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From Roots to Rhizomes: Unveiling Migratory and Nomadic Trajectories in Hamid's *Exit West* and Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future*

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ABSTRACT

In a world where displacement is the new norm of being, migration appears both as rupture and reinvention. This article focuses on Mohsin Hamid's Exit West (2017) and Kim Stanley Robinson's The Ministry for the Future (2020), and explores how migratory patterns of human and non-human entities, identity crisis and nomadic subjectivities are constructed and reshaped in times of planetary conflict and ecological collapse. Deleuze and Guattari's Rhizomatic Structures (1980), Rosi Braidotti's Nomadic Subjectivity (1994), and Arjun Appadurai's Concept of Scapes (1990) allow us to view these instances of migration not as individual acts, but as entrapments in global systems of capital, ecology, and culture. These two novels reject linear, origin-destination models of migration, and present it as an existential necessity— a continual negotiation of fragmented selves across unstable landscapes. Ultimately, this study contends that in contemporary fiction, migration becomes a philosophical condition, a way to re-conceptualize subjectivity beyond nationalism, territories, and stable identities in a world of uncertainty. Future studies can be carried out in the literary context of non-Anglophone diasporic literatures.

| **KEYWORDS** | Migration, Nomadism, Rhizome, Deterritorialization, Conflict and Crisis, Scapes |

Introduction

Migration, as both a physical reality and a conceptual framework, has become vital to many accounts of the global situation in the twenty-first century. Migration, far from being a linear or uniform process, is multidirectional, disruptive and often involuntary which arises from a combination of factors such as war, climate change, economic collapse, and systemic inequality. As Castles and Miller (2005) note, we have moved beyond the conventional push-pull model of migration, and migration now both enable and is enabled by changing politics, technology, and ecologies.

Migration is a key aspect of the current global condition as emphasized by Deleuze and Guattari's (1980) rhizomatic structures, Braidotti's (1994) nomadic subjectivity, and Appadurai's (1990) global cultural flows. Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome disrupts fixed, linear trajectories and presents a model of movement that is non-hierarchical, interconnected and dispersed which serves as a metaphor for the unpredictable, multidirectional paths of migrants in a fractured context. Building upon this perspective, Braidotti's idea of the nomadic subject signifies movement not as displacement but as a form of ethical becoming, where subjectivity is performed via transitions that are inherently fluid, as opposed to static identities or origins. Appadurai's theory of scapes situates these philosophical reflections in the material realities of global flows by showing how power, media, and technology shape migratory experiences that travel across uneven terrains. Combined, these frameworks provide a means to read migration as not only a structural consequence of global crises, but also as a transformative practice that reconstructs borders, belonging, and identity.

"Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted." (Said, 2000, p. 173)

Contemporary literature has emerged as a critical space for capturing the large-scale, complex, and often bewildering experiences of global migration in an era of increasing climate catastrophes, political unrest, and social and economic inequity. Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* (2017) and Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) provide politically charged and compelling fictional representations of mobility, dislocation, and survival while in crisis. Although the genre of the two novels differs—*Exit West* (2017) is rooted in magical realism and *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) in speculative climate-fiction—there is a shared political horizon of re-fictionalizing the lived realities of a world that is in motion. Migration, as both authors illustrate, is not just about crossing physical borders, but about an existential transformation that has been mediated by geopolitical forces shaped by race, class, and technology. Both texts add to an expanding literature that, as Nixon (2013) conceptualizes, embodies "slow violence" of environmental and structural displacement—forms of harm that are invisible and experienced most strongly by the Global South.

This article considers how the two novels reimagine migration and nomadism as a reaction to global crisis, but also reveal the unevenness of mobility and agency. It considers how characters navigate racialized borders, techno-political infrastructures and affective loss and argues that the texts resist reductive depiction of migrants as victims or threats. Instead, they offer dynamic, unsettling images of movement as both a site of ethical possibility and a condition of crisis.

Literature Review

This section of the study examines the previous research in the field of migration, rhizomatic structures and scapes in literary works.

Bulut et. al. (2024) examine the way migration transforms family roles and identities. The research highlights how often migratory transitions alter traditional gender roles, shift intergenerational relationships, and catalyze substantial psychological transformations. This study adds insight into the complexity of migration, identity reconstruction and changing family dynamics.

