

Search for Identity in Michael Ondaatje's Post colonial Novel *In the Skin of a Lion*

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Abstract

In his post colonial novel, *In the Skin of a lion*, the Canadian/Sri Lankan writer, Michael Ondaatje is so interested in the term "Post colonialism" because he wants to show that the term doesn't only refer to a period of time that comes after colonialism. In other words, post colonialism is not only referred to as a literal description of formerly colonial societies. He deals with the term as a literary genre and an academic construct that describes the global conditions of a man after a period of colonialism. He shows that post colonialism is a theory that tries to examine and explore the different styles and faces of European authority to control the colonized. Ondaatje's attempt through such term is to unmask European authority and to focus on those who are excluded such as the immigrants and the outsiders who feel lost and without identities in their world. Thus, he writes *In the Skin of a Lion* to retell and illuminate the story of the marginalized characters of Toronto who are used and controlled by the colonizers to build Toronto but they remained as outsiders. The writer tries to weave the story around such characters as Caravaggio the thief, Nicholas Temelcoff the daredevil, Patrick the tunnel worker, and Alice the nun to show how the colonial powers dominated over them, marginalized and alienated them in a city where they sought home. He shows how the barriers of language, culture and beliefs hold these individuals back and imprison them in "the tunnels and the stockyards". They were denied even the right to communicate in their own language. This is because of the "rule of the city", a city that imposes on them their philosophies and values on struggling. It made them known only by their trade, "A starrer of roads, a house builder, a painter, a thief". Ondaatje resorts to *The Epic of Gilgamesh* to suggest thematically the title of his novel as *In the Skin of a Lion*. He emphasizes the idea of assuming the skin of a lion to take action because each one has responsibility in life. To sum up, the novel is a call to provide the opportunity for the once marginalized persons to stand and to be heard. In other words, the novel is about the transformation of identities in the shed of the colonialism.

البحث عن الهوية في رواية ميكيل اونداتجي " في جلد الاسد" من ادب ما بعد الاستعمار

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المخلص

اهتم الكاتب ميكيل اونداتجي في رواية " في جلد الاسد" التي تعد من روايات ادب ما بعد الاستعمار بتفسير مصطلح " ما بعد الاستعمار" لأنه اراد ان يبين ان المصطلح لا يعزى فقط للفترة الزمنية التي تلي الاستعمار وبكلمات اخرى فان مصطلح ما بعد الاستعمار لا يتم الاشارة اليه فقط لوصف مجتمعات تم استعمارها سابقا فقد تعامل الكاتب مع المصطلح بصيغته لونا" ادبيا" وتمثيلا" اكاديميا" يصف الوضع العالمي للإنسان بعد مرحلة الاستعمار. فقد بين ان فترة ما بعد الاستعمار هي نظرية تحلل و تفسر الواجه والاساليب المتعددة التي تمارسها السلطات الاوربية للسيطرة على مستعمراتها فمن خلال هذا المصطلح حاول الكاتب تعرية او فضح هذه السلطات والتركيز على هؤلاء المستبعدين كالمهاجرين والاجانب او الدخلاء من خارج البلد اللذين يرافقتهم الاحساس بالضياع ممن ليس لديهم هوية لأثبات وجودهم

