

## Chapter V

### Conclusion

Michael Ondaatje is an ardent practitioner of the concepts of postmodernism. His novels such as *Coming Through Slaughter*, *Running in the Family*, *In the Skin of a Lion*, *The English Patient* and *Anil's Ghost* are the paradigm for the texts that employ postmodern strategies of writing fiction to divulge the condition of people in the society of war and migrancy. He contrives a veracious account of the contemporary world in his novels as he believes that the quest for order, certainty and perpetual progress promised by the modernists' simultaneously promote ambivalence, dissatisfaction and restlessness. He expresses discontent over the modernist tendency to engineer progress by fabricating fake order and certainty in the chaotic world. Moreover, he considers that the grand promises of equality offered by the totalising forms of modernist social theories have lost its authenticity owing to the massive changes that have enveloped the world.

The turbulent state of the world demands an in-depth analysis of the condition of society. The study has examined Ondaatje's works from the sociological, psychological, and historiographical aspects of postmodernism. The interdisciplinary approach of reading his works has helped in apprehending the combined effect of the socio-economic and cultural factors on the psychological and historical framework of the society. Knowledge of the contemporary conditions acts as a catalyst for social and political change and it propounds several requisite actions that should be adhered in order to acquire a serene society. The individuals can retain stable self and attain enrichment when they maintain their equanimous nature during the state of crisis. The relentless crusade to uphold a

unanimous society without any differences is of tantamount importance in attaining an amicable society.

The survey of Ondaatje's novels from the sociological point of view has enabled to construe the ambience of the postmodern society. The entire world has experienced myriad challenges conjured by the imperialists, the elites and the rulers of the country who exploited the life of the people by exerting their power and authority for their own benefits. The quest for power has instigated many countries to fight against each other. In addition, the process of migration effectuated during the colonial period, has resulted in an increasingly hybrid scenario. The cultural differences and the inequality between the rich and the poor have incited inter-ethnic conflicts in several colonised countries. The seclusion of economically backward people and the racial minorities has aroused upheaval in the world. The intensified tension which ensued due to the rapid incidents of violence during the conflicts insists on massive reformations in the attitude of the power seekers.

The psychological approach of reading Ondaatje's works has corroborated how the psyche of the individuals is gradually affected by the endless trauma they have encountered as a result of the economic crisis, violence and bloodshed during the war and the ethnic differences that alienate them from rest of the society. The stable self of the postmodern individuals throbs with an alarming rhythm when they live with a foreboding of an impending catastrophe and confront the tumultuous events of war. The destruction and devastation wrecked by warring nations is matched by the inner desolation and tragedies of the characters. The irresolute nature of the individuals heightens when they experience the sense of alienation in the adopted land. The study emphasises the

significance of coping with the commotions resulting due to political turmoil and cultural differences in the society and thereby live a balanced life.

The examination of Ondaatje's novels from historiographical perspective highlights the unilateral trait of histories that fail to render a comprehensive view of the social condition of the world. The historical records accentuate and monumentalise the nominal contributions of the capitalists and the colonialists, while they discredit the relentless sacrifice of the marginalised people who forsake their life for the sake of the country. The conventional historiographers have effaced the lifestyle, culture and agonies of the marginalised persons from the pages of history. The biased way of recording the events of history leads to an incomplete knowledge of the world to the upcoming generations. The historians should strive to give a truthful account of history irrespective of material benefits so as to enlighten people and give hope and courage to the future citizens of the world.

The study has highlighted the hardships endured by the people in the postmodern world as presented in Ondaatje's novels to highlight the social threats that should be overcome to obtain a better world. The postmodern individuals should involve themselves in redressing the condition of the society instead of hovering over the changes of the world. The memories of the trauma endured and the reprobation of the scientific innovations will only stifle the progress of mankind. Life can become meaningful only when people develop a positive attitude towards the changes in the world and indulge in welfare measures that would exalt the condition of man. Gerard Raulet in the article, "Marxism and the Post-modern Condition" suggests that "post-modernity is not necessarily the impasse of a decomposition that abolishes reason . . . could be a renewed

modernity, not in the sense of a repetition and an intensification of the modern failure, but of a new start” (162).