Özden and Çalici (2024) recognize migration as a human psychosocial phenomenon that not only arises from factors such as war, oppression, and genocide, but also from the pursuit of betterment. This research highlights that migration cannot be seen simply as a traumatic rupture; there is also the possibility for a positive transformation, especially when people move to escape their oppressive dynamics and activate their potential—what they term as 'developmental migration' (Özden & Çalici, 2024).

Hall (1996) refers to migrant identity as "double displacements," a disarticulation of both physical place and cultural context. He suggests:

Rather than speaking of identity as a finished thing, we should speak of identification, and see it as an on-going process. Identity arises, not so much from the fullness of identity, which is already inside us as individuals, but from a lack of wholeness, which is 'filled' from outside us, by the ways we imagine ourselves to be seen by others (Hall, 2003, p. 222).

Abrahamsson (2007) argues that nomads are universal figures of deracination in literature whose relationship with place is always tenuous and subject to rupture. The

displaced person "refugee," "stateless individual," or "economic migrant"-has to occupy complex, shifting landscapes of both physical space and social association.

Rabbani in her study (2023) claims that as human beings continue to be displaced by climatic events, war, and systemic poverty, the nature of their existence becomes one where a nomadic lifestyle is non-negotiable.

Powell (2011) points out that globalization has entered a new phase of population forecasting. Globalization, which has, in a fundamental sense, been defined as the imposition of transnational forces on national sovereignty, has changed how human identity is conceptualized—not as being bound by national territories or identity, which are increasingly transnational, but rather to recognize how people identify beyond national borders (Estes, Biggs, & Phillipson, 2003).

Moreover, Estes, Biggs, & Phillipson (2003) argue that institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and patterns of migration generated by globalization have offered victims of displacement new social and economic environments that reconfigured belonging and identity across national and cultural boundaries.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This research is qualitative in nature and makes use of textual analysis to unravel the multi-faceted complex nature of nomadic existence. For this purpose, this study utilizes Deleuze and Guattari's combined theory of rhizomatic structures, Rosi probably Braidotti's nomadic theory and Arjun Appadurai's transnationalism theory, particularly, the "concept of scapes" to examine the representations of migration and nomadism in Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) and Hamid's *Exit West* (2017).

Deleuze and Guattari's idea of rhizome is the cornerstone upon which this paper builds. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe rhizomatic structures as characterized by their multiplicity, connectivity, and non-hierarchical nature. They allow for many entry and exit points which stand in stark contrast to arborescent, or tree-like, models that emphasize linearity, hierarchy, and the centrality of a single origin (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Applied to migrant identity, it departs from a rooted, origin-based understanding, and opens up the fluid, intersecting, and non-linear experiences that shape a dynamic sense of self.

The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and … and… and …". This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb "to be". Where are you going? Where are you coming from? Where are you heading for? These are totally useless questions. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 25).

Braidotti's nomadic theory furthers the idea that identity and movement are fluid. Braidotti (2011) proposes that nomadic subjectivity as an identity is not fixed but rather constantly changing its form with time and place. This theory highlights the importance of embracing change, multiplicity and becoming rather than being defined by any stable identities (Braidotti, 2011). Braidotti's concept resonates with the rhizomatic structure, underscoring the dynamic and transformative effects of a nomadic life in response to geographical shifts and global crises.

Appadurai's theory of transnationalism, particularly "concept of scapes" offers complementary insights into the theme of linking how global people, technologies, and ideas generate their own experiences in migration and identity. Appadurai (1996) introduces the concept of "scapes," which has five kinds: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes.

Data Analysis

This article entails the qualitative evaluation of contemporary fictions, specifically, from the viewpoints of selected theoretical frameworks. It examines how the novels depict nomadism and migration, exploring narrative structures, character trajectories and thematic elements through the lenses of rhizomatic and nomadic theories. Additionally, it explores the flow of human and non-human entities through the concept of scapes.

Rhizomatic Awakening: Globalized Nomadism in Contemporary Texts

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of rhizomatic structures, as mentioned in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), present a model for multiplicity that is non-hierarchical and decentralized and it challenges traditional arborescent (tree-like) thinking. Rhizomatic structures do not have a fixed point of origin, but spread unpredictably from multiple entry and exit points. This theoretical lens provides a valuable frame for interpreting migration and global change, as seen in *Exit West* (2017) by Mohsin Hamid and *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) of Kim Stanley Robinson. In both narratives, migration figures as a rhizomatic phenomenon, typified by fluid networks for transport routes or movement paths which cannot be mapped in advance and resistance to centralized control. While *Exit West* (2017) looks at personal or interpersonal migration due to war, *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) takes us into large-scale climate-driven migration and state-level responses, both of which exhibit the rhizome image-connectivity and deterritorialization.

