

**Migration and Coping Mechanisms in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* and Helon Habila's *Travellers***

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**Being a MA Thesis Submitted to the Department of Languages and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, Ibadan**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Award of Master of Arts Degree (MA) in English (Literature)**

**2025**

### **Certification**

This is to certify that **Deborah Oyindamola TADESE** with matriculation number **LCU/PG/005258** carried out this research work titled "Migration and Coping Mechanisms in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* and Helon Habila's *Travellers*" in the Department of Languages and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Master Degree in Literature and that this has not been previously submitted.

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**Dr. R.O. Aluko**

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**Date**

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**Dr. U.R. Davies**

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**Date**

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to God Almighty and my parents, Barr. and Mrs. Tadese.

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## **Acknowledgement**

My sincere appreciation goes to Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, along with all the staff members from the Department of Languages and Literature for their significant contributions to the execution of this research.

I am also grateful to my supervisor, Dr. R.O. Aluko, for her guidance, invaluable insights and support throughout the entirety of this study. I also acknowledge the support of the Head of Department, Languages and Literature, Dr. U.R. Davies and the Dean Faculty of Arts, Prof. Anjola Robbin, for their support and unwavering motivation throughout this study.

Additionally, I wish to acknowledge the Press Manager, Lead City University Press, Ibadan - Mr Ayodele Ayodeji for his support and encouragement. I also wish to acknowledge my colleagues and friends, Mr Jibuo Kingsley, Miss Marvellous Gbadegesin, Miss Opeyemi Adalakun, Mr Olaniyi, Mr Quadri Kolawole, Mr Uthman Ismaeel, Mr Adedokun, Mr Bidemi and others, for their generous and steadfast support during this research endeavour. Lastly, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my beloved parents, Barr. Taiwo Tadese and Mrs Esther Tadese, and my siblings, Olalekan David Tadese, Abisola Dorcas Tadese and Olusola Daniel Tadese, for their unwavering love, support, prayers and encouragement.

Although the above-mentioned institution and persons have assisted in the process of this research work, I alone stand responsible for the errors, if any, found in the work.

## Abstract

This research aims to explore the experiences of African migrants as portrayed in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and Helon Habila's *Travellers* (2019). The main goal is to examine how migration affects the mental and emotional wellbeing of these characters, and how they cope with life in unfamiliar and often hostile environments. The study fills a gap by focusing on the psychological struggles of migrants in literary texts, using Psychoanalysis theory and Coping mechanisms theory to guide the analysis. A literary analysis approach was used to closely study the characters, themes, and narrative techniques in both novels. Attention was given to how the authors portray the inner worlds of migrants, especially their emotional and mental challenges. The findings show that migration often leads to trauma, confusion, and a sense of loss. Many of the characters become disoriented and emotionally broken due to the harsh conditions they face. Instead of finding the better lives they had hoped for, they experience alienation, isolation, and despair. Selvon and Habila provide powerful stories of migrant suffering, showing that the search for belonging comes with heavy emotional costs. The study concludes that migration, as represented in the two novels, causes more psychological harm than hope. It is recommended that future research further examine coping strategies among migrants, and that societies take greater care in supporting the emotional needs of migrants as they adapt to new environments.

*Keywords:* Selvon, Habila, Migration, Coping mechanisms, Psychological effects

Word Count: 250

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