankan historian K.M. de Silva states that the separatist concept of a Tamil homeland or Eelam developed from the political ideology of the Federal Party of the Tamils (FP)

as early as 1949. The FP was later replaced by the Tamil United Front (TUF), which in turn amalgamated into the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), a collection of political parties that represented the Tamils of Sri Lanka during the national elections of 1977. While the early leaders of the TULF were more conservative and sought parliamentary means to achieve their separatist goals, the LTTE favoured armed conflict and guerrilla warfare, striving to suppress and eliminate other Tamil separatist factions including the TULF in order to become "the sole representative of the Tamils of Sri Lanka" (de Silva 4). De Silva stretches the origins of the ethnic conflict to the colonial era of the early 1940s when the Tamil groups demanded a "fifty-fifty" division of the seats in the national legislature, "with the Sinhalese majority (over 70 per cent of the population) entitled to just half the seats, while the minorities, just over 25 per cent of the population, entitled to the other half" (43), thereby casting the Sinhalese to the position of a "marginalized majority population" (Spinks 208).

Following its independence from the British in February 1948, the island nation of Sri Lanka was strife with ethnic conflict between the Tamils and the Sinhalese, as the latter suspected the former of having enjoyed a predominant position under the colonial rule, being over-represented in the state service sector and the university departments of law, medicine and engineering. To redress this perceived imbalance, the post imperial national governments passed the Sinhala Only Act in 1956, whereby Sinhala became the sole official language of a trilingual nation and the university admission policy of 1970 by which the "Tamil students had to obtain higher aggregate marks than their Sinhalese counterparts to gain admission to the science, engineering and medical faculties of the

University of Ceylon" (de Silva 111). The anxiety of the Tamils to retain their professional levels and employment opportunities of the colonial era and the Sinhalese insistence to have their legitimate share in the state sector and other middle class employments led to a series of skirmishes between the two groups. The escalation of tension very soon erupted into a full-scale civil war that lasted almost twenty-six years, from 23rd July 1983 to 18th May 2009, claiming over 100,000 civilian lives, casting around 300,000 as refugees and internally displaced people. The struggle, comprising four phases of the Eelam war, the Indian intervention by means of Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) from 1987 to 1990, the intermittent cease fire and peace talks between the government and the insurgents, finally resulted in the military defeat of LTTE and the government reclamation of the northern and eastern areas that were previously held by the Tamil Tigers.

In her highly informative book *Still Counting the Dead*, the former BBC correspondent in Sri Lanka, Frances Harrison states the civilian experience during the war, those hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren, doctors, farmers, fishermen, nuns and priests who were caught in the crossfire, whose suffering remained invisible from the world's eye owing to the strict media blackout. Published in 2012, well after the defeat of the LTTE, when "the Sri Lankan option" of brute military force became widely acclaimed as a successful strategy in counter-terrorism, thereby protecting the government from any future war-crime investigations, this book, like Ondaatje's novel emphasizes upon the civilian tragedies that were unaccounted for, such as "blurring the distinction between civilians and combatants, … indiscriminate killing of women and

children, the violations of international law and the crushing of a free press".

The Postmodern Text

According to Linda Hutcheon, the historiographic metafiction constitutes the fourth mode of narrating the past: the first three being the romance, the swashbuckling tale and the historical novel. By the term, she refers to novels such as *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *The Midnight's Children*, *Ragtime* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which are popular, self-reflexive and yet historical. Following the postmodern tradition, these texts rework both the forms and contents of the past on the basis of their assumption that both history and fiction are equally human constructs. They argue that any rewriting of the past strives to present the past as inconclusive and non-teleological. Such novels openly reject the Rankean claims towards an empirical history built on a positivist epistemology and a monolithic truth claim. Instead, they establish that truth is plural and are interested in those events that are excluded, silenced and absented from the mainstream historical texts. As a result, both the historical referentiality and the artistic originality remain challenged. Paradoxically, this is often done by inscribing and then subverting the boundaries between history and fiction so as to problematize the traditional notions of identity, subjectivity, historical certainty, reference and representation as well as to explore "the intertextual nature of the past and the ideological implications of writing about history" (117).

Hutcheon pulls through a workable definition of this genre by contrasting it with the features of Georg Lukács' concept of the nineteenth century historical novel as exemplified by Sir Walter Scott. In his influential study *The Historical Novel*, Lukács

attributes the success of Scott's historical novels to "an artistically faithful image of [the] concrete historical epoch" (19) they strive to represent. Unlike his precursors of the eighteenth century for whom history was a "mere customery", Scott sought to portray the transitional periods in English history with no contemporary reference whatsoever. However, in both the construction of the plot and that of the hero, Scott resorted to a "middling" path by which neither extremes of the new post-revolutionary capitalist society were touched upon. A typical Scott hero almost always was a prosaic, mediocre and philistine English gentleman who possessed the "correct" degree of decency, moral fortitude and practical intelligence which restrained him from any sweeping passion or emotion. By casting his protagonists into the human embodiment of stereotypes that synthesized both the general and the specific aspects of one's social condition, Scott thus ensured a wider circulation for his fiction.

To Hutcheon, the postmodern protagonist is neither a conformist nor a proportionate blend of two extremes: he, to borrow Ishiguro's analogy, inhabits the outer rings of the wheel that represents his society (*Remains* 115). In other words, the typical postmodern protagonist is seldom typical: he is ex-centric, marginalized and peripheral in character. The postmodernist interrogation of the unity and coherence of the atemporal stance has resulted in a re-negotiation of the edges and margins of the idea of centre. Such decentring simultaneously blurs the centre and establishes the provisional and the contingent, often represented by identities that are "contextualized by class, race, gender, social role, ethnicity, education, sexual preference and so on" (Hutcheon 59). This does not mean that the centre no longer holds or that the marginal

has replaced the centre. It simply indicates the postmodern paradox by which the ex-centric forever contests with the centre even while maintaining a contradictory relationship with it. Hence, in historiographic metafiction, the protagonist is provisional, individual and culturally conditioned in his response to both private and public history.

Ondaatje dispenses with the traditional notions of a central, singular, coherent and universally acceptable hero-figure in his texts. Instead, he employs multiple narrators possessing their various perspectives, each bearing the weight of their own pasts and taking responsibility for their micro-narratives. They have slipped out of official documentation, are often the politically and economically powerless and occupants of the peripheries. Their identities are constantly evolving, thus enabling them to contest with the supposed orderliness of history and resist the fixed frames of identity. For example, the working class protagonists of *Lion* constantly change their professions and identities, so that Hazen Lewis the farmer turns into a dynamiter; Patrick Lewis the village boy becomes a searcher, then a tannery worker, a tunneller, an activist and finally Hana's adopted father; Temelcoff a bakery hand later becomes an aerial labourer at the bridge and finally the owner of the Geranium Bakery; Alice Gull who was a nun, turns into an actress and later into an activist; Caravaggio, "a tarrer of roads, a house-builder, a painter, a thief" (199) of *Lion* turns into a spy in *Patient* and Hana the little girl becomes a nurse. Though the protagonists of *Ghost* belong to the middle class, they are no less ex-centric. While the middle class characters like Anil the forensic pathologist, Sarath the archeologist and Gamini the doctor are powerless to combat against the brute force of violence around them, Ananda the artist who turned into a

gem-pit labourer is able to offer a resistance of peace from his peripheral existence.

Along with non-historical characters, the historical novels also comprise "real" and recognizable personages from the mainstream history. In Scott's novels, these historical characters are politically and economically powerful personalities and leaders of warring groups like Richard the Lion Heart, Oliver Cromwell, Elizabeth, Louis XI and Mary Stuart. The motive behind the insertion of such recognizable historical characters is to validate the epoch of the text and to represent large sections of people. Therefore, such personalities are assigned secondary roles and are portrayed as non-evolving, but complete figures that appear only in historically significant moments. Thus, while they are celebrated as significant personalities, their historical grandeur is retained by relegating them to the background.

Historiographic metafiction also employs but foregrounds historical characters such as J P Morgan, Sigmund Freud, Harry Houdini, Carl Jung, Henry Ford and Booker T Washington as found in E L Doctrow's *Ragtime* (1975), Gustave Flaubert in Julian Barnes' *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984), Simón Bolívar in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *The General in His Labyrinth* (1989), the bushranger Ned Kelly in Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000), to name a few. These historical characters are no longer kings and queens, but are simply familiar personages from the mainstream history, whose lives are fictionally intertwined with that of the non-fictional characters. As evident from the examples cited above, these historical figures are particularized and are as evolving as the ex-centric protagonist. By contextualizing these characters, historiographic metafiction negotiates their claims to mainstream history as well as the politics of

exclusion practised against the marginalized figures within the annals of the same history. Such an interrogative stance problematizes both the authenticity of history and the fictionality of literature.

The historical characters such as Ambrose Small, R. C. Harris and Almásy, included in the select novels, are simultaneously fictional and historical entities. Thus, the Ambrose Small of Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* is and is not the Small of history, but a paradoxical identity constructed out of the imagination of the historian and the author. The historical Ambrose J. Small (1866-1919) was a Canadian entertainment tycoon, a theatre magnet who owned theatres in and out of Ontario and Toronto, a self-made millionaire who fought his way up from scratches, a reckless gambler and a notorious womanizer, a cunning and unscrupulous businessman whose enmities and prejudices were better known than his wealth. His mysterious disappearance on 2 December 1919 soon after selling his theatre assets for a million dollars became Canada's most iconic unsolved mystery that failed resolution till date. At the time, it was a sensational case inviting hordes of investigators, private and public searchers, criminologists, clairvoyants and fortune hunters apart from the Canadian police force that conducted an extensive international search of no avail. His wife Theresa Small put up a reward of fifty thousand dollars for information about her husband which at best served to generate headlines of sporadic sightings across the world, conspiracy theories of amnesia, amputation, mistaken identity, suicide and even kidnapping and murder for a ransom. Even Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of the legendary detective Sherlock Holmes was approached by the media to look into the matter. The facts that Small

packed no suitcase, left no note, no ransom call came home and no body was discovered made the mystery one of the "coldest cases" of Canadian criminal history. In 1923, Small was officially declared dead and in 1960 the case was officially closed by the Toronto police.

Nevertheless, Ondaatje resorts to historical revisionism in his portrayal of Ambrose Small, whose mysterious disappearance offers the common man "a momentary respite from the banality of everyday life" (Spinks 151) when the residual facts get tailored with numerous fantasies, rumours and gossips resulting in a passionate public obsession that raged for many more years after the incident. Small makes a brief fictitious appearance in *Lion*, "as a rich man who escaped from a rich shoe" (99), having cast himself into a lifetime of anonymity in the company of his mistress Clara Dickens the radio actress. In her review of the novel titled "Mr. Small isn't here. Have an iguana!", the poet Carolyn Kizer labels Patrick's meeting with Small at Depot Creek as a surrealist episode of adventure in which the millionaire, "who presumably commands the services of numberless minions, pours kerosene on Patrick from the roof and drops a match on him. Patrick runs for his life and jumps in a pool, whereupon Small throws something like a Molotov cocktail at him and nearly blinds him". The Small of the novel also meets with his death of natural causes, just after imploding himself into gibberish of secrets concerning his liaisons, affairs and business negotiations. In fact, his death in Marmora the sled-dog capital of Ontario and Patrick's drive there in order to pick Clara back to his life form the frame narrative of the novel. Another historical character who is foregrounded in *Lion* is R. C. Harris, the Commissioner of City Works who

modernized the city of Toronto through the construction of viaducts, water filtration plants, an efficient transport system of bridges and sidewalks. Harris is given an imaginative rendering when Patrick interviews him in the middle of the night in what turns out to be the latter's aborted mission of blowing up the filtration plant.

Count László Ede Almásy de Zsadány et Törökszentmiklós (1895-1951), the Hungarian explorer, cartographer, aviator and intelligence officer is widely regarded as the model for the titular character of *The English Patient*. In "Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Questions of History", Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek makes an extensive study of this historical character and has come up with the following details from his life:

> Almásy's merits include the discovery of the lost and legendary oasis Zarzura in the Lybian desert, the discovery of prehistorical paintings in the caves of the Uweinat mountains, the cartography of the Lybian desert, the development of civil aviation in Egypt and the building of the Al-Maza airport, scientific and geographical data accumulation in Egypt, the Sudan, Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, Abessynia, and Tripoli, and a good number of papers and books published in Hungarian, French, and German about his travels, discoveries, and experiences in the Second World War. (117)

As a reserve officer of the Royal Hungarian Army, Almásy was assigned to work for the German army led by the "Desert Fox" General Rommel and is believed to have led the Operation Salam, the military expedition across the Libyan Desert that successfully delivered the German spies Johannes Eppler and Hans Gerd Sandstede in Egypt. This feat earned him the award of an Iron Cross and a promotion to the

position of a captain. Zepetnek is of the view that although a historical figure, Count Almásy was a perfectly marginalized Other suitable for Ondaatje's text that both foregrounded and fictionalized him. Despite his published books, papers, monographs and discoveries, the post war life of Almásy was of much debate and speculation; his title of aristocracy was rather obscure; his allegiances, whether he was a Nazi sympathizer or a double agent, remain unproven and as a confirmed homosexual, he was alleged to have been in such a relationship with General Rommel (Zepetnek 122). As in the case of Small of *Lion*, the authorized history leads to a cul-de-sac in the case of Almásy after the Second World War. While the fictional Almásy mostly matches with his historical counterpart in his abilities and discoveries, Ondaatje presents him as a heterosexual having an illicit affair with a married woman, the wife of his explorer-colleague. Thus, the fluid and slippery identity of the historical Almásy is analogous to that of his fictional counterpart which provided Ondaatje with the necessary freedom to portray his protagonist based on him.

Apart from the titular character Almásy, there are other lesser known real life characters as well such as Richard A. Bermann, Almásy's companion in his expedition to Zerzura; Ralph Bagnold whose review on Almásy's monograph is an acknowledged source of the novel; Kip's mentor Lord Suffolk (Charles Howard, the Twentieth Earl of Suffolk) who along with his secretary Miss Morden and chauffeur Hards formed the "Holy Trinity" of the Second World War bomb disposal units; Sir Robert Clayton the fifth and last baronet of Marden and of Hall Place, his wife Lady Clayton East Clayton born Dorothy Mary Durrant (who became Geoffrey Clifton and Katherine Clifton in the

book), Patrick Clayton the British surveyor who supposedly formed the basis of Almásy's closest friend and colleague Madox and so on.

However, as we come to *Anil's Ghost*, no historical characters per se attract our attention save for vague allusions and strong resemblances by which textual incidents and characters are linked to real life ones. Thus, Ondaatje is criticized of resorting to an aesthetic but apolitical stance "without being committed to history, legend, culture or ideology" (Sugunasiri 64) in this novel that dwells upon recent history of his home nation. Similarly, Kanishka Goonewardena accuses Ondaatje for dealing with the symptoms of the Sri Lankan crisis at the cost of its causes by painting "a picture of the everyday life there in a time of terror" (qtd. in Zepetnek 28). Meanwhile, Marlene Goldman finds striking parallels between the lives of the blind historian Palipana and the real life Sri Lankan epigraphist Senerat Paranavitana, who, at the height of his career, fell into an abyss of notoriety, owing to his unprovable and therefore controversial reading of the gold foil Vallipuram inscription; the political killing of Narada at the hands of a novice and the historical crimes that were alleged to have been committed in the late 1980s by the Buddhist monks at the behest of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) and the climactic assassination of the President Katugala at the hands of a suicide bomber and the historical assassination of Ranasinghe Premadasa the third president of Sri Lankan on 1 May 1993, during a May Day rally in north Colombo, by an LTTE suicide bomber. Apart from such far-fetched allusions, one is compelled to accept the Author's note, "…while there existed organizations similar to those in this story, and similar events took place, the characters and incidents in the novel are invented".

Both Scott and Lukács attach less weight to historical details per se, which were incorporated and assimilated into the fiction to authenticate the novel. In fact, Scott was more interested in "historical faithfulness" which he equated with the depiction of the conventional noble virtues pertaining to an age like morality, heroism and capacity for sacrifice. As a result of his "broad portrayal" of the age, the accuracy of individual historical details was gravely overlooked and he even refused to create "eccentric figures [that] fall psychologically outside the atmosphere of the age" (Lukács 60). Historiographic metafiction, on the other hand, deliberately plays upon certain known historical details to reveal their fallibility and to indicate the possibility of error inherent in historiography. These postmodern novels incorporate historical data without assimilating them so that they foreground the very processes of the collection and ordering of such data.

Ondaatje insists on a display of details regarding (mainstream) historical data: his fiction is filled with digits and statistical figures interspersed throughout the text. For example, he informs us that the central span of the Bridge was of 281 feet and 6 inches while the two flanking spans and the two end spans were of 240 and 158 feet respectively (*Lion* 35). The novel *In the Skin of a Lion* abounds with historical data concerning the dimensions of the bridge and the water filtration plant, the dates of their opening, newspaper reports on the rumoured Ambrose Small sightings, the amount of the prize money offered by the Small family, the years of search, the Bertillon record system used for identification between 1889 and 1923, the socio-political and cultural climate of 1938, the list of subcontractors for the water-plant who supplied stone,

concrete, ornamental iron, paint, plasters and so on.

The same novel foregrounds historical data-collection through Patrick's research on the viaduct at the Riverdale Library: "The articles and illustrations he found in the Riverdale Library depicted every detail about the soil, the wood, the weight of the concrete, everything but information on those who actually built the bridge" (145). Patrick collects reference material in the form of newspapers and journals that wrote profusely on Harris' determination to concretize his dream-project, the survey arguments, the scandals, the decision to use night crews, the flooding of the Don River, ice dangers, daredevils whereas the deaths of workers were only "fleetingly mentioned" (144). The printed photographs focused on "the shells of wood structures into which concrete was poured, and then the wood removed like hardened bandages to reveal the piers" (143), while they never represented the nun who fell off the bridge except as a "story" or a legend. Thus, the traditional history of urbanization remained exclusively masculine and refused to picturize the woman even while sensationalizing her story.

When compared with *Lion*, *Patient* offers lesser number of statistical figures. Here, the historical data is incorporated chiefly by means of the names of winds, guns and those of the explorers who set out to seek the lost oasis of Zerzura. Still, the unassimilated statistical data finds its expression in a detailed account of the magnitude of mines laid in Italy and North Africa:

> At the Kismaayo-Afmadu road junction, 260 mines were found. There were 300 at the Omo River Bridge area. On June 30, 1941, South African sappers laid 2,700 Mark 11 mines in Mersa Matruh in one day. Four months later the

British cleared Mersa Matruh of 7,806 mines and placed them elsewhere. (292) The narrative time of the novel is marked by the events such as the plane crash of the musician Glenn Miller which took place on 15 December 1944 and the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which occurred in August 1945. Caravaggio the thief turned spy assumes the role of Patrick the searcher of *Lion* and embarks on a research on the true identity of the English Patient. However, while Patrick's research was substantiated by the newspaper reports, journal articles and photographs he had collected, Caravaggio's reconstruction of the Patient's identity is endorsed more by legends, assumptions and fictitious accounts.

Anil's Ghost that chooses to fictionalize the chaotic Sri Lankan civil life contests with the assumed rationality and empiricism of mainstream history. This is done by problematizing the primacy of Western historical assumptions, methods of data collection and truth claim. Thus, both the processes of historical data-collection and its arrangement are interrogated, not by foregrounding historical data, but by negotiating their theoretical and philosophical principles. Even the traditional rituals like Nētra Mangala described by Palipana the plagiarist-historian turn to be unproven stories and legends. As opposed to *Lion* where figures and statistics guaranteed the inclusion of the working class migrants into the mainstream history, *Anil's Ghost*, because of the very lack of such data problematizes the western preference for statistics as proof for one's scholarship. Likewise, there are no individual seekers like Patrick or Caravaggio here and Anil the investigator from Geneva hardly unearths anything new. Ondaatje seems no longer interested in the discovery of a single and monolithic truth. Truth, already

problematized by the text, is plural and accommodates the multiple versions of Palipana, Anil, Sarath, Ananda and Gamini.

The italicized description of the National Atlas of Sri Lanka, with its seventy-three versions, each representing the rainfall, winds, flora and fauna, the bird life, mineral deposits, reptiles, isobars and altitudes of the "sea-locked" island-nation foregrounds the historical and geographical data. Yet, it excludes names of cities and rivers as well as human life. In this, it is comparable to Patrick's reference material on the construction of the bridge in its exclusive politics of the crucial human element. Another instance where the historical data gets represented involves the above theme of excluded human beings: this time the fragmented pieces of information concerning the last sightings of missing persons collected from the Civil Rights Movement offices.

Lukács further advocates a "poetic awakening" of the characters portrayed in the historical novels so that the readers "re-experience the social and human motives" that spurred them into action in their historical reality (42). This calls forth an identification with the fictional world thus portrayed which, in turn, rather skillfully conceals the joins between fiction and history "in a formal and ontological sleight of hand" (Hutcheon 114). Because of its metafictional self-reflexivity, historiographic metafiction rejects such subterfuge, and instead, celebrates and problematizes the ontological join between fact and fiction. This is done by paradoxically acknowledging the reality of the past while simultaneously contesting "its textualized accessibility" in the present.

As stated already, Ondaatje's representation of the ontological join between fact and fiction is revealed from the interspersion of statistical data with his poetic language.

To explain this, we need to consider his portrayal of Nicholas Temelcoff the undocumented Macedonian immigrant labourer who is also the protagonist of the chapter titled "The Bridge". Temelcoff the daredevil is an aerial labourer at the viaduct who is suspended, by ropes and pulleys, thirty feet down, so that he hangs under the spine of the bridge. His job is to assemble the steel towards the next pier of the bridge under construction, while hanging in air above the Don River. While the author valorizes the heroism of his actions, the potential perils of his life-threatening labour are statistically represented. For instance, he is described figuratively as a "dead star" and as "mercury slipping across a map" while the night wages he receives amounts to just "$1.25" (35).

The superfluity of the metaphorical language stands out in the description of his labour: "Now he enters the cages of steel and wood like a diver entering a sunken vessel that could at any moment tip over into deeper fracture zones of the sea floor…. He is a fragment at the end of the steel bone…. The steel and Nicholas are raised up…like a carrot off the nose of the most recently built section of the bridge" (39-40). It is well evident that the "cages of steel and wood" suggest the entrapment of the migrant labourer, the comparison with the sunken vessel exposes his insecure working conditions, the simile of "fragment" reveals his insignificance and by equalizing him with steel he is both venerated for his courage and subordinated for his subhuman mechanical existence.

The author also raises him up to an exalted position both physically and metaphorically, imparting him with a bird's eye view and an ontological awareness of the valley: "He knows the panorama of the valley better than any engineer. Like a bird.