Ondaatje recapitulates the importance of leading a democratic form of governance in his novels. He advocates an end to imperialistic policy of subordination as he considers it to be the root cause for the extensive prevalence of violence in the world. The savagery in the society can be reduced to a significant extent by supplanting the capitalist policy of the colonisers with the accreditation of egalitarian policies. He has discussed the influence of British colonisation on the countries like Canada, India, Italy, New Orleans, Sri Lanka and Africa in his novels. Meanwhile, he has expressed dissident attitude towards the colonist ideologies of enlightening people by colonising different parts of the world.

Ondaatje explicates in the novel *The English Patient*, the way in which the British army has seized the interior deserts of Africa and Italy with an intention of surpassing the superpowers like Germany in discovering new lands throughout the world. They have engaged people like Kip, Hana and Caravaggio from the colonised countries like India and Canada to serve in the army and fight against the German troops. These characters are transported from their homeland and are made to work in the war fields. Millions of innocent men who have been ignorant of being betrayed by the colonisers, sacrifice their lives for the sake of war. The cognition of being victimised by the colonisers has also abated the real explorative tendency of the desert explorers like Almasy and Madox.

In the novel *Running in the Family*, Ondaatje cogitates as to how the British rulers have imposed their language and culture on the colonised countries like Sri Lanka so as to enable unhampered administration in these colonies. The ethnic differences that arose in the country during the process of colonisation have haunted the life of the people even

after the departure of the British rulers as it has created not only disputes amidst several countries resulting in world wars but also has also incited inter-ethnic conflicts like civil war in Sri Lanka. The society has been subsequently divided into different factions and involved themselves in a cycle of reprisal and retaliation.

Ondaatje portrays in the novel *Anil's Ghost* the incidents of violence that perpetrated among Sinhalese and Tamil leading to the dilapidation of the stable condition of the world. The tranquil state of nature that replicates the peaceful life of people has transformed into a belligerent area. The life of the common man like Ananda, Sirissa, and Gunasena is at stake as they constantly live under the threat of the endless killings, tortures and kidnappings. There is no permanence and security for people who are caught under the social trauma. The buildings have been demolished and the streets are littered with corpses and carcasses. The hapless state of Sri Lankans suggests the need for reviving the state of society. The neighbouring countries of Sri Lanka like India also ardently hope for a revival in the condition of the people in the country. The article entitled "India to ask Colombo about Emergency Withdrawal" published in *Hindu* cites the speech of External Affairs Minister, S.M. Krishna in the Rajya Sabha who insists that the government of India has reiterated,

. . . and will continue to reiterate, to the government of Sri Lanka the urgent and imperative need for taking expeditious steps towards genuine national reconciliation, including early return of internally displaced persons to their respective homes, early withdrawal of emergency regulations, investigations into allegations of human rights violations, restoration of normalcy in affected areas, the reduction and ultimate elimination of high

security zones, accountability for missing persons and redressal of humanitarian concerns of affected families.

Ondaatje adverts the violence in the world as a predominant threat for mankind in the novels, *The English Patient* and *Anil's Ghost*. The disputes that arose during the period of colonisation have led to incidents of violence throughout the world. Jon Pearce in "Moving to the Clear: Michael Ondaatje" has appended the words of Ondaatje who acknowledges that "It's been said that violence is normal in our lifetime just as good manners were normal to the world that Jane Austen created. You know, it's a reality. It's getting a balance between the two worlds – the violent and the gentle – but both exist" (136).