في عالمهم. لذلك ومن خلال هذه الرواية فقد حاول ان يسلط الضوء على هكذا شخصيات بل ويركز عليها جيدا في مدينة تورنتوا مثلا ممن اعتادوا السيطرة على المستعمرين والتحكم بمصانيرهم فعلى الرغم من انهم " الاجانب " هم اللذين اسسوا لبناء تورنتوا الا انهم عنوا دخلاء. حاول الكاتب ان يربط خيوط احداث القصة حول هكذا شخصيات: كاللص كار فاجيو والشيطان نيكولاس تيمي كلوف وعامل التنفق باتريك والراهبة اليس. ليبين كيف ان المستعمرين يمارسون سطوتهم على هكذا شخصيات مستضعفة ويحدون من وجودهم ثم ينفونهم لمدينة ينشدون فيها الوطن. يوضح الكاتب ان حاجز اللغة والثقافة والمعتقدات يحدد سلوك هكذا شخصيات ويحجم ردود افعالهم ويدفعهم للالتزام. ويتبين من احداث الرواية انهم سلبوا حتى حق التواصل باللغة الام فيما بينهم وذلك بسبب قانون المدينة. المدينة التي فرضت عليهم قيم وافكار تجعلهم في معاناة دائمة فهي تجعل شهرتهم فقط من خلال المهنة التي يزاولونها فمثلا فلان عامل الطرق وفلان البناء الرسام واخر اللص. اشار الكاتب لمحنة كلكاش ليقترح ما يشير اليه عنوان الرواية حيث انه اكد على فكرة التظاهر بجلد الاسد للقيام بفعل معين اذ ان لكل انسان مسؤولية يوديها في حياته. وبإيجاز فان الرواية هي محاولة لإيصال اصوات هذه الشخصيات وجودهم وتعبير اخر. ان الرواية تبين اوجه تحول هوية الافرا

Search for Identity in the Post Colonial Novel: Michael Ondaatje's In the Skin of a Lion

Post colonialism doesn't refer to a period of time that comes after colonialism. Post colonialism is a theory of criticism that tries to address literature and other disciplines as gender studies, culture studies and anthropology which stresses on the reconstruction of the "identity" and the image of "the self" after the departure of the colonialism that follows and imposes the policy of power and domination which lead to the "Euro-centric notions of national purity in the western canon".¹

Post colonialism is a theory of literature called post colonial literature that emerges in a colonial period to oppose colonialism. This type of literature often tries to focus on what colonialism creates like race relations and the effects of racism and usually indicts white or colonial societies.

The definition of post colonialism has faced much diversity. Many critics are different in the definitions of the term post colonial literature and this is due to their perspectives and experiences like the post colonial critic, Simon During who argues, for a more inclusive definition, that the term means, " the call for the need, in nations, or group which have victims of imperialism to achieve an identity uncontaminated by universalist or Eurocentric concepts or images".² In other words, Simon During points out that this term should be expanded to include the literature of Canada, the united states, and Australia. As to the critic, Gina Wisker, she notes that:

The indictment present in many postcolonial texts tends to produce guilt or feeling of inherited complicity in many readers. Also although writing about these texts may raise the level of awareness of both the texts and their writers, some postcolonial writers see reflected in this activity an arrogant assumption about the need for no colonial cultures to recognize postcolonial writers.³

To be more clear, Gina Wisker tries to marginalize the writings of the postcolonial writers because she supposes that their experiences are a product of being "other than European".⁴

In her essay, on post colonialism, Deepika Bahri shows that the term "post colonialism" is subjective because it consists of a very diverse range of experiences, cultures, and problems. The reason behind this diversity is the use of post colonialism as a "literal description of formerly colonial societies and as a description of global conditions after a period of colonialism".⁵ So according to her, "post colonial " is a literary genre and an academic construct that may have meaning that is completely separate from a historical moment or time period.⁶

Post colonialism is also related to certain movements such as Feminism. It tries to reflect the experiences of some women writers who live in strong patriarchal cultures that confined their ability to write and communicate by the use of language as power. In other

words, post colonialism shows that even writings are confined and ruled by the language of colonialism so the language and the ability to speak, write and publish have become an enabling tool for postcolonial authors.⁷

In the Encyclopedia of The contemporary Literary Theory, the term post colonialism is defined as

A term for a collection of theoretical strategies used to examine the culture (literature, politics, history, and so forth) of former colonies (of European Empire, and their relation to the rest of the world) so despite the fact that there has been colonial expansion, at a certain time in the past, by Eastern nations over western ones, yet post colonialism is interested in the post colonial era of the previously colonized countries with the colonizer being " Europe" and the legacy of the European conquest of the other parts of the world. In this regard the literature of the third world, Canada, and Australia are postcolonial literatures though many labels and names were given to this body of literature called postcolonial literature such as the Third World Literature, Commonwealth literature, New Literature written in English, Migrant writings, Black writings and Diasporic writing.⁸