Better than Edmund Burke, the bridge's architect, or Harris, better than the surveyors of 1912 when they worked blind through the bush" (49). His practical wisdom may be contrasted to the epistemological scholarship possessed by Harris, who, despite having never entered the tunnels himself,

> …understood the continuity of the city, the daily consumptions of water, the speed of raw water through a filter bed, the journeys of chlorine and sulphur-dioxide to the island filtration plant, the 119 inspections by tugboats each year of the various sewer outfalls, and the approximate number of valves and caissons of the East Toronto pumping stations, and the two miles a year of water-main construction—from the St. Clair Reservoir to the high-level pumping station—and the construction of the John Street surge tank. (110)

Does history credit Temelcoff with his daredevilry? Is he paid and repaid enough for his contributions? These are some of the questions raised by Ondaatje's depiction of the hero of "The Bridge". Despite his superiority, Temelcoff and his likes will not make to the mainstream history, except in a fictional photograph retrieved by Ondaatje from amidst Patrick's reference. This is the irony of the mainstream historiography to which Ondaatje wishes to draw our attention when he comments, "Even in archive photographs it is difficult to find him. Again and again you see vista before you and the eye must search along the wall of sky to the spec of burned paper across the valley that is him, an exclamation mark, somewhere in the distance between bridge and river" (34). Temelcoff recognizes Harris "by the time it takes him to walk the sixty-four feet six inches from sidewalk to sidewalk on the bridge and by his expensive tweed coat

that cost more than the combined weeks' salaries of five bridge workers" (43). The disparity in wealth is further contrasted by the labourers' deplorable working conditions and the neo-Byzantine affluence of the water-works they toiled to construct. "All morning they [the tunnellers] slip in wet clay unable to stand properly, pissing where they work, eating where someone else left shit" (106); whereas the filtration plant thus constructed boasts of herringbone tiles that cost more than half their salaries put together (236).

The figurative descriptions are temporarily replaced by statistical figures when the possible dangers of Temelcoff's life are accounted:

> He allows ten feet of lose rope on the pulley, attaches the wrench, then drops on to the two-foot handle, going down with it, and jars with the stiffening of the bolt, falling off into the air, and jars again when he reaches the end of the rope. He pulleys himself up and does it again. After ten minutes every bone feels broken—the air he stops in feels hard as concrete, his spine aching where the harness pulls him short. (40)

The crisp journalistic details provided above ironically magnify his hazardous life, his isolation and the fact that the responsibility to save his life in times of accidents is solely his as his predecessor got killed in an accident, "cut, the upper half of his body found an hour later, still hanging in the halter" (41).

The join between fact and fiction is further incorporated in the descriptions of the photographs of Temelcoff, of the tunnel-workers captured by the city photographer Arthur Goss, the old newspaper clippings and the 1919 files concerning Small that

Patrick reads through at the Paris library, Patrick's three love letters to Clara, Hana's photographs and mementos concerning her late father, the italicized passages from Cato's last letter, a passage from Joseph Conrad's letter to a newspaper and the statistical depiction of the magnitude of his imminent destruction of the waterworks. It is difficult to assume how much of this data is fictitious and how much borrowed from the mainstream history as Ondaatje writes only a vague acknowledgement for this text unlike *Patient* and *Ghost* whose detailed acknowledgement sections run over two pages. After thanking a few individuals and organizations, the author declares, "this is a work of fiction and certain liberties have at times been taken with some dates and locales" (*Lion*).

The English Patient too follows the suit of its predecessor in that a clever mixture of fact and fiction exposes and contests with its ontological join. Here again, not all facts are "really" historical, but fiction is garbed in the fashion of historical facts so as to give an impression of factuality. This often results in the historicizing of fiction in the form of the excerpt from the minutes of the Royal Geographical Society which serves as the epigraph of the novel, meticulous description of the types of winds, tribes, guns, bombs and oases, italicized quotations from other texts, a list of the parts of a bomb, an almost "empirical" account of the disposal of bombs and mines, Hana's letter to Clara with the picture of a dovecote and Almásy's copy of the 1890 edition of Herodotus' *Histories* which he carries around as a commonplace book.

It is reiterated that the above list need not be "purely" historical; some of them may be fictional parodies of historical representation of data by which the empirical

claims of traditional historiography are contested and problematized. A closer look at the aforementioned epigraph would clarify this point:

> 'Most of you, I am sure, remember the tragic circumstances of the death of Geoffrey Cliffton at Gilf Kebir, followed later by the disappearance of his wife, Katharine Clifton, which took place during the 1939 desert expedition in search of Zerzura.
>
> 'I cannot begin this meeting tonight without referring very sympathetically to those tragic occurrences.
>
> 'The lecture this evening…'
>
> *From the minutes of the Geographical Society meeting of November 194_, London* (n.pag.)

This epigraph has the appearance of a historical document, the excerpt of the minutes of the "Geographical Society meeting" held during the month of November in one of the years of the fifth decade of the twentieth century. At the same time, the exact year and date are missing from the source (italicized in the original), which could be explained by a need for privacy. Zepetnek has identified that the characters "Geoffrey Clifton" and "Katharine Clifton" are Ondaatje's fictional versions of Sir Robert Clayton East-Clayton and his wife Lady Dorothy Mary Durrant Clayton (120-121). This being so, how can the minutes be real? If Clifton and Katharine Clifton never existed outside Ondaatje's text, the excerpt from the minutes is a piece of fabricated evidence, by which the author pokes fun at most mainstream historiography. This could be seen

as his challenge at those critics who would search for the "reality" behind his fiction. To Ondaatje, this is the strategy employed by historians to pass their discourse as "real" facts.

In *Anil's Ghost*, the author attempts to fictionalize history and to emphasize the dramatic potential of Sri Lankan civil life by comparing it with the darkest Greek tragedies. The novel, which strives to reveal the fissures in the mainstream historiography, does so by staging philosophical discussions on some of the widely accepted variables of history-writing such as truth. Still, there are some undigested data like the details concerning the medical education of Anil and Gamini, Anil's discovery of the amygdala or the seat of fear, her reconstruction of the last moments of Sailor, the cost differences of an artificial limb, entomological data offered by Chitra, effects of bombs on human bodies described in urgent prose, Gamini's numerous patients and his "offstage battle with the war" (209) and the reference to the photographs of Katugala just before he got killed. The unassimilated historical data and factualized fiction obstruct the readers' identification with the novel and prevent them from indulging in a "willing suspension of disbelief", thereby contributing to the distancing effect that is achieved by the exposure of the join between fact and fiction.

The interface between fact and fiction intrinsic to these novels has given rise to a number of specific issues concerning reference, subjectivity, narrative, intertextuality and ideology. Of the first four issues, the question of reference and representation is a classic ontological theme which the historiographic metafiction contests by representing the discourses that construct the external world instead of imitating that world itself

(Waugh 100). As a result, history becomes one such discursive construct, a text to which historiographic metafiction refers and strives to represent. Thus, while the ontology of the past is not denied, all our epistemological awareness of it is contested and problematized. As Hayden White argues, "the historical narrative does not reproduce the event it describes; it tells us in what direction to think about the events" (qtd. in Hutcheon 154).

By self-consciously locating itself onto the threshold between past and present, historiographic metafiction reinstates the past "as the referent of language, the relic or trace of the real" (146). In order to study the referentiality of historiographic metafiction, Hutcheon offers a multi-term theoretical model that identifies five kinds of reference. They are: the "intra-textual reference" that occurs within the text, by which the language of fiction primarily refers to the "universe of reality of fiction"; the "self-reference" by which the fictional language metafictionally hooks to itself; the "intertextual" reference whereby the fiction points to other intertexts by word or structure; the "textualized extratextual" that refers to historical documents as traces of the past; and the "hermeneutic" where the text self-consciously returns to its own performative process and to the enunciative act of reading it. (154-157)

To the philosopher Kent Palmer, the term "intra-textuality" concerns the treatment of "a given text or a set of texts as a fractal landscape" which is explored with "a full realization of their overlapping and interpenetrating internal contexts and signs that express concepts and archetypal motifs" (1). As the prefix "intra-" means "within", to many theorists such reference pertains to echoes within a single text. This view treats

the text as a coherent, autonomous body, a closed system in which the meaning is generated in constant echoes of different parts. But to Palmer and L K Wheeler, "intra-textual" could refer to a group of related texts written by the same author as in the case of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* or Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. In *The Canterbury Tales,* the tales narrated by different pilgrims echo certain themes, phrases, concerns and ideas of previous storytellers, thereby consolidating them. Thus, "the overall meaning originates not in one single pilgrim's pronouncement, but rather *between* or *amongst* the various statements made by other pilgrims" (Wheeler).

By restricting the intra-textual enquiry to a single text, fiction is validated as an autonomous reality independent of its relation to the empirical world external to the text. However, historiographic metafiction problematizes both these concepts: of the internal autonomy of textuality as well as the external empiricism of extra-textuality. This prompts us to look for the intra-textual both within an individual text and among the three select novels under consideration here. The intra-textual reference within *Lion* often involves narrating an event after showing it as in the case of Patrick reliving the lives of Temelcoff, Cato, Alice and Hana through his research on the Bridge, letters and photographs; Ambrose Small's fictitious death in Clara's company later narrated by Clara to Patrick; the attack on Caravaggio in his prison cell first witnessed by Patrick who later narrates it to Hana; Patrick who had seen the skaters at night as a little boy, later learning from Alice that they were Finns, thus solving an ancient riddle.

In *Patient*, the intra-textual becomes a kind of cross reference by which the

circumstances leading to Hana's isolated existence in the Villa San Girolamo, nursing the English Patient are narrated thrice in the second chapter titled "In Near Ruins": first by the doctors at Rome who described Hana's "shell shock" to Caravaggio (29-30), then by the omniscient narrator suggesting her father fixation with the burned patient (44-45) and finally, by another third person narrator closely revealing her emotional turmoil that led to her decision to stay back with her dying patient (54-55). Each of these narratives, by means of an "incremental repetition", throws further light to the personality of Hana, revealing the subtle nuances of her character. Similarly, the "Marseillaise" that Hana passionately sung when she was sixteen is repeated by herself on her twenty-first birthday at the villa (56 & 285). Caravaggio, having witnessed both the events, notices that Hana's passionate rendition of sixteen is replaced by the "scarred" hopelessness of the five years of war, so that the song has lost all its earlier certainty: "the singer could only be one voice against all the mountains of power. That was the only sureness. The one voice was the single unspoiled thing" (285-86).

The doomed fate of Anil's investigation is sealed quite early in *Ghost* by the intra-textual reference to that of a previous human rights investigation conducted in Congo, when the team, having incurred the local government's displeasure, was forced to board a plane and leave. Despite the international authority of Geneva, the team lost their data overnight with all "their paperwork burned": "If and when you were asked by a government to leave, you left. You took nothing with you. Not a slide tray, not a piece of film. At the airport, while they searched her clothing, she'd sat almost naked on a stool" (29). The reference to the previous investigation portends the treatment Anil

would receive at the end of her present investigation, which is not shown, but imagined by Sarath. The end of the novel is further established by Gamini's almost prophetic comment:

> 'American movies, English books—remember how they all end?' Gamini asked that night. 'The American or the Englishman gets on a plane and leaves. That's it. The camera leaves with him. He looks out of the window at Mombasa or Vietnam or Jakarta, someplace now he can look at through the clouds. The tired hero. A couple of words to the girl beside him. That's enough reality for the West. It's probably the history of the last two hundred years of Western political writing. Go home. Write a book. Hit the circuit.' (285-86)

Another example would be the question recurring throughout the text: "Who killed Cherry Valance?" (63, 236 & 256) which portends Sarath's tragedy at the end of the novel. This line, which is repeated by Anil to test the failing memory of her friend Leaf, turns out to be the crux of the novel—if the innocent character Cherry Valance of the movie *Point Blank* could get killed for trying to stop a fight, then why not Sarath for trying to mediate between Anil and the Sri Lankan government? Other examples of intra-textual reference includes Anil's meeting of Gamini (38) even before he was introduced to her by Sarath; the ritual of Nētra Mangala described by Palipana (98-99) and later performed by Ananda Udugama (304-07) and the metaphor of amygdala the seat of fear referring to Sri Lanka.

The intra-textual references among the three select novels would be recurrent themes such as colouring, naming, reading, blindness, theatricality, demarcation, tableau,

photographs; recurrent characters like Hana and Caravaggio who inhabit both *Lion* and *Patient*; recurrent situations like Alice Gull being cast out of history, Almásy out of the Allies' watchful eyes and Palipana erased out of the Sinhala encyclopedia; Patrick as a representative of the author, observing and collecting data about the lives of Clara, Ambrose, Alice, Temelcoff and Cato (*Lion* 156-57), while Almásy and Caravaggio doing the same, one with the aid of imagination and the other by means of morphine, with the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Clifton and Almásy himself respectively.

As postmodernism rejects all external verifiable truth and accepts its own identity as a construct, it indulges in auto-textual self-reference. This is usually metafictional in character and requires a detailed analysis. Patricia Waugh defines the term "metafiction" as "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality". Such self-reference enables them to examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction and to investigate "the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text". Because of their awareness of the theoretical issues involved in the construction of fiction, the metafictional writers tend to embody the "dimensions of self-reflexivity and formal uncertainty" into their novels, thus exploring "a theory of fiction through the practice of writing fiction" (2). Thus, metafiction concerns itself with the novelistic conventions that constitute it, thereby revealing its own constructedness to the reader, who is invited to deconstruct and reconstruct the postmodern text.

To Waugh, metafiction could take a wide variety of possibilities such as the insertion of an author-character in the form of the bearded Fowles in his *The French*

Lieutenant's Woman, the novels of Iris Murdoch that explore the theme of fictionality, the works of E L Doctrow that permit their deconstructed texts to reconstruct in terms of a new realism and the texts of Federman and Sorrentino that totally reject realism by representing the world as a "fabrication of competing semiotic symbols" (19). In her *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox*, Linda Hutcheon identifies two types of metafictional self-reflexivity: those texts that are aware of their narrative processes and those that are conscious of the power and powerlessness of their own language (22-23).

In Ondaatje's novels, metafictional self-reflexivity constitutes both the types indicated by Hutcheon. Self-references that display an awareness of their narrative process comprise those apparently general statements that refer to the writing of fiction, writer, story, characters, theme, plot, power and powerlessness of language and literature and so on. It has already been seen that both Patrick and Almásy take turns in assuming authorial position in their respective texts. Apart from this, certain other characters like Temelcoff and Caravaggio become narrators when the former is made aware of his place in history and when the latter invented "a mythical agent named 'Cheese',…clothing him with facts" and "qualities of character" (*Patient* 124). *Anil's Ghost* has an author-character called Cullis, who is compared to a tumbler or a tinker that packs things into a book (164).

Descriptions of "book" including story, novel, plot and character run throughout all three novels thus: "This is only a love story. He does not wish for plot and all its consequences" (*Lion* 160); "A novel is a mirror walking down a road", "Many books

open with an author's assurance of order…" (*Patient* 97 & 99); the indoor courtyard of the villa being compared to an open book (232), bomb-defusing to that of the climax of novels (111) and even Almásy asks Caravaggio, "am I just a book? Something to be read…" (269). While the rooms of houses at night are compared to sub plots in *Lion* (243), Leaf of *Ghost* declares, "I'm just a detail from the subplot" (256). It is to be noted that many of the characters of Ondaatje's novels express close affinities with the art of novel-writing and the power of characters within a text. This is evident in Almásy's comparison of himself to the "cynical villains in a book" (*Patient* 244) and in the following passage from *Lion*:

> Patrick never believed that characters lived only on the page. They altered when the author's eye was somewhere else. Outside the plot there was a great darkness, but there would of course be daylight elsewhere on earth. Each character had his own time zone, his own lamp, otherwise they were just men from nowhere. (143)

The power of language and literature is celebrated in *The English Patient* where Caravaggio elaborates upon the potential eroticism of words (127), where the Patient himself, as a man "governed by words" (245), reminds Caravaggio of their power to initiate a fatal romance and where Kip attributes Britain's power to her possession of "histories and printing presses" (301). In *Anil's Ghost*, the power of fiction to convince is placed above that of truth: "Information was made public with diversions and subtexts—as if the truth would not be of interest when given directly, without waltzing backwards" (55). The power of language is further revealed by Anil's improvement

upon Chitra Abeysekera's request for funds, by which the dramatic effect of a few added adjectives transformed the latter's "list of abilities into a more suggestive curriculum vitae" (71).

At the same time, the powerlessness of language does not escape the author's attention as he laments the futility of indulging in an artistic exercise depicting the plight of the working class immigrants:

> If he (Patrick) were an artist he would have painted them (the dyers) but that was false celebration….What would the painting tell? That they were twenty to thirty-five years old, were Macedonians mostly, though there were a few Poles and Lithuanians. That on average they had three or four sentences of English, that they had never read the Mail and Empire or Saturday Night. That during the day they ate standing up. That they had consumed the most evil smell in history, they were consuming it now, flesh death, which lies in the vacuum between flesh and skin, and even if they never stepped into this pit again—a year from now they would burp up that odour. That they would die of consumption and at present they did not know it. That in winter this picturesue yard of colour was even more beautiful, the thin layer of snowfall between the steaming wells. Below-zero weather and the almost naked men descend into the vats at the same whistle and cover themselves later with burlap as they stand waiting. (*Lion* 130-31)

Ondaatje realizes that the living and working conditions of these workers are too pitiful to be aesthetically represented: such a representation would be an insult to the daily

horrors undergone by these men who are forced to lead lives beyond the Aristotelian catharsis of pity and fear. Equally unrepresentable is the civil life of Ondaatje's home nation Sri Lanka as, "the darkest Greek tragedies were innocent compared with what was happening here" (*Ghost* 11).

The intertextual reference, whether verbal or structural, originates out of a desire to rewrite the past in the context of the present. Here, the literary text is regarded neither as an original, nor a copy of an outside reality. Further, the textualized past is incorporated into the texts of the present by means of parody of both literary and historical discourses. Historiographic metafiction, through their inscription of literary and historical texts, thus becomes a "doubled" discourse informed by "culturally significant intertexts" (Hutcheon 133). In Ondaatje's novels, the intertextual reference arises out of the echoes and literary allusions pertaining to other literary texts. The intertextual pleasure emerges out of the author's deliberate selection and inclusion of extracts from other texts that would echo aspects of his own, thereby imparting it with an enriched meaning. For example, it is thrice mentioned in *Patient* that Mrs. Clifton read out to the company of desert explorers: at first, the reference is to a poem by Stephen Crane (103), then an excerpt from Milton's *Paradise Lost* (153) and finally, the Candaules-Gyges story from *Histories* (246-8). While Hana reads the first incident in the Patient's commonplace book, the second forms a part of the latter's apparently meaningless ramblings to Hana and the third is narrated by the morphene-induced Patient himself to Caravaggio. Whereas the first intertext describes the desert as the setting, the second one hints at a budding romance and the third implicitly establishes the parameters of

their adulterous relationship.

Apart from being a type of reference, Hutcheon marks intertextuality as a major issue concerning the postmodern. Hence, it would be analysed in detail in the forthcoming sections of this chapter, along with its subsidiary features like parody and irony. While the intertextual reference treats history as an intertext, the textualized extratextual regards historiography as a textual means of mediating the past. This implies the inclusion and foregrounding of the historical and "extratextual documents" as the remains of the past. All the historical characters and incidents as well as the methods of researching data fall under this type of reference.

Finally, the hermeneutic reference relates to the process of reading and interpreting a written text, which Hutcheon views as the site for potential interaction between the fictive world and the external world inhabited by the reader. This involves the establishment of the reader as the consumer of the text, foregrounding of the process of reading, characters who present themselves as readers and consumers of art, the effects of text on the reader and so on. Reading is a significant and recurring motif in Ondaatje's fiction. Many of his characters like Patrick, Almásy, Katharine, Palipana, Sarath and Anil are voracious readers, while some of them are even researchers. We see Alice reading out Conrad's letters to Patrick, Patrick himself reading Cato's letter and researching about the Bridge, Hana reading out to the English Patient, Caravaggio attempting to "read" the patient like a difficult book, Anil's attempt to read and reconstruct the lives of the Sailor, Ananda and Sarath.

Regarding the consumption of a given text, Ondaatje states: "If only it were

possible that in the instance something was written down—idea or emotion or musical phrase—it became known to others of the era" (*Lion* 133). Often the contemporaries fail to grasp the real significance of a text. The process of reading is specific to each text and hence is to be mastered patiently, as the Patient instructs Hana to read Kipling slowly:

> 'Read him slowly, dear girl, you must read Kipling slowly. Watch carefully where the commas fall so you can discover the natural pauses. He is a writer who used pen and ink. He looked up from the page a lot, I believe, stared through his window and listened to birds, as most writers who are alone do. Some do not know the names of birds, though he did. Your eye is too quick and North American. Think about the speed of his pen. What an appalling, barnacled old first paragraph it is otherwise.' (*Patient* 100)

It is again the Patient who proves that the process of reading requires the reader to be imaginative, both to read into the text and out of the text. Thus, he points out the Gilf Kebir to Caravaggio, off a portion of the Indian map printed on *Kim.* To the truly imaginative reader, the text is just a means; not an end. Caravaggio as a reader wishes to read the patient as a book and hence induces the latter with morphine so that "each swallow of morphine by the body opens a further door…" (263).

Hana, herself an avid reader, is aware of the effect of reading on her: "She entered the story knowing she would emerge from it feeling she had been immersed in the lives of others, in plots that stretched back twenty years, her body full of sentences and moments, as if awaking from sleep with a heaviness caused by unremembered

dreams" (13). It was she who felt that Kip the sapper entered their lives out of this fiction, "as if the pages of Kipling had been rubbed in the night like a magic lamp" (100). Patrick, on the other hand, translates this as a process of fooling him by someone he felt could not fool him (*Lion* 153). The attempt to re-read a film like a text often results in the Sri Lankan movie goers' demand for "replay" and "rewind" of a great scene (*Ghost* 237). As in the case of writing, Ondaatje is not unaware of the fate of an unread document, however important it is, for this would be the fate of Anil's investigative report which would be filed in Geneva. Without an informed reader, that document would remain meaningless and uninterpreted.

Hutcheon offers her five-part model as an overlapping "route" rather than a static model of referentiality, by which postmodernism attempts to transcend the modernist "referential agnosticism" (Norris qtd. in Hutcheon 157). By problematizing our discourses of reality, postmodernism effectively contests our knowledge systems conditioned by such discourses. Without providing any privileged access to reality, postmodernism thus offers a complex, self-reflexive set of questions rather than answers.

The traditional theories of subjectivity owe their allegiance to Rene Descartes, who defined the limited, partial, error-prone "subjective" by differentiating it from the universal, impartial, error free and human "objective". Until recently, it has been widely acknowledged that the notions of agency and responsibility are central to the idea of subjectivity. As Luce Irigaray insists, the idea of the subjective has always emphasized the coherence and stability of a white, masculine, Western individual self. However, with the advent of postmodernism that interrogates "such celebrations of first-world,

privileged-class eclecticism" (Hall 126), the liberal humanist concept of a unified and coherent subjectivity got decentered and situated. Historiographic metafiction's project of inscription and the subsequent subversion of subjectivity involve contestation of the latter by means of an unstable narrative perspective or focalization point. Such a narrative can be either "resolutely singular" with overt, deliberately manipulative narrators or "disconcertingly plural" with myriad voices. Thus, the traditional humanist notion of a knowable, intentional, unified and self-sufficient subjectivity gave way to a plurality of indeterminate selves that characterize the postmodern idea of a textualized subjectivity.