Rosi Braidotti's concept of nomadic subjectivity, as articulated in *Nomadic Subjects* (1994), complements Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic structures. This is set against fixed identities that resist precise definition in favor of fluid, non-essentialist existence. Nomadic subjectivity is defined by transversal movement and change, travelling through deterritorialized space without being anchored in fixed origins or destinations. This resonates with rhizomatic model by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) which focuses on multiple, shifting connections beyond singular rooted identity.

In *Exit West* (2017), Saeed and Nadia traverse a world in which migration is made possible by mysterious doors that transport people instantaneously across borders. These are interstitial doors as rhizomatic nodes wherein rupture suddenly offers up new ports and identities. In resisting linear narratives of migration, the structure of the novel treats movement as erratic and diffuse, true to the multiplicative, non-hierarchical components of the rhizome. The relationship between Saeed and Nadia exhibits the rhizomatic structure of subjectivity. Nadia, the one who welcomes change and self-sufficiency, is less attached to old structures, and Saeed, who holds on to the cultural past and his family's history, finds it difficult to deal with rhizomatic movement and deterritorialization. This contrast is evident in their differing approaches to survival:

"She learned how to dress for self-protection, how best to deal with aggressive men and with the police." (Hamid, 2017, p. 11)

The above statement demonstrates how Nadia learned and internalized survival skills in unpredictable environments. Even before physically migrating she is the person who wears a thousand faces for a million circumstances, a woman who exists in spaces of power and control. Her adoption of a black robe is not an act of religious faithfulness to her Muslim roots but a layer of protection in a patriarchal world. When Nadia moves in other worlds, her positionality allows her to take different roles, moving in and out of identity the way that only a deterritorialised subject can, embodying the nomadic subject who has no home, but is in a constant state of becoming along the horizon. Saeed, in contrast, grapples with the emotional burden of having left behind his homeland, his parents, and the cultural roots that form his identity. Unlike Nadia, who welcomes change and

independence, Saeed clings to the familiar, searching for reminders of home in unfamiliar places. His yearning for cultural continuity is expressed in his inclination to socialize with people from his homeland and his emotional ties to religious traditions. As Nadia easily adapts to new settings, Saeed is resistant to losing the familiar world of the old one, creating two different responses to the act of deterritorialization; adaptation and reinvention, on one hand; nostalgia and emotional rooting, on the other. This contrast reveals the complexities of migration; people do not only bring their physical belongings, but also the psychological burden of home, history and identity.

Moreover, based on patterns of self-definition not around national or cultural stability, but movement and reinvention, Nadia embodies Braidotti's nomadic subjectivity since she does not attach herself to cultural or national boundaries. Her choice to abandon her family and cross through different territories is to embrace nomadic becoming rather than holding onto a fixed, singular identity as she states, "We all are migrants through time." (p. 115) This statement resonates Nadia's character with a rhizomatic existence; confirming the existence as a fluid and dynamic entity in itself. The novel also captures this nomadic condition in fragmented, interlinked stories about other migrants, who materialize, then vanish briefly, echoing a wider web of transient subjectivities. The thematic concern with space and time in the novel aligns multiplicity with a rhizome. As Saeed and Nadia travel through cities—Mykonos, London, Marin—their identities shift, and the rhizome's resistance to fixity is on display. They are not linear, but sideways, creating new connections and temporary communities before moving again. That fluidity is mirrored in the narrative itself, which frequently diverges into vignettes of other migrants' experiences, highlighting the collective over the individual experience as Hamid (2017) suggests in this sentence, "In this group, everyone was foreign, and so, in a sense, no one was" (p. 56). This statement explores the paradoxical complexity of deterritorialized identities within a rhizomatic framework; in a space where no singular culture dominates, the idea of "foreignness" is diminished. The migrants do not embody rigid national identities but instead exist in a fluid, non-hierarchical nexus of relations, finding resonance with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of multiplicity which states:

"How many people today live in a language that is not their own? Or no longer, or not yet, even know their own and know poorly the major language that they are forced to serve?" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p. 1602)