It is concluded from all these definitions of post colonialism that postcolonial literature tries to examine and explore the different styles and faces of European authority like the use of the language as a means and power to control the self and the identity of the colonized. The postcolonial writer, Salman Rushdie, says, "There should be a process of making the self free".⁹ In other words, post colonial literature tries to reestablish a unique identity away from the subjection to colonial authority and power. Moreover, it attempts to bring the marginal to the center, for instances, it brings those who have been left out of literature in the past or history in general such as women, blacks, and other victims of oppression. This can be seen more clearly in Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion*¹⁰. The writer tries to deconstruct the European traditional identity by the use of certain stylistic devices and ideas such as imagery, language, story within a story, and characterization. In other meaning, he is interested in the study of marginality because it is as the post colonial thinker, Bell Hooks says, "Marginality is the site of power, of authority and of creativity where we recover ourselves, where we meet in solidarity to erase the category colonized/ colonizer. Marginality is [the site] of resistance. To that space, we have to be as liberators".¹¹

Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a lion* is a post colonial novel in the sense that it gives the voice for the people especially those who are historically silenced to resist the colonial power. As a Sri Lankan born writer who emigrated to Canada at the age of eighteen following several years of education in England , Michael Ondaatje's perspective on migration and displacement is influenced by his own experience in postcolonial spaces and his personal knowledge of the process of adaptation to cultural change for marginalised groups . His experience of migration from Sri Lanka to England as a child was traumatic in the severing of filial connection and readjustment to a new environment , but he feels that he gained strength from affiliation with an extended family and community in his new space .While developing an interest in the differences encountered in England and Canada, he retains a strong sense of " the landscape , politics and religion "of his homeland on a subconscious level .

Postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha suggests that aspects of past cultural life which are integral to the migrant are challenged through the experience of displacement: "The transnational

dimension of cultural transformation migration , diaspora , displacement , relocation makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification “. ¹² .

Bhabha’s model of cultural difference respects and preserves the peculiar and multiple histories and identities of the marginalised . Culture is in a constant state of dynamic change . The embracing of that which has gone before and that which is happening in the present requires adjustment and different perception by the migrant whose expectation of the new cultural space may be challenged . Bhabha also suggest that : “ The language of rights and obligations , so central to the modern myth of a people , must be questioned on the basis of the anomalous and discriminatory legal and cultural status assigned to migrant , diaspora and refugee populations “. ¹³ . A different set of rules applies to the migrants who are not treated by law in the same way as the native inhabitants of their new place . This positions the migrants those who can not participate on equal terms within the new culture . Combined with language barriers and lack of connection with the native community this situation may lead to misunderstanding and transgression of the law . “ Inevitably , they find themselves on the frontiers between cultures and nations , often on the other side of the law “. ¹⁴ . Ondaatje reveals this aspect of migrant experience through his description of the subversive activities of the Macedonianrebel , Cato , and the migrant community in *In the skin of a lion* . By demonstrating his character’s attempts to adjust to different cultures , Ondaatje exposes the difficulties encountered in the process of redefinition of self in relation to others (the recognition of self-in-others and others-in –self) , as well as the negotiation required for individual adjustment to change

Like Bhabha , postcolonial intellectuals Edward Said and GayatriSpivak perceives the position of the migrant intellectual as one of privilege , being able to straddle more than one culture and attain a vantage point which enables enhanced perception of the complexities of those areas . In his introduction to culture and said perceives that the migrant intellectual , having a more flexible position than those remaining in their own national situation , are more able to be critical of both cultures. ¹⁵

