

Migration, Agency and Subjectivity in Helon Habila's Travellers

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Abstract : The late 20th to the early 21st century has been predominantly characterized by the movement of individuals from one country to another country or countries. The chief reasons for migration have always been premised on socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic factors, with influences of migration finding expression through various ways. Indeed, migration experiences have formed points of subjectivity which functions as agencies that propel migrants to strongly quest for migrating from their home space to other socio-cultural space that performs the role of escape for them. This paper interrogates the discourse of migration, agency and subjectivity in Helon Habila's Travellers. The essay explores the interconnectedness between migration which is the physical [as deployed in this paper] movement from one location to another, agency as seen in the ability to act based on various ideological frameworks within which the action is taken, and subjectivity which identifies with the predominant factors that influence human actions; and how these connections are responsible for defining the diaspora individual. The discourse of what makes migrants desire to move from their various spaces is as critical as the experiences they face in their various host land. Hence, this paper demonstrates, through the analysis of an African diasporic novel, that the quest for migration is mostly determined by certain agencies in the diaspora home space, which characters have been subjects of and desire to escape. Traveller is a novel which chronicles the various experiences of migrants who journey from their various home space to another land as a result of different agencies that precipitated their migration. This paper engages these agencies as impediments to human survival.

Keywords : migration, agency, subjectivity, Helon Habila, diaspora, home, space

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