

## CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION

After reading and analyzing *An Imaginary Life*, the writer concludes that this novel is not merely about the journey of an exiled Roman poet who lives in an isolated village, but about something else entirely. There is a matter of allegory between the characters in the novel and real life history. The analysis of the novel brings three major conclusions.

The first conclusion is that the character of Ovid and the people of Tomis is indeed an allegory to the early British people in Australia and the Australian Aborigines and how they managed to live together equally. The writer found out that the character of Ovid is an allegory to the early British people in Australia. Ovid himself is a prominent poet who is known across the Roman Empire. He was exiled to Tomis, questioned his purpose, learn from the Tomis people and eventually becomes one of them. Similar to Ovid, the British Empire sends their convicts to a new claimed land, which is unknown to the convicts, and forced them to build a colony. There are some conflicts between the colonist and the indigenous, but at the end, they live together equally.

The people of Tomis is an allegory to the Australian Aborigines. The village of Tomis is an outpost of Roman Empire, it belongs to the Roman Empire. The Australia continent is claimed by Captain James Cook, a British explorer. Australia was uncolonized territory but after James Cook claimed the land it belongs to the British Empire. It is also the place where they exiled their convicts

when their prisons are overcrowded. The people of Tomis has cultures and beliefs that are similar to the Aborigines’.

The second conclusion is that while using the concept of ‘the other’ coined by Edward Said, the writer found that the people of Tomis is ‘the other’ to Ovid. Ovid judges Tomis as place of degenerate, inferior to his place in Roman Empire, because that is how he was probably told by his fellow Roman, or because he is used to live in glamorous lives that he automatically thinks any backwater civilization is inferior, but as time goes, he realized that he was wrong. The Tomis is actually no worse and no better with any Roman, he even considers one of the Tomis as a better person than any Roman he ever met.

The last conclusion is that through this novel, David Malouf shows the reader his perspective on Orientalism. He is against the idea of Orientalism. He believes that there are things that should not be followed or believed from mere assumptions about one culture. He shows that through the banishment of Ovid in Tomis village. Despite the negative stereotypes Ovid has early about the Tomis people, he managed to break those stereotypes by understanding their culture, he even acknowledged one of the Tomis people as a better man than anyone he ever met in the Roman Empire. Malouf wants to tell the reader that each culture has its own value and differences but that does not make one better than the other.

By looking at the journey of Ovid, we can learn that no matter how beautiful, powerful and vast the civilization a person comes from, he/she can live and co-exist with another person from another civilization, even if the other civilization is “lesser” than his/hers. One can take a lesson from the other that is

lesser or greater, no matter where one came from. It is obvious that Malouf is trying to show the history of colonization of the British Empire in his country Australia throughout this novel.