The novel tells the stories of the marginalized characters of Toronto such as Caravaggio the thief, Nicholas Temelcoff the dared devil, and Patrick the tunnel worker, to tell their own stories to take control of their lives. Ondaatje weaves the story of the novel around such characters for the purpose of showing how the colonial power dominated and alienated them in a city where they sought home uselessly. Those characters where imprisoned in "the tunnel and the stockyards" by the barriers of language, culture and beliefs. They were even denied or deprived of using their own language to communicate, "It was a rule of the city" that imposed such limit. The city knows them only by their own trade not personalities;" A tarrer of roads, a house builder, a painter, a thief". Ondaatje emphasizes the importance of telling personal stories through the use of the imagery of the title. He shows that, "each person had their own moment when they assumed the skins of wild animals, when they took responsibility for their story". He tells the readers through this imagery to take action since history is never unbiased. It is tainted by the storyteller’s prejudice. He indicates that assuming the skin of a lion can be a way of legitimizing one’s life in order to compensate for ignorance and silence. It provides an opportunity for those marginalized to stand up and be heard. A vertical mosaic of ethicized class divisions informs the relations among the characters in *In the skin of a Lion* . Although “ Canada as a nation is built on immigrant labour “. ¹⁶ , when Ondaatje conducted research on the history of Toronto , he discovered that the “ armies of immigrants who built the city “ are unrepresented in its pages . ¹⁷ . Astonished that he could find out “ exactly how many buckets of sand were used “ to build the Bloor street viaduct , but that “ the people who actually built the goddamn bridge were unspoken of “. ¹⁸ , Ondaatje perceives an opportunity to redress this historical imbalance . In its focalization through working class characters , his novel counters the absence noted by Canadian sociologist John

Porter in 1965 : “ there is almost no one producing a view of the world which reflects the experience of the poor or the underprivileged “. ¹⁹ nor “does class appear as a theme in Canadian literature “. ²⁰

Thus the novel is post-colonial in the way of bringing the marginalized to the center because though those marginalized persons were immigrants, they participated to build the city of Toronto and they should be part of its official history, otherwise, they will be ignored as outsiders. That's why he chooses such title, "*In the Skin of A lion*". He has written a novel about the wearing and removal of masks, the shedding of skin, the transformation and translation of identity.

In *In the Skin of a Lion*, the epic of Gilgamesh²¹ is retold in the figure of Patrick Lewis who wanders through the city as an angry outsider and an enemy of the establishment," He has always been alien, the third person in picture. He is the one born in this country who knows nothing of the place...he was a watcher, a corrector". (*In the Skin of a Lion*, 156-157) Patrick as born in Ontario, remains, "a searcher gazing into the darkness of his own country". (In the Skin of a Lion, 157)

Ondaatje resorts to the Gilgamesh myth to emphasize certain themes and facts; one of them is the identity of the characters and the city. Gilgamesh, the king of Uruk, represents Rowland Harris by building his public works. Patrick Lewis assumes the role of adventure. Caravaggio becomes the figure of Enkidu. Both Gilgamesh and Patrick have done a long journey. Gilgamesh to glorify his remorse over Enkidu's death, while Patrick is incensed by his lover Alice's senseless death at the hands of an anarchist and swims the waterworks at great personal risk to arrive in Harris' office.²²

As an Italian Canadian, the professional thief Caravaggio, an important secondary character in the novel, belongs to the immigrant group that holds “ the lowest position in the class system “²³ during the time period of the novel. While he is in prison, “ three men who have evolved smug and without race slash out “ with the intent to murder him. their only apparent motive is racism or xenophobia, as these racially unmarked men accompany their physical attack on Caravaggio with shouts of “ Fucking wop ! Fucking dago!”²⁴. This attempted murder constitutes the novel's most blatant evidence that some “ immigrants of European origin “ were seen as “ racially different and inferior “ and subject to “ prejudice and discrimination “. ²⁵ Caravaggio survives the prison attack thank to Patrick's vocal intervention, but his escape from prison (and from possible future attacks) depends on altering his skin colour : “ Demarcation said the prisoner named Caravaggio . That is all we need to remember “. ²⁶