To Hutcheon, the traditional inscription of the subject is problematized and contested on the one hand by the over-assertive and deliberately manipulative self and on the other, by a pluralizing multivalency of myriad perspectives. In other words, the postmodern employs the metafictional narration of the resolutely singular and the disconcertingly plural to interrogate the Cartesian *cogito*, which is re-inscribed as "*We think . . . and rethink . . . and therefore we are*" (Hall 130). However, such a view should not be perceived as a total negation of the subjective; it should be seen as the subversion of the traditional subjectivities of a unified, coherent and totalizing masculinity and of a continuous, universal and non-contradictory historicity. As a result, the multiple and the heterogenous subject of historiographic metafiction easily contests with and decentres the traditional transcendental notion of a male subjectivity as a unique and valid source of meaning.

In her *Poetics*, Hutcheon goes on to describe how the postmodern reader is affected by such redefined and re-contextualized subjectivities:

> The multiple points of view prevent any totalizing concept of the protagonist's subjectivity, and simultaneously prevent the reader from finding or taking any one subject position from which to make the novel coherent. Asked to confront and not evade contradictions, the reader cannot but feel ill at ease and disturbed. As spoken subject s/he finds no anchor in discourse or her/his own (gendered) subjectivity through identification. (169)

Thus, postmodernism precludes its readers from identifying with the spoken subject of a discourse, thereby challenging the traditional humanist notion of man as a coherent and continuous subject; of narrative as an autonomous, closed system of meaning; "of the first-person pronoun as a reflection of subjectivity and of the third-person pronoun as the guarantee of objectivity" (177).

Ondaatje, according to Gordon Gamlin, employs the strategies of oral narrative such as verbal fluidity and variability, emphasis on performance, audience participation, dynamism and resistance to closure. The individual rendering of a common text by each artist decides the originality of the performance, which largely depends on the artist's powers of composition and improvisation. Hence, it is contingent on the performativity, which in turn, depends on the active or passive participation of the audience or observers. As the oral narrative directly addresses its target audience in close proximity, it achieves a simultaneity which the pre-recorded written narrative is devoid of. One may say that the oral narrative that is born out of the interface between the individual performer and the community as represented by the audience, constantly and dynamically evolves itself to match the changing social conditions, at the same time

lacking the finality of the written discourse.

Accordingly, in *Lion*, the author establishes an ever-expanding sense of history that is devoid of finality but susceptible to constant interrogation. The monolithic notion of the mainstream history is challenged by a non-linear representation of individual histories, by which the narrative widens annularly to include any number of new characters into its fold who mute and replace the established dignitaries of the official history. Thus, while "Little Seeds" narrates the history of Hazen Lewis, "The Bridge" relates that of Temelcoff, "The Searcher" of Patrick and Clara, "Palace of Purification" of the migrant labourers, "Remorse" of Patrick the arsonist, "Caravaggio" of the thief and "Maritime Theatre" of the rest of the characters. These micro-histories subvert the traditional primacy attributed to the singular protagonist.

Ondaatje further illustrates this by means of the analogy of a play where several actresses acquire the role of the heroine simply by passing the heroine's costume, "After half an hour the powerful matriarch removed her large coat from which animal pelts dangled and she passed it, along with her strength, to one of the minor characters….Each person had their moment when they assumed the skins of wild animals, when they took responsibility for the story" (157). Along with the animal hide thus circulated, the authority and identity of the protagonist also gets transferred to the minor characters, so that as soon as the limelight falls upon them, they begin their lines in the capacity of the protagonist. This technique abandons the traditional hierarchy of actors and equalizes all the participants however ex-centric they are. As a multi-layered "web of symbolic connections" (Gamlin 76), a collage or a jigsaw puzzle with missing

pieces, the text problematizes the need for the consequential plot or the conventional closure of a simple realistic novel.

The participation of the audience is portrayed twice in the text, first in the context of migrants who closely follow the speeches of the stage actors to learn the accent and pronunciation of the Canadian English. In their anxieties to get the pronunciation right, the migrants pursue the actors so close that each speech is succeeded by its repetitions, "spoken simultaneously by at least seventy people and so tended to lose its spontaneity" (47). This impersonation carries on to such an extent that upon the death of an actor onstage, the show goes on without interruption as a Sicilian butcher steps in to complete his part so meticulously. The second event is when Patrick, as a representative of the audience, intervenes in Alice's passionate performance as a life-sized muted puppet at the waterworks. True to the traditions of the oral theatre, such an intervention from the audience is an expected practice, for as Alice later tells Patrick, "Someone always comes out of the audience to stop me, Patrick. This time it was you" (125).

In the text, such substitution of primary actors by the marginal onlookers gets translated into the unexplained inclusion and falling out of characters. For example, Patrick who remains a watcher, searcher and spectator in the stories of Clara, Ambrose, Alice, Temelcoff and Cato, like "a prism that refracted their lives" (157) very soon becomes the missing link that joins them all. Thus, from the role of an investigating observer, he temporarily gatecrashes into the lives of Clara and Ambrose as Clara's lover and later into the lives of Alice and Hana, filling up the absence of the dead Cato. Likewise, Alice, who is introduced as Clara's "pale friend" (75) that remains a

silent and self-effacing spectator to the love story of Patrick and Clara, replaces her friend in the life of Patrick Lewis. Thus, characters slip in and out of the textual fabric easily and effortlessly.

However, in between such fluid tales, the omniscient narrator makes his all-knowing, all-seeing presence felt during various occasions that demand an awareness of the characters' whereabouts before and after the story time. For example, in *Lion*, it is this third person narrator who hints at what Patrick the boy of "Little Seeds" is to learn later in his life about the migrant loggers, "It takes someone else, much later, to tell the boy that" (8). The story promised here is that of Cato, the son of a Finnish logger, who fought union battles up north and was eventually murdered in the winter of 1921. It is related to an adult Patrick in the "Palace of Purification" by Alice, the "someone else" mentioned in page 8. Until then, Patrick is destined to remain oblivious of the revolution and of the union struggles contemporaneous to him, waged by the migrants in the northern part of the country where he was born. Similarly, it is this precognitive narrator who indicates how Patrick is going to learn the official names of the bugs, moths and grasshoppers of his farm, thereby getting reintroduced to them:

> Years later at the Riverdale Library he will learn how the shining leaf-chafers destroy shrubbery, how the flower beetles feed on the juice of decaying wood or young corn…. Having given them fictional names he will learn their formal titles as if perusing the guest list of a ball—the Spur-throated Grasshopper! The Archbishop of Canterbury! (9)

As in the case of Patrick, the third person narrator permits us a glimpse of

Caravaggio as a bridge labourer in "The Bridge", "When Caravaggio quits a year later he will cut the thongs with a fish knife and fling the blocks into the half-dry tar" (28), long before the character is delineated as a thief in the penultimate chapter. Regarding the fate of Temelcoff, the omniscient author is both precognitive and retrocognitive: "Five years earlier or ten years into the future the woman would have smelled the flour in his hair,…" (42), "Nicholas, unfortunately, would later choose Fats Waller as his model" (47) and of his translation dreams caused by a fast and obsessive learning of English (46-47). The narrator also offers us an exclusive view of Ambrose Small's lonely morning routine in his office an hour before the scheduled office time when he "pulled out an imported avocado pear, sliced it into thin green moons, and sat at his roll-top desk eating it and thinking" (58). Still, this omniscient narrator remains self conscious of the multiplicity of the fragmented human stories he handles: "A nun on a bridge, a dare-devil who was unable to sleep without drink, a boy watching a fire from his bed at night, an actress who ran away with a millionaire—the detritus and chaos of the age was realigned" (145).

However, the omniscient narrator of *Lion* becomes limited and selective in *Patient* by describing Hana's life in detail (49-55) while adamantly withholding information about the past and identity of the English Patient. The patient is referred to as the "Englishman" throughout the text until page 263, where Caravaggio establishes his identity as Almásy. Only after the patient divulges his past by means of a morphine-induced confession, does the author refer to him by his official name. In *Ghost*, on the other hand, the narrator remains quite unobtrusive and self effacing with the result that

he allows the story to unfold itself before the reader and the characters to reveal themselves to each other at their destined points of time.

According to the teleological concept of Derrida, historiography posits the selection and narrative positioning of events of the past so that the past is made sensible by imposing a finite end and origin onto it. Historiographic metafiction, on the other hand, resorts to problematize a limited and meaningful notion of the past. This is often done by replacing coherent and individualistic accomplishments by dissipated forces of anonymity; totalities by contradictions; the universal and transcendent by the local and the provisional; continuity, development and evolution by gaps, ruptures and other discontinuities.

Ondaatje's fiction is marked by certain deliberate discrepancies and unexplained elisions that enable him to dispense with the stability of a traditional narrative voice that imparts the past with an epistemological significance. Apart from characters like Briffa and Kosta who are named in *Lion* casually, without proper introductions, there are elisions such as how Patrick becomes a searcher after the death of his father or how he becomes a tunneller after the departure of Clara. Characteristic of his episodic, fragmentary style, the author leaves unexplained how Patrick, a young worker from the woods "was befriended by the sisters (of Small) at their house on Isabella Street" (*Lion* 60) and was appointed as their private detective, or why Small should take so much interest in Patrick, quiz Clara about him and decide to live in a cottage closer to Patrick's childhood home when Ondaatje himself declares that Patrick was just one among the many millions of searchers who set themselves upon the trail of Small.

Similarly, Ondaatje leaves unexplained how Caravaggio escapes prison by daubing himself in blue paint or how Patrick links Alice's death by explosion to Harris and his waterworks.

In *Patient*, such discrepancies are two fold in the sense that they are both textual and functional. In pages 21-22, the author describes an elaborate ritual of Bedouins who carried around the wounded and blindfolded Almásy to identify the guns from different periods and nations. It goes unexplained how the desert tribes benefitted from making him recognize the names of their guns or how they came to know of his talent for the same. It goes without saying that the narration, both by the author and by the Patient are more incongruent than any textual discrepancy. For example, in page 60, Ondaatje switches between the thoughts of Hana and the speech of the Patient with the result that the reader is clueless as to whether this is a dialogue or merely thinking aloud. The paragraph that begins with "Okay, tell me, she thought, take me somewhere" ends in "No, said Hana, laughing". Without any quotation marks or other punctuation switches to indicate that the patient is talking to her about the Italian renaissance, one is bound to wonder if this is a real conversation between the nurse and her patient or is she simply imagining it all. Describing his desert exploits, the patient at first begins to speak in first person in "We were desert Europeans…" (144); a hundred pages later, while retaining the first person narrative, he refers to himself in third person as Almásy, "When Almásy was like this we usually dispersed, but this was Madox's last night in Cairo and we stayed" (259), thereby taking a point of view different and outside of his own self. By switching between first and third persons, the patient effectively pulls off

the suspense regarding his identity till page 268, when Caravaggio declares him to be Count Ladislaus de Almásy and he does not deny it.

By aesthetically asserting its fictional autonomy while simultaneously situating itself within the historical discourse, historiographic metafiction paradoxically reworks both fictional and "real" pasts. This is often done by incorporating the intertexts of both history and literature into its own textual framework so that the ontological demarcation between history and literature is asseverated rather than obliterated. Since both history and literature are equally reduced to texts and intertexts "with interrelating plots which appear to interact independently of human design" (Waugh 48-9), historiographic metafiction successfully asserts that both history and literature are human constructs.

Based on their essential characteristics, intertexts may be categorized into different types. They are the notion of vertical intertext as put forward by the Australian media critic John Fiske, which refers to the relation between the primary text and texts of a different type like photographs or painting; the obligatory intertext by which hypertexts like Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* are linked to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*; the optional intertext by which the link between the hypotext and hypertext is less clearly brought out than the obligatory so that it remains just a possibility; the accidental intertext in which the readers stumble upon intertextual references in other texts; the thematic and structural intertexts in which the intertextuality is based on the similarities in theme or structure. Ondaatje's intertexts are mostly thematic in character (or the selection is based on their thematic similarity or dissimilarity). In the case of historical intertexts, structural similarity may be perceived as

Ondaatje has attempted to parody authentic history-writing, for example, the one found in the epigraph of *Lion*.

Ondaatje makes no effort to hide his intertexts, both fictional and historical. However, among the three select novels, *Patient* is the most enriched with intertextuality. It alludes to a wide spectrum of intertexts including Herodotus' *Histories*, Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, the Holy Bible (King James Version), Stendhal's *The Charterhouse of Parma*, James F Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Richard Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*, the *Kitab al Kanuz*, Almásy's *Récentes Explorations dans le Désert Libyque*, poems by Stephen Crane and Wallace Stevens, songs of Frank Sinatra, Lorenz Hart, George and Ira Greshwin, Caravaggio's painting *David with the Head of Goliath*, the life histories of László Almásy and his desert explorations, Poliziano, Operation Salaam and Eppler's code-book *Rebecca*. Many of these texts are acknowledged by the author himself both within the text of the novel and at the acknowledgment section at the end. Hence, the study of intertextuality employed here has to do with the author's intentional selection of intertexts rather than reader's discovery of connections as celebrated by Barthes and Kristeva. All texts are invested with fictionality, in other words, treated equally as literary intertexts, although some of them are drawn from diverse fields such as the authorized or fictional history, painting, music and song lyrics. Similarly, intertexts are not differentiated based on the availability of tangible and well-preserved records as in the case of songs and paintings. It is assumed that the accessibility of the ontological status of the past is now possible only through our epistemological awareness of the traces or

remains of the past or the texts of the past. Therefore, this study of the postmodern intertextuality aims to see all these prior texts as representations of the past and the select texts as the present's attempts to come to terms with those glimpses of the past.

Rachel D Friedman compares the life histories of Ondaatje and Herodotus from the migrant perspective and Almásy and Herodotus on the basis of their nomadic perspective, where identity is independent of territory and on the basis of their love of the desert, as "spare men in the desert who travel from oasis to oasis, trading legends as if it is the exchange of seeds, consuming everything without suspicion, piecing together a mirage" (*Patient* 126). *Histories* becomes a palimpsest and the only available clue to the puzzling identity of the English Patient: He is so identified with Herodotus that he comes to see himself almost as his posthumous editor; he is not only super-inscribing his own story onto Herodotus', but also supplementing the original narrative as he finds more corroborating evidence. (57)

To Thomas Harrison, Herodotus' *Histories* itself is a scrapbook, much like Almásy's copy of it, for possessing a wealth of information besides the war between Persia and Greece, thus being a structural intertext to the novel. Thematically, intertextuality may be perceived in the issues of empire, nationality, internationalism, desire for anonymity, a concern for naming, ownership and their historical status. Harrison points out that while the historical Almásy was gay and a "committed Nazi collaborator", Ondaatje's character is "straight" and an "accidental spy" (61). Like Herodotus, he distances himself from the stories he narrate by switching to a third person perspective at times. Like Almásy's commonplace book, Herodotus willingly

interlaced fictional elements and speeches onto his narrative. He provided different versions of the same event while approving only one of it, thereby distancing himself from the stories he narrated and slipping from a focus on historical truth to that of verisimilitude.

There are nearly twenty references to Herodotus' *Histories* in Ondaatje's *Patient*. The hero, Count László de Almásy, has added to his 1890 edition of the book by "cutting and gluing in pages from other books or writing in his own observations—so they are all cradled within the text of Herodotus" (16). In this valuable commonplace book he has also put "other fragments—maps, diary entries, writings in many languages, paragraphs cut out of other books" (96). He has even glued a small fern into his "thick-leaved sea-book of maps and texts" (97-98). When updating what he calls "his guidebook, ancient and modern, of supposed lies," he sometimes "brought out his glue pot and pasted in a map or news clipping or used a blank space to sketch men" and animals (246). Referring (anachronistically) to the Penguin paperback edition of 1954 (revised in 1972 and reprinted in 1985), and to a Greek sculpture of a seated philosopher in the Louvre, Almásy self-reflexively observes of the often unreliable Herodotus,

> I have seen editions of *The Histories* with a sculpted portrait on the cover. Some statue found in a French museum. But I never imagine Herodotus this way. I see him more as one of those spare men of the desert who travel from oasis to oasis, trading legends as if it is the exchange of seals, consuming everything without suspicion, piercing together a mirage" (125-126).

A crucial passage in the chapter titled "Cave of the Swimmers" explains, with the help of four long quotes from Herodotus, how Almásy falls in love with Katharine Clifton, the only woman on an archeological expedition in the Libyan Desert. Ondaatje devotes three whole pages to Katharine reading aloud the story of Candaules to her husband Geoffrey, to Almásy and to other members of the group. Katharine sees the story "as a window to her life" and is jarred by what seems to be a familiar situation. In the story the king, madly in love with his own wife, praises her beauty to his favorite retainer Gyges, convinces himself that Gyges does not believe him and absolutely insists that the man see her naked to prove the claim. When Gyges vehemently objects, Candaules assures him that he will not be harmed and that his wife will never know. Gyges then hides in their bedroom and watches her undress, but the queen catches sight of him and realizes that the king is responsible for the wicked plot. The next day she summons Gyges and tells him, "Either you must slay Candaules and possess both me and the Kingdom of Lydia, or you must yourself here on the spot be slain" (248).

The second major intertext to the novel would be Kipling's *Kim* whose passages are strewn across the novel. Hana often reads out to the English Patient who instructs her how to read Kipling. He uses *Kim* to trace Gilf Kebir for Caravaggio. Kripal Singh, nicknamed as Kip, a variant of Kim is presented as if he has come out of the text of Kipling. Kip, like Kim, treats the English Patient and Lord Suffolk as his teachers. Kim O'Hara, the Irish boy growing up in India much like a local is comparable to Almásy and Kip as vagabonds and international bastards. Mahbub Ali, the Pashtun horse-dealer who works for the British intelligence is comparable to Clifton

and Caravaggio. Kim, too, was trained in espionage to be a surveyor, like the Nazi informant desert explorer Almásy. Like the latter's discovery of Zerzura, Kim also had set out to discover the legendary River of Arrow with his spiritual guru the lama. The old Sikh soldier is comparable to Kip as they both are Sikhs.

Holy Bible is mainly alluded to for the story of David and Goliath. The burnt patient looked after by Hana is described as the aged king David nourished by the slave woman Abishag (100-101). But the patient compares himself to Goliath and assumes that he will be defeated by someone like Kip whom he pictures as the David of the painting *David with the head of Goliath*, by the Italian Baroque artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. Other allusions from Bible are sentences like "Let the dead bury the dead" (Matthew 8:21-22) where Kip, being spiritually awakened to his national sense, is stripped of filial duties to the Patient, whom he looked upon as a father figure prior to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Once the Patient dies, he will be buried by the spiritually dead like Hana and Caravaggio.

Among minor intertexts one may include *Anna Karenina*, *Paradise Lost*, *The Charterhouse of Parma*—all of which bear in varying degrees the theme of lust and adultery. Hana identifies Caravaggio to be one of the last of the Mohicans, belonging to a noble tribe now on the verge of extinction. To her, Caravaggio is the last link from the old pre-war world of Canada that brought her a childhood sense of security. Historical details of Operation Salaam are used to authenticate the English Patient. Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* undergoes many intertextual versions before it settles as Johannes Eppler's codebook, though the code was never used by the Germans for fear

of it being compromised. *Rebecca* the thriller becomes an intertext to the throbbing tale of Eppler's journey across the desert. *Kitab al Kanuz*, Arab literature on Zerzura, the life stories of Almásy and Claytons are all valid intertexts to the novel. Following Fiske's notion of vertical intertexts, Caravaggio's painting of David and Goliath portends the end of the novel by which Kip attempts to take the life of the Patient, viewing the latter as the representative of all European evil upon the Asian races. It suggests the victory of the apparently powerless over the powerful so that Kip the sapper revolts against the supposedly "English" Patient, despite the former's admiration for the colonial father figure he was. Similarly, the songs included also have some thematic resemblance to the main text.

The cover of the 2004 Bloomsburry edition of *Patient* features Willy Ronis' print named *Le nu Provencal* in which the photographer had captured the nude image of his wife Marie Anne beside a wash basin. The text has a similar scene with a half-naked Hana weeping at the kitchen table with Caravaggio unsuccessfully trying to console her. The window in the cover photograph could be interpreted as the kitchen doorway in the text through which the cool air from the hills entered the villa. The bobbed hair of the woman in the photograph could pass as Hana who, according to the text, had cut her hair. But the textual scene has Hana partially dressed wearing a skirt whereas the woman in the photograph is completely nude. This cover photograph, which Gennette calls the "paratext" becomes an intertext to the aforementioned scene of Hana's sorrow: for her dead father Patrick whom she could not care for and for the eternally dying aged Patient whom she cares as her father and for her own sympathetic self.

Like Herodotus' *Histories*, the most prominent intertext of the *Lion* is the *Epic of Gilgamesh* from which the title of the novel is taken. The phrase belongs to the latter part of the epic where Gilgamesh, having lost his bosom friend Enkidu to death, sets out to seek the mystery of life and death. Gilgamesh the powerful has turned half-mad owing to the death of Enkidu. He even defeats a herd of lions in his wanderings to the nether world. In the novel, this suggests Patrick's frenzied state at having lost his lovers Clara and Alice. Patrick, the normally calm man, becomes as aggressive as Gilgamesh that he sets out to destroy the water works with his detonator. The skin of the lion could also refer to the working conditions of the migrant tanners in the Canadian leather industry. It could also symbolize the acting career where each actor dons different roles, where the one who plays the lion wears the skin of a lion to act out his lines instead of becoming a lion. As such, it reminds us that one is forced to become a lion at a particular stage in life and such transformations need not be permanent. The role of the lion is provisional and is only skin-deep, never touching the heart. When one puts on the skin of a lion, one tends to have some powers of the king of the jungle and behaves accordingly. This could be the explanation for Patrick's odd courage at seeking revenge for Alice's death. Likewise, in page 79, Patrick and the two women are compared to Judith and Holofernes and St. Jerome and the lion.

Besides, there are a few minor intertexts like Martha Ostenso's *Wild Geese*, a Canadian novel, suggestive of Patrick's loneliness and victimization and Joseph Conrad's letter on the war of ideas rather than men, suggesting the climax of the novel to be an aborted symbolic revolt of Patrick. As vertical intertexts, there are a number of

photographs mentioned in the text suggestive of the power of the authorized history to celebrate and suppress individuals. In *Anil's Ghost*, Cūlavamsa becomes a historical intertext of the Sri Lankan history, the movie of Cherry Valence portends the tragedy of Sarath and the many photographs mentioned within the text represent the vertical intertextuality. The myth of Satyavan and Savitri becomes a thematic intertext in which the wife succeeds in bringing back her husband to love and life and yet the husband's face looks capsized at this sudden reverse metamorphosis. Intertextually, Sarath who renounced the material world following his wife's death is forced to come back for the sake of Anil. This unwilling return brings about his tragedy.

Such intertextual reworkings of postmodernism are characterized by the employment of parody and irony by which the textual link with the past is both affirmed and subverted. Whereas the parodic reworking of the historical intertexts resorts to familiarize the unfamiliar and emphasizes the textual connection with the past, the employment of irony problematizes any such familiarization by stressing the difference from the past.