The techno scientific innovations in society are envisaged for the formation of a constructive living environment as explicated in the novel, *Coming Through Slaughter*. On the contrary, the cataclysmic events associated with the innovations make it impossible to believe the complex processes through which social realities are constituted. Ondaatje has elucidated in his novels, *The English Patient* and *Anil's Ghost* as to how the invention of atomic bombs accelerated the level of vengeance that is inflicted upon the innocent people of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Sri Lanka. The guns and home made weapons have been replaced by the destructive devices like grenades and atomic bombs. They are frequently used during the war to decimate the entire mankind including the future generations. The deadliest weapon of the twentieth century considers the human life and possessions as superficial matters. The sappers like Kirpal Singh and Hardy are frequently employed by the army to deduct and defuse the mined bombs. The dangerous working condition of the sappers epitomises the eternal threat of the postmodern world.

A congenial living environment is essential for the social well-being of people. It enables them to flourish in life and develop a stable identity but Ondaatje considers that the jeopardous environment of the postmodern world has disintegrated the notion of having a unified self. He manifests the destabilised self of the characters that has been besieged by the casual sense of massacre and bloodshed prevalent during the war. The bodily deformities of Almsy, Hana and Caravaggio connote the trauma encountered by them during the war. Corina Ana Anghel in the article on “Polytropic Identities in Michael Ondaatje’s *The English Patient*” asserts that the identity of these characters “is no longer haplus, monolithic, simple, but it becomes polytropic, diverse, disconnected” (75).

The dearth of the humanistic feelings like love and compassion is deducted as the driving forces behind the interminable conflicts. Ondaatje considers that the inhumane nature of the colonisers has given rise to disillusionment, despair, nostalgia, frustration and panic. Barry Smart in the book entitled, *Modern Conditions, Postmodern Controversies* views that “All that once seemed so solid and secure does indeed now appear quite different, increasingly fragile and uncertain. Conditions are not as once we expected, or anticipated, they might be(come). We are not able to predict, control, or design our future, but that should not occasion surprise or stop us continuing to attempt to influence the course of events” (220). Ondaatje reckons that the coherent increase in rationality and the inculcation of humanitarian spirits will ameliorate the crisis in society and guarantee paths of freedom. The adherence to the precepts of non-violence and democracy will accord chances of forming a better society.

Effectuation of the democratic form of governance is the sole vehicle for the implementation of the values of equality, liberty, tolerance and solidarity. Communal

harmony and solidarity between different members of the group will lead to the convergence of the people of various ethnic groups to live amicably in a common place. Ondaatje stresses the significance of invigorating the spirit of integrity in the multicultural environment in the novel, *Coming Through Slaughter*. He considers that in a multicultural environment, people of different ethnic communities must be treated equally devoid of any ethnic differences. The impoverished state of people like Bolden can be alleviated when the rulers of New Orleans avoid segregating Africa-Americans from the others. He evinces that an awareness of one's own identity plays a significant role in a reformation.

Ondaatje reiterates that an understanding of the factors that has led to the complex social conditions within which the postmodern individuals are bound to live provides an opportunity to surmount the impediments and strive more effectively in the shaping of social future. His novels conjure the fragmented identity of the characters whose sense of sustaining a coherent self have been destabilised as a result of the ongoing process of migration for social, economic, or political reasons. Stephanie M. Hilger in the article "Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and Rewriting History" states that "Focusing on the fragmented nature of consciousness is a method of dealing with the feeling of disintegration of the postwar and the postcolonial period . . ." (44). He embodies the uncertain, fractured and displaced self of the postmodern individuals in the colonial and postcolonial era.

The confluence of different nationalities in the colonies of Britain has led to the hybrid environment in these colonies. In the novels *In the Skin of a Lion*, *Running in the Family* and *Anil's Ghost*, Ondaatje expounds the need for forming a multicultural environment where people of different ethnic communities can live in an amiable

integrated society. He delineates the hyphenated identity of the migrants by explicating the adverse residential environment of the adopted country and their persistent attempt to grasp the distant past of the homeland. He has summed up the several challenges faced by the immigrants in the multicultural places like Canada, Sri Lanka and New Orleans.