Search for identity is a major theme in Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* because it is an integral part that focuses on the transformation of characters. The main character is Patrick Lewis. He searches for his identity and the light because without these elements man will lack love and cannot survive the world. In the first part of the story, " Little Seeds", Patrick is seen as a young boy who loves insects and is much more comfortable in the darkness. The insects represent the change that will occur for him later on in the story, and the darkness provides a medium for him to do that and to discover who he is. Moreover, in chapter three of the novel, he is described as a lonely man that is isolated from the world around him:

Clara and Ambrose and Alice and Temelcoff and Cato-this cluster made up a drama without him. And he himself was a bashed man, an inheritance from his father. Born in Abashed, Ontario. What did the word mean? Something that suggested there was a terrible horizon in him beyond which he couldn't leap. Something hollows, so when alone, when not aligned with another-whether it was Ambrose or Clara or Alice-he could hear the rattle within that suggested a space between him and community. (Ondaatje, 157)

Patrick's isolation and insularity is demonstrated by a metaphor for the emotional and psychological barriers within him..

"There was a wall in him that no one reached. Not even Clara, though she assumed it had deformed him. A tiny stone swallowed years back that had grown with him and which he carried around because he could not shed it. His motive for hiding it had probably extinguished itself years earlier...Patrick and his small unimportant stone. It had entered him at the wrong time in his life. Then it had been a flint of terror. He could have easily turned aside at the age of seven or twenty, and just spat it out and kept on walking, and forgotten it by the next street corner." (Ondaatje 71)

Not only Patrick who is changed but even Alice, his beloved. She is transformed from a nun to be a different woman. She realizes what her true identity is and what she really wants to do in life after being with Temelcoff in the Ohrida Lake Restaurant

- Hana is nice years old . Already too smart . not enough a child , and that's sad
- You've got a lot more time with her .
- No . I feel she's loaned to me . We're veiled flesh that's all" (Ondaatje 125)

Her phrase " veiled flesh " is an apt analogy of the themes of *In the skin of a lion* regarding identity and history . the lowercase history carries with it the import of the individual : history is emotionally resonant and self- propagating . The very dispossession that is characteristic of Alice makes her not the charismatic leader that would move hordes , but the human aspect of political activism , she is composed of well – used words , controlled words , which are worthy of Patrick's trust since as she says, " I don't think I'm big enough to put someone in a position where they will hurt another " (Ondaatje160) this offhand sentence like many others *In the skin of the lion* is a jewel , multi- faceted and beautiful and dependent on the changing perception of the beholder . Ondaatje continually apprehends the commonplace , the societal assumption and upends their meaning into something else, heavy and tenuous with implication of a moment of recall. Lowercase history allows for self-examination : History would eradicate it . Lowercase history , moreover , is only capable and apparent in the hands of individuals sure in their equilibrium of words and action like Alice , Armed with both, these individuals are a deadly whisper of " Let me now re-emphasize the extreme looseness of the structure of things " in the night (Ondaatje163) .

Temelcoff is another character who is trying to find his true identity. He is a character who has trouble with the English language. He uses a lot of gestures to communicate and this is very clear in Ondaatje's note:

He never realizes how often he is wanted by others. He has no clue that his gestures are extreme. He has no portrait of himself so he appears to Harris and others as a boy says fanatic about toy ears (Ondaatje42)

Since Temelcoff didn't know much English he felt the need to learn English as the narrator notes

He still could hardly speak English and decided to go to school, working nights in another Macedonian bakery. If he did not learn the language he would be lost. The school was free. The children in the class were ten years old and he was twenty-six. (Ondaatje46)

Through the lack of the language, Temelcoff realizes his lack of confidence in himself. So he went to school with little kids, as he feels that he would be lost if he didn't know English. Other migrants feel isolated and powerless because of their exclusion from the society they are attempting to enter. The puppet show illustrates this aptly. The

migrants lack the language and cultural attributes to give them a voice in society. They are frustrated by their lack of power and influence in mainstream society and their only outlet is to 'bang on the whole novel is to give a voice to the disenfranchised, the ones who did the work but missed out on getting the credit in nation building; the vast number of inarticulate migrants who form the basis of all developing countries. As the front piece claims: 'Never again will a single story be told as though it were the only one.'

