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NARRATIVES OF NATURE: LITERATURE, ECOLOGY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

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AN EXPLORATION OF URBAN ECOLOGY AND RESILIENCE FROM SELECT TRANSNATIONAL NARRATIVES

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Abstract

"Nature is not a place to visit. It is home" by Gray Snyder reflects literature accomplished with nature. From the 18th century onwards, the portrayal of nature in works of art has been connected with human life, and transnational narratives consolidate the relationship between nature and humans. Biodiversity is a phase of the ecosystem in a globalised context. This study was conducted through two national narratives: *Black Girl in Paris* (2000) by African American novelist Shya Youngblood, and *Hiam* (1998) by Australian award-winning novelist Eva Sallis. The protagonists, Eden Danial and Hiam, are both immigrants. They encounter the same problem, but the solution is different. This study examines the comparative analysis of urban ecology, interconnected realities of migration and ecology and how the city is portrayed within this framework, using Debord's theory of drift (theory of derive 1956) as they sustain their identities and retrieve their resilience.

Keywords: Biodiversity, Exile, Immigrants, Psychogeography, Resilience, Urban Ecology.

Introduction

Transnational literature refers to literary works that transcend national boundaries and explore the themes related to globalisation, migration, identity, and cultural exchange. Where multiple national cultural and social contexts continuously influence identities, languages, and traditions, they are simultaneously inter connected with different cultures. In this context, the scientific study of urban ecology demonstrates a relation between living organisms and the ecological system. The ecology blends with natural spaces and the navigation of life in a globalised world. It is a symbol of living in a globalised context. The population spreads out the urban ecology in transnational narratives, yet various approaches are used in it. In literature, urban ecology meets the needs of the characters, which is a medium for the authors to exemplify the city. Biodiversity, sustainability, green spaces and human interaction are constructing the urban ecology.

In a transnational context, migrants unconsciously blend with the urban ecology, representing their homeland, which is a way they connect with their hometown. Shya Youngblood is an African American writer. Her narratives often express the characters' longing for their hometown, which was observed in an urban setting, especially in *Black Girl in Paris*. As an Australian writer, Eva Sallis observed that the ecology represents the character's memory of living as an exiled person. This article substantiates that the urban ecology in these novels simultaneously reveals the representation of the city in those novels,

in the light of Debord's theory of psychogeography. The urban ecology becomes a healer for immigrants as they feel the urban city is also their hometown. The significance of the study is comparative analyses of how ecology is observed in the urban era differently, in parallel with the comparative analysis of the representation of the city to an unknown listener.

Review of Literature

The transnational literature is often explored in the form of a diasporic sense. Such as identity, memory and feminism and post-colonial writings, my study extends these boundaries in to ecosystem, simultaneously exploring the representation of the city in transnational narratives. This study falls upon two nationalities, which are African American and Australian forms; there is no prominent study to combining these narratives under the framework of psychogeography. *Black Girl in Paris* by Shay Youngblood and *Hiam* by Eva Sallis often explored the following criteria.

Jones S.W. (2003) observes the expatriate narrative of black women challenging the male-dominated society and expanding the diasporic discourse with the framework of African American literary criticism and feminist theory. In another perception observed by Fabre M. (2007) in his scholarship, he explores the historical context of Youngblood's novel while sustaining in lineage of African American writers in Paris with the light of diaspora studies and transnational literary theory. *Black Girl in Paris* is also implemented in black feminist cultural studies, in which Griffin F.J (2004) explores how black women artists are negotiated in transnational space. My study extends these implications.

Hiam by Eva Sallis is often discussed with post-colonial criticism and cultural studies. Antor H. (2016) examines within the Australian literature how immigrant women's identities are reshaped through trauma and the environment with the framework of trauma theory and postcolonial criticism. Claringbold, E. (2014) highlights multiculturalism and their Islamic perspective on dominating narration of Australian society with the light of cultural identity and religious literature

My study implies the theory of the derive to demonstrate urban ecology and the representation of the city in a transnational literature. Each of the novels is explored separately, but there is no prominent study comparing these authors. So, this study making the comparative lens through exploring how the city is examined in different ways due to the immigrant are sustaining their identity and choosing their own careers and resilience.

Discussion and Analysis

Paris is of a Holistic Nature

The urbanisation nature should be observed by Eden and narrated by young blood as "It was a gorgeous breezy early autumn day, the sky was bright blue, and flowers were blooming everywhere, even between the stones in the sidewalk". (young blood, p.35)

Black Girl in Paris is a novel that explains about the cultural eco system in briefly, in it the city of Paris is defined as a diverse direction where the form of art as survival and adaptation, Eden states that Paris is a place for the life of survival adaptation in it "I was hungry for adventure, hungry for Paris, hungry for love, hungry for art" (Shay youngblood

2000) the act of diversity expatriates in a country to showcase Paris is not French, is a diversity, for where African Americans, the protagonist Eden Daniels form black community, she chosen Paris is place for seeking freedom from racial discrimination, French locals are existing who lives their everyday life as a shopkeepers, artists and neighbours, immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean are French colonize, who also living to support colonizer, and the international artists and writers also lives in Paris, this novel represents the artists are Lamens Baldwin and others. This diversity is a part of the urban ecology, the expatriate tradition of Paris as a living environment cultivated by culture, race and everyday survival. Suzanne W. Jones (2000) also spoke about freedom and racial discrimination. In my point of view, the city of Paris is represented with liberty and sustaining identity. In this, the protagonist, Eden, moves to Paris to retain her freedom to choose her own career while enduring her identity as an African woman. Paris is a holistic city where anyone can come from anywhere, but sustaining her identity is a must.

