

The Reinvention of Diasporic Identity in *Brown Girls* by Daphne Palasi Andreades

إعادة بناء الهوية في إطار تجربة الشتات: رواية "فتيات بنيات" لدافني بالاسي أندرياديس

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Abstract:

The complexity of Diasporic Identity captivates American writers, fostering diverse perspectives. Therefore, this article explores Diasporic Identity in Daphne Palasi Andreades' novel, *Brown Girls*, using Rhizomatic Identity and Self-Determinism theories. It analyzes transformative journeys and behavioral patterns of characters, focusing on identity reinvention. The study reveals self-determinism's pivotal role in shaping unique identities. Findings contribute to understanding how diasporans build their essence and challenge cultural narratives. The novel disrupts dominant voices, creating space for authentic portrayals and nuanced dialogues. Exploring diasporic identity in *Brown Girls* uncovers intricate complexities and emphasizes self-determinism's significance. This research enriches the tapestry of the Diaspora and its identity.

Keywords: Diasporic identity; Rhizomatic Identity ; Self Determinism ; Reinvention of identity ; Brown Girls

ملخص:

تعقيدات الهوية المرتبطة بظاهرة الشتات تثير اهتمام الكتاب الأمريكيين، مع وجود وجهات نظر متنوعة. يستكشف هذا المقال هوية الشتات في رواية دافني بالاسي أندرياديس "بنات بنيات"، باستخدام نظريات الهوية الجذورية و تقرير الذات. تحلل الدراسة رحلات التحول وأنماط السلوك لشخصيات الرواية، مع التركيز على إعادة بناء الهوية. تكشف الدراسة عن دور تحديد الذات في تشكيل هويات فريدة. تسهم النتائج في فهم كيفية بناء المهاجرين المتشتمين لجوهرهم وتحديدهم للسرديات الثقافية. تقوم الرواية بتخطي السرديات السائدة، وتخلق مساحة للصور الحقيقية والحوارات المعقدة حول الهوية. وعليه تسهم هذه الورقة البحثية في إثراء النقاش حول الهوية والشتات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: هوية الشتات؛ الهوية الجذورية؛ التقرير الذاتي؛ إعادة بناء الهوية؛ بنات بنات

Introduction:

When describing the dispersion process, the verbs "moving" or "traveling" may not fully capture the phenomenon's puzzlement. A more nuanced set of terms can be used to better convey the multifaceted nature of the process. In nature, for instance, particles or objects that disperse can also scatter, diffuse, or re-distribute themselves. They may cross boundaries, overcome obstacles, or navigate through different environments. They can transcend limitations, expand their reach, or explore new conditions. At the same time, the dispersion process may entail challenges, frictions, or resistance as different forces can defy or oppose those particles. Similarly, the diasporic experience is not solely limited to moving or traveling. The dispersion of people across boundaries can be projected in the particles' scramble and interactions, as reflected in many American diasporic novels, including Daphne Palasi Andreades' *Brown Girls*. The novel delves into the complexities of Diasporic Identity and its profound impact on the way the journey is perceived. It showcases how individuals maneuver their backgrounds and desires in a world that often attempts to force them into predefined boxes. In the novel, the characters revise and modify their identities to expand out of these boxes. While many theorists and scholars view the evolution in Diasporic Identity; starting inside of a box and growing out of it, as a form of hybridity, this research paper approaches the portrayal of identity in the novel as being fluid rather than immutable. The attempt is made through the lens of characters and their subjective identity reinvention. The concept of identity reinvention allows for a more subtle understanding of how Diasporic Identity is built and interpreted. Moving beyond the mere focus on hybridity, this paper aims to contribute to the Diaspora literature by shedding light on the reinvention phase of diasporic identity involving the active construction of identity in response to social and cultural contexts. Central to this article, thus, is the Rhizomatic Identity theory. It offers a framework for understanding the complexities of diasporic identity and the characters' interactions with their environment while growing up in America. The characters in *Brown Girls* are aware of their diasporic identities, and as their identity is dynamic and non-predetermined, they create new versions of themselves that are both rooted in traditions and open to new experiences. The article uses Self Determination to explain this process of creating new versions of identity from the complex rhizome because characters clearly manifest their self-made identity in the novel. These characters are active agents in shaping their identities and rejecting narrow definitions of what it means to belong to a particular community.