Additionally, this resonates with Braidotti's concept of nomadic subjectivity, where identity is not defined by static cultural or national markers but by continuous transformation and adaptation to shifting conditions as she states: "The nomad is my own figuration of a situated, postmodern, culturally differentiated understanding of the subject in general" (Braidotti, 1994, p. 4). In an age of rapid change, as Braidotti (1994) argues, our identities are fluid and always on the move, like nomads wandering between different landscapes of life. According to this view, the self is not a fixed entity, but something that is constantly being shaped. This nomadic subject matter is embodied so well in *Exit West* (2017), where the characters' immigration and dislocation necessitates the constant re-imagining, re-construction of their own identities. Immigrant 'foreignness' represents a common ground on which both men and women can advance from traditional loyalties, and create a community characterized by motion and flux rather than fixed social categories. When everyone is 'foreign,' therefore, the idea of foreignness itself collapses. Individual forms of otherness are cancelled for the sake of the immediate, which appear to be a collective experience of belonging-in-commotion, dyadic and polycentric, referring to the sense of not-belonging as belonging (post)migrant being. This is a more general commentary on life in the modern age, in which fixed identities become increasingly impossible and fluid. To put that in other words, Hamid's image resonates with the rhizomatic and nomadic paradigms, providing insight into the world of connected and dynamic identities. The text highlights that migration is not a singular trajectory but an intertwined web of collective experiences as it illuminates, "Geography is destiny, respond

the historians" (p. 5). It echoes the traditional notion that the place where someone is born determines their path, possibilities, and constraints in life. The deterministic approach prescribes that the realities of culture, society, and economy span no further than the geographic barriers and that collectively, the summation of these realities, are defined by these geographical constants. Rhizome is not structured hierarchically, nor does it have fixed values, so scattered and multifaceted connections can be made. Aligning it to the idea of geography, it means that a rhizomatic orientation would not place identities and destinies within fixed space or limits. Instead, people can connect and disparate cultures can intersect to form a fluid and dynamic sense of self transcending geographical determinism. Braidotti (1994), further, rejects the idea that geography is destiny. Braidotti (1994) imagines the self as always becoming, never anchored to a particular identity or place. The nomadic subject moves across various spaces and moments, resisting confinement to fixed categorization. As in *Exit West* (2017), characters travel through great distance in geography, constantly reshaping their identities to suit their new environments. This nomadic existence puts emphasis on the idea that one's destiny is not determined geographically but rather is a constant journey of being shaped by the experience of movement, change, and is influenced by various interactions as Hamid (2017) argues,

"We are all migrants through time" (p. 115).

Similarly, migration in Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) is represented as non-hierarchical, non-linear movement that spreads through unpredictable pathways. It reflects a rhizomatic structure just as Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome (1987) which "has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things." The statement, "A hundred million people were out there wandering the Earth or confined in camps, displaced from their homes," (Robinson, 2020, p. 265) highlights a mass displacement due to climate change and refugees do not use single pathway but move through various fragmented routes. Their movement also disrupts the fixed boundaries of nation-states, revealing migration as a systemic redefinition of the bounded space of the world, not an isolated crisis, an emergence that is building a new layer of global geopolitics. Like a rhizome that perpetually redistributes itself without seed or root, these climate refugees fashion new healthcare assemblages, seeking refuge, moving between camps, urban peripheries and informal economies. Characters like Mary Murphy, Badim Bahadur operate under a system that constantly shifts, an architectural thing that has no center; no power or agency is settled down into a single point but slides through a wide range of assemblages - diplomatic bodies, black ops, economic restructuring. Mary Murphy argues in the text, embodying the global decentralized yet deeply networked response required for climate resilience, "We have to act as if our lives depend on it, because they do" (Robinson, 2020, p. 112).

Frank May, a traumatized climate refugee, speaks to a line of flight, deterritorialized from his former life and nomadically traversing spaces of resistance and survival, mirroring the rhizomatic dispersal of subjectivities. Frank May's experience — from surviving the Indian heatwave of 2015 to his equally ambiguous future role in the climate-resistance movement — shows what nomadic displacement looks like in a world ravaged by climate upheaval. His dislocation reflects the notion that "one becomes a subject through interdictions and permissions, inscribed in power" (Braidotti, 1994), as his trauma remakes his political consciousness. Braidotti's nomadic subjectivity is highly relevant as it represents people and movements in a world in transgression. Mary, an avatar of institutional bureaucracy, becomes a kind of "becoming-nomad," engaging nonstate actors, kaleidoscopic rogue financial interventions, and climate geoengineering efforts. Her experience follows Braidotti's (1994) claim that the nomadic subject "resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behavior". In the same way, the novel's decentralized climate movement recalls a nomadic political agency, crafting dynamic

instead of territorial identities, striking strategic alliances, resisting the freezing forces of fossil capitalism.