Ondaatje vindicates the migrated individuals like Nicholas, Patrick, Small, and Stoyanoff in the novel *In the Skin of a Lion* who face fits of anxieties when they are besieged by the jeopardising events of the world. However, Nicholas and Patrick attempt to overcome the sense of being displaced by trying to assimilate with the immigrants from other countries. The displaced migrants confound the burden of being uprooted in the alien land and are often haunted by the memories of their homeland. It is the disparities between their aspirations and the social terrain that degenerate them to an uncertain state.

The British rulers have encouraged the immigrants to work in the construction and agricultural works but they have not taken any effective measures to improve the condition of immigrants as they consider them as a potential threat leading to economic crisis. Jody Mason in the article “‘The animal out of the desert’: The Nomadic Metaphysics of Michael Ondaatje’s *In the Skin of a Lion*” states that “Ondaatje’s novel seems to assert a citizenship that exceeds the nation-state and challenges the class hierarchies of liberal conceptions of citizenship . . .” (67).

Ondaatje insists that the government of the countries must acknowledge the contributions of all races and afford healthy living conditions. He affirms the need for the insistence on the value and dignity of all people regardless of their racial or ethnic origins, language or their religious affiliation. He feels that it is the rulers of the country who ought to promote racial and ethnic harmony. He believes that if ghettoisation, violence and racial

discrimination do not exist, it would create an endearing circumstance for the peaceful coexistence of various cultural groups. For instance, the multicultural policy adopted by the Canadian government in 1971 is an optimistic enterprise that ensures the formation of a genial society with people of varied cultures living under cordial relations.

Ondaatje considers that solidarity between different members of the society is essential for the sustenance of life in an alien land. In the novel *Coming Through Slaughter*, he reiterates that the predicament of the immigrants remains the same in all colonised countries. He discusses the condition of immigrants like Bolden in New Orleans, the city to which they have been brought in as a part of the slave trade. The predicament of the African Americans exemplifies the condition of immigrants in the new land. They become disoriented when they are alienated from the rest of the society on the basis of racial differences. They live in ghettos and do not have favourable living conditions but Bolden's ability to attain self-satisfaction in his musical parade helps him to transcend the fragmented state of self.

The making and remaking of identities is conducive to the socio-political conditions of the adopted country. The question of identity has constantly haunted migrated people and tortured them with a dilemma between assimilation and maintenance of the culture of the homeland. In the novels, *Anil's Ghost*, *The English Patient* and *Running in the Family*, the migrated characters like Anil, Hana, Caravaggio and Ondaatje undergo the experience of displacement and dislocation as they are bemused by the uncertain new environment and the security and warmth of the native land. They attempt to assimilate themselves to the new environment but the realisation that by adapting to the new culture, they would lose their bond with the homeland creates hyphenated identity in

these migrant characters. The conflicting desire of the characters demonstrates the ambivalent yearning of the migrants to transform themselves from the fragmented identity to stable identity.

The mutual divergences among the migrants of different nationalities have made the hyphenated personality of the migrants more transparent and aggressive. Blending of people of various ethnic groups disempowers the idea of forming a uniform political identity. The immigrants fear that the homogenisation of different nationalities would result in the loss of individual identity. Ondaatje suggests the migrants to assimilate with the new environment by retaining their affiliation with the home culture. He feels that the awareness of one's own tradition, culture and history will help an individual to redefine one's roots. The decision of Anil, Hana, Caravaggio and Ondaatje to retain ties with their homeland and have a sense of belonging helps them in reframing their original self. Ondaatje directs the migrants living in the adopted land to preserve their identities by taking pride in their ancestry and thereby achieve an identity of their own.