Regarding parody, Hutcheon believes that it is a version of intertextuality that emphasizes the similarities between the hypotext and the hypertext. In *Lion*, Ondaatje borrows the structure of parody to make the immigrants learn English, by following a pet actor's intonations and dialogue delivery. In Alice's show, the actress plays a parody of a dumb puppet, unable to speak and prove its innocence. The immigrant millionaire Small parodies the lives of the native millionaires whereas the silent nun when asked to scream, mockingly takes the name of a parrot "Alicia" before she accepts

acting for a career. Much of the other parodies described are theatrical and associated to role play both on stage and in life.

In *Patient*, gardens are parodied by Hana, the paintings on the villa and by the Patient's description of the English gardens which he got from Katherine. Hana's use of books to rebuild the two lowest steps of the broken staircase and of a crucifix to form a scarecrow mock tradition as much as her desire to build a raft like that of Robinson Crusoe. The character of Kip becomes a parody of the colonialist Kipling's Kim, being an Indian student at the feet of an English guru, in which the teacher-student roles are reversed. The novel is full of biblical and religious parodies that include Hana's misuse of the crucifix, the need for ravens to clean up the postwar Italy, Lord Suffolk and his team described as the Holy Trinity as well as Kip's conversation with the terracotta figures of Virgin Mary and Gabriel. Also, to Caravaggio, the song that Hana sings on her twenty-first birthday is a crude parody of her passionate rendering of sixteen.

In *Anil's Ghost*, the parody verges on the ludicrous in the song "The Good Ship Venus" as sung by the boys of St. Thomas to woo the schoolgirls of Ladies College where the tune is retained with words replaced by erotic lyrics. The transportation of the blindfolded victim on a bicycle becomes the parody of intimacy between the torturer and the tortured; the surgeon Skanda's practice of defacing books and writing his own life history into the pages of Jung (similar to what Hana does in *Patient*) and the two Katugalas, where the old and frail real life Katugala becomes a failed parody of his vibrant-looking giant cut out are other examples. On his death, the president gets reduced to his giant cardboard cut out as the person himself got disintegrated in the

bomb explosion.

If parody emphasizes similarity, irony marks difference. By its double nature, irony is one of the most significant postmodernist tools that simultaneously inscribes and subverts an idea. Of the three types of irony, namely, structural, situational and verbal, Ondaatje's texts make ample use of situational and structural ironies. The situational ironies of *Lion* would include the bridge being described as Harris' first child though "much of it [was] planned before he took over" (29); Temelcoff's superior knowledge of the panorama of the bridge to that of Burke and Harris, the real architects; Patrick the native's realization of Toronto being a land of possibilities while a migrant to the city becomes unable to move out of his safe zone; Ambrose Small the capitalist giving rise to jobs for the poor as searchers following his disappearance; the millionaire's body which was the site of privately accumulated wealth becoming a gold mine in the public sphere, when people set out in search of him; Clara's gift of a blind iguana to Patrick as a memento; Patrick's failure to search Small in his own hometown; sentimental migrants being forced to kill animals in the slaughter-houses and compelled to live with the olfactory reminders of the tannery; Patrick's lack of knowledge of his narrating present, concerning the union battles in the north; the jailbird escaping into colour blue; Caravaggio being accepted as a decent guy just because of his presence in the canoe; thieves never being smelled of the rich and the irony of the official history excluding the real workers and women from its annals. Examples of verbal ironies from the same text would include such phrases as the oxymorons, namely, "terrible loudness entering the silent performance" (117); "irony of reversals" (133); "only a dead name is permanent"

(165) and “You have a loud nose” (169).

In *Patient*, the ironies include the shifting positions of the protagonist being both the self and the enemy he was fighting with from the air (6); mutability of a sea into a desert (24); “she swims in this wool as the English Patient moved in his cloth placenta” (51); Hana “kissing her forearm to practise kissing” (96), by which even a supposedly spontaneous emotion such as love is brought out as a construct; how the distraction of music helps Kip to concentrate better (105); irony regarding the protagonists of the novel inhabiting the peripheries of the wartime history, where “everything else, apart from danger, is periphery” (133-4); how personal and individual histories are excluded from official histories; Almásy, the explorer’s desire to walk on “earth that had no maps” (277) and so on. The verbal ironies from the same text would include paradoxes and oxymorons such as Hana living the life of a vagrant, while the English Patient reposed like a king; how religion took away the “right to worship Plato as well as Christ” (61), thereby bringing in fanaticism and parochialism; description of the Patient as an “eternally dying man” (121); the paradox that the rich cannot “afford to be smart” (130), contrary to the popular belief; the paradox of a man holding absence within his cupped hands, “pale maps” where borders of social rules are blurred and easily transgressed (165); Caravaggio being described as “too curious and generous to be a successful thief” (180); dialogues such as “Is that a true story?...One of many!” (220-21); Kip’s ayah being an “intimate stranger” (238) and the “braille doorways” (287) to Kip’s heart. In the pre-war scenario, the Patient led the life of a vagabond explorer and Hana was treated a princess by her family. This is also suggestive of the ironic

reversal of their roles.

The situational ironies of *Anil's Ghost* include how the guesses and assumptions of Western science are deemed scientific whereas those of the east as represented by Palipana are dismissed as unacceptable falsehoods. Even crucifixion, the greatest crime in Christianity is hardly a major assault in the present day Sri Lanka, where worse torture instruments have been invented and implemented. Consequently, despite being a doctor by profession, Gamini is highly informed of the "blast weaponry" (132-33). The blindfolded man to be punished is transported on a bicycle, where the victim is forced to indulge in a ceremonial embrace with his would-be-torturer in order to maintain his cycle-balance. During times of political crises, historical discoveries are made by which history gets revealed whereas the contemporary truth is hidden. Ananda's reconstruction of the Sailor's head permeating peace and serenity results more from a need of the sculptor than of the Sailor. Anil, Sarath and Ananda in the estate mansion which was constructed at a time when there was possibility of only private woes. Their search for a public story or a publically recognizable face for the Sailor seems an ironic appropriation of the private space of the *walawwa* for public needs. Dr Skanda is ironically identified with the outrageous acts mentioned in the novel by which he attempts to identify with a fictional world when reality is stranger than fiction. While human flesh and bone remain mortal, an image on rock can be immortal due to "faith or an idea" (278). Sarath who can re-create centuries of past refuses to unearth anything of his dead wife Ravina. Gamini's attempt to heal and wash the wounds of his dead brother is compared to pieta. By means of a poetic justice, Katugala's

dismembered body gets disappeared following the attack of the suicide bomber just as the other victims like Sailor and Sirissa for whose deaths the President is regarded responsible. While the President's assassination is kept away from the general public, the authorities are forced to reveal it to the foreign enquiries.

The novel also abounds with verbal ironies such as "some people let their ghosts die, some don't" (53); "truth bounced between gossip and vengeance" (54); the paradox of retreat or relativity by which a monk cannot survive without the society (103); of how history has faded to exist only through remembrance (104); "disposable needles reused" (126); Gamini remaining at the centre and still being invisible (223); "a casual sense of massacre" (283) and the suicide bomber R— , being both the weapon and the aimer (293).

Contrary to the accepted conventions of realistic fiction, the endings of Ondaatje's novels do not offer a probable resolution to the plot or the character. This, again, is in keeping with the structure of the fragmented text as well as that of the oral narrative. In all three novels, the climactic action pertains to an act of violence, aggression or bloodshed. In *Lion*, it concerns Patrick's elaborate endeavour to infiltrate the Waterworks and detonate it, well assisted by Caravaggio and his wife. Just how does Patrick connect Alice's death by an accidental clock bomb explosion to Harris and his Palace of Purification is never fully explained in the text except for Harris' assumption that, being an amateur in the world of power, he holds tangible and targetable assets like the boisterously decorated purification plant. Patrick's solo revolution, despite having failed to perform the act of violence, stands fulfilled, if only for the discussion between

historical and fictional characters rather than the intended demolition. Robert Stacey points out that the demolition of the Waterworks, the very embodiment and historical record of the migrant labour is out of question for both Patrick, the representative of the working class and for Ondaatje, whose text pays homage to the unappreciated and uncelebrated labourer. Despite its superfluity, the Palace of Purification is still a valid evidence of the migrant labourers' existence, which the authorized history has hitherto denied or smothered. As a monument of the dreams of both Harris and the labourers, any defacement brought to it, would cause the erasure of the labour that constructed it.

The text's deviation from the trajectory of a "heroic" conclusion and the protagonist's relinquishment of the opportunity to dismantle the building portend to the possibility of a different type of history. In the final scene, we meet Patrick again, this time as the narrator of his story/history to Hana and as the saviour figure to the now homeless Clara. By the same token, almost all the protagonists of the select novels are pacifists, who take up arms only to undermine the efficacy of armed resistance. Thus, we have Kip in *Patient*, who attempts to kill the "English" patient at the end of the novel, in retaliation for the American atomic bombing on Japan. This attempt of violence is too sudden and unreasonable for the character of Kip, who has been portrayed as a dutiful colonized subject much devoted to his knowledgeable British masters. Even for the American act of violence, he holds the British responsible and attempts to vent his anger on the invalid and mortally wounded explorer with an accidental English identity thrust upon him. However, he too refrains from murder and leaves, throwing away his weapons and the identity of "a sapper, a military engineer who detected and disarmed

mines" (290) to become a doctor and a family man in an Indian city, twelve years later.

The detonator that Patrick abstained from activating is finally triggered by an unknown suicide bomber in *Ghost*, in a terrible act of violence that claims among others the life of the then Sri Lankan president. Ondaatje gingerly presents this real life allusion as retribution for the government instigated murder of Sarath that precedes it. The gentle Sarath who "always sidestepped violence" (289) could easily have been Patrick's counterpart in *Ghost*. He too is a saviour figure who sacrifices his life for the sake of Anil. The brutality of Sarath's murder is retrospectively revealed in the "pietà between brothers" (288), when Gamini examines and dresses the wounds of his dead brother. For this act of violence, Ondaatje stages the murder of President Katugala. Again, these two events can in no way be correlated as in the case of the two preceding novels. Perhaps, by refusing to stain the palms of his protagonists with the blood of aggression, the author is presenting us with an ideology of pacifism. The attempted and aborted acts of violence could be the common man's answer to the mainstream history's proclaimed acts of valour, like war, treason, massacre and holocaust. By refusing to perform it and answer the authorized history in the same coin, Ondaatje is upholding a new historiography of the subordinate groups.

Chapter IV

Trading Time for Space: A Review of Ishiguro and Ondaatje

Broadly defined in 1966 as "a permanent or semi permanent change of residence" (Lee 49) human migration, as envisaged by the discipline of geography, is a time and space process. Almost ten years later, in 1975, R. P. Shaw improved upon it as the "relatively permanent movement of persons over a significant distance" (qtd. in Kok 19). An analysis of both these definitions would reveal that the notions of permanence and semi permanence relate to the temporal factor and that of distance and displaced residence refer to the spatial component. Right from the days of E. G. Ravenstein, the nineteenth century geographer and cartographer who formulated the "laws of migration" in 1885 and 1886, the temporal aspect suggested the duration of the migrant's stay in the region of destination, whereas the spatial component hinted at the distance travelled as well as the home and host spaces that impacted the act of migration. Taking cues from geography, economics, politics and literature, this chapter perceives migration as an interdisciplinary discourse built on the geographical dimensions of time and space; the economical notions of market and capital; the political aspects of the restrictions, compromises and discrimination as well as the literary concepts of prizes and subversions.

Emphasizing spatiality, Ravenstein's first law stated that distance was inversely proportionate to the number of migrants and that the destinations farther away from the home spaces had to be great centres of commerce and industry in order to attract

migrations. However, it should be noted that Ravenstein's formulations were just a decade away from Jules Verne's classic travel-adventure *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1874), when such a world tour was still regarded as a challenge enough for speculation. In the twenty-first century of supersonic speed, Ravenstein's distance law hardly counts and spatiality is to be limited to a comparative and contrastive study of the areas of origin and destination of the migrant. Thus, it can be seen that while the traditional geographers concerned themselves with the distance covered, in the contemporary world of advanced technology and transportation, distance hardly remains a criterion for migration. This warrants us to go back to some of the spatial theories formulated by the geographers concerning the home and host spaces of the migrants, the perceived differences or similarities between which, prompted and repeated the acts of migrations.

Apart from the time-geographers beginning with Hägerstrand who devised methods of mapping migrants' time-space routes, movements and visualization, spatial theorists such as Michel De Certeau, Doreen Massey and Guy Debord also discuss the special relationship of space with time. De Certeau perceives space as "a site of transformations and appropriations" that constantly evolves into an enriched "object of interventions" (127). He identifies three distinct and symbolic relationships among the spatially signifying practices, namely, "the believable", "the memorable" and "the primitive", each of which respectively authorizes, repeats and structures the topoi of the urban discourse into the legend, recollection and dream. Because of their close relationship with a past time, they make the city space endearing to its inhabitants. Thus,

sites turn into "fragmentary and convoluted histories" haunted by the "countless ghosts that lurk there in silence, to be 'evoked' or not" (143). This theory is further endorsed by the geographer Everett S. Lee who asserts that the migrants' evaluation of home and host spaces tends to be positive or negative on the basis of their personal relationships with these regions. For example, many of us have a special fondness for the place where we spent our childhood and youth, as it reminds us of our formative years of greater health and happiness with lesser worries and responsibilities. By means of his theory of dérive, Guy Debord also speaks of spaces, whose "psychographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones" (2).

To Doreen Massey, the abstract concept of spatiality is often appropriated and internalized by the human imagination utilizing the concrete images of "space" as a surface on which we are placed, as a local place to be differentiated from the space out there and of turning of space into time. Space, as such, becomes a product of interrelations constituted through interactions, a sphere of possibility of the existence of plurality and multiplicity, yet a never-ending process that simultaneously remains under construction. Rejecting all spatial associations with temporality and problematizing the traditional concepts of stasis, closure and representation on which the space is unquestioningly embedded, she wishes to identify it with the political and its sub themes such as heterogeneity, relationality, coevalness and liveliness (13). Likewise, philosophy of all times, including those of structuralism and deconstruction have prioritized time over space with the result that space often becomes the negative, opposite or the residual of

time. However, Massey rejects all such philosophies and points out that the temporal and the spatial are mutually implicated so that our imagination of space is very much affected by our concepts of history and temporality.

In order to prevent geography from turning into a historical narrative, the structuralists emphasized space over time, structure over narrative and synchrony over diachrony. Having equated narrativity with temporality, they identified their atemporal structures with space, thereby completely negating time. However, the rigid structures of structuralism became dynamic and dislocated during the post-structuralist era headed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe who advocated for an abandonment of the dualities of synchrony and diachrnony. Although Laclau reconceptualised the structures of time to be more open, his idea of space retained a causal closure. This enabled him to classify as space certain forms of time that are unrelated to the production of novelty. Deprived of any possibility of politics or determination, his notion of the dislocated free space was treated as "the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic" (Foucault qtd. in Massey 49).

During the postmodern times, spatial is emphasized at the cost of the temporal as the postmodernist retelling and rewriting of "the story of modernity through spatialization/ globalization exposed modernity's preconditions in and effects of violence, racism and oppression" (63). Such a spatial retelling often displaces and disperses the story of the Euro-centric capitalist modernity to its global peripheries and multiple trajectories. As a result of globalization, the spaces that were hitherto imagined as closed, bound and pertaining to a specific culture, society or community got opened up to new migrant

inflows across the boundaries. The postmodernist legitimization of the transgressions of spatial boundaries ironically gave rise to a nostalgic return to a non-existent pre-globalized past symbolizing every type of nationalism, parochialism and localism. Massey points out that all modernist attempts to tame the spatial by resorting to an unreal past ended up in the justification of an imperialist era of territorialization as we find in *Remains* which mourns the passing of an age of supposed spatial stability, coherence and authenticity, devoid of all multiplicities, fractures and dynamism; a safe haven supportive of the discourses of nationalism and parochialism and "a stabilization of the inherent instabilities and creativities of space; a way of coming to terms with the great 'out there'" (65).

The system of organizing different places into different stages of a single temporal sequence views history as a linear as well as spatial and relational singular movement where Europe, Asia and Africa are merely different points of a unilinear story of human development, which Massey views as a discursive victory of time over space, as against what Laclau proposed (42). By collapsing the multiplicities of space into a single historical sequence, the forefront of which consisted of the most developed nation or people or culture and by imposing a single universal of temporal trajectory, the discourses of modernity enables the spatial to be overcome by the temporal. As such, the migrants who arrived at the centre from the supposed margins of Asia and Africa were perceived as "people from the past" (70) or people belonging to a primitive stage of progress in relation to the Western Europeans. In this connection, Massey views migration as a celebration of coevalness at the cost of spatial differences that were

repressed and downplayed along with the multiple trajectories of the geography of power and knowledge. While Kern argues that all representations are spatial and that this particular representation mobilized time to represent space, according to Massey, such a view imposed a single universal temporal convening of space thereby destroying the multiplicity of the spatial.

Characterized by a "depthless horizontality of immediate connections" (76), the contemporary world of the postmodern reprioritizes space by "reprivileging history as the agency which has replaced history with geography" (Grossberg 177). Here, Massey fears the shift from modernity to postmodernity is from one history to no histories, from a single progressive story to a synchronic depthlessness (78). Unlike Laclau and de Certeau, Jacques Derrida recognized the importance of space along with time, as his notion of *différance* is both temporal (deferral) and spatial (differentiation). In deconstruction, where everything is a text, spatialisation came to be identified with textualisation instead of representation. This imparted the texts with horizontality, a turn towards a more open and differentiated spatiality. The present era of globalization is marked with two apparently contradictory time-space notions namely, the age of the spatial and the age of the final victory of the temporal over the spatial. Any increase in the speed of transport and communication would reduce the distance between two spatial points; but they do not annihilate space altogether. As a result of such speeding up, newer social relations and interactions including that of the cyberspace are constructed thereby expanding the multiplicities of the spatial boundaries and reducing the time needed for the construction of such contacts. The reduction in time to cover

distance gives rise to propositions that near and far are the same and that the margins have invaded the centre.

The migrant authors under consideration here have located their texts in a past world inhabited by anachronistic protagonists belonging to a still different time scheme either of the narrative or of the author. Although the temporal aspects of the content of their novels have been analysed in the preceding two chapters, their spatial aspects need be discussed in relation to the individual migrant experience of these authors. Why have both of them refrained from depicting their spatial dislocation of which they had first hand knowledge and exposure, all the while resorting to portray temporally dislocated protagonists yearning for a bygone past of aristocracy, servitude and oppression; a past that turns a foil to the present (of the author and of the text) in many ways? Whereas the previous two chapters analyse the aesthetics of the postmodern appropriation of the select novels, this chapter seeks the politics behind the depiction of the temporally dislocated characters.

Literature has always been regarded as the sublime expression of passionate emotions. Migration from an Asian country to U.K. and Canada being a significant experience in the personal lives of these authors, why have not they touched upon it; all the while emphasizing the seemingly irrelevant theme of temporal dislocation at the cost of the spatial? For this, one needs to establish the difficulties of a migrant existence which include discrimination and identity crisis. Did these writers go through these difficulties? How can one infer the troubles they have encountered in their personal lives if they choose not to reveal them, not even through their books? Is it necessary that

migrant literature should have themes based on the experience of migration? Dissociating themselves from their personal migrant experience yet flaunting themselves as cosmopolitan writers, are these authors trying to capitalize on their mixed and hybrid identities? To prove this, one should speak about market and capital in migration as well as the effects of international prizes and their means of dodging censure, themselves being naturalized instead of natural citizens, as described by Thom Brooks. So, after the theories of time and space, one should return to their application in the select texts, how time in the hands of these writers, gets substituted for space. After this, I would argue the ideology behind such a substitution. I would argue that these middle and upper class migrant authors capitalize on their dual identities, only to inscribe and subvert, thereby offering subtle resistance even while subscribing to the mainstream notions of their host spaces. By that they establish firmly their positions in the appropriated host space (appropriated because they were not born there) simultaneously satisfying a reader population in their home spaces, thus laying claim towards an international authorship and readership.

Comparison and Contrast of the select novels on the basis of three spaces:

Regarding the migrant authors under consideration, we are going to analyze how they present the three spaces of home, host and third spaces. This is done by pairing one each of the novels of Ishiguro and Ondaatje according to their spatial setting. Thus, the notion of the migrant home space is represented by Ishiguro's *An Artist of the Floating World* set in the author's motherland of Japan and Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* set in Sri Lanka, the author's native place. After this, we shall move on to the host

spaces of these two authors as revealed in *The Remains of the Day* situated in Britain, the host space of Ishiguro and *In the Skin of a Lion* by Ondaatje, which locates itself in Canada, the author's host space. From here, we move on to a third space or a space that is neither the home or host spaces, as revealed in *When we Were Orphans* of Ishiguro set mostly in China and *The English Patient* set in Italy. It is further argued that while the home and host spaces inhibit the authors considerably, the third space offers a site of liberation and self actualization that enable them to engage in spatiality with less concern.

Home Space

Home, when defined as a place of habit, comfort, family, rights and duties, personal space, privacy, a place of return after the day's work, a space where we meet our loved ones, where we live, where we rest and rejuvenate each day, prepare ourselves for the next day's work, a place of sustenance and so on is different for each person. In the oft-cited line of Robert Frost, it "is the place where, when you have to go there, / They have to take you in" ("The Death of the Hired Man" lines 122-123). Such an over-romanticized view imparts a sense of ownership, belongingness and unconditional acceptance to the idea of home and has been a favourite theme with much early migrant literature. However, to the migrant authors under discussion here, the traditional notion of home with its above mentioned attributes is highly problematic. This is because, as naturalized citizens, they both have proclaimed allegiance to and have received political entitlement in their countries of residence and neither of them considers a permanent return to their native places in the near future. Yet, for want of a better

term, this chapter uses "home space" to denote the countries of their origin and ancestry, their birthplaces and the places where they spent their early childhood until migration.

Among the select novels, *An Artist of the Floating World*, set in Japan, Ishiguro's country of origin, serves as the representative text portraying the authorial home space. The novel begins with a spatial description of the premises of Ono's house:

> If on a sunny day you climb the steep path leading up from the little wooden bridge still referred to around here as 'the Bridge of Hesitation', you will not have to walk far before the roof of my house becomes visible between the tops of two gingko trees. Even if it did not occupy such a commanding position on the hill, the house would still stand out from all others nearby, so that as you come up the path, you may find yourself wondering what sort of wealthy man owns it. (7)

While the steep path, the little wooden bridge and the two gingko trees offer a picture perfect view of a Japanese countryside, they are also stereotypical Orientalist images capable of satisfying the Western curiosity. Besides, the introduction of the two gingko trees in the first paragraph is significant as the resilient gingko, one of the *hibaku jumoku* (the plant species that survived the atomic bombing), represents the Japanese capital city of Tokyo being its official tree. The gingko leaf is the symbol of both Tokyo and the *Urasenke* school of Japanese tea ceremony.