1. Theoretical framework

Diaspora is characterized by rootlessness, hybridity, ambivalence, contradictions, cultural clashes, and desires insofar as individuals fly over several cultural and societal conventions, beliefs, encounters, and expectations. It is an experience of displacement, an act of influencing or being influenced by social norms and political policies. Hence, the moral, cultural, and behavioral expeditions of immigrants and their children are addressed as Diasporic Identities (Brooks & Louridas, 2014).

1.1. The complexity of Diasporic Identity

The concept of Diasporic Identity has been the subject of intense academic scrutiny due to its complex and multilayered nature; it is a valued phenomenon. In other words, identity-building is affected by the rich cultural contacts that Diaspora individuals establish as they continuously shift from one culture to another, move from one context to another. These alterations occur within the limits of the personal beliefs and social standards surrounding them.

Stuart Hall, an influential scholar who studied diasporic identity, argues that such identity is a dynamic and ongoing process of negotiation and transformation (1990). He also emphasizes the role of power in shaping it, noting that the dominant culture often imposes its norms and values on diasporic communities, leading, ultimately, to conflicts and tensions. (Borgohain & Ammari, 2022).

In addition to Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha (1984) argues that diasporic communities engage in "cultural translation" as they negotiate with multiple cultural identities. This process of translation results in a hybrid identity that is both "here and there" a combination to embrace, a mixture to live with. To rephrase, this diasporic essence challenges the boundaries of fixed cultural identity. Identity as a complex reality influenced by various factors, such as personal drive, self-governance, and external power dynamics makes can be pictured like a rhizome.

1.2. Rhizomatic Identity

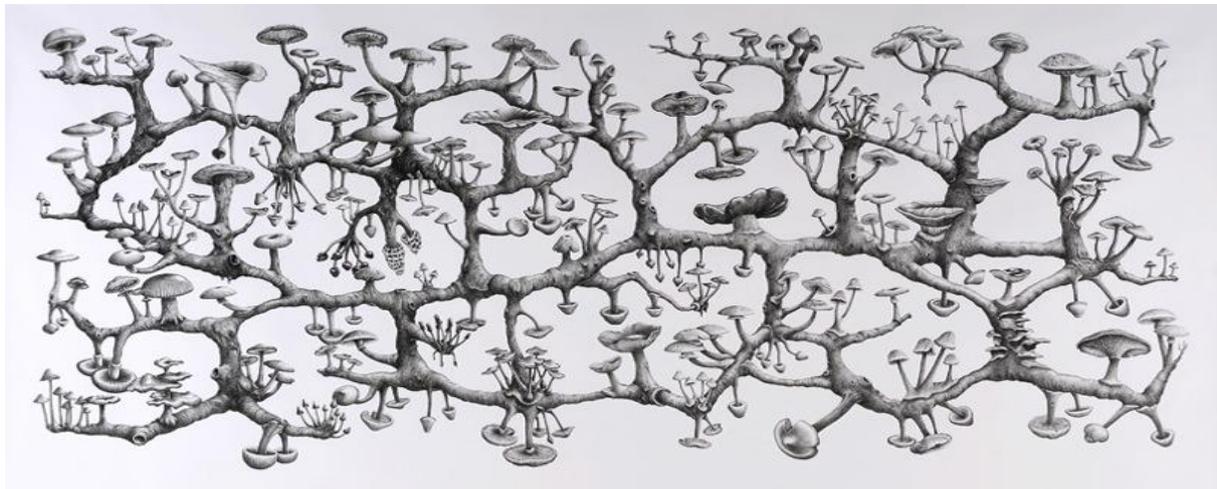
The concept of Rhizomatic Identity provides a simplified interpretation of Diasporic Identities' dynamism by challenging linear and essential notions. The malleability of Identity is explained through an acclaimed image associated with the works of the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1983). Their explanation provides a robust framework for understanding the complex nature of diasporic identities with the name of Rhizomatic Identity. The latter is characterized by horizontal diffusion; that is drawing on multiple cultural resources and circumstances. The nature of such identity enables individuals and communities to delve into complex cultural terrains.