Ondaatje considers that the growing interconnectedness of the various places of the world hastens the need for developing an understanding of a wide variety of cultures along with the knowledge of the native culture. The ability to perceive one's cultural condition and the tenacity to cope with the changes will enable an individual to form a composite identity. However, individuals can attain completeness when the history of the world recognises their existence and experiences as a part of the community. He infers in his novels that history has been very partial in its inscription of the events of the world. He anticipates an extensive change in the political framework of the contemporary society by insisting acknowledgment and equality for people of all races and class.

The realistic self-narrated version of Ondaatje's novels counters the distorted history projected by the colonialists and the capitalists. He has subverted modernist strategy of writing histories as the conventional historians do not give an exact recounting of the past and mainly aim at selecting events that favours the policy makers. He considers that their discourses are highly utilised as medium for self-promotion and are meant for enhancing their reputations. The historical writing is governed more by power than by truth. He condemns the nature of the colonisers for infusing the dominant ideologies and customs into the consciousness of their colonial subjects.

Ondaatje's novels suggest that the postmodern historical writers fight against the conventional way of writing history as he believes that history written and read from the perspective of the people in power will only give a biased view of the society. He corroborates that historical writing should give a rounded view of history to the generations in future by abolishing the policies of favouritism. He earnestly appeals to the historiographers to stop underestimating the contributions of the marginalised people and recognise their precarious plight in the society. An ideal world can be created by recording the events of the world impartially and truthfully. He attempts to insert history into fiction to counteract historical facts that are cherished from time immemorial and rewrite them from a perspective different from the accepted interpretation.

Ondaatje as a chronicler of history has immortalised the experiences of the marginalised people who are secluded from the rest of the society on the basis of race, language, and economic differences. The marginalised people make endless contributions for the sake of nation's progress but their endeavours are generally nullified by the historiographers who exaggerate and accredit the trifling accomplishments of the

capitalists. Chelva Kanaganayakam in the article “A Trick with a Glass” states that his work remains as “an authentic narrative, the voice of the expatriate, the exiled voice that it is both marginal and central, divided in its loyalties, but clear and unequivocal in its commitment to struggle with competing identities” (41).

The hitherto silenced voices of the subaltern groups encompassing both the colonial and the post-colonial periods are foregrounded through Ondaatje’s rewriting of historical material. He provides a vivid picture of the broad spectrum of people like that of the migrant workers, ethnic and political minorities, the rural poor, unrecognised musicians and the colonised people of different countries. He writes about their dangerous and denigrated positions and fights against the social forces that deter the advancement of the marginalised people. He depends upon the interviews and oral information to discover facts about the sector of people that history has not acknowledged.

Ondaatje contemplates the peripheral position of African Americans in the post-colonial society of New Orleans in the novel, *Coming Through Slaughter*. He recognises that the conventional historians have recorded the music and biographies of the white musicians whereas they have completely ignored the rich musical tradition of the African Americans. His attempt to collect information about a black musician, Bolden who is said to have been the originator of jazz music has enabled Ondaatje to apprehend about a whole race of society whose lives has been completely effaced from history. He realises that neither his music nor his life has been recorded in history. He acknowledges that he has been able to find only the copy of Bolden’s photo left over as the evidence of Bolden’s presence in the world.

The lack of authentic information has prompted Ondaatje to depend on interviews that he collected from Bolden's friends and neighbours to know more about the life and society of Bolden's times. He perceives that the segregated living conditions of the blacks have barricaded the progress of his musical ability. The jazz music that Bolden performs reflects the social scenario in which the African Americans lived. The dearth of formal education and extreme poverty of his life has made his music very temperamental. His unstructured music reflects the chaotic state of their lives. It is their racial difference that has led to the erasure of their culture from the world records. The individual talent of several African American musicians remains unknown to the outside world.