The house that Ono bought from the great Akira Sugimura by means of an

"auction of prestige" at once becomes a source of pride and testimony to his artistic talents and political influence of the pre-war decades. He attaches inordinate importance to the house, its different wings and the garden with its carefully selected specimens of shrubs and bamboo bush. A paragraph later, the house is described in closer detail, drawing attention to "the fine cedar gateway, the large area bound by the garden wall, the roof with its elegant tiles and its stylishly carved ridgepole pointing out over the view". To critics like Barry Lewis and Rocio G. Davis, the house and similar enclosed buildings offer an objective correlative to the migrant author's personal displacement and "privileged homelessness". Thus, Ishiguro's Japan forms an "imaginary homeland" that exists in his own mind and drawn from a variety of sources such as bits and pieces of early childhood recollections, inventions, imagination, family upbringing, textbook facts and the Japanese films of the fifties, rather than firsthand information.

Ono's identity as a talented painter is very much tied to his house which, in a sense, is a reward to the artist that he was. If the glorious period of the house stands for the golden age of Ono's career, its post-bombing dilapidated condition, described just a couple of pages later, represents the fall in the career of the artist, who was forced to retire and stack away his paintings due to the changed political climate of Japan. However, Ono is not very eloquent in describing the war damage to the house as he was while depicting its splendour. Quite vaguely and with stoic minimalism, he refers to the damage in general as "large gaps in the ceiling, shielded from the sky only by sheets of tarpaulin" and "the sunlight pouring through the tarpaulin in tinted shafts, revealing clouds of dust hanging in the air as though the ceiling had only that moment

crashed down" (12). Cracked floorboards and leaking roofs are all the damage that he can speak of about a house whose garden corridor, the east wing and the veranda where his daughters spent time got damaged. Similarly, the rise and fall of a number of other houses, buildings and other structures suggest the rise and fall in the fates and fortunes of their owners and occupants, such as the Migi Hidari, Mrs. Kawakami's bar, Morisan's villa and Akira Sugimura's Kawabe Park. It is easily discernible that man-made spaces in the novel are closely linked to the humans in charge of them.

The relationship between characters and the external space has grown to symbolic dimensions in the novel, so that the natural or the external scenery, quite often, represents the inner anguish and turmoil of the individual characters. Sometimes, the external environment serves to indicate a switch in the mood of the character as in the first Ichiro-scene where Ono becomes self reflexive so that the conversation turns into an internal monologue: "I walked over to the window. It had become quite dark outside, and all I could see was my reflection and that of the room behind me" (38). A similar nature description occurs in the second Shintaro-scene, after Ono gives cold shoulder to his former student at his inability to accept his personal past and its mistakes:

> I went on gazing at my garden. For all its steady fall, the snow had settled only very lightly on the shrubs and branches. Indeed, as I watched, a breeze shook a branch of the maple tree, shaking off most of the snow. Only the stone lantern at the back of the garden had a substantial cap of white on it. (104)

It is to be noted that this scene occurs after Noriko's *miai*, where Ono

confessed and acknowledged his past mistakes before the Saito family. Ono's mental acceptance of his past has enabled him access to a heightened state of moral rectitude in contrast to which Shintaro's request appears depraved and hypocritical. Viewed thus, the falling snow symbolizes the changed political climate from which the vegetation recovers quickly through adaptation. But Ono would compare himself to the stone lantern that bravely dares the snow. Here, the outer space turns to be the objective correlative of the mood and dominant emotion of the character. Another example would be the description of the exterior of Kuroda's house, where "behind a mesh fence, a bulldozer was churning up the ground" (109). While the "mesh fence" suggests the menace and futility ingrained in the estranged relationship of Ono and Kuroda, the physical excavation symbolizes Ono's retracing of steps down the memory lane.

At times the spatial descriptions are found to be coloured by the attitude of the character as in the different descriptions of the interior of Mrs. Kawakami's bar. In page 26, when she was one of his few remaining acquaintances, Ono perceived it as a cosy, intimate place "lit up by warm, low-hung lights". A hundred pages later, that is, after his confession, Ono views the same place as "small, shabby and out of place" (126). He even advises Kawakami to accept the governmental offer and move out of the erstwhile Pleasure District, where the men are working to erect the large concrete buildings, where the mechanical sounds of hammering, drilling and a starting truck submerge the memories of banter and arguments they remembered from their individual pasts. Likewise, a chance meeting with Dr Saito and a casual reference to Kuroda trigger Ono's anxieties about Noriko's wedding thereby making the rest of his tram

journey rather uncomfortable. Ono's attitude towards his surroundings undergoes drastic changes after his confession at the *miai* with the result that spaces described after that key event receive a more sympathetic consideration in his narration. Having identified himself and his artistry with the palatial house he bought from the Sugimura family, it is only natural for Ono to be contemptuous of the closed little spaces and office cubicles of his present. While this attitude is more noticeable in the early parts of the text, say for example, in the depiction of Miyake's office as small and seedy, towards the end of the novel, after having come to terms with the ghosts from his past like Kuroda and Matsuda, he finds the new world represented by the apartment of Taro and Noriko to be clean, convenient and respectable despite being constrictive, unimaginative and claustrophic when compared to his spacious traditional house. Ono further understands that his position in the new world is one of a silent spectator and that he is out of place in the lives of his daughters: "However convenient the kitchen, it is very small, and when I stepped inside it that evening to see how my daughters were progressing with the meal, there seemed no space for me to stand" (156).

In Ono's narration, spaces perform other functions as well such as memory triggers when the reception room of his own house reminds him of paternal suppression of his artistic talents. Ono's suggestion of a family outing at the cinema is overruled by Noriko's assertion of the visit to the deer park, where these two spaces symbolize two ways of life; the cinema, a man-made artificial space, being Ono's suggestion, represents the traditional and patriarchal society in which the father was the ultimate authority; whereas the deer park, denoting a more natural ambience, suggests the contemporary

world ruled by the assertive, office-going new generation youth. Although Ono is able to take Ichiro to the cinema the next day, he understands that his position as the head of the family is on the rocks. Other spatial descriptions include Takeda's studio which is not very different from a modern multinational firm working under tight schedules and deadlines doling out commissioned work producing Japaneserie and the Kasuga Park Hotel decked in a "vulgar manner" to "strike the American clientele…as being charmingly 'Japanese'" (116).

Apart from the close descriptions, Ishiguro introduces place names such as Negishi in Fukushima, Yokota in Akita, Arakawa in Tokyo, Wakaba in Chiba and Yamagawa in Fukuoka as places visited by Ono during his journeys. The first two of this impressive list belong to the Tōhuku region, the next two to the Kantō region and the last one to the Kyushu region of Japan. While Ishiguro's Western critics were rather impressed by such names dropping, elaborate and meticulous descriptions of individual sites, his eastern critics like Cheng regard it as a deliberate attempt to create an "implausible assemblage" of parks and stations gleaned through "calendars, guidebooks and postcards" (84) that brings forth a Japanese ambience rather than be representative of the contemporary Japan. She adds,

> Ono's city embodies a bewildering conflation; it fuses fictional places, such as Kashuga Park Hotel, Takami Gardens, and Kawabe Park, with actual locations of various Japanese cities…. The Japanese names of these spots attach to Ono's city simulated authenticity even though it assembles the real and imaginary locales in an improbable fashion. (84)

Ishiguro himself has acknowledged this in "I just invent a Japan which serves my needs. And I put that Japan together out of little scraps, out of memories, out of speculation, out of imagination" (Mason 341). Although some critics, like Pico Iyer, buy this logic and attribute Ishiguro's fictional recreation of Japan to his impulse to document a rapidly fading recollection of an imagined homeland, the "Japonaiserie" of his narrative style was detected by early reviewers like Malcolm Bradbury. Connoting the peripheral, superficial and the contingent, the Japonaiserie represents "Japan through a cluster of conventionalized signs" (Lewis 52). Thus, the Japan of Ishiguro as portrayed in the novel is a geographical mixture of the real and speculated sites, mostly gleaned from the Japanese films and literature.

It is through his somewhat recent novel *Anil's Ghost* that Michael Ondaatje returns to his home space of Sri Lanka. If Ishiguro justified the fictional representation of Japan in his early novels as an attempt to recapture a fast fading memory landscape, Ondaatje's depiction of Sri Lanka is both political and aesthetic. In other words, because of its political backdrop of the Lankan tripartite aggression and because of his decision to tone down a much controversial subject to a conventional call for pacifism, the novel is said to bag a few literary prizes and remained a bestseller for almost a year in Canada. However, Ondaatje's refusal to take sides enraged the local and Sri Lankan born diasporic critics to condemn this book as "a shameless act of appropriation, essentialism, distortion or blatant prejudice" (Kanaganayakam 6).

Like Ishiguro, Ondaatje also strews his text with Sri Lankan place names such as the Katunayake airport, Kollupitiya, Bandarawela caves, rock fortress of Sigiriya,

Anuradhapura, Ekneligoda, Arankale, Boralesgamuwa, Polonnaruwa, Jaffna, Buduruvagala and Colombo. No doubt, many of these are foreign, exotic and unheard of eastern names to the Western ears. Regarding the spatial descriptions, Ondaatje has made them as exotic as possible matching with their names. However, a closer look at the various spaces would reveal that the author has refrained from detailing the capital city Colombo or the towns like Jaffna and Trincomalee, which are at best passing references in the text. These are descriptions easily verifiable for their authenticity by the natives as well as the Sri Lankan born migrants. Hence, the author has made it a point to expatiate the interiors of the buildings and downplay the exteriors in his portrayals of the city. At the same time, we find a more eloquent Ondaatje in his spatial descriptions of forests and country sides.

It is curious to note that Ondaatje's description of the capital city of Colombo is restricted to a vague portrayal of the rain in one of the early pages: "Clouds would suddenly unlock and the city would turn into an intimate village full of people acknowledging the rain and yelling to one another" (15). Such minimalism of the outdoor depictions gives way to eloquence when he has to describe the interior of the ship *Oronsay*, which serves as the lab of the forensic team. The deficiency of first hand knowledge of space is met with representations in the form of maps and encyclopedic information on the extensive aspects of the island nation. At times, we find the author resort to poetic and figurative language as found in "the landscape like a green fjord beneath them. In the distance the open plain was bleached white, resembling the sea" (45).

Ondaatje's one line descriptions of space give place to elaborations of poetic prose as the investigation team moves away from the capital. Yet, not many of them contain easily recognizable landmarks, but are enriched with non-urban and non-present entries such as "freshwater and arboreal gastropods, bone fragments of birds and mammals, even fish bones from distant eras of the sea. The region felt timeless. They found charred epicarps of wild breadfruit that still grew in the region, even now, twenty thousand years later" (50). Ondaatje attempts to achieve a timeless quality in his rural depictions. Even in describing the perspective of Palipana the Sri Lankan historian, we find him Orientalizing his home island to satisfy the fantasies of his western readers: "While the West saw Asian history as a faint horizon where Europe joined the East, Palipana saw his country in fathoms and colour, and Europe simply as a landmass on the end of the peninsula of Asia" (79). Palipana's fall into notoriety and dishonour, on the other hand, is caused by his rather ungrounded interpretation of rock graffiti, which forms an appropriation of space. The author creates a fictional landscape for the wilderness: "He (Palipana) blended fragments of stories so they became a landscape" (105). Other significant instances of elaborately described rural spaces are the graffiti of Sigiriya, the forests of Anuradhapura, Palipana's leaf hall, the Grove of Ascetics and so on.

Further, Ondaatje holds geography responsible for Anil's disastrous marriage with a fellow Sri Lankan medical student. Her alienation from and inability to adapt to the British geography and her nostalgia for the Sri Lankan geography cause her to be seduced into a wrong marriage with a "monster". What Ondaatje misses in the Sri

Lankan landscape, he compensates with the American Southwest. Here, the desert is described in a couple of pages, the description being one of encyclopedic kind, listing the plant and animal species found there. Still, a comparative reader misses Ono's personal descriptions of how a pleasure town got reduced to debris only to be later reconstructed to a business town. Ondaatje's descriptions, if any, are objective and impersonal. True to the nature of historiographic metafiction, they refuse to blend with the fictional tale he is unravelling, only to stand out of the story thus narrated. One never feels Anil to be a part of Sri Lanka, one fails to feel her nostalgia for the island nation that she feels in her bones.

Space study becomes important in a novel that deals with the forensic investigation of a dead body that was twice buried since its unnatural and violent death. Sarath and Anil have come to the conclusion that the discovery of the original site of its burial will help to ascertain the identity of this victim whom they named Sailor, of his murderers and of many similar victims. This results in a long search to identify the soil, the place of burial and the attempts to reconstruct his head; the details of which are incorporated into the text unblended. All the place names that are mentioned like "mass disappearances at Suriyakanda, reports of mass graves at Ankumbura, mass graves at Akmeemana" (156) are sites of cruelty and violence. The four italicized pages describing Sirissa's journey to school meander into a fantasy landscape where the author visualizes the lost wife of Ananda. For Ondaatje, it seems, "one village can speak for many villages" (176), at least as far as spatial descriptions are concerned. Similarly elaborate is the forest monastery in Arankale, although Anil and Sarath spend only a few hours

there. Yet the place has a number of stories to its credit, for obvious reasons.

The acquisition, ownership and dispossession of building spaces form an important aspect of the text. The *walawwa* in Ekneligoda, belonging to the family of Wickramasinghe, is a single house whose doors, walls and courtyard are mentioned in detail in pages 164 and 165 and later from 201 to 203. The *walawwa*, taken over by the Archaeological Society after the death of its last heir, was a childhood and youth abode of Sarath, who takes Anil and Ananda there for their safe investigation on the Sailor. This place was abandoned by the Archeology department owing to its lack of safety: "But when the region became unsafe and rife with disappearances, the building was no longer inhabited, and like a well that has gone dry it took on a sense of absence" (164). A building that was supposed to be unsafe for archeological purposes ironically is chosen for hiding to collect evidence against the insurgents. Anil's decision to leave this haven proves fatal and risks their lives, causing the death of Sarath. Another appropriated building is Gamini's house, presently occupied by an unknown family. To a western reader, it must be astonishing to know that homeless people existed in Sri Lanka so that one would dispossess one's own house if left unoccupied for even a couple of months. The casual nonchalance of the appropriator family who has the guts to take the signed cheques from Gamini and provide him with supper in return, without any word of apologies, is intended to shock the reader. Equally casual does Gamini sound when he accepts their invitation to eat and leaves happily.

While describing the childhood rooms of Sarath and Gamini in Colombo, Ondaatje justifies the indoors thus described on account of the secretive nature of

Gamini, the younger brother who was nicknamed as the Mouse. Another indoor description is Gamini's hospital in Polonnaruwa. After this, the author resorts to a legendary description of Jaffna thus:

> It was legendary that every Tamil home on Jaffna peninsula had three trees in the garden. A mango, a murunga, and the pomegranate. Murunga leaves were cooked in crab curries to neutralize poisons, pomegranate leaves were soaked in water for the care of eyes and the fruit eaten to avoid digestion. The mango was for pleasure" (240).

Finally, when Ananda sculpts the Buddha statue at Buduruvagala, the space acquires an allegoric significance as the whole place gets surveyed by the gigantic Buddha statue, it being Ondaatje's call for a peaceful co-existence.

Host space

The host space could be a place of hostility or hospitality to the migrant, although the term "host" suggests the host-guest relationship of the migrant author who was once a guest of this nation, before settling down as a naturalized citizen. In fact, the migrant's nation of residence should be his home as one of the multiple definitions of home includes the place where one lives in. Such a perception problematizes the notions of both home and host as the nation of origin is a home relinquished while the nation of residence becomes the accepted space to which they rightfully belong as citizens. Yet, how much rightfully do they belong to the host space? Are the migrants wholeheartedly accepted by the natives? While citizenship is often a matter taken for granted by the natives, it comes in the form of exams, credentials, allegiances and other paper work

for the migrants. Is the migrant at a position to confidently describe a place that was home to many others before his arrival, a place that could be seen as appropriated by himself and his likes?

After his first two books set in Japan, Ishiguro turns his attention to his host nation of Britain in *The Remains of the Day*, his third book. The central theme and form of the novel are built upon the very idea of the possibility of a journey, a linear movement across the geography of Britain, a non-linear movement into Stevens's past, a six days' adventure during the absence of his employer from the Darlington Hall, a country mansion and relic from the feudal days. On a professional plane, it symbolizes Stevens's departure from his professional capacity as a butler of the Darlington Hall to a sightseeing tourist of the countryside. It could as well be a journey from the feudal centre of the lord's house to the fringes of his estate. The Prologue of the novel deals with the preparations for this journey, such as seeking the permission to undertake it, its cost and costume, mode of travel, route and purpose. The commencement of the journey depends largely on the anticipated absence of the employer from the house, for if he were there, he ought to be served.

J.J. Su holds that Stevens' journey from the Darlington Hall to the pier at the West Country simultaneously marks the decline of the British Empire as a world power and the revival of the nostalgia industry. While the enormous nostalgia industry led to the preservation of the country houses as tourist attractions, the Thatcherite political campaigns of the late seventies invoked nostalgia for the imperialist history implicit with racism. It is this myth of a white England as a beautiful place "before the trade unions

tried to make it more egalitarian or before the immigrants started to come or before the promiscuous age of the ’60s came and ruined everything” (Ishiguro qtd. in Su 563) that the author ironically revisits and strategically subverts using the medium of a travelogue.

Thus, the space of the Darlington Hall becomes a surviving relic from the feudal past of the Great Britain, to be dust-sheeted and preserved by the remnants of its housekeeping staff such as Stevens whose identity is locked within that space in keeping with the allegiance borne by the vassals to their landlords. Stevens’ loyalties are rooted both in the soil of the Darlington Hall and its owner whom he serves. Quite unlike the present day employer-employee relations, it is abject to the point of slavery that he denies himself his own private space and existence. Thus, his pantry as described by Miss Kenton is dark and cold without sunshine, has damp walls and is “so stark and bereft of colour” (52). Having subordinated his private space to that of his professional world as a butler, Stevens’ personal definition of dignity centres around a spatial misplacement: “But I suspect it (dignity) comes down to not removing one’s clothing in public” (210).

Stevens’ love of the indoors of the Darlington Hall is further revealed in his elaborate preparations for the journey, anxieties to leave the familiar grounds, fear of losing his way and deviate into the wilderness, the alarm, unease, excitement and exhilaration of going “beyond all previous boundaries” (24) and the fact that his travelogue devotes more space to his memories of the Darlington Hall which he has left behind rather than the external beauties the appreciation of which he embarked on this journey. He attributes, sometimes rightly, the welcome he receives at various points of

his journey to the suit he wears, that once belonged to his previous employer and to the Ford car he drives, that belongs to his present employer.

As far as spatial descriptions are concerned, Ishiguro gradually prepares the readers to the marvelous and enchanted views that are awaiting them along with Stevens. Thus the "most marvelous view" of the Salisbury countryside, or of the whole of England according to a local, turns out to be a vague, common and unspectacular vista thus described:

> What I saw was principally field upon field rolling off into the far distance. The land rose and fell gently, and the fields were bordered by hedges and trees. There were dots in some of the distant fields which I assumed to be sheep. To my right, almost on the horizon, I though I could see the square tower of a church. (26)

It is worth noting that Stevens's treatise on the English greatness and dignity is constructed upon this geographical space of the unassuming English countryside, this unexceptional panorama of fields, hedges, trees and sheep.

The external spatial descriptions of his narrating present are kept minimal and are limited to vague, random views of thickets and hedges that are presented as the countryside. Yet, Stevens claims that he has chosen an "unnecessarily circuitous" route to Salisbury in order to enjoy the numerous sights recommended in the volumes of Mrs. Symons, although the sights as such are undescribed in the text. More than the sights themselves, the narrator stresses upon the mood they create in him and slides into emotional descriptions of the metaphors and objective correlatives such as those

employed in *Artist*. Thus, the name "Mursden" reminds him of his own glorious days of very polished service while the narrative present of the town Taunton in Somerset remains unreported. Also, the trapped claustrophobic existence of Stevens's father is brought out through the metaphor of a prison cell. The narrative space of the journal compensates for what is lost in the depiction of the exterior by restricting itself to the indoors of the various inns and guest houses he checks in, thus building clear, precise and picturesque images and elaborate mental pictures for the reader. As a result, Moscombe is represented by the description of the little cottage of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, Little Compton in Cornwall by the Rose Garden Hotel and Weymouth by the pier "lit up with bulbs of various colours" (231) in the evening. Miss Kenton also shows a preference for space as she used misplaced dustpan and Chinaman as premises to prove that elder Stevens needed rest. Also, towards the end of the novel she declares her allegiance to her husband and family life by stating that her "rightful place" is with her husband, thereby upholding her entitlement and belongingness to the establishment of a conventional status quo.

Unlike Ishiguro who warily depicts the landscape of the nation that he chose to settle down, Ondaatje celebrates the proletarian life of Canada in a spatially demarcated story, the narration of which takes place in a moving car. Like a magic carpet, the story of *In the Skin of a Lion* spreads itself across the four hours drive to Marmora during the early hours of a morning, witnessed by a dark countryside exterior to the vehicle and by six stars and a moon in the night sky above them. This metaphor is extended to the process of narration whereby the man (the narrator) "picks up and

brings together various corners of the story, attempting to carry it all in his arms" and the girl (the narratee) "gathers" it from him. Apart from being the narratee and the sole companion of the man in the speeding space of the frame narrative, the girl Hana is one of the major characters of the novel that unravels in the subsequent pages.

As a text very much embedded in space, R.D. Stacey regards this novel as a covert pastoral which opens up with the mongrel history of the Bellrock village, differentiating between the dispossessed migrant loggers and the native landowners and cattle-owners. This is the typical pastoral setting of the Virgilian tradition of shepherds, gatherers, games, gift-giving, conversations and non-violence. To Stacey, the pastoral mood is carried till the very end of the novel which is "unassuming, intimate, neither auspicious nor inauspicious, but signaling that shift in perspective or change of consciousness that seems to underlie the mode's insistence on fellow-feeling and human sympathy" (467).

With intimate knowledge does Ondaatje describe the rustic world of the village that remained unrepresented by the maps until the early nineteenth century. The author succeeds in constructing picturesque images of the village life during the summers and winters of Patrick's childhood. In this exotic landscape, the little boy is both the subject who observes and the object of observation. Ondaatje even invokes the temporary lodges of the loggers, which Patrick has never been able to see: "A raw table, four bunks, a window the size of a torso….The only connection the loggers have with the town is when they emerge to skate along the line of river, on homemade skates, the blades made of old knives" (8).

The lonely little boy sitting in a brightly lit kitchen of an otherwise dark house, turning the pages of his geography textbook and reading out the exotic place names is another picturesque image that eventuates before us. It is worth remembering that the map of Canada forms the cover of the book that encompasses the maps of other countries. With dexterous ease does the author paint the pictures of timberlands and the livestock farms of Western Ontario where Patrick grows up as the son of the "abashed" Hazen Lewis, in the midst of "cutting wood, haying, herding cattle" (11), the scenic beauty of which alters into the panoramic vision of the Bridge where Nicholas Temelcoff works, the Macedonian bar and the Ohrida Lake Restaurant. The descriptions are more precise here as the truck bearing the workers turns east at the top of the Parliament Street, "passes the Rosedale fill, and moves towards the half-built viaduct" (25). The landscape gets measured in feet and inches, "the width of the cross-walks in terms of seconds of movement—281 feet and 6 inches make up the central span of the bridge. Two flanking spans of 240 feet, two end spans of 158 feet" (35).