The Ministry itself, which is formed to combat the ecological collapse, is a rhizomatic, non-stop heuristic institutional actor between legal reform, subterfuge, and radical financial restructuring, a collection of intercessions, not a homologous, vertical approach. Robinson's novel, then, performs a rhizomatic resistance to, and against, climate catastrophe, adopting nomadism as a mode of survival and metamorphosis. The movement itself cannot be contained, as traditional infrastructures are unable to either absorb or stem the flow of people in search of stability. It definitely makes a point about the hypocrisy of the whole migration debate as Robinson argues:

"People come to Europe and they get called economic migrants, as if that wasn't just what their own citizens are supposed to do, try to make a better life, show some initiative. But if you come to Europe to do it you're criminalized." (p. 368).

This is emblematic of the selective framing of migration, where mobility and economic ambition are celebrated when exercised by Western nations but criminalized when practiced by people fleeing instability. Economic and climate migrants are deracinated, not only from their homes, but from the promise of being recognized at all as legit subjects in the world system. Their movement undercuts the fiction of settled national identities and stable economies, exposing the profound inequalities that lead to displacement in the first place. By bringing out this contradiction, the novel underscores the rhizomatic character of migration—an unstoppable, mutable force that resists hierarchical mastery. In the end, *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) sees migration as a decentralized, adaptive force that reconfigures global arrangements rather than being limited by them. Drawing on the latest visualization of the phenomenon, climate migrants do not see themselves as passive victims; they become active agents of change constructing new networks of survival and resistance. This rhizomatic movement of people through borders upends the petrified frameworks of the modern nation-state, showing that the nation-state of most of the 20th century is incapable of addressing the realities of a world in motion. Migration is not merely a crisis, let alone a solution to one, but rather a cornerstone feature of the Anthropocene in which movement has now become a permanent and constant mode of existence.

Hence, these minute differences create a world in which cultural distinctions bend and warp through interaction and the movement of people and ideas. And here, the subtlety or absence of differences among people signals a world in which cultural differences are ever fluid and identities are always constantly re-formed through interactions and movement. This adaptive nature encapsulates the spirit of global nomadism, wherein migration becomes a decentralized phenomenon that dissolves static societal frameworks, nurturing a kaleidoscope of vibrant identities. This aspect of the nomadic life is vividly illustrated in this line, "When we were done we had a little nomad village, colorful against the white background: yellow, orange, khaki, red" (Robinson, 2020, p. 112). It evokes the transient yet colorful communities formed by individuals coming from diverse backgrounds. These kinds of assemblages are rhizomatic networks, which are resistant, flexible, and without a center, but rather grow as a network of relations. These are nomadic villages that embody the power of migration to transform: when dislocation becomes the vector for new social fabrics, scattered yet united and opens a pathway for unimaginable possibilities.

Scapes: The Architecture of Global Mobility

Arjun Appadurai's concept of scapes—ethnoscapes, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes—represents a powerful lens to analyze migration and globalization in *Exit West* (2017) and *The Ministry for the Future* (2020). Both novels

portray a world in which migration is not just a response to crisis but an ongoing, networked process responsive to flow of people, and also technology, capital, media, ideas. If *Exit West* (2017) imagines migration as a kind of magical, and very personal, journey through mysterious portals, *The Ministry for the* Future (2020) views migration not as fantastical adventure, but as a systemic response to climate catastrophe. Combined, these novels offer an illustration of how scapes interact to produce contemporary and future patterns of displacement.

In *Exit West* (2017), the portrayal of migration, digital connectivity and changing national identities, Hamid (2017) offers a vision of a world in which borders dissolve, and societies are remade by transnational forces. This novel underlines the social movement of masses resulting from war, climate catastrophes and the economically displaced, which goes rightly with Appaduraian ethnoscapes of people migrating from one country to another. This is evident in the following statement

That summer it seemed to Saeed and Nadia that the whole planet was on the move, much of the global south headed to the global north (p. 93).