Ondaatje realises that the marginalised people enter the pages of history only when they attempt to create an own version of historical events instead of striving to get a place in the dominant discourse. Bolden's name gets engraved in the minds of the audience when he makes a public performance for the first time after his visit at the Brewitts. Ondaatje finds that though the newspapers do not cherish his musical talent, his name gets immortalised in the memory of Jazz admirers. It is the perpetual struggle of the African Americans that turn them into heroic figures. Jon Kertzer in the article "The Blurred Photo: A Review of *Coming Through Slaughter*" opines that the heroic victims make their way across the primitive landscapes like "the slums of New Orleans. Here, through a series of encounters and disasters, they are pushed to mental and physical extremes; they live and die with such intensity, they become heroic, perfect, yet typical, figures" (299).

The historical writings should faithfully compose the truthful account of individual cultures instead of circulating fantasised and fictional accounts of the colonised cultures. Ondaatje recounts the true ancestral heritage of the Sri Lankan culture that is being

disdained in the historical writing of the British writers like Leonard Woolf and Robert Knox in the novel, *Running in the Family*. Ondaatje affirms that the colonisers focus solely on the material gains they receive from the colonised countries. The travelogues and other historical documents they compile represent the country as a land of savage people. They have looted the wealth of the country but have repressed the culture of the native people. The horrid experiences of the British writers during their short stay in Sri Lanka is considered true as their version of history is written in a language that is more powerful and would reach a large mass of people.

In Ondaatje's discourse on the richness of the Sri Lankan language, he exposes the artistic nature of Sri Lankan alphabets and the way the language is used as a powerful weapon against the colonisers. He refers to the great literature written in Sinhalese language along with other local records to express the real virtue of the Sri Lankan culture. His account of history signifies as to how far the beauty of the country has been ravished by the colonial rulers. Ernest MacIntyre in the article "Outside of Time: *Running in the Family*" states that Ondaatje

. . . touches their lives in such a way that I at least cannot escape the feeling that the whole explanation of the fantastic way in which they lived, loved and died lies in their perforce happy suspension outside the deception held by their wealthy Sinhalese and Tamil counterparts – that there was a job to be done in shaping the future of a whole nation. (316)

The history reaches its consummate state when a historian succeeds in stating the events of the world precisely without any exaggerations. Ondaatje condemns the attitude of the colonisers who treat the members of the working class as mechanised men only for

generating income. They fail to recognise the human attributes of the workers. Ondaatje deals with the question of ethnicity and its role in Canadian historical discourse in the novel, *In the Skin of a Lion*. The mainstream historians exaggerate the role of British rulers but repress the splendid contribution of the workers in the new world enterprise.

Ondaatje spotlights the tormented life of immigrant workers like Nicholas and Patrick by bringing out the dangerous working condition of immigrants in Canada. Winfried Siemerling in the article ““Scared by the Company of the Mirror”” states that the novel *In the Skin of a Lion* “defamiliarizes the local habitants’ habitual perception of Toronto by superimposing, on this ‘domestic scene,’ a reconstructed and imagined arrival in a new world” (154).

Ondaatje focuses on the transformation and creates an awareness of the arrival of a new world with the large scale social uprising against the icons of authority. He has projected how Patrick attempts to grab ‘the skin of a lion’ and thereby hold the mantle of power. Patrick raises his voice against Harris when he realises that his preying attitude has taken away the life of several workers. Patrick’s attempt to destroy the waterworks and confront Harris in the end, signifies the intention of the marginalised people to surmount the domination of the colonisers by creating a history of their own. He also succeeds in making Harris acknowledge that immigrants are an integral part of the nation’s progress.