Shay Youngblood's *Black Girl in Paris* is an example of cultural biodiversity, where diverse communities live through their community with an imagined symbolic green space.

Australia as an Ecological Confrontation

Hiam is a novel of estrangement, depicted by Eva Sallis, in which the protagonist is marked for alienation and trauma. *Hiam's* city life often enhances trauma, and the city is an unfamiliar surroundings with cultural clashes. And Anette Svensson (2009), who also examines how cultural translation intensifies alienation, affirmed that Sallis portrays Adelaide as a fractured space where immigrant identity collides with dominant norms.

The city of Adelaide is a place where the ecological creative exile defines the Australian landscape. Especially for immigrants' identity, across the metropolitan landscape, *Hiam's* daughters' wishes act against their cultural norms, which creates *Hiam's* trauma in an alienating landscape. Therefore, Sallis states. "The city was a place of exile, where memories of home clashed with the silence of strangers" (Sallis, *Hiam*, p.45). Heinz Anotor (2016) also argues, as I indicated, that the novel explores how immigrant women reconstruct subjectivity in hostile urban landscapes. And he highlights the city as a site of trauma where ecological exile and cultural dislocation intersect.

Findings

Comparative Analysis

In transnational literature, urban ecology is portrayed through the lens of cultural and social backgrounds, and it frequently shifts from one environment to another. Immigrants actively negotiate ecological challenges in their struggle for survival. The representation of the city differs from the specialised environment.

The city of Paris represented for each personality, as an immigrant, Eden observes in urban, "Everything in the villa is dead or old except me. The offices were in the basement of mason dimples yellow brick mansion. The house was surrounded by a meticulously manicured landscape of pink and white dogwoods, red and orange azalea bushes. (Youngblood, p. 24)

Black Girl in Paris explores the cultural ecology in a globalised city, where immigrants are struggling to pursue their dreams in the context of a multicultural society. The city of Paris is represented as a nurturing place to facilitate understanding non-French speaker also. Eden pursued her dream as a writer and met her favourite writer; other immigrants chased their dreams respectively.

In Hiam, for immigrants, the city is represented as a challenging environment. As Sallis states, "the land stretched flat and imprecise to its uniform and evanescent rim" (Sallis p. 49). In which, as an Arab immigrant whose life became painful in the city, for her partner's suicide. And her alienation and memory make her living in the city an estrangement. Because she moves her memory to the out deck.

Implication of the Theoretical Framework

The Psychogeographical theorist Debord's Drive (the drift) emphasises the overview of the city. wandering in the spaces to know the hidden psychological and political effects. As Debord (1995) defines psychogeography as "the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals."

In *Black Girl in Paris*, Eden's journey in an unknown city, her emotions wander to various places to find something without knowing the laws and their specific effects. At last, the Psychogeographical memory aligns Eden's survival in an unknown language city. She emotionally structures the geographical context for her psychological preference.

In Hiam, Adelaide is an unknown city for immigrants who are longing to searching identity and sustain their culture, detached from others, which creates alienation effects. As Hiam's voices that "A red land, an interminable road, populated by beasts with whom she spoke not, but killed without intention or retribution" (Sallis, Hiam, p, 67). Hiam's drive to the North side follows her daughter's wish to marry a white Australian man. In that desert journey, geography affects Hiam's memory to survive in the desert area; the new geography consoles her trauma and memory to replace their identity.

In parallel, this study exemplifies through the Psychogeography that the protagonists were psychologically positioned in a new geography, which shapes their identity and shapes the subjectivity of women. And it became a healing power to restore emotional resilience for survival in a globalised world.

Conclusion

"The derive includes both this letting -go and its necessary contradiction; the domination of Psychogeographical variations by the knowledge and calculation of their possibilities." (Debord 1956), as the immigrant lets them observe in the city and develops their own understanding of contradictions. Through they get healing themselves.

The process of healing plays a vital role in diasporic literature, especially for immigrants, a concept common to all nations, as is evident in this article. For this study, I chose two narratives from two different countries, which will be observed in various ways and with distinct problems, but the remedy is healing without hurting them. This kind of healing

literature heals not only the characters in a book but also those who are reading these kinds of characters.

The transnational literature consistently highlights the interdependence between human and ecological systems. Both the African American and the Australian narrative dramatise the urban ecology, and the representation of the city differs, encountering the environment and culture. Paris is represented as a culturally diverse city, and it is a place for nurturing. Contrastingly, Adelaide is a place for alienation and depression. Through the Psychogeographical framework, the immigrants are sustaining their identity and culture, and simultaneously achieve their desire and console their trauma. Complementing this makes an impact on the reader's resilience. In Indian American diasporic literature, the renowned feminist writer dealt with a particular character towards resilience to immigrants' problems with spices.

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