This statement synthesizes some of the enormous demographic changes at work in the novel, which reflect Appadurai's concept of "ethnoscapes," the movements of persons and groups across boundaries. Hamid does not limit migration to Saeed and Nadia's journey in isolation but presents it as a global phenomenon. "The whole planet was on the move" implies that migration is not an isolated emergency, but rather one of the most basic realities of the modern world. This mirrors real-world trends where huge populations from war-torn or economically struggling regions in the Global South — the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa — strive for stability in the Global North (Europe, North America, and portions of East Asia).

The phenomenon termed as mediascapes, refer to how global media constructs world perceptions. In *Exit West* (2017), media both reports on migration and allows migrants to write their own story:

Sometimes someone from the press would descend on Saeed and Nadia's camp or work site, but more often denizens would themselves document and post and comment online upon what was going on (p. 97).

Here, Hamid (2017) engages with mediascapes, which Appadurai refers to as the global flow of discursive data, such as information, images, and narratives that produce imaginations. Migration accounts used to be primarily told by news agencies, governments, and main stream media organizations. But due to digital platforms, people are now able to record and tell their own stories. The difference between someone from the press would "descend" and "denizens would themselves document and post" is striking (Hamid, 2017). The term "descend" suggests that such antiquated media coverage is inconsistent and distant, as if it were compounding migrants into inert subjects rather than active participants. On the other hand, through the "document and post" method, migrants pointed out to the fact that they have the agency over their stories. It reflects how digital platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Instagram enable dispossessed people to tell real-time versions of their experiences, challenging media-sponsored representations of refugees and migrants. This suggests that globalization enables a digital world in which images and stories cross all borders. While migrants are too often portrayed as a crisis by mainstream media, their own narratives can counter those characterizations by humanizing their experiences and generating global solidarity.

Technoscapes is also highlighted in the contemporary narrative. Migration is not only a matter of mere movement, though; it is also about economic survival and labor flows. Saeed and other migrants toil in an expanding urban area dubbed the "London

Halo," an emblem of technological, infrastructural and economic changes. The statement "A thriving trade in electricity was under way in dark London. . . able to recharge their phones from time to time" (2017, p.85) underscores the perverse distribution of technological resources in a world reshaped by seismic change. In a city such as London, traditionally synonymous with stability and modernity, universal access to technology is also a thing of the past. For Saeed and Nadia, technology is a crucial lifeline, connecting them to a new world and, ultimately to their dwindling ties to home. Having the ability to just charge your phone a little, even at times, is symbolic of survival, cellphones can be communication, information, currency in an increasingly digital world. This reflects the real-life experience of many migrants now, who turn to mobile phones for GPS navigation, job searches and keeping in touch with family. But the fact that power exists only in "pockets" indicates that technological access is far from universal or evenly distributed. Instead, it is controlled by particular groups, illustrating how digital access has become a type of economic and social privilege.

In this way, Hamid (2017) critiques the assumption that technology is a series of bridges that automatically bring people together; rather, it deepens new divides, enabling who can fully participate in the digital world and who will retain its benefits. The frequent disruption in power supply that Saeed and Nadia experience demonstrates that rather than being the great equalizer, in many cases technology is actually a factor that exacerbates social and financial inequalities, further complicating the realities involving migration in the contemporary global scenario where access to various forms of digital connection plays an ever more vital role in whether an individual can adjust and thrive in a new environment.

Similarly, financescapes, the global movement of money, capital, and other economic resources, dictate the possibilities and constraints of migrants in *Exit West* (2017). Economic forces shape who may move freely and who finds themselves in precarious conditions, entrenching the inequalities that migration enforces. This is given explicitly in lines such as "a rich woman on paper, the house now worth a fortune" (p. 114), emphasizing that financial security lies most in the ownership of property and speculation on markets, not physical or social security. In globalized economies, "rich on paper" implies showing signs of wealth at the mercy of inaccessible, variable markets - not limited by soil and its resources, but at the same time, abstract and ethereal. The Palo Alto woman knows that rising value is good for her real estate, but her wealth is now more a number than a thing she can spend or control. This is a far cry from the economic challenges of migrants like Saeed and Nadia, whose well-being hinges on their real-time access to resources, not the financial portfolio they are unable to touch. This addresses the larger implication of financescapes in the act of migration, where global economic structures determine where citizens can migrate to, and how they will subsequently be treated. In a world where money makes mobility possible, where economic capital is the key that unlocks freedom, the difference between the wealthy woman and the refugees illustrates how lopsided that power is. In doing so, *Exit West* (2017) targets the financial systems that produce and reproduce inequality, tracing a world where economic flows dictate the right to stability vs. a permanent state of flux, and here the idea of migration is not so much the geographical crossing of borders as it is the movement in a world disciplined by capitalism.