The subdued voices of the colonial subjects like Patrick and Kip erupt violently when they could no longer endure the domination of the colonisers. The prolonged exposure to discrimination and agonies prompts them to break out of that shackle and face a free world. In the novel *The English Patient*, Ondaatje has illustrated the transformation in the nature of Kip who liberates himself from the bond of the British rulers by returning

to his homeland. He has remained loyal to the British army for decades but his realisation that they are being manipulated for their military aims, changes his attitude. Ondaatje enumerates how the colonial rule in India has driven numerous Indians to work for the British army in alien lands. They sacrifice their life for the sake of British rulers without reacting against the British army that has ended the life of millions of people in India and Japan. The awakening of his nationalistic consciousness epitomises his ardent desire to be known as a part of his own culture instead of becoming an instrument of dominant rulers.

Ondaatje attempts to articulate the complexity of colonial inheritance and stresses the need to transcend beyond the boundaries of the official records in the novel, *Anil's Ghost*. The official history of the rulers subjugates the real condition of people in the country. Anil's version of the atrocities in Sri Lanka foregrounds the exact state of the country as opposed to the official history that claims no knowledge of the violence in the country. She encrypts the suppressed accounts of the victims of violence with the belief that she can alleviate their trauma. Her attempt to disclose the secret behind the murder of Sailor typifies her willingness to bring out the muffled voices of millions of people.

Ondaatje's novels liberate history from the influence of the dominant totalitarian and colonial ideologies. He asserts that the subaltern people should unite and assert claims of their own. The voiceless state of the marginalised people will only lead to the evanescence of their presence from history. He calls for reformation in the attitude of the historians so as to emancipate people from their hapless state. He urges the historians to give an accurate account of the facts and incidents without dissimulating the information for personal favours. He reiterates that the historians should state the events of the world as it happens instead of writing it as how it should happen. He conceives of a society where

people of all cultures would live socially without being subjugated by the imperialists and rulers of the country.

The study has immense significance in the contemporary world as the innumerable changes evolved during the process of globalisation have urged the humanity to renew its commitment socially, economically, culturally and historically. Ondaatje's novels identify violence, poverty, marginalisation and sense of displacement as serious issues haunting the life of the common man in the postmodern world. The awareness of the various factors leading to the crisis in the society admonishes the future generations to follow effective and affable means of social formation. The ability to grapple with the changes in the shifting scenario of society will enable the individuals to attain a stable identity and occupy a significant place in the world history.

Violence in the contemporary world is considered as a highly complex and multi-faceted issue as the global terrorism and violation of human rights has caused repercussions in all arena of life. The peaceful ambience with democratic form of governance is necessary for the social well-being of the individuals. The policy makers of every country should secure the rights and welfare of the people by constituting the policies of equality and fraternity as the fundamental law of the country. They should ensure that the citizens of the country are not segregated on the basis of race and class. Equality of all classes of people will enable in the smooth governance of the country. Politics without morality is a pure exercise of power, so the politicians must imbibe the ethical codes for governing the country to elevate the status of mankind.

The visualisation of the complex picture of the present scenario from different perspectives helps in defining solution for the crisis. The mere examination of the zeitgeist

of the world will not bring out changes in the condition of postmodern individuals unless a joint effort is taken by the various organisations to bring about a positive change in the society. The International Human Rights Organisations and the government should ascertain the peaceful existence of people in the world.

The governing bodies should take effective steps like formulating effective legal system to ensure law and order in the country and thereby curb violence to a great extent. The government should comply with the policy of non-violence and forestall the terrible crimes that are committed during the political practice of teaching and imposing moral behaviour on people. The adoption of the principles of non-violence will liberate the individuals from the perils and exigencies of the chaotic world. A non-violent society can certainly work its way up to create the social development and lead to inter-cultural and inter-religious harmony.

The economic development and eradication of poverty should also be at the forefront of the development agendas in all countries. The racial inequalities and the social differences are the major causes of poverty. The globalisation of the world has brought in massive global inequalities. The power structures and institutions in the global system generate discrepancies in wealth and income. This is evident when one half of the people battle against hunger, poverty, disease, security in the work place, the elite class of people live lavishly enjoying themselves in pubs and hotels. The appalling discrepancies between the classes of people create impediments in the progress of any civilisation. The ruling authorities should hike the wages for the working class irrespective of racial differences and ensure safe working conditions so as to enhance the economic condition of the workers.