However, both the precision of the bridge and the poetry of the village get lost in the city space of Toronto, where the eloquence of the two previous locations give way to a vague, imprecise rendition: "Patrick sat on a bench and watched the tides of movement, felt the reverberations of trade. He spoke out his name and it struggled up in a hollow echo and was lost in the high air of Union Station. No one turned. They were in the belly of a whale" (54). From this point onwards, only the interiors are elaborated upon such as Alice's farmhouse looking "like the quarters of a monk" (65) with its woodstove, bird feathers, bed, windows and a mat on the floor. It is significant

that Ondaatje's next elaboration of the exterior has to be Patrick's childhood village to where he is forced to return in search of Ambrose Small living there under cover: "He is among blue trees, he can smell gum on the branches. He can hear the river. He knows this place from his childhood, the large house belonging to the Rathbun Timber Company, which he had passed every day during the log drives" (94).

As stated in the last chapter, Ondaatje elaborately describes the interiors of the waterworks, Alice's room on Verral Avenue, Wickett and Craig's tannery, a Chinese café, the Muskoka Hotel, as fragments of a jigsaw puzzle that connects the adult life of Patrick. It is ironical that the next outdoor scenes happen to be the fictitious Garden of the Blind on Page Island, where he comes across the blind woman who leads him to "see" with his ears and Caravaggio's escape route from the prison where he was held. Both these locations are away from the city, thereby emphasizing Ondaatje's preference for the elaborate spatial to be the village and the outskirts.

Third space

As already stated, the third space refers to a place that is different from the home and host nations of the two select authors. In the case of Ishiguro, this space is represented by *When We Were Orphans*, a novel set in Britain and China and for Ondaatje, the representative text is his Booker winner *The English Patient*, which shifts between the locales of Italy and the Libyan desert. It is to be noted that neither of these authors focuses on a single third space nation as they had done in the case of the two other novels, each exclusively set in their home and host spaces. Of the seven parts of *Orphans*, the third space of China is limited to just three parts while the

remaining four parts are set in Britain which is also the author's host space. This enables us to compare between the twin spaces of Britain and China as well as the Britain of *Orphans* and that of *Remains*, the latter being the representative text of the authorial host space. Out of the ten chapters of *Patient*, four are exclusively set in the Libyan Desert while the rest of them in Italy with the Patient occasionally transporting his narrative back to the desert.

It is argued that along with some of the most poetically constituted spatial descriptions of the two "third spaces" situated far away from the vestiges of civilization such as the lush hills of Tuscany and the dry sand dunes of the Libyan Desert, *The English Patient* more boldly presents Ondaatje's statement on war rather than *Anil's Ghost*, set amidst the warring factions of Sri Lanka. Likewise, the study reveals a marked change in Ishiguro's style as the author graduates from vague, hazy and imprecise depictions of hedges and thickets to a political rendering of a war-torn China during the Japanese invasion.

The novel *Orphans* spatially locates itself in the London of the early nineteen twenties which slowly unfolds into a city of lethargic sidewalks, pleasant parks, quiet reading rooms, museums of antiquity where tradition meets modernity in the form of "creepers and ivy…found clinging to the fronts of fine houses" (3). Almost all spatial depictions are politically charged with ulterior motives, intended either to create an impression, or to elaborate upon a concept or to impart an emotionally charged perspective of the protagonist. For example, the small flat Number 14b Bedford Gardens in Kensington, where Banks resides, serves also to impress his visitors with its

tastefully furnished interiors comprising an ageing sofa, two snug armchairs, an antique sideboard and an oak bookcase filled with crumbling encyclopaedias. The narrator claims to have chosen the premises with utmost care, it being a place that evokes "an unhurried Victorian past" (3), thus laying claims to an ancestry of antiquity which Banks, being an orphan, never possessed. Another example would be the expensive Dorchester Hotel where Banks chooses to throw a dinner to Colonel Chamberlain so as to impress upon the latter of his transformation from a snivelling little squirt to an affluent gentleman.

Apart from the two above mentioned buildings, the spatial description of London is limited to the interiors of a few clubs, hotels and party-sites such as the Charingworth Club and the Waldorf Hotel, spaces that reveal the emotional instability and distorted perception of Banks. Even though Banks himself is acutely aware of the inaccuracy of his impressions concerning the spaces of his narrating present, his remembered narrative of Shanghai is more picturesque and logical. Thus, Banks describes the Charingworth Club of his narrating present as "uncommonly dark…despite the wall lamps, the candles on the tables, the chandeliers above" (12) and at once realizes that his perspective is both exaggerated and unnatural owing to his own frozen, child-like awkwardness. At the same time, his description of one of his childhood days in Shanghai when he met Colonel Chamberlain at the office of his father's supervisor is rather vivid and elaborate with the result that at least three sentences are solely devoted to the depiction of the chair that he quite awkwardly occupied then.

Very soon, we find Banks' memory relapsing to his childhood house in Shanghai,

where he lived with his mother, father and ayah, with Uncle Philip as a frequent visitor. Although he had to leave Shanghai at a very early age following the mysterious disappearance of his parents, Banks' memory narration of that city is more intricate than the Britain where he grew up. Thus he succeeds in evoking before us the house where he spent his early childhood in the Shanghai International Settlement, including its grand staircase, his playroom, the dining room where the meetings of his mother's anti-opium campaigns took place, the conservatory where teas were served, the library where he did his homework under the strict supervision of his amah Mei Li, the swing where he spent time with his mother, his father's study where one day he and his mother found a thoroughly distraught father and the grass mound with a single maple tree at the rear of their garden where he played with his next-door friend Akira. In bits and snatches, these spaces offer us the fragments of Banks' family life, the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle which if properly joined would sum up the story of his tragedy.

Apart from tracing the life of an overseas British family stuck in China, these spaces also reveal the racism, corruption and hypocrisy inherent in the white community towards the natives. For instance, the children were forbidden to venture beyond the boundaries of the Settlement into the Chinese areas of the city without adult supervision:

> Out there, we were told, lay all manner of ghastly diseases, filth and evil men. The closest I had ever come to going out of the Settlement was once when a carriage carrying my mother and me took an unexpected route along that part of the Soochow creek bordering the Chapei district; I could see the huddled low rooftops across the canal, and had held my breath for as long as I could for

fear the pestilence would come airborne across the narrow strip of water. (54)

A couple of pages later, Banks remembers a childhood incident when a health inspector from his father's company demanded his mother to dismiss the servants belonging to the Shantung province on account of the high incidence of opium addiction of the region. Using a slippery slope, he argues that opium addiction inevitably leads to poor hygiene, health hazards and dishonesty among the natives who will eventually be forced to thieving in order to cater to the drug needs of themselves and their family. It is ironical that while the company is concerned with the health of its white employees, it refuses to consider the "untold misery and degradation" it causes to the whole of China as a result of its massive importation of the Indian opium.

In the scene where Uncle Philip lures Christopher away from his house so as to let Wang Ku kidnap his mother, we find the little Banks in possession of much topographical awareness that he successfully finds his way back home through the Kiukiang Road, the Yunnan Road, the Nanking Road and finally the Bubbling Well Road. It is to be noted that Ishiguro uses specific names of roads and regions in this novel when compared to the indeterminate "Pleasure District" and the jumbled up city names of *Artist* or the unnamed countryside of *Remains*. Banks, like Ishiguro, justifies his elaborate mental tour of Shanghai as his need to preserve a quickly fading memory of his childhood. Later, in Parts Four, Five and Six, the protagonist revisits these once-familiar locales with the eyes of an adult Banks, revealing further insights into the spatial.

On his second arrival in Shanghai, Banks presents his readers with three snapshots of the city, namely, that of the obstructing people, homeless refugees and the

lone barge with cargo. While the first one can be attributed to Banks' emotional reaction to a daunting investigative task at hand, the second and third may be interpreted as representing the present situation of Shanghai. He attributes his disorientation to the supposed tendency among the people to obstruct one's vision. He describes the Shanghaites thus, "No sooner has one entered a room or stepped out from a car than someone or other will have smilingly placed himself right within one's line of vision, preventing the most basic perusal of one's surroundings" (153). It is in his journey to his childhood house with Anthony Morgan does Banks comes across the "refugees from the north of the canal" (183) in the form of huddled homeless figures sleeping on the pavement "so that there was only just enough space down the middle of the street for traffic to pass" (182). While watching the war, Banks sees a crates-filled barge like boat with a lone oarsman trying to pass under a bridge. This boat passes under the bridge gracefully, with its precarious bundles of cargo intact, with the boatman oblivious of the war going on around him. This singular image becomes the objective correlative of the precarious quotidian existence of the Chinese natives who have no time to watch and worry about the war, unlike the whites of the Settlement.

From the dystopic description of the war-zones of Chapei we see Ishiguro coming of age regarding the spatial descriptions. Here the author quite painstakingly brings to life the horrors of war from close quarters. Thus the police station of Chapei is so meticulously described drawing our attention to its abandoned and dilapidated state, thinly guarded by wounded and inexperienced volunteers brandishing garden tools instead of proper weapons, with windows broken and doors hanging off their hinges,

unplastered walls, lit by two bulbs dangling side by side, a battered wireless set, an office desk "sawn in half then crudely put back together again with rope and nails" (231), several upturned tea chests instead of seats and an unconscious and heavily bruised Japanese soldier who vomited from time to time. Banks, who prides himself to be a celebrated British detective, is incongruous and out of place in this space owing to his costume of flannelled suit and his unreasonable demand for armed soldiers to venture into the war-zone and rescue his parents whom he supposes to be held in a house the location of which he is totally clueless. The police station becomes an absurd space on the basis of its difference from what is commonly thought of in the western world. For example, what looks like a broom cupboard to Banks turns out to be the observation tower of the police; upturned tea chests are seats and garden spades are the only weapons available there.

It is from the police watch tower does Banks get his first glimpses of the warren where the factory workers reside. Like an ant's nest, invisible to the eyes of the foreigners and the rich natives, the warren extends over a vast space of land and is the present zone of war between the Chinese and the Japanese. Although realistic descriptions of slums and warrens have prevailed in English literature such as in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, Ishiguro politicizes the slum space into a war-zone thereby stressing his statement against war. The description aims at bringing out the abject living conditions of the poor, lack of properly ventilated housing facilities for the factory workers, the failure of the Chinese government in providing ample shelter to its citizens, the inmates' helplessness that prompts them to lead such base, undignified lives and

further partition their tiniest abode with other families in order to share the rent. This description should be seen in sharp contrast to the lives of affluence led by the imperial British subjects, such as Sir Cecil Medhurst, who wile away their time gambling.

His peregrination across the war terrain of the warren proves a rite of passage for Banks who learns that the miserable life circumstances of the slum dwellers are many times multiplied by the onset of war. This scene resonates with a similar one in *Artist* where Matsuda takes Ono through the shanty town of the Nishizuru district, an experience that jolts the artist out of the "floating world" of his then teacher Mori-san. However, unlike *Artist* where the gross inequalities of life and culture are subtly implied, here Ishiguro makes Banks voice his anger at the politicians and statesmen who irresponsibly cause the war, thereby bringing untold miseries to the poor and the innocent:

> …and I would find myself suddenly overcome with renewed anger towards those who had allowed such a fate to befall so many innocent people. I thought again of those pompous men of the International Settlement, of all the prevarications they must have employed to evade their responsibilities down so many years, and at such moments I felt my fury mount with so much intensity… (241)

At close quarters, the warren is portrayed despicably with "large areas submerged in stagnant water…scuttling of large groups of rats…pitch blackness…the most overwhelming stink of excrement" (247).

The strange friendship that grows between Banks and the unknown Japanese

soldier whom he mistakes as his childhood friend Akira reinforces Banks' opinion that a war at best satisfies only the politicians and it is never in the interest of the ordinary people who are rather peace loving. The painstaking journey undertaken by Banks carrying the Japanese soldier, the "grim circumstances" of the war-terrain that house only "isolated individuals with abandoned looks in their eyes, muttering or weeping to themselves" (257) and the description of the frightfully identical death-throng of two disembodied voices, first of a Japanese soldier (243-4) and later of a Chinese soldier (258) that Banks initially mistakes to be of the same person quite forcefully brings home the universal horrors of war as suffered by the common man throughout the world, irrespective of his nationality. Here, Ishiguro makes Banks verbally philosophize that "this was what each of us would go through on our way to death—that these terrible noises were as universal as the crying of new-born babies" (259).

The place where they choose to rest for the night is no less terrifying, with grenade damage, bullet holes, smashed brick and timber everywhere along with the carcass of a water-buffalo covered in dust and debris. However, it is in such unwelcome circumstances does a strange friendship develop between Banks and the Japanese soldier. Together, they dream of a good, peaceful and warless world that they should strive to construct for the sake of the next generation and agree on the need to preserve a happy childhood for their children. This hopefulness is closely followed by more unpleasant spatial depiction of "ghastliness" and "wreckage", "blood—sometimes fresh, sometimes weeks old" and "piles of human intestines in various stages of decay" (264). Very soon, they reach the house of the little girl, who, despite being mortally

wounded and all her family killed by the shelling, seeks the strangers' help to save her dying dog. Such scenes where controlled understatements replace the melodrama have a cathartic effect as they heighten the agony and helplessness of a suddenly orphaned little girl.

It is on his way back to the British Consulate that Banks gets a clearer picture of the war and its political reasons. From a cultured and well-read man like Colonel Hasegawa, he realizes that the philosophy of imperialism is firmly rooted in war, damage, carnage, exploitation and suffering. Having set the precedent of colonialism in the past, Britain has no reason to accuse Japan in its scramble for power. It is to be noted that Banks' adventure at Chapei that spreads over thirty-five pages is what Ishiguro comes closest to the depiction of the Second World War. Described as "a small speck of dust compared to what the world must soon witness" (278), the Chapei episode becomes the synecdoche of the greater war that will soon ensue. The rest of the places described in the text, such as the Rosedale Manor, Hong Kong where he at last meets his mother, Gloucestershire where Jennifer resides and London where Banks spends the last lap of his life, offer the resolution and denouement of the novel.

If Ishiguro evokes public opinion against war by explicitly reporting the calamity from the war-zone, Ondaatje does the same by creating a parallel world of art, books, murals, frescoes and wall paintings, idealism, passionate love and unspoken grief. Incidentally, Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, set in Italy in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, is also a call against arms that enhances the horror and tragedy of war by drawing our attention to its very opposite. If Akira and Banks spoke

of a warless good world of nostalgia and childlike innocence inside the war-zone, the microcosm of Villa San Girolamo is precariously perched near the precipice of war, on a land strewn all over with the German mines, inhabited by four war-torn individuals who strive to form a family and make some sense of their otherwise meaningless existence.

The first chapter of the novel titled "The Villa" sets off with a poetic description of the villa, its many rooms, its present state of war-damage, the intricate frescoes on its walls, the unidentified burnt patient and his lone young nurse who constitute its present inmates. The first eleven pages elaborate upon a magical landscape, leisurely unfolding into a large canopy that extends across the unnamed patient's personal past and their present lives. Saturated with a profusion of similes, metaphors and such other figures of speech, the patient's inaccurate memory of his personal past is measured in spatial movements as a "well of memory he kept plunging into" and the stories that cause the room to "slip from level to level like a hawk" (4). Similarly, Hana often picks random books from the library to be read out to the Patient, the plots of which are, like their own lives, fragmented, lacking in coherence and continuity, "like sections of a road washed out by storms, missing incidents as if locusts had consumed a section of tapestry, as if plaster loosened by the bombing had fallen away from mural at night" (7). Even the desert medicine-man receives the author's bounty: "He walked through sandstorms with this coat of bottles, his ears plugged with two other small corks so he seemed a vessel to himself, this merchant doctor, this king of oils and perfumes and panaceas, this Baptist" (10). Elsewhere, he is compared to a winged archangel and the

texture of his glass bottles as “rough and sandblasted, glass that had lost its civilization” (10).

From the twelfth page onwards, Ondaatje moves into deft prose and crisp sentences, thereby jolting his readers out of the magical landscape that he constructed in the preceding pages to their present precarious existence with mines cast everywhere. The harsh, coarse and prosaic reality that comes after the initial pages of poetry offers a rude shock as well as a conflicting perspective to something already described. The identity of the villa that was once a nunnery, then a German stronghold, a military hospital after the German retreat and now, in its ruins, the sanctuary of these individuals is brought out in this section of multiple narratives. As a result, the Edenic utopia of the first few pages crumbles into a devastated makeshift home where twenty books from the library became the lowest two steps of the staircase that were burnt down and the crucifix from the chapel became the scarecrow. The Tuscan villa situated near a gorge, on the hills twenty miles away from Florence is further revealed in the second section, from the information gleaned by Caravaggio who insists on reaching them there. In their present time of April 1945, it looks a besieged fortress with little demarcation between the gardens painted on its walls and the landscape that surrounded it. This is a life away from the civilization, “in near ruins”.

The English Patient’s theory of the villa being that of Bruscoli, one of the many Tuscan villas owned by the Medici family to which Poliziano was a tutor, further connects it to the birth space of the Renaissance where argument was both vocation and avocation. By means of a mistaken identity of the villa, Ondaatje succeeds in

inserting the probability of a different religious order where Plato could have been worshipped along with Christ, had not Savonarola's prophesy of a French invasion swept across Florence, burning "wigs, books, animal hides, maps" (61) and the free will upheld by the Medici. Here the alternate identity of the Villa Medici, when superimposed onto its adjacent Villa San Girolamo, that had been a nunnery, suggests the possibility of a more secular art and lifestyle, before Fra Girolamo Savonarola's religious fanaticism intervened to reclaim Florence to a Christocentric theocracy. This villa thus becomes a site of art, religion and warfare amalgamating into a variant historical space. As the nineteenth century German historian Ludwig Pastor writes, Savonarola's politico-religious concept of a theocratic rule resembled that of the Jews during the time of the Judges, by which Savonarola himself would be the "medium of the Divine answers and commands" (210). This is comparable to Hitler's defective logic mixing religion and politics in his mass extermination of the Jews, a policy of aggression central to the Second World War.

Reminiscent of the "hushed politeness" of the migrant loggers of *Lion*, Kip enters the villa only if he is invited as "a tentative visitor" (79). While the other three inmates are apparently at home in the villa, Kip, possibly on account of his brown race, regards himself an unbelonging migrant. A couple of pages later, Ondaatje uses the exact phrase "hushed politeness" (82) to refer to the seventeen soldiers who enter the Sistine Chapel to defuse the bombs planted there. This, along with Kip's experiences at the marine festival of the Virgin Mary in 1944 and the Church of San Giovanni a Carbonara of Naples illustrate further intermingling of war and religion, to which the Indian sapper

remains a spectator. Although the Patient legitimizes the sapper's existence in the villa by comparing Kip to the David of Michelangelo Caravaggio's painting, Ondaatje suggests that the Indians like Kip should realize how they are being exploited by the British and the Americans in return for the skills and civilization they impart to them. At the end of the novel, this is what Kip does after learning about guns from the Patient, thereby foreshadowing the success of the Indian freedom struggle two years later.

Hana's passionate indictment of war is situated in her professional life as a nurse during the troubled times of the world war. The uncertainty of her existence prompted her to give up her unborn child as the dangerous times prevented her from having a family of her own: "You felt you could be shot anytime there, not just if you were a soldier, but a priest or nurse. It was a rabbit warren, those narrow tilted streets. Soldiers were coming in with just bits of their bodies, falling in love with me for an hour and then dying" (88). Having attended to unbearable suffering and innumerable casualties, she also adds, "Every damn general should have had my job" and defines the ambivalence of war as "something no one wanted and somehow make them feel comfortable" (89). Elsewhere, Caravaggio holds the privileged rich who are therefore compromised enough to protect their property and civilization as the true perpetrators of war (130). This is similar to the irresponsibility of politicians and statesmen that Banks complains of in *Orphans*.

If Hana voices her need for peace and return to Canada with its tin roofs and sleeping poplar trees in rain, Kip silently works at his job of defusing the bombs, all the while remaining loyal to the civilized British culture inculcated in him by his mentor, Lord

Suffolk. Only at the end of the text is he given a substantial dialogue against war:

> My brother told me. Never turn your back on Europe. The deal makers. The contract makers. The map drawers. Never trust Europeans, he said. Never shake hands with them. But we, oh, we were easily impressed—by speeches and medals and your ceremonies. What have I been doing these last few years? Cutting away, defusing, limbs of evil. For what? For *this* to happen? (302-3)

Quite dramatically does the author succeed in bringing about this self revelation in Kip that while he was endangering his life defusing the many small bombs and mines, an enormous bomb was being made for Hiroshima, to let "the living witness the death of the population around them" (305). To a thoroughly disillusioned sapper, any nation that bombs the brown races of the world has to be English because Indians like him were brought up to emulate the "fragile white island" of England whose customs, manners, books, prefects and reason somehow dictated the correctness of behaviour to the rest of the world. By the same token, Japan easily represents the whole of Asia, although he had in the past denounced the Japanese for brutalizing the Sikhs in Malaya. Hindsight reveals that Ondaatje was preparing his readers for this moment in the differences he had brought out between Hana and Kip. For example, while Hana romanticized swimming in rivers and her life in Canada, Kip felt self-sufficient in his tent and dived into the rivers for professional purposes alone, "for the lost pulleys, grappling hooks in the water among them, mud and surface and faces lit up by phosphorus flares in the sky around them" (136). Although Hana was ready to endanger her life at the behest of the sapper, she fails to understand his present outrage at the Japanese

bombing and is therefore unable to accept the responsibility of the white race's cruelty on the Asians. Hence she asks quite innocently, "What did we have to do with it?" (306).

Ondaatje does not advocate for the supremacy of one race or religion over another as Hitler or Savonarola had envisaged; but for a cosmopolitan society symbolized by the desert, a space of anonymity that "could not be claimed or owned", that existed long before Christianity, longer than the Asian and European civilizations and warring nations. It is a "nationless" world "that had been civilized for centuries, had a thousand paths and roads" (149). The prehistoric quality of the desert is contrasted with the provisionality of human explorations thus:

> The ends of the earth are never the points on a map that colonists push against, enlarging their sphere of influence. On one side servants and slaves and tides of power and correspondence with the Geographical Society. On the other the first step by a white man across a great river, the first sight (by a white eye) of a mountain that has been there forever. (150-51)

While the explorers like Almásy and Madox formed an oasis society among warring nations and sought to erase their names and ownership, there were others like Fenelon-Barnes and Bauchan who were vain enough to name after them the tribes, sand dunes and fossil trees they discovered. With the advent of the war, this peaceful society of explorers who had "seemed to be interested only in things that could not be bought or sold, of no interest to the outside world" (152) suddenly found themselves split into "teams" and warring camps. Almásy even suspects that Madox took his life because of

nations, as the green fields of his hometown of Marston Magna got converted into airfields and the church sermon campaigned for war instead of peace. It is by emphasizing a love story between a woman who loved the rains, the English gardens and her ancestry and a man who loved the silence, vastness and namelessness of the desert that Ondaatje substantiates his statement against war. It is for the sake of his love does Ondaatje's Almásy guides Eppler to Cairo across the desert and it is because of the war that he fails to save his love, thereby further blending love with war.