Lastly, Appadurai's Ideoscapes is vaguely presented in *Exit West* (2017). These lines "The nation was like a person with multiple personalities...whose skin appeared to be dissolving as they swam in a soup full of other people whose skins were likewise dissolving" (Hamid, 2017, p. 86) capture the fluidity and fragmentation of national identity in an age of mass migration. This resonates with the idea of ideoscapes, which refers to the global flow of ideologies, values, and political narratives influencing perceptions of migration, sovereignty, and belonging. In the novel, the idea of the nation-state as a singular, stable entity is fracturing, showing competing ideologies — some

pushing for inclusion and coexistence, others reaffirming exclusionary nationalism. The image of a "person with multiple personalities" implies that within one single nation contests between conflicting visions of identity and belonging simultaneously occur, which create an unbearably burdened national consciousness that is ultimately impossible to maintain. The image of "skins dissolving" further affirms the destabilization of fixed identities. Similarly, the "soup full of other people" conjures the notion that globalization is not a one-way process but rather an entangled, fluid exchange in which national identities are not port-like states, but shaped instead by transnational encounters.

The tension between "union" and "disintegration" reflects actual ideological strife in the real world over immigration policies, border control, and nationalism. Some, including right-wing factions, view migration as a threat to a pristine culture and a stable nation, while others, including left-wing factions, embrace migration as an inevitable and enriching feature of globalization.

Without borders nations appeared to be becoming somewhat illusory, and people were questioning what role they had to play. (p. 86)

Similarly, Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) offers an in-depth exploration of globalization through the lens of Arjun Appadurai's five "scapes" — ethnoscapes, financescapes, technoscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes. Appadurai's ethnoscapes refer to the flow of people in regard to migration, displacement, and transnational change. Racially-motivated migration is rife in a flooded world, which Robinson vividly illustrates, showing the scale and ferocity of climate-induced migration as millions are sent fleeing their homes. "A hundred million people were out there wandering the Earth or confined in camps, displaced from their homes" (p. 265). This statement vividly demonstrates the scale of climate-driven migration. The term "a hundred million people" indicates that displacement is not an isolated crisis, it is a systemic global issue. The distinction between the nomadism of wandering the Earth and the confinement of camps also suggests the heterogeneous condition of these dispossessed subjects, some are able to wander free, while others are stuck in liminal spaces, waiting for a political or humanitarian solution.

Financescapes, which expressed the global flow of capital, according to Appadurai, explains how economies are growing in a responsive manner to crisis at every level, in which at the end of the day, profit trumps social responsibility. In *The Ministry for the Future* (2020), Robinson takes the financial sector, which has proven it can profit off climate change, to task, recasting this not as a moral crisis but a market opportunity. "Finance unfazed by anything, carbon coins just another. . . between the stick and the carrot" (p.331). This shows how even noble policies like carbon coins get absorbed into the system, becoming mere speculation instruments in financial markets. Carbon coins were structured as an economic reward for cutting emissions, but financiers treat them as "just another tradeable commodity", allowing them to forgo any ethical value. This is how financescapes work—money flows and adapts not for the needs of people or environments, but for profits, which is consistent with Appadurai's assertion that financial markets are independent of local or social constraints and knowledge systems, prioritizing volatility over stability. The expression "betting on the spread between the stick and the carrot" emphasizes the speculative dimension of stock markets, where market players profit from both. Instead of treating climate action as a matter of how the planet will survive, financiers embrace climate action as just another opportunity to hedge risk and seek returns. This reflects the way real-world financial actors anticipate and profit from government action, converting crises—be they economic downturns, pandemics, or climate disasters—into wealth-building opportunities.

Moreover, Appadurai's technoscapes describe the global flow of technology, highlighting how technological innovations transcend borders, enhances communication,

change industries, and reshape means of governance. In the text, technology is a double-edged sword, a solution and a product of climate change.

We flew to sixty thousand feet, as high as the planes could get. Higher would have been better but we couldn't do it. It took a couple of hours, as we always carried a maximum load... Once up there we deployed the fuel lines and pumped the aerosols into the air (p. 36).