In the context of Diaspora, Rhizomatic Identity allows for the reinvention of the self and the creation of new forms of identity that challenge the essential notions of belonging, and it is neither linear nor confined. According to Deleuze and Guattari (1997), the rhizome can alter the traditional common perceptions of history as being linear or progressing over time (1983). Various histories progress at different rates, sometimes progressing and other times regressing, advancing continuously but not in order. Actually, external aspects determine how the rhizome branches out in a non-hierarchical and decentralized manner, making diasporic identity draws on the rhizome metaphor. This root system spreads horizontally rather than vertically. Deleuze and Guattari further argue that Rhizomatic

Identity is characterized by its lack of a fixed direction; instead, it renders on multiple cultural resources to create a dynamic and fluid form of identity (1983). This contrasts other forms of identity rooted in a fixed location, culture, or tradition.

In the Diasporic experience, Rhizomatic Identity manifests diverse and multiple cultural resources to create complex and hybrid forms of the essence. In the United States, diasporic communities from Africa, the Caribbean area, and other parts of the world have created Rhizomatic Identities that draw on various cultural traditions and experiences. These identities challenge the general fixed notions of identity and home, and enable diasporic communities to create new forms of cultural expressions. Thus, instead of calling it a framework, it should be called an ingredient to understand the complexity and the dynamism of diasporic identities. After tasting the rhizome, diasporans can react and deal with the convolute texture in many ways, the choice is theirs to pick from the rhizomes below.

Figure1: Mycelium Rhizome



Source: (Giblett, 2017)

1.3. Dealing with Rhizomatic Identity: The reinvention of Diasporic Identity

Turmeric and ginger are Rhizomatic plants that grow horizontally and have many shoots. They can be later transformed or reshaped into spices or tea. The recreation of these plants into one of the two possible final products depends on a number of factors. Similarly, the concept of identity is complex and indefinite, and it can be shaped by many factors such as culture, history, language, and personal experiences. Identity is not static but; in a way, fluid and constantly changing and evolving to many possible outcomes, influenced by the individual's internal and external state (Scott, 2011). Thereby, reinventing and recreating it after it grows to its Rhizomatic shape becomes possible and even necessary, particularly for diasporic communities. The aspects of the Rhizomatic Identity, its recreation, and reinvention are pertinent to Diaspora because it refers to the dispersion of a group from their original

homeland with continuous and overlapping senses of attachment and detachment to it. This largely entails that Diaspora is itself a Rhizomatic phenomenon.

The reinvention involves moving away from fixed notions of identity and embracing hybridity. It also involves blending different cultural traditions and influences, and settling with a choice as a decided product (Yang, Zhao, & Liu, 2021). For diasporic people, the product is not subject to be inclusively final because the option of reinvention can be recycled and repeated. Reinventing identity gives individuals command and ability to designate themselves based on their definitions and choices. For that reason, it can be repeated at any phase if the individual is self determined to decide the path of the rhizome; a new bud can grow within the rhizome (consider figure 1), or the whole rhizome can be transformed into a new product.