A comparative analysis of the third spaces represented by these novels reveals that both Ishiguro and Ondaatje have successfully politicized this space, unlike the novels representing their home and host spaces. Instead of his vague spatial depictions that characterize both his home and host spaces, Ishiguro's Banks is eidetic enough to recall even the names of small streets of Shanghai, even though he is unable to remember what happened to him in the previous day. It is to be noted that Geoffrey Clifton, whose family genealogy dated back to Canute, is comparable to Osborne in *Orphans*; while Almásy because of his anonymity and chosen orphanhood is like Banks with no family connections to speak of. In his wish to be marked by nature and not labelled on maps, Almásy expresses his desire "to walk upon such an earth that had no maps" (277). This desire to merge with the anonymity of the desert is comparable to the need to construct a warless world as expressed to Banks by the Japanese soldier trapped in the warren. Both novels excoriate war, although in Shanghai the Japanese are perpetrators of crime, while in Tuscany they are the victims.

Time and again, studies have been performed on the multiple difficulties of segregation and racial discrimination faced by the Asian migrants in integration to a European host society. Commonly defined as the maintenance of cultural heritage along with participation in the social life of the receiving society, the idea of integration has implications in the socio-economic and political issues encountered by the migrants in the host society. It is to be noted that neither of the selected writers has explicitly dealt with their personal experience of migration in the novels under analysis, save for some very subtle, indirect echoes and references. Hence, we are to figure out the presence or absence of it from the indirect allusions and suggestions made by these authors in their texts. Therefore, this chapter wishes to study these authors on the basis of their representation of the issues related to migration. It is argued that the voicing of the migrant concerns in the select texts is a true sign of their endorsement of their migrant identity, whereas their apparent silence about the migrant issues is apt to reveal them as conformists to the dominant identity of their host nation.

While the acquisition of a naturalized citizenship that guarantees permanent residency forms a major milestone in the migrant's movement towards political integration, the road to it is paved with complicated formalities, regulations and rigorous citizenship tests, the syllabi of which change from time to time. In his book *Becoming British*, Thom Brooks says that "naturalization is a process where migrants are forced to jump through increasingly difficult hoops….Naturalizing is becoming British the hard way, where some of the rules may seem 'unnatural' and maybe a touch un-British as some migrants find they have more hurdles to jump than others to become fellow

citizens". He further adds, "…migration is about crossing territorial borders, but British citizenship is about crossing civic boundaries, recognizing others as equals". In other words, apart from the intransigence of the citizenship tests, Brooks, an American British migrant, points to two major problems in integration and social equality. Accordingly, some migrant-citizens, such as the white Americans, are "more equal" than others and the process of naturalization that assures legal and political equality, need not guarantee civil, social and racial equality.

In Britain, like many first world nations, the attitude of politicians, policy makers and the general public towards immigration is that of a threat, not an opportunity and migrants are described in alarmist language, "like hordes of locusts…dangerous, which must be curbed before they destroy everything in their path" (Brooks). Most British natives tend to view non-American and non-white naturalized citizens as asylum seekers and undesirable immigrants rather than fellow British citizens. Mike Storry and Peter Childs validate this by pointing out that any serious discussion of immigration and ethnicity is usually accompanied with problematic terms such as "issue", "concern", "problem", "question", "answer", "debate" and so on, terms that suggest that immigration is an anomaly to be resolved by the indigenous British population, thereby contaminating the mutual relations between the natives and the migrants even before the arrival of the latter (257). Tracing the history of the mutual relations of migrants and the natives of Britain, Storry and Childs argue that although post-war immigrations from the "New Commonwealth" of "brown" nations were initially welcomed by the natives with a mild interest at the proximity of exotic cultures and a few practices (such as the Yoga, the

raga and the turban) were accommodated by the "multicultural" Britain, racism was rampant within the modern British response to immigration. While the earlier "biological racism" of the 1960s and 1970s was more violent and aggressive, the newer varieties of "cultural racism" of the 1990s are subtler, more suggestive and surveillant. This is illustrated through the controversial argument of the British Conservative politician Lord Norman Tebbit that "if people living permanently in Britain support other nations in sporting or other cultural events, then they have not sufficiently adapted themselves to British life, and cannot therefore legitimately be called British" (260-261). This argument, called Tebbit's "cricket test", although originally directed at the black Britons who supported the West Indies cricket team instead of the official English team, later was applied to any instance of assumed disloyalty and cultural treason among the immigrants of Asian and African origins.

Regarding acculturation, John W. Berry identifies four different strategies, such as assimilation, separation alternative, integration and marginalization, based on the immigrants' preference for the maintenance of their own heritage culture and identity or to participate in the larger society comprising other ethnic groups. The strategy of integration, which Berry identifies as the most effective of all acculturation strategies, is built upon the assumption that the individuals of a non-dominant society can volunteer to enter into a cultural contact with a very open and inclusive dominant society. As a result, the non-dominant society acquires and adopts the values of the dominant society while the dominant society adapts its social institutions to meet the needs of the non-dominant groups. Although variations are possible in each of these strategies, it has been

found that depending on their age of arrival, the children belonging to the immigrant families tend to adopt the values of the society of settlement more easily than their parents whose primary socialization was in their country of origin. However, such considerations have been replaced in the contemporary age by the transnational families that celebrate flexible identities, "subject to multiple influences and interpretations of equal validity" (Tyyskä 92).

Depending upon the different degrees of assimilation and alienation encountered by the ethnic minorities, the British identity that reveals itself in specific values, belief systems, practices and attitudes has become more complex and "enmeshed in an intricate web of similarities and differences" that cover every aspect of the modern British life. The apparently antithetical labels of "Little England" based on the version of a nation built on cultural purity and that of "Great Britain" built on a glorious imperialist past of slave-trading and colonization are premised on the predominance of a white, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant British identity that persists to differentiate between the white and the non-white British citizens. Despite the slow recognition of multicultural identities by the dominant British culture, the contemporary identities are more fluid, incorporating the mixtures of people and ethnic practices that were until recently labelled as "foreign". Thus, "the term 'British' will only survive as a worthwhile label of identity if it can be used to embrace all of these multicultural identities, while recognizing and valuing the difference between them" (324).

Unlike many migrant authors of his age, Ishiguro's oeuvre does not foreground the autobiographical details of his personal experience of migration. In fact, except for

Etsuko Sherringham of *A Pale View of Hills*, none of his narrator-protagonists are permanent migrants; even though most of them are constantly and rather restlessly on the move. *Artist* is full of Ono's outings and errands, while *Remains* is built around Stevens' sight-seeing trip to the country and *Orphans* bases its resolution on Banks' temporary shifting to Shanghai. Instead of thematic concerns of a migrant existence, Ishiguro's texts and characters are permeated with allusions and subtle references to a much celebrated sense of rootlessness, dislocation and displacement, enhanced by his "inside-outsider's (or outside-insider's) perspective of Britain and Japan" (Cheng 18). Consequently, Pico Iyer designates him to be the great spokesperson of the "privileged homeless" (qtd. in Lewis 5) and Kate Kellaway observes that Ishiguro's placelessness has imparted the author with the freedom to master "the art of projection and protective coloration" (qtd. in Lewis 4).

Of the three protagonists of the select fiction, we can readily assume that Ono and Stevens have neither ventured abroad nor undergone a physical experience of migration. Ono's interests, excursions and power games are limited to that of his nation, in spite of having done commissioned artwork for American clientele. Regarding anything beyond the borders of Japan, his knowledge, as Matsuda alleges, is no better than that of an infant. His statement that Karl Marx led the Russian revolution and that Lenin was his colleague is evidence enough to bring out his naivety about foreign affairs (172). Likewise, although Stevens boasts of having known the entire world within the walls of the Darlington Hall and claims of having close contact with the statesmen and diplomats of his time during his tenure, his personal experience of travel or migration is next to

nothing. At the same time, his exhilaration at the beginning of his journey after he passes familiar grounds is similar to that undergone by a migrant upon leaving his known shores. Despite being closely tied to their places of residence and therefore totally ignorant of a world outside it, both Ono and Stevens exhibit certain characteristics peculiar to a migrant such as love of and pride in one's heritage culture, inability or unwillingness to get assimilated into changed circumstances (here, it is a change of time as these characters are temporally out of place); always apologetic and obsessed with the impulse to please others as evident in Ono's attempts to appease his past acquaintances instead of standing his ground and Stevens' servitude and menial efforts to oblige his master and guests at the expense of his personal life; a need to prove their allegiances to the organizations of which they are members like the Takeda's, Mori-san's, Okada Shingen, Hayes society and so on.

In comparison with these two, Banks of *Orphans* has spent some part of his life abroad. Having born in Shanghai and having spent his early childhood there, Banks is unable to accept England as his "homeland"; he perceives himself as a Shanghaite and yearns to go back there, to come to terms with his abruptly ended childhood and resolve the case of his missing parents. Like the author, Banks has undergone a childhood migration to England. But while Ishiguro as a child migrant was leaving his home space of Japan to come to Britain where he later acquired citizenship, Banks re-migrates from his parents' temporary abode of Shanghai to the nation of which he is a citizen. Although he completed his schooling and college education in England and set himself as a busy private detective there, the Banks whom we meet at the beginning of

the novel has not properly acclimatized to his place of residence. We learn how he deliberately picked up some of the gestures and mannerisms in vogue among his peers during the time. Despite his proclamations of being well adapted to his surroundings, we understand that there are loopholes to his story of assimilation. To Banks, his revisit to Shanghai as an adult is a return home, to a place he remembered nostalgically, a place where he had and lost his parents. At the same time, like Ono and Stevens, Banks also exercises extreme caution and precaution in revealing his inner feelings and desires. As a re-migrant, the mannerisms and social etiquette of his home space baffle him so much that, corollary to what he told Uncle Philip in Shanghai that he is not enough Englishman, he decides to join Osborne's invitation to "encounter points of custom as yet unfamiliar" (11) to him.

Besides the chief protagonists, the select texts offer allusions to the migrant experience through thematic concerns and minor characters. In order to acquire his present residence, Ono is asked to submit "to a close investigation of (his) background and credentials" (*Artist* 9), much like the scrutiny undergone by a British immigrant for access to permanent residence in his target country. Further, the phrases associated with the sale such as "compromise", "high-handed" and "distinguished history" may be considered symbolic of the lost glory of Britain and how her natives treated her migrants. Critics like Barry Lewis attribute Ishiguro's repeated obsession with words and phrases like "respectable", "dignity", "treason", "loyalty", "deceit", "suspicion", "people like us" and ideas such as political well-connectedness, confiscation, the menace of a hidden family secret and so on to the migrant author's sense of shame and

embarrassment. We understand that Ono is as out of place as a newly arrived immigrant in his own hometown and is in a transit stage, attempting to please his erstwhile enemies as if his present existence depended upon his pleasing them. Apart from his elder son-in-law Suichi who fought war in Manchuria, the text fails to portray any migrant characters as such.

When we come to *Remains*, the presence of American immigrants such as Stevens' new employer Mr. Farraday and the family of Wakefields who has been residing in Britain for some twenty years, occasions better opportunities to study the interrelationship between the natives and the migrants. True to Tom Brooks' statement, the white American is hardly regarded as an unwelcome migrant by the native British. However, there are instances of disdain thrown at the new rich American at times as in, "American, eh? Well, they're the only ones can afford it now" (242). Their manners are ridiculed in the tales circulated by Mr. Simpson and Mr. Rayne according to which American bartenders and taxi drivers are expected to hurl invectives and crude references at their customers in order to fulfill the roles expected of them (15-16). Stevens, on the other hand, struggles hard to attune himself to the likes, tastes and preferences of his American employer, to correctly anticipate the latter's needs and desires so as to provide him with the best of his service. Eager to please Farraday, he even goes to the extent of learning the art of bantering and ironically alludes to the migratory aspect of gypsies collecting unwanted iron (16-17). Besides Stevens, Lord Darlington also had disdain for his American guest Lewis, had connections with the blackshirts, concern for Herr Breman, but was ready to sack his Jewish maids. This last

act shows that the lord was indeed a snob who had no sympathy for his powerless employees. As a butler, Stevens also exercises customary caution with his employer and his guests, an attribute common to newly arrived migrants.

The introduction of Akira in *Orphans* makes us wonder if he is a textual counterpart of the author. Like that of Akira, Ishiguro's birthplace is also Nagasaki, to which his parents always planned to go back. As such, the family spoke Japanese at home, retained their cultural heritage in the form of wall decors and interior designs and efforts were taken to prepare their children to resume their lives and education in Japan. Hence, in his Nobel Lecture, Ishiguro recalls how, every month throughout his childhood, his grandfather living in Japan used to send him a parcel, "containing the previous month's comics, magazines and educational digests" (5). His parents regarded themselves as visitors rather than immigrants and went on to discuss "the curious customs of the natives" without feeling any responsibility of adopting them. Because of this, Ishiguro obtained his British citizenship only in the early nineteen eighties, after the publication of his first novel. Still, the fate that awaited Akira in Japan could be a possibility of what would happen to Ishiguro if he returned there. Akira's torment at Nagasaki school and his fear of being sent there could be shared by any migrant child of his age, who considers himself not quite fully belonging to the cultures of either the nations he inhabited. Like Akira, Ishiguro is neither enough Japanese, and like Banks, nor is he sufficiently British. But unlike his characters Akira and Banks, the author seems to celebrate his rootlessness and hybridity.

The problems that Akira encounters in the learning of English as a second

language are revealed in his rudimentary English and his faulty expressions such as “old chip”. There is maintenance of heritage culture in the houses of both Akira and Banks. Concerns of cultural purity are retained by the migrant children as evident in their constant complaint that they are not enough English or Japanese and in Akira’s “endless harping on the achievements of the Japanese” (78). This last aspect of Akira has caused a few inter-ethnic conflicts between the children. Ten pages later, we see the same Akira return from Japan as a hopeless misfit dreading any return there. Banks even witnesses his brave friend crying to think about going back to Japan. Fearing the ordeal of returning to their “home” nations, both Banks and Akira vehemently declare themselves to be the citizens of a third space, the International Settlement of Shanghai, a space where members of different nationalities could come together in peaceful coexistence.

Upon returning from Nagasaki as a misfit, Akira is willing to be integrated into the International Settlement as a cosmopolitan citizen, as envisaged by Uncle Philip. Uncle Philip, at least during the childhood of Banks and Akira, is a staunch advocate of multinationalism as a panacea to all wars. He argues that hybridity takes away the sense of belongingness to one’s nation or race and also the jingoism and militarism associated with it. This could be viewed as Ishiguro’s view of the world—that the world wars are caused by excessive nationalism. If people like him with mixed backgrounds and allegiances live together peacefully, there will be no war.

Jennifer, another significant migrant character discussed in the novel, is a British orphan compelled to live with her grandmother in Canada. Her missing of England and

her home is quite the opposite of what Banks felt for his home nation during his childhood. As a child migrant, Jennifer is a proper foil to Banks. Although she eagerly awaited the arrival of her trunk from Canada, its loss does not perturb her much as she chooses to look forward to her life as the adopted daughter of Banks. His unnecessary caution in disclosing personal details to Sarah and the "look of suspicion" (129) he reads on Lady Beaton's face as he declares his decision to take her in reveal that even in his adulthood, Banks remains unadapted to England. Likewise, he attaches undue weight to his temporary departure for Shanghai as desertion, betrayal and irresponsibility towards his adopted daughter, whereas the latter does not perceive it as he does.

Anthony Morgan, Banks' old school friend is yet another migrant whom we come across in the novel. Despite himself being an orphan, Banks has little sympathy for this classmate, whom he remembers as an unhappy and lonely refugee boy who used to sulk behind the main group of boys, refusing to join in the fun and keeping to himself. At the same time, he is judgmental of Morgan for being unsympathetic towards "his poorer counterparts", namely, the "refugees from the north of the canal" (183), the huddled figures of homeless Chinese and Europeans that they meet on the road during their night drive. Morgan himself is unhappy with his eleven years' life in Shanghai and constantly complains of his Chinese lifestyle, his Chinese furniture and his chauffeurs. Similar temporary migrants are officials of the consulate and office of the commissioner, soldiers who fight in the foreign territory and diplomats like Cecil and Sarah trying to avert the war.

Cultural racism towards the Chinese natives is pervasive among the immigrant

white Europeans. Examples can be seen in Banks' observation that "people (of Shanghai) seem determined at every opportunity to block one's view" (153) as part of a typical "local eccentricity" or social etiquette, that is complemented by "surprisingly rough shoves to get people out of one's way" (154); Morgan's comment that one of his drivers was a typical Chinaman and bandit of sorts, who kept rushing off "to perform his gang duties" so that he picked him up once "with blood all over his shirt" (181), Sarah's allegation that the Chinese drivers, unlike their British counterparts, would cut the throat of their prospective customers (171) and the red-faced man's "monologue satirizing various aspects of Shanghai life" such as "the bathroom arrangements at particular clubs" (209). The problem with such biased comments is that they are conveniently normalized as part of typical social custom and etiquette to be absorbed by the immigrants who wish to integrate into it.

In her chapter "Making and Marketing Kazuo Ishiguro's Alterity", Chu-chueh Cheng argues that while his Japanese identity as represented by his exotic-sounding name and face provided the springboard for his earlier books, in his later works Ishiguro resorted to downplay the Japanese influences by shifting to universal themes, styles that defy categorization and an evasive approach to imperialism that borders on a celebrated subversion. Unlike the postcolonial writers like Rushdie, Mo or Naipaul, with whom he is rather needlessly grouped, Ishiguro's home space is a former empire, the military aggressions of which extended throughout the East Asia. To Cheng, it is this personal history of inhabitance in two former empires that imparts Ishiguro's writing with evasiveness towards imperialism and the foregrounding of the civilian memories of a

socio-cultural world severely altered by the Second World War. As such, "haunted by memories of loss and guilt, Ishiguro's characters are more temporally incarcerated than spatially dispersed, for they can neither secure a firm foothold in the capricious present nor flee from the catastrophic past they dread remembering" (21).

Regarding his global readership, Cheng argues that Ishiguro, being acutely aware of the acceptability and wider circulation of the mass media myths, clichés, images and stereotypes, attaches them to altered contexts thereby disassociating them from their "original frames of reference" (74). She identifies three broad categories of such clichés, namely, the national myths, snapshot images and stock characters that are transformed and interrogated in the novels of Ishiguro. As such, his novels deflate and de-naturalize the national myths of Japanese collective heroism, the moralistic greatness and paternalism of the English aristocracy and the savagery and sinisterhood of China as Orientalized by the West. After establishing each nation as an amorphous entity, Ishiguro invokes deceptive realism whereby the readers vaguely recognize the hazy panoramic visions from their cultural memory that are regularly associated to Britain, Japan and China.

As a multicultural society that recognizes the social significance of immigration, Canada has one of the highest immigration rates of the world and is best described as a "cultural mosaic". However, John Porter's sociological study, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* indicates a case similar to that of Britain, whereby the migrants having British origin enjoy a higher social status as an over-represented elite group that is entrusted with greater social, political, financial and

ideological powers in the hierarchical structure of the vertical mosaic. *Canadian Immigrant Integration Literature Review* compiled by Farahani et.al. discusses the problems encountered by the Canadian immigrants in the process of integration to the host society. Some of them are, commodification of labour; absence of better employment opportunities, referrals and counselling; skill-devaluation, labour market exclusion and non-recognition of credentials; lack of language, other sector-specific skills, business orientation, networks, experience in Canadian work culture and business etiquette; sexism, racism and racial discrimination; feelings of inadequacy related to economic insufficiency, scarcity of affordable housing conditions as well as inter-ethnic conflicts. To this, Erik Girard and Harald Bauder add that, for successful assimilation, the immigrant professionals and executives ought to have cultural competence along with their technical competence, a cultural understanding that enables them to internalize the "habitus" of practices and behaviours that the "naturally-born" Canadian has already engrained within him (35-53).

As far as economic assimilation is concerned, the role of immigrant families has been emphasized in the constitution of "intra-family migration history" (Kaushal & Reimers 103) by which, the subsequent members of a family with a migration history tend to thrive better in skills and wages than their earlier counterparts or single migrants. Some of the major indicators of integration include labour market and educational participation, use of proper housing and health care provisions, creation and maintenance of inter-ethnic social relationships, the level of political participation and the level of orientation towards the host society and identification with it. Similarly, migrants who

choose their spouses from the new nation are bound to be more effectively adapted and assimilated to the host nation, rather than those migrants who prefer to marry within their ethnic circles. By these standards, it is evident that the migrant authors under consideration here are both economically integrated to their respective host societies.

When compared to Ishiguro, Ondaatje's depiction of migration is more direct and explicit. In *Lion*, the author glorifies the European migrants, with due emphasis on the dangers of their work culture, their housing and accommodation problems, their initial struggles at obtaining the work they are skilled for, as in the case of Nicholas Temelcoff who had to work in the Bridge before settling on his bakery business, the difficulties in learning English as a Second Language as revealed through the schools attended by migrants like Temelcoff, their visits to the cinema and the theatre to learn the situational pronunciation which renders a melodramatic theatricality to the daily conversations of the migrants, their songs, plays and dance, their revolutions, protests, activism and so on.

Lion has been venerated as a brave attempt on the part of a middle class author at the celebration of working class migrant lives. However, in his attempts at glorification, Ondaatje sometimes assigns his working class migrants with middle and upper class attributes. For example, Patrick the son of a farmer and logger is an avid reader, who regularly visits libraries to peruse on encyclopedias, Caravaggio the thief also reads about the various intelligence measures used in the world war, whereas Cato, another migrant logger and activist, sends philosophical letters to his lover Alice. Reading, usually regarded a middle class pastime, is what these characters indulge in,

thereby negating their social position before the readers.

From the migrant perspective, Ondaatje's workforce, comprising the European Canadians, is marked with a conspicuous absence of the Asians such as the Indians, the Japanese and the Chinese, who formed Canada's second largest pan-ethnic group since the early decades of the last century. A portrayal of the South Asian migrants in the text would have entailed allusions to racism, restrictions and exclusive politics that were practised by the Canadian government upon the Asians as against their European counterparts. The Continuous Journey Regulation of 1908 and the *Komagata Maru* incident of 1914 are examples of such discrepancies in the State policy towards migrants of Indian origin. Similarly, although the novel depicts activists like Cato and Alice, the reasons for their activism and discontentment remain unacknowledged. It is evident that, by means of such deliberate and selective silences, the author disengages himself from certain embarrassing episodes in the Canadian migrant history.