This passage depicts solar geoengineering as a techno-fix to the climate crisis. Specific numbers for the altitude, fuel loads and deployment methods highlight just how complicated an operation of this scale would be. But the phrase "higher would have been better" suggests the limitations of contemporary technology that also reaffirms Appadurai's claim that technoscapes are reshaping faster than regulatory scapes can respond. Although this innovation functions as a potential tool toward reducing climate change, its long-term outcomes are untested, emphasizing that technoscapes hold solutions as well as risks. Further than climate intervention Robinson investigates how decentralized digital networks are shifting governance and economic structures, which speaks to the ways techscapes transform and alter the world. YourLock, a stand-alone digital platform that enables people to exchange and move economic and social value without being in state-backed financial systems, resonates with Appadurai's notion of technoscapes as undermining traditional power structures as they allow non-state actors such as corporations, decentralized communities, and activist-networks to become actors in global governance.

Arjun Appadurai's concept of mediascapes suggests that globalization of media helps to solidify or reduce the public perception of important events as a patchwork of ideologies and binary language that often creates a two-dimensional instead of three/dimensional representation of events (Appadurai, 1990). Robinson is critical of how climate disasters and mass movements globally are mediated through the digital and traditional news sources.

This was news, of course, remarked on everywhere. . . and this was true everywhere. Global revolutions these days were strange, Mary thought, being as virtual as everything else (Robinson, 2020, p. 261).

The passage underscores the disjoint between narratives of media and lived realities and experiences. This schism is symptomatic of how climate change, a calamity of unthinkable scope, is often distilled down to an abstract emergency, one that is reported on but not necessarily lived, at least on a day-to-day basis. The statement, "global revolutions these days were strange, being as virtual as everything else" (Appadurai, 1990), captures the deepening dependence on expanding digital platforms for the purposes of rumor.

Ideoscapes, introduced by Arjun Appadurai, explains the globalization of political ideologies, demonstrating how they adapt to different cultural and historical contexts to shape governance, nationalism, and social movements (Appadurai, 1990). Examining how ideologies shape governance and policy in the text, Robinson (2020) serves up matriotism, the planetary reworking of nationalism.

Matriotism, Dick jokes. JA nods. Support growing fast. Could cross a tipping point and become what everyone thinks. A new structure of feeling, underlying politics as such. Global civilization transcending local differences (Robinson, 2020, p. 332).

This excerpt reflects the rise of matriotism as an alternative framework of ideology that replaces nationalism in its traditional sense. Framed within Appadurai's ideoscapes, this demonstrates the migration of nation-based political and ideological constructs and

how they engender countries' governance and social frameworks (Appadurai, 1990). It highlights that ideologies do not always emerge from state institutions but gain momentum from the street, from social media, from political discourse. This resonates with Appadurai's claim that ideoscapes circulate dynamically, driven by media, political movements, and social consciousness. The phrase "a new structure of feeling, underlying politics as such," proposed in this formulation suggests that ideological shifts are rooted in public sensation, rather than mere performance of policy. Moreover, the last phrase, "global civilization transcending local differences," hints at planetary governance transcending the sovereignty of the nation-state. This ideological transition corresponds with a major theme present in *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) that in order to survive in the Anthropocene, we must re-conceptualize political structures beyond borders, an ideology inherently tied to Appadurai's concept of ideoscapes.

Conclusion

Conclusively, this article has explored Hamid's *Exit West* (2017) and Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) through the lenses of changing migration patterns, rhizomatic structures, and fluid identities. Both narratives also show how movement ceases to be linear or bounded by established borders, operating instead in decentralized and adaptive networks. *Exit West* imagines migration to be a sort of dynamic enterprise, the people involved in it crossing new landscapes and having no specific destination, and *The Ministry for the Future* relates climate refugees to a broader shift in their relationship with land and governance. Political and economic structures are further shaped by the global circulation of people, technology, finance, media and ideology, exposing how interdependent systems redefine belonging and power. Hence, both novels interrogate national and economic structures, and claim that survival in the Anthropocene requires accepting fluidity, mobility and new forms of solidarity.

Recommendations

Literary investigations of migration need to include the interrogation of literary texts from non-Anglophone and more marginalized contexts, particularly those situated within indigenous, Afro-diasporic, and South Asian contexts. Comparative literary studies across text from the Global North and Global South will remain important to unraveling the layered and uneven burdens and entitlements attached to global movement. Interdisciplinary frameworks that combine environmental studies, migration policy, and digital humanities can deepen theoretical engagement and offer further readings of how global witnessing reshapes mobility and belonging.

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