1.4. Self Determination

In relation to making choices, Self Determination Theory (SDT); a psychological theory of human motivation developed in the 1970s by the American researchers Edward Deci and Richard Ryan. It can be used to explain the process of reinventing the Diasporic Identity as a voluntary yet challenging action if it is applied in this context. Simply put, Self Determination is critical to mental well-being, as individuals prefer control over their lives. According to Deci and Ryan, Self Determination entails using one's abilities.

To achieve that ability, people must recognize their strengths and limitations, acknowledge external influences, make choices, and establish strategies to fulfill their needs (2008). In other words, they become aware of the complexities and emerge from them with the will for power. Self Determination grants personal control over life.

Self Determinism goes hand in hand with the reinvention of identity as they resemble the ultimate solution to the Rhizomatic complicated circumstances. This strategy can create a strong sense of the self, essential for developing a chosen Diasporic Identity, and it can be used to decipher characters actions in diasporic literature.

2. *Brown Girls* as a Diasporic novel

Brown Girls is a 2022 novel that tells the story of girls growing up in Queens, New York, America, they were referred to as being 'brown' to entail that they were colored coming from different places such as Pakistan, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, China, and many other African and southern American and Asian countries. They share everyday experiences as they grow up, they collectively experience discrimination and racism, the American dream, familial expectations, and the pursuit of self-discovery.

The novel is structured as a collection of chronological vignettes, and Andreades wrote it in the "choral we" using first-person plural narration to transmit a collective and

shared experience of the girls with different ethnical origins. Throughout the novel, the characters appear to be struggling with the complications that popped up due to their immigration background, their families and their traditional values, and they all went through these developments while trying to find their place within the American society. They leave their childhood home to study and work away in other cities. Andreades used new and sensory language that draws upon music and poetry to convey the experiences of the brown-skinned girls.

2.1. The novel's setting

Queens's diversity and multiculturalism make it an ideal setting for exploring diasporic experiences in *Brown Girls*. Queens in New York City is a diversified and dynamic region in America with a long history of immigration and a vibrant multicultural record. It is home to more than two million people with varied ethnic backgrounds and it is considered as one of the most ethnically diverse urban districts (McMillen et al., 2020). The fact that the novel's characters are from Queens makes it more significant in diasporic studies because the primary setting is a home to a wide range of ethnicities and communities, including significant populations of Latinos, African Americans, South Asians, East Asians, and Europeans. With such considerations at hand, one can understand that Queens represents the backdrop of the novel; a place where identity is full of distribution and reinvention is an option.

2.2 .Brown Girls' complex identity:

By embracing the entanglement of their identity, individuals can break free from societal norms and expectations, paving the way for the reinvention of their identity on their own terms. The diverse set of the novel provides the reader with assorted characters who experience many complexities and braided identities. The girls are from different diasporic families but their experiences were identical. To illustrate, this passage provides an overview of the characters' interactions with complexities:

"One aunt gives us manicures every Sunday. Squirts poopcolored henna onto our palms, sketches lotus flowers. One cousin lets us listen to her collection of country CDs—Dolly, Shania, the Dixie Chicks— her most prized possessions. **WIDE OPEN SPACES!** We sing along. Another cousin lends us her romance novel, the lone paperback that sits atop her dresser, after we beg her." (Andreades, 2022, Duties)

The above extract ensures the complexity of diasporic identity by referring to the contradictions in the girls' behaviors and preferences. On the one hand, the girls receive a cultural education from their family, as evidenced by the aunt who gives them henna. On the other hand, the cousin shares her love of American country music with the girls. Out of the contradiction, the girls reject the traditional cultural marker of henna, calling it "poop" and show no interest in it. This suggests the existence of conflict and tension between their native culture and Western norms. Moreover, the girls' preferences for Western cultural products,

such as country music and romance novels in the passage, further emphasize the complexity of their identity.

The fact that they idolize blonde women like the Dixie Chicks and Dolly Parton speaks of the influence of the American mainstream culture on their views. This contradiction between embracing western cultures while also having a connection to their roots highlights the fluidity of diasporic identity. The brown girls are facing pressure to conform to two cultures. The extract thus invites readers to consider the various influences and tensions that shape the identity of diasporic individuals.

