

In the Skin of a Lion: Toronto under Construction and its Workers

I. Outline

- Toronto Introduction (1): Toronto in the novel
- The novel: general introduction and questions
- The Workers
- Immigrant and Marginalized Characters: Hazen, Patrick, Nicholas and Alice
- Toronto Introduction (2): its Multiculturalism

II. Toronto in the Novel (1): history

- Major Natural resources in Ontario: forestry
- Major Constructions in Toronto: viaduct, water filtration plant
- 1919 -- Ambrose Small, one of Canada's greatest missing-persons mysteries and the searchers.
- Issues of map and boundaries
- Workers and their strikes* in Toronto in early twentieth century
- History of early immigrants
- Love and obsession

III. Location Napanee

IV. Toronto places

- **Bloor Street Viaduct**, where Temelkoff, a daredevil, flinging himself underneath, on ropes, with pullies and straps.
- **the Harris filtration plant** by Lake Ontario, provides Torontonians with clean water.

V. The City Imagined vs. the City Built

- *The City imagined: Concept City or Invisible Cities* p. 29
- *Rowland Harris's ideal about the viaduct and the water plant:* p. 29
- Unexpected outcome of his ideal construction p. 33
- Harris and Nicholas p. 43

VI. *In the Skin of a Lion*: Plot & Characters

- : "This is the story a young girl [Hana] gathers in a car during the early hours of the morning [...] She listens to the man [Patrick] as he picks up and brings together various corners of the story..." (4).
- **Characters:** besides Patrick and Hazen Lewis,
 - The missing millionaire, Ambrose Small & his former mistress Clara Dickens, whom Patrick falls in love with.
 - Alice Gull, an actress friend of Clara and her work for the Hungarian anarchists
 - Nicholas Temelkoff, a daredevil and baker
 - Caravaggio, a worker and then a thief

- Hana, daughter of Alice.

VII. *In the Skin of a Lion*: Starting Questions

- What are the two chapters about?
- What details or characters or passages impress you the most?

VIII. Workers

“Wander thru’ wilderness in the skin of a lion”

- Herding the cow: Rescuing the Holstein pp. 11-13;
- Loggers pp. 7-8;
- Dynamiter p. 17; 19;
- tarrers p. 27; Bridge builders p. 28;
- daredevil 34, 37, 40- 41; knows better 49
his immigrant/worker identity

IX. Logging:

“He has heard their barks, their axes banging into the cold wood as if into metal.” (8)

“his father, solitary, cut timber all day, minute in those while halls.” (15)

X. The Loggers’ position & spaces

Lawren S. Harris *Snow*, c. 1917

<http://www.mcmichael.com/harris.htm>

XI. Bridge builders and tarrers

- Work starts in early dawn, night and day. Pp. 25-26
- Tarrers: pp. 27 - 28.

XII. Bridge builders’ position & spaces

- The cyclist at the opening ceremony and the workers the night before.

XIII. Nicholas as an immigrant

- Ohrida Lake Restaurant as an old courtyard of the Balkans. P. 37
- **Nicholas:** Quiet, self-sufficient at work p. 42-43
- Nicholas’ immigration/acclturation process:
 - Pull: Daniel Stoyanoff pp. 44-45
 - Push: War at home
 - Journey and jobs
 - language learning: p. 46 –
(If they do not speak in English in public, they will be jailed. 133)

XIV. Nicolas and Alice

- communication between him and Alice after the rescue scene pp. 36-37; 48

XV. Patrick on the edge of civilization

- Unmapped place 11
- His “companies”: the loggers and the insects pp.10-11– How and Why?
- His father:
 - skillful, 14 – 15;
 - Withdrawn 13; taciturn 18
- Patrick’s learning: p, 19

XVI. Patrick’s development

- His two lovers: Clara, unfinished, Alice in translation. 153
- Patrick--alien, in somebody else's landscape, clung like moss to strangers, to the nooks and fissures of their situations. 156
- Alice: "Like water, you can be easily harnessed, Patrick. That's dangerous." But he tells her, "I don't believe the language of politics, but I'll protect the friends I have. It's all I can handle."
- “It is Alice’s death, however, that causes him to feel true human sorrow and to ... **’wander through the wilderness in the skin of a lion’** (Hutcheon 98)”

XVII. The novel’s cinematic skills

- Audio-Visual images: p. 7
- Collages of visual images: p. 14;
- Transition with visual images: pp. 24 – 25;
- Glimpses of the future p. 20

XVIII. Something to think about:

- How do we look at the foreign laborers here in Taiwan?

- 走過許多落後國家也從來沒看過像楊梅這種鋪馬路的水準，施工進度其慢無比而馬路完工後的品質(有品質可言?)幾乎是金氏紀錄等級的爛。

桃園已經是外勞充斥了，但對於居民而言，真正需要的外勞是：非洲土人，莫三鼻克或賴比瑞亞都行，薪資低且施工品質亦不至於那麼差，

何樂而不為呢？

Origin: [_交大資工鳳凰城資訊站 _<bbs.csie.nctu.edu.tw> _](http://bbs.csie.nctu.edu.tw)

[_◆ From: _gate3.chttl.com.tw](http://gate3.chttl.com.tw)

- ※ 引述《 resolution.bbs@zoo.ee.ntu.edu.tw (.....) 》之銘言：

: ※ 引述《sam.bbs@bbs.dyu.edu.tw (~~重生~~)》之銘言：
 :: 不會啦.經濟再差下去.我們也要去外國當外勞
 :: 那時也可以拿8250了.
 : 很有機會 要是和大陸統一的話
 : 台灣廣大的勞工就要當台勞了 因為大陸工資太便宜了
 : 生意人通通跑去雇一個月一千元的工人 誰要又懶福利又要好的台灣勞工??
 : 到時候就有機會到國外去撿別人丟掉的手機打電話回家報平安了
 : 很快啦 如果還是很多人把黏主席和宋神長當神在膜拜的話
 : 上工啦 諸位台勞們.....

- _※ Origin: 臺大電機 Maxwell 站 ◆ From: sj17-32.dialup.seed.net.tw

XIX. Toronto History (2)

- Formerly called the town of York; Toronto means “meeting place” in Huron language
- An orderly and peaceful town, a city of churches, before the end of WWII. "Toronto the Good.” *E.g. As late as 1936, 30 men were arrested at the lakeshore resort of Sunnyside because they exposed their chests -- even though the temperature was 105°F!* ([source](#))
- Now: DWA (Designated Waiting Area) in subway and the death of two Taiwanese sisters.

XX. Toronto History

- Yonge Street, “the longest street in the world”; racial neighborhoods; map
- Recent immigrants:
- '50s and '60s -- European immigrant groups, including German, Italian, Polish, Greek, and Portuguese. 1961 Population 42% foreign-born.
- 1970s and early '80s -- from Asia and the West Indies. (clips: 5, 6, 7, 8)