Ondaatje writes from the perspective of the unacknowledged drones of society, the voiceless manual laborers who are scarcely regarded by society, the rich or history. This derisory attitude is reinforced many times:

"A man is an extension of hammer, drill, flame." (Ondaatje . 26)

"In the tenth century, he (Small) liked to say, the price of a greyhound or a hawk was the same as that of a man".

Harris: 'You're as much of the fabric as the aldermen and the millionaires. But you're among the dwarfs of enterprise who never get accepted or acknowledged' (Ondaatje 238)

Most of the characters live on the fringe of society and strive to be included in it. Patrick, a refugee from the country finds it difficult to adjust to city life and become accepted. He finds refuge with the migrants, especially the Macedonians

He had reduced himself almost to nothing. He would walk home at dusk after working in the lake tunnel. His radio was on past midnight. He did nothing else that he could think of. They approved of his Finnish suit. *Po modatadeganten!* Which meant stylish! stylish! He was handed a Macedonian cake. And suddenly Patrick, surrounded by friendship, concern, was smiling, feeling the tears on his face falling towards his stern Macedonian-style moustache. Elena, the great Elena who had sold him vetch for over a year, unpinned the white scarf around her neck and passed it to him. He looked up and saw the men and women who could not know why he wept now among these strangers who in the past had seemed to him like dark blinds on his street, their street, for he was their alien. (Ondaatje.113)

Language for immigrants is essential. It helps them to communicate and make new bonds with a hostile world. Moreover, it helps them to be more understood in such a world, and able to tell their stories to generation. This can be clearly seen through the character, Patrick who tries through the language to transmit the story of the immigrants to the daughter of his late beloved, Alice.

The recognition of self – in – other and other – in – self is a consciousness to the limiting of conflict between different human subjects and cultural groups . This concept is outlined by French psycho-analyst Julia Kristeva in *Strangers to Ourselves* : “ Strangely , the foreigner lives within us : he is the hidden face of our identity , the space that wrecks our abode , the time in which understanding and affinity founder “.²⁷

She suggests that by recognising the stranger within ourselves , we are able to move towards acceptance as an inherent part of both ourselves and others : “ By recognising him within ourselves , we are spared detesting him in himself ... The foreigner comes in when the consciousness of my difference arises , and he disappears when we all acknowledge ourselves as foreigners , unamenable to bonds and community “.²⁸

Ondaatje deals the themes of metamorphosis and transformation as he explores the experiences of his characters . He demonstrates the human flexibility that allows adaptation to

and absorption of different cultures and spaces . He shows that displaced people are able to create a new cultural location , which is both a blending of the cultures that have been experienced and something new . By realising that the past cannot be reclaimed , only remembered , and finding difficulty in the relocation to a different cultural space , his characters appear to experience a process of change in their individual consciousnesses which allows them to redefine themselves . Trinh Minh –haexpersses this type of transformation in terms of language development in *Traveler's Tales* :

The voyage out of the (known) self and back into the (unknown) self sometimes takes the wanderer far a way to a motley place where everything safe and sound seems to waver while the essence of language is placed in double and profoundly destabilized. Traveling can thus turn out to be a process whereby the self loses its fixed boundaries – a disturbing yet potentially empowering practice of difference.²⁸

Though the process of migration and adjustment to different spaces and recognition and acceptance of difference in self and others may be a traumatic experience , it holds the possibility of being empowering for the individual who gains self – awareness and knowledge of the wider world .