This passage can be approached with an eye toward the various power dynamics. Expressly, the girls' rejection of henna and their embrace of Western cultural products reflect diasporic individuals' navigation of their position within a hierarchy of cultural values. Furthermore, the girls' identity is shaped not just by their own choices but by larger societal forces that are part of America. The fact that the girls are exposed to Western cultural products and that these products are often associated with power and prestige, complicates their relationship with their native culture. In other words, the girls may find it difficult to conform to Western cultural norms. At the same time, the CDs are alluring to them, and they sing with them, even if this means rejecting some aspects of their own culture. The following is another extract from the novel which falls into the same theme: "We just want to try. We just want to see. We begin to paint our faces lighter, lighter. Until we are the color of lilies. Or bones. There. Beautiful." (Andreades,2022, Optical Illusions)

The extract, again, stresses the complex and sometimes contradictory nature of Diasporic Identity. The fact that the girls desire to paint their faces lighter, even though they come from African, Caribbean, and South Asian countries suggest a clash between their desire to assimilate to the dominant Western beauty standards and their connection to their cultural heritage. This contradiction is displayed in the symbolism of the girls' reference to their bones as beautiful. The Bones that are hidden beneath the skin represent the girls' inner selves and true identities. The girls tend to embrace their unique original cultural identities while painting their faces by expressing admiration for their bones and recognizing their beauty despite their dark skin. The fact that they see whiteness as a desirable trait, even though it goes against their ethnic identity, and authentic selves, reflects the complex experiences that diasporic individuals undertake (Verkuyten, Wiley, Deaux, & Fleischmann, 2019). By recognizing the beauty of their inside (bones) and expressing admiration of their cultural heritage, the girls are developing awareness, resisting, and assimilating simultaneously. As the novel is full of these complexities, the following extract serves as a further illustration:

"In cathedrals where stained glass windows depict Mother Mary weeping over Jesus and filter in shards of colorful light, in mosques made of yellow brick, ripe with the scent of hard-working feet, in temples where the matches keep snapping in half whenever we try to light a stick of incense, while Buddha with his half-closed, sleepy eyelids smiles down at us—

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU TODAY? our grandmothers ask—some of us are too frightened to pray. It's nothing, Grandma, we say, and squeeze her hand. We wonder if God will accept our prayers. (**GOD, PLEASE GIVE ME A BODY I CAN LOVE. GOD, PLEASE HELP ME HAVE THE STRENGTH TO TELL MY FAMILY. GOD, PLEASE GIVE ME WINGS SO I CAN LEAVE THIS PLACE BEHIND.**) If we pray at all. Good "girls," we are good girls." (Andreades, 2022, Jenny)

The quote again emphasizes the complexities of diasporic identity, accentuating the girls' varied cultures and beliefs in the novel. By describing different religious places, from cathedrals to mosques and temples, and the figures of Jesus and Buddha, the author demonstrates the diversity of cultures and beliefs as they grow up in Queens. In addition, the description of the different structures and places in the novel, and as shown in the passage above, conveys the girl's reflection on every part of their culturally rich environment. For instance, the cathedrals are depicted with "stained glass windows" that "filter in shards of colorful light" creating a sense of awe and wonder. In contrast, the mosques are described as "ripe with the scent of hard-working feet," suggesting a more grounded and intimate experience of spirituality. Similarly, the temples are associated with "matches [that] keep snapping in half," implying a sense of clumsiness, imperfection, and repeated failing attempts. Yet, despite the girls' varied cultural and religious backgrounds, they all connect with their grandmothers, who symbolize their origins as well as their native heritage.

Correlating prayer with grandmothers and their heavy steps to pray highlights the obscurity of their identity. They want to distance themselves from their homeland, temples, mosques, and cathedrals, yet they still yearn