It is in *Patient* that we find an Indian migrant in the persona of Kripal Singh the Sikh sapper. The microcosmic world of Villa is full of migrants: the Canadian Hana, the Italian turned Canadian Caravaggio back to Italy during the war, the Hungarian suspected to be British Almásy and the Indian sapper Kip working for the British. Here the four individuals come together as if in a cosmopolitan space as envisaged by Ishiguro in the International Settlement of *Orphans*. Yet, the relations among them are not so equal. This is revealed through the customary caution exercised by Kip while entering the house. Kip is aware how the brown races are treated by the whites and so is thankful to his mentor Lord Suffolk for treating him as an equal. However, at the

end of the novel, he attributes the bombing of Japan to the racism of the whites.

In none of the three select novels, Ondaatje portrays a Sri Lankan migrant like himself. The migrants delineated in Canada do not have South Asians amidst them (*Lion*); the migrants in Italy have an Indian but not a Sri Lankan among them (*Patient*); in *Ghost*, the Sri Lankan-American migrant Anil Tissera is depicted in her home nation, where she returned as part of a governmental investigation. As such, she is a re-migrant like Banks of *Orphans* in England. Like Banks, she has problems in acclimatizing to the place which she left only fifteen years ago. But unlike Banks, she very easily gets involved in the political scenario of Sri Lanka and meddles with the situation there. As such, Anil is a responsible citizen, although her problems as a migrant in the western nations are not represented except for a bad marriage that she falls victim to. As in *Lion*, here too the author is silent about the causes of political unrest in his home nation as well as the allegation that the Sri Lankan civil war was sponsored by the Lankan migrants in the U.S. and Canada. From this discussion, it is evident that both the select authors resort to some elisions and evasions in the portrayal of the socio-political and economic dimensions of migration. It seems that, like many of their own protagonists, these migrant authors are continually, even apologetically engaged in a policy of appeasing the readers of their home and host nations as part of a compromise of their hybrid existence.

The French philosopher Jean de La Bruyère wrote, "there requires a better name to be bestowed on the leisure of the literary character, and that to meditate, to compose, to read and to be tranquil, should be called *working*" (qtd. in D'Israeli). This

view conforms to the popular belief of literature being a "non-pragmatic", highly valued discourse of "fine writing", a pursuit of genius and imagination, the leisure of which hardly falls into the sphere of labour of the manual or professional variety. The criteria for great literature often form the value-judgments of the reader or critic that are flexible, unstable and subjective. However, as the aggregate of the mental and physical capabilities existing in a human being (in this case, the writer) contributes to his capacity for labour, which results in the saleable commodity of books as well as the service of his skills, we may safely define the work of literature as a form of wage-labour. Unlike the manual labour, the labour to create intellectual commodities such as books is safeguarded by the intellectual property rights like the industrial property rights and the copyright. The copyright laws that came into existence in Britain during the seventeenth century were formulated to enhance the extensive production and commodification of creative human activities such as the literary and artistic products, while protecting the individual interests of the writer or artist.

On 5th April 2019, The Society of Authors, under the leadership of their President Philip Pullman wrote a letter to the U.K. State Secretary for Business requesting the latter to take action against book piracy. This letter, signed by thirty-three authors, including the Nobel laureate Kazuo Ishiguro, stated that a sixth of the e-books read online in the U.K. are pirated; that the growth of online book piracy damages the legitimate book market and the library service thereby substantially cutting down the income of authors; that such piracy is a gross infringement of the copyright regime of the nation and that, according to the survey conducted by Authors' Licensing and

Collecting Society (ALCS) in 2018, the mean earnings of a U.K. author from their writing was just about ten thousand pounds per annum (Flood). This instance of correspondence between the authors' trade union and the British government reveals that the authors of Britain are an organized group of individuals who, well aware of their intellectual rights, the worth and income they are capable of generating, are interested in the preservation of their monetary and cultural existences.

According to their website, The Society of Authors (SoA) is a U.K. trade union established in 1884 in order to protect the rights and interests of all types of authors at all stages of their careers and currently claims to represent around ten thousand writers, illustrators and literary translators of the United Kingdom. Throughout its history, notable writers like Tennyson, Bernard Shaw, Thomas Hardy, H.G. Wells and E.M. Forster have served this organization as members and office bearers. At present, they purportedly offer advice in all aspects of the profession including confidential clause-by-clause contract vetting, campaign on issues like copyright that affect authors, administer grants, prizes and literary estates. Likewise, The Writers' Union of Canada, of which Michael Ondaatje is a member, is a national organization of professionally published Canadian book authors. It offers to promote the rights, freedoms and economic well-being of all writers and counts among its achievements the Public Lending Right and Access Copyright, "which provide writers with financial compensation for the use of their work by libraries and through electronic reproduction" ("About". *The Writers' Union of Canada*). Founded in 1973, this union offers "a range of services that are not otherwise easily available to writers working in isolation". From the "About" sections

of both these organizations, it is evident that the contemporary writers themselves regard writing as a career and a serious profession that earns income, irrespective of the aura attributed to them by the fan clubs and discussion groups of reading enthusiasts.

Both Ishiguro and Ondaatje are authors of indisputable eminence which is evident from the honours and decorations bestowed upon them by various national governments, the international prizes and awards they have won such as the Booker and the Nobel Prize as well as the millions of readers around the world who pore over their books, in originals and in translations. While Ishiguro's Nobel can be seen as recognition of his literary contributions to mankind (according to the Will of Alfred Nobel dated 27 November 1895), the Golden Man Booker won by Ondaatje's *The English Patient* is an acknowledgement of the enduring readability of that book. The novels of both these authors have been adapted to films by acclaimed directors like James Ivory and Anthony Minghella. As time goes by, we find them addressing global themes and universal subjects that permit them to transcend the narrow boundaries of home and host spaces to attain cosmopolitanism.

Of the six novels set in the historical past that were analyzed here, it is clear that the two books located in third spaces bear their pacifist ideologies and anti-war messages to the fullest. As a result, they inhabit a curious position according to which, on the one hand, they are accepted by the Booker and Nobel Prize committees as champions of mainstream culture; whereas on the other, through their works, they resort to subtle attempts at exposing and subverting the mainstream cultural and literary conventions that acknowledge their worthiness. Thus, having chosen writing as a career

and by selecting historical themes instead of the spatial and autobiographical concerns, these authors aim to transcend above and beyond their geographically restricting identities and trade time for space.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Over the years, migrant literature or the literature of migration has firmly established itself as a subgenre of world literature owing to its transnational considerations and multicultural implications. Most contemporary migrant writers, like Kazuo Ishiguro, Ben Okri, Salman Rushdie and Michael Ondaatje, aspire towards internationalism and global readership by way of their cosmopolitan themes, universal treatment as well as their multinational personal backgrounds involving at least two sites, that of the home and host spaces. Despite being a recent genre that came in vogue since the 1980s, migrant literature has acquired great significance and momentum as it reflects many of the trends common to the contemporary world literature. While the early generations of migrant authors limited their range of themes to the portrayals of geographically specific locations and autobiographical narratives involving their personal experience of migration, the contemporary proponents of the genre have moved away from such conventional and simplistic concerns to depict subtler and more complex subjects such as retellings and appropriations of certain privileged and dominant narratives.

In its preceding chapters, this thesis undertook a study of the implications of historical appropriations practised by migrant authors. The following research questions formed the basis of this study: What are the means and ends of historical appropriation when performed by a migrant author? Does the author's spatial dislocation impact the

temporal dislocation of his anachronistic protagonists in any way? If so, can time be said to substitute space in such cases? These three major questions got summarized into the hypothesis that connected the spatially dislocated migrant author with his temporally dislocated protagonists by means of the parameters of time and space as factors determining their participating culture and social identity. It is argued that the protagonists turn away from their narrating present to describe events that happened in their pasts and are characters who constantly look back to a regressive past and outmoded lifestyle refusing to welcome the new age of progress and increased freedom. By inscribing and later subverting such reactionary characters, the authors seem to be challenging the very base of the mainstream historiography that is at once exclusive and dominant. The construction of a very English butler or a too true detective by Ishiguro as well as the very bookish romantic idealists of Ondaatje are therefore their strategies of subtly satirizing some of the evils of societies they participate in.

It is worth remembering that the two authors examined here migrated during the mid-twentieth century, the era of mass migrations following the major historical events like the end of the Second World War, the fall of the British Empire and the declaration of independence by numerous nations that were erstwhile colonies. This was an era prior to the present day advancements in transport, communication and technology that transformed the world into a multitude of transnational and transcultural relationships. At the same time, it was an age when migration was a significant and almost permanent life-changing decision. Neither of the select authors could re-visit their nations of origin until the nineteen eighties, only to find that they were visiting “imaginary

homelands" (Rushdie), whose people and concerns had moved on without their emigrants. Unlike those who migrate in today's globalized world, where distance gets reduced by speed and cost effective technological developments that are easily accessible to the common man, these writers grew up with a strong sense of their home nations as an Other culture safely stacked away behind their public selves. The thesis argues that it is the authors' personal experience and memories of migration that get translated to the unaccountable adjustment problems faced by the protagonists.

The primary objective of the study is the application of the postmodern theory to the select novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and Michael Ondaatje. This involves an analysis of the temporal dislocation of the protagonists who appropriate the authorized public history of their present, by choosing to obscure, distort, suppress, invent or obliquely refer to it by means of their personal and therefore unverifiable histories. The second and third chapters of the thesis are devoted to this analysis, of which the former deals with Ishiguro's three select novels, namely, *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986), *The Remains of the Day* (1989) and *When We Were Orphans* (2000) and the latter with the three select novels of Ondaatje, that is, *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987), *The English Patient* (1992) and *Anil's Ghost* (2000). Each of these chapters is further divided into two: the historical context that informs us of the mainstream public histories concerning the period contemporaneous to the narrators and the postmodern text that follows it, which appropriates such histories.

As such, Chapter Two, titled "The Recovered Histories of Kazuo Ishiguro" comprises the historical contexts of post-war Japan, Britain during the Suez Canal crisis

and the inter-war period of China. This part is followed by the postmodern text of these novels that problematizes the totalitarian narratives of the preceding section, by critically reworking the past and retelling its history using such devices as irony, parody, pastiche, subversion, self reflexivity, unresolved contradictions, postmodern constructs and contrived closures. Here the theoretical framework is drawn from Linda Hutcheon's two books, namely, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988) and *Politics of Postmodernism* (1989) and the appropriation is studied as a process and a product. Besides the authorized history, the select novels also undertake to appropriate certain literary and artistic styles, devices and traditions of the past thereby challenging the conventional borders between fact and fiction. This is done by means of possible intertexts that include the works of Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, P.G. Wodehouse, Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, Arthur Conan Doyle and Miguel de Cervantes and genres such as the historical romance, comedy of manners and dated journals. By blending the factual with the fictional and by disregarding all claims of authority put forward by authorized histories, these texts are found to be recovering certain aspects of life stories suppressed by the dominant historiography. It is argued that thereby Ishiguro is upholding the rights of the common man to narrate history in his own manner, as differentiated from the scholarly narratives of the authorized history.

The third chapter, named "The Recollected Histories of Michael Ondaatje", likewise, offers a bird's eye view of the historical contexts pertaining to the select novels such as the Canadian construction history, the history of the final lap of the Second World War and the Sri Lankan civil war. The second part of this chapter

analyses the postmodern elements in Michael Ondaatje's historical novels using Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction, a subgenre of the postmodern novel with its own distinct features. Here too, the grand narrative of the authorized history is appropriated, by foregrounding the processes of collection and recollection, by means of invention, imagination and celebration of those voices that are excluded by it. The four major features of the historiographic metafiction are discussed, namely, the ex-centricity of the protagonists belonging to the margins of historiography; the foregrounding of historical characters who are fictionalized counterparts of their mainstream versions; the presence of unassimilated historical data in the form of statistical figures and the negotiation and celebration of the ontological joint between fact and fiction. Further, other issues concerning appropriation such as those of reference and representation, subjectivity, intertextuality, fluidity of the narrative, parody and irony are discussed, which substitute the monolithic concept of the mainstream history with the non-linearity of the histories from below. Along with historical texts, other possible intertexts identified are classics such as Herodotus' *Histories*, Kipling's *Kim*, the Holy Bible, Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and the Epic of Gilgamesh which add colour to the texts at hand.

The secondary objective of this study consists of an analysis of the cultural and aesthetic politics behind the impulse to appropriate the authorized history by the migrant authors. Hinted at throughout the second and third chapters and finally elaborated in the fourth chapter, this objective involves some of the major findings of the thesis. The aesthetic politics of appropriation is sought within the postmodern framework of the

textual analysis. It is maintained that, by foregrounding textual disunities and inconsistencies, the postmodern novel challenges and exposes the grand narratives and their overstatements of order, meaning and stability. The past is reworked to prove that all our naturally and universally acceptable conventions are constructs that need to be problematized both for their oppressive strategies and for their impact on social psyche. It destabilizes the notion of a stable and universal truth and replaces it with a set of continuously shifting aphorisms that are to be negotiated from time to time. Similarly, through allusions, intertexts and rewritings of literary works, genres and conventions, the select novels interrogate the quality of timelessness attributed to great literature and uncover the selective silences and exclusions practised by many of our classical texts.

For the cultural aspect, the thesis situates the select novels within the global interdisciplinary discourse of migration, built on the geographical, political, economic and literary dimensions. Thus, in Chapter Four, titled "Trading Time for Space: A Review of Ishiguro and Ondaatje", a comparative analysis of the select novels of Ishiguro and Ondaatje is performed, based on their concerns with time, space, market, capital, racism, discrimination, compromises, restrictions and subversions. Built on the space theories of Doreen Massey, Michel de Certeau and Ernesto Laclau, this chapter groups all the select novels into three pairs, on the basis of their geographical locations. Thus, a comparative study of the novels set in the home, host and third spaces of these migrant authors reveals that the third spaces are portrayed with lesser constraints than that of either the home or host spaces and is a more politicized site offering the respective author's statement against war, aggression and all types of violence.

Further, issues pertaining to the social, political, economic and literary aspects of migration are discussed. Both Ishiguro and Ondaatje, having acquired citizenship at their nations of residence are found to be politically integrated to their respective host societies. However, for a naturalized citizen, integration in the social and cultural realms is found to be insufficient and unequal to that of a native citizen. Besides the racism and discrimination prevalent within the white societies towards the Asian migrants, there are some equally significant economic challenges that affect the migrant quality of life such as commodification of labour, absence of better employment facilities, referrals and counseling, skill-devaluation, labour market exclusion, non-recognition of credentials, lack of language and other specific skills, business orientation, networks, experience in the work culture and social etiquette, economic insufficiency, scarcity of affordable housing conditions and inter-ethnic conflicts.

These multiple problems, when applied to the migrant texts under study, reveal that while Ondaatje has incorporated most of them in his texts, Ishiguro has resorted to the portrayal of their subtler and rather indirect dimensions. Thus, his non-migrant protagonists display certain symptoms associated with migration, such as concerns with racial purity, an unwillingness to get integrated to the host society, problems in learning the English language and imbibing the social etiquette and so on. Likewise, one of the political problems of migration concerns with the over-representation of certain ethnicities such as the American in Britain and the British in Canada. This is something we find in Ondaatje's novel *In the Skin of a Lion* which depicts the migrant labourers who risked their lives to construct the Canadian cities. Although the novel celebrates the manual

labour of the migrant working class, it fails to represent any Asian immigrants. As such this novel is silent about the Indians, Chinese or Japanese who arrived in Canada during the turn of the last century. Hence, one may say that Ondaatje's oeuvre has an over-representation of the white European migrants as a result of which the author disengages himself from the racist and discriminatory governmental policies that existed then towards his Asian predecessors. Further, the author's portrayal of the political unrest in both Canada and Sri Lanka remains incomplete without any reference to the possible causes for such acts of resistance.

The literary aspect of migration is characterized by the international prizes and awards received by the authors, which can be seen as a recognition of their artistic values, productivity, humanitarianism, cosmopolitanism, global readership, outstanding contributions to humanity and world peace, as well as the cultural exchange offered by their status of hybridity. Whereas such recognitions unambiguously acknowledge these writers as established, prominent, mainstream artists who are clearly integrated into the host society, the literary subversions they employ simultaneously undermine their assimilation, as subversion is presupposed to be a byproduct of non-belongingness.

The same chapter fulfills the third objective of a comparative analysis based on the similarities and differences of the select novels of Ishiguro and Ondaatje. Concerning the similarities, the following findings are arrived at: Both of them appropriate the authorized history and the literary conventions of the past, thereby contesting the totalitarian narratives through postmodern devices. A few of these devices common to both the writers are critical reworkings of genres and texts of the past, inclusion of

intertexts, employment of parody and irony as well as the technique of contrived closure or improbable resolution. While the critical revisions and the presence of intertexts offer commentative dialogue with the past and enrich the text with nuances of meaning; devices like parody, irony and contrived closure problematize the textual connections with the past and equip it to dispense with all its pretensions of unity and coherence. As stated already, their indictment on war is revealed in the depictions of their much politicized third spaces, through which they evoke public opinion against violence and put forward the idea of a peaceful co-existence through the celebration of differences.

A contrastive analysis of these authors reveals that, while Ishiguro's texts appropriate the history of the Second World War by means of suppression, distortion and oblique reference; Ondaatje's novels appropriate the authorized history of three separate historical ages of national importance by means of historiographic metafiction. In the place of Ishiguro's single, insular and over-individualized unreliable narrators, Ondaatje has multiple narrators narrating a single story from multiple angles and visions. Apparently dissimilar, both these techniques of narration aim at the fragmentation of texts and render the story incomplete. As far as the three spaces are concerned, while Ishiguro's text on home space is replete with Orientalist and stereotypical images of Japan, that of Ondaatje thrives on exotic place names and elaborate descriptions of the village and forest spaces of Sri Lanka. Such a strategy enables the authors to conceal their own spatial ignorance of their homelands all the while catering to the imaginations of their Western reader with what he thinks he knows and what he desires in the East. In their delineation of the host spaces, while Ondaatje continues with his strategy of

elaborating the rural spaces at the expense of urban, Ishiguro resorts to more vague, abstract and inexact spatial descriptions of Britain. Such representations impart a timeless quality to the spatial descriptions, making them universally recognizable to the global reader.

Regarding the fourth objective, namely, the exploration of the current global literary discourse of migrant writing through the selected novels is a rather presumptuous objective to be fulfilled within the purview of this study. This thesis undertakes an extensive research on the implications of historical appropriations as evident in the select novels of Kazuo Ishiguro and Michael Ondaatje. As such, its scope cannot be extended to include a thorough analysis of the whole of migrant literature in which a number of texts appropriate authorized histories, such as Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) and *Shame* (1983), Amitav Ghosh's Ibis trilogy consisting of *Sea of Poppies* (2008), *River of Smoke* (2011) and *Flood of Fire* (2015), the Ghanaian-American novelist Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* (2016), to name a few. The present-day migrant literature also offers appropriations of other mainstream narratives as found in Rakesh Satyal's *Blue Boy* (2009), based on the Indian myth of Krishna and Helen Oyeyemi's *Boy, Snow, Bird* (2014) that freely rewrites the fairytale of Snow White. In other words, the diversity of the themes, styles and motives employed by the contemporary migrant literature is such that it demands further analysis and is beyond the scope of this thesis.

With reference to the research methodology of this study, it can be seen that two different theories and approaches are employed, namely, the postmodern theory as

found in the second and third chapters as well as the interdisciplinary theories of migration which inform the comparative study executed in the fourth chapter. Although both the novelists appropriate history in the postmodern technique, Michael Ondaatje's texts belonging to the sub genre of historiographic metafiction demand the employment of that specific theory of Hutcheon in the discussion of his novels in the third chapter. On the other hand, as Ishiguro's texts cannot be specifically grouped under historiographic metafiction, their analysis in the second chapter necessitates the utilization of a general postmodern theory. The employment of two different forms of the same theory has facilitated a detailed investigation of all the texts with respect to their common postmodern elements and an appropriate examination of their intrinsic and exclusive qualities. Along with the aesthetic elements of appropriation, these two chapters also undertake to investigate the temporal dislocations of the protagonists.

In the fourth chapter, the dissertation moves away from specific literary theories to an amalgamation of a wide variety of observations drawn from theorists of multiple fields like geography, philosophy, migration, economy, politics and culture. Instead of delving into any of this in detail, this study has chosen to incorporate only those statements that are most relevant to the task at hand, that is, a comparative study of these texts and their authors based on the different aspects of their migration. Space being a significant parameter of the definition of migration, an elaborate analysis of the texts based on the three spaces relevant to the migrant authors is most warranted. In order to study the migrant authors' relationship with the three spaces, time and space theories from geography are extensively applied and a detailed analysis of the select

novels is conducted. The rest of the migrant aspects, such as the social, political, economic and literary, are combined together, so as to understand the cultural implications of historical appropriations.

From the analysis, this thesis comes to the conclusion that, in the select novels, these migrant authors refrain from a portrayal of their individual experience of migration. Instead, they freely engage in the appropriation of the authorized history through anachronistic protagonists in order to reveal the possible gaps, silences and exclusions in the dominant historiography. As the process of appropriation is performed through the postmodern text that self reflexively celebrates its own disunities, inconsistencies and contradictions, the primacy of the authorized version is contested and subverted to the end that its omissions are supplied with migrant, marginalized and civilian personal histories from below that may lack the unity, coherence and scholarship of the mainstream version. However, as the authorized version cannot be replaced by a similar alternate version, but by a multitude of plural versions, further lacunae are created by the appropriated text in the migrant situation. By attributing the cultural, economic and socio-political issues of migration to their anachronistic protagonists, these writers emphasize time at the expense of space. Such a strategy enables them to downplay their migrant identities and instead foreground and celebrate their hybrid identities, looking forward to a multicultural world of peaceful co-existence.

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APPENDIX

1)	Name of the Author(s)	:	**Lakshmi A.K. & Dr. W.S. Kottiswari**
	Title of Publication	:	**"'A Well-told Lie': Autofiction and Local History in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*"**
	Name of the Journal	:	***New Academia: An International Journal of English Language, Literature and Literary Theory***
	Volume, Number & Year	:	**Vol. 7, no. 1, January 2018**
	International/National	:	**International**
	ISSN	:	**2347-2073 (E-ISSN)**
	Web Address of the Journal	:	**http://interactionsforum.com/new-academia**
	Impact factor, if any	:	**0.765**

2)	Name of the Author(s)	:	**Lakshmi A.K.**
	Title of Publication	:	**"The Ambivalence of the Self and the Other in the Migrant Narrative of Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*"**
	Name of the Journal	:	***Appropriations: A Peer-reviewed Journal of the Dept of English, Bankura Christian College***
	Volume, Number & Year	:	**Vol. 10, 2015**
	International/National	:	**National**
	ISSN	:	**0975-1521**
	Web Address of the Journal	:	**Print Journal**

3)	Name of the Author(s)	:	**Lakshmi A.K. & Dr. W.S. Kottiswari**
	Title of Publication	:	**"Transnational Migration in the Selected Fiction of Michael Ondaatje"**
	Name of the Journal	:	***The Criterion: An International Journal in English***
	Volume, Number & Year	:	**Vol. 6, no. 5, October 2015**
	International/National	:	**International**
	ISSN	:	**0976-8165**
	Web Address of the Journal	:	**www.the-criterion.com**