Conclusion

It is concluded from this paper that Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* is a postcolonial novel because it tries to reposition the immigrants especially the marginalized in a hostile world. Those immigrants are essential in rebuilding the world and they deserve the opportunity for a new beginning as well as the challenge to find a voice for their stories and be part of history for what they have done. In other words, they have the right to be immortalized.

Throughout the research, Ondaatje celebrates the individual, and empowers the migrants through his literature, giving them identity and their chance to wear the skin of a lion. He foregrounds the stories of the migrants who built the city, presenting them not just as "extension of drill" but as real people, whom Patrick is able to find his identity through and who stimulate Patrick enough to fight for their cause. He lives out Alice's dream of political activism, finding a voice amongst the powerful, by blowing up the Muskoka hotel and attempting to blow up the Waterworks . In his final political attempt he gets his chance to speak to Commissioner Harris and tell the stories of the workers and Alice, he wears the skin of a lion.

End Notes

1. Hossein Pirnajmuddin and Behnaz Niroumand, "An Earth without Map": Antony Minghella's *The English Patient*, *Studies in Literature and Language*, vol.4, 2012.
2. "Post colonialism", Introduction, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (Gale Cengage), 2006.
3. Gina Wisker, *Post-Colonial and African American Women's Writing*, 2000.
4. "Post colonialism".
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. "Brief Introduction to Postcolonial theory", 2012.
9. Gilbert McInnis, " The Struggle of Postmodernism and Post colonialism", Laval University: Canada. [URL:http://mhtml:file://c:/Documents and Settings/sahar/Desktop/The Struggle of Postmodernism](http://mhtml:file://c:/Documents and Settings/sahar/Desktop/The Struggle of Postmodernism). Retrieved on December, 2011.

10. Michael Ondaatje is a Canadian/Srilankan writer. He has published this novel to fictionalize the lives of the immigrants whose contributions to building Toronto in the early 1960s never become part of the city's official history.
11. Hook, "Marginality as a site of resistance", 1990, p152.
12. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*:(New York,NY.1994)p.172
13. Bhabha, 175
14. Ibid.
15. Edward said ,*Culture and Imperialism*, p. xxii
16. Roxana Ng, "The Social Construction of 'Immigrant Women' in Canada. "The Politics of Diversity : Feminism, Marxism and Nationalism. Ed. Roberta Hamilton and Michele Barrett. London: Verso, 1986. 269-86.
17. Barbara Turner, "In the Skin of Michael Ondaatje: Giving Voice to a Social Conscience". Quill and Quire May 1987: 20-22
18. Ibid.
19. John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1965.
20. Ibid.
21. The Epic of Gilgamesh was based on an earlier epic of Gilgamesh that was first composed in the old Babylonian period (1800-1600BC). It recounts the deeds of a famous hero-king of Ancient Mesopotamia and is rich with adventures and encounters with strange creatures, men and gods alike. But though these provide a lively and exotic story line, the central concerns of the epic are really human relationships and feelings- loneliness, friendship, love, loss, revenge, regret, and the fear of the oblivion of death. Gilgamesh was a famous king who left eternal monuments of both his royal and personal accomplishments. As a punishment for his oppressive treatment of the people of Uruk, the gods create a counterpart to him, Enkidu, a primal man, born and raised in the wilderness that sets free the animals caught by traps. This epic then reflects the confrontation of civilization against nature. After a confrontation between them Gilgamesh wins and they become friends. Gilgamesh is approached by the beautiful goddess Ishtar who wants him to marry her but he rejects her. The gods decide that Enkidu must die a long and painful death. Gilgamesh is devastated by the loss of his friend and rebels against mortality. He sets out to find the secret of eternal life from the only survivor of the flood, Utanapishtim. Along the treacherous journey, he meets with strange and wondrous creatures who all warn him of the impossibility of his quest immortality. Gilgamesh returns older and empty-handed for there are no second chances in real life. The story of Gilgamesh's quest ends suddenly where it began praising Gilgamesh's wisdom and understanding of life.
22. Ibid.
23. Porter, P.6
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