The segregation of people based on racial differences is the major reason behind the awakening of the feelings of displacement in a multicultural scenario. The homogenisation of people of different cultures will lead to the sense of being alienated and dislocated. The multicultural countries should ensure heterogeneity of all cultures where the migrants are given the freedom to retain their native identity, yet assimilate with the culture of the new land. The immigrants can overcome the sense of living in an isolated area by harnessing ties with other immigrants in the country. The government should be effectual in providing hygienic living conditions for the migrants. They should also give due regards to the contributions of the migrants instead of neglecting them based on racial differences. The endearing living conditions and the feeling of having been recognised as a part of society will fortify their will-power and help them in acquiring stable identity.

The postmodern individuals should summon courage to fight against the adversities of life instead of succumbing to those forces that detain their progress. The friendly gesture of government and other welfare organisations towards the deprived class of people play a great role in uplifting the condition of the society. They should acknowledge and actualise the hopes and aspirations of people of all races and classes. The governing bodies should also ensure that the growth of knowledge is mainly utilised for dispelling the ignorance of people and for other progressive needs that guarantee a hopeful future.

Ondaatje is a prolific writer who has employed his novels as a powerful weapon to propagate a great reformation in the society. His works offer endless scope for further research. The self-reflexivity of Ondaatje's novels is a potential area for further research as he self-consciously and systematically draws attention to the fictional status of his works in order to remind the readers that the novel is a construct of language. He eliminates the

postures of realism in his fictional oeuvre by questioning the relationship between fiction and reality. His novels signify the transformation of the traditional narrative from the story told to the process of storytelling. He presents a composite picture in which the real and the fictitious, the past and the present are expressed synchronically.

The examination of the technical aspects of Ondaatje's works enables to understand how he has implemented postmodern techniques of writing fiction. He does not confine himself to a particular genre and his works are a confluence of biographical, historical and autobiographical forms of writing. The blending of different genres has made his novels extremely postmodern in its style and technique. Similarly, the application of postmodern elements in the study of his poetry presents a true account of his genius. The study helps to differentiate how he has employed the same technique in two different genres. The cross comparison of his novels with other postmodern writers like Thomas Pynchon, Kurt Vonnegut, John Fowles, and Jeanette Winterson helps to enrich an exhaustive knowledge of the different strategies adopted by various postmodern writers and explicate how Ondaatje's works differ from the rest of the writers.

The investigation of Ondaatje's works from transnational perspective underlines how his works are primarily concerned with economic and political interconnectedness that migrants maintain with their home country. The study articulates the transnational identity of his characters who organise their daily lives around more than one nation and identify themselves with more than one nation. The concept generally identifies more tangible and contemporary connections between people in societies of migrated country and the country of origin. The analysis of transnational social spaces is more general and

emphasises identities, relationships, exchanges, practices, and institutions that arise in the process of transnational migration.

Ondaatje is a transnational writer who has incorporated the elements of east and west in his novels. He integrates oriental characters in western background to signify the importance of living in a borderless world. He is concerned over the condition of people all over the world and propagates an unthreatening social scenario with no borders and conflicts. He has paid scrupulous attention while composing the novels by collecting information, facts and interviews to give a factual appeal to his fictional works. He is a great historian and a psychologist who has delved deep into the human psyche and world history to give his novels a universal significance.

Ondaatje is a brilliant craftsman who has presented an enormous portrait of the contemporary world. He has attempted to revolutionise the society by infusing the significance of nurturing the gentle qualities of love and compassion among his fellow beings. He envisions a social system in which people of all cultures and classes are offered equal status as the well-disposed scenario of the world is essential for the psychic welfare of the people. The praxis of the propositions enlisted in this dissertation offers the scope for the evolution of a secure and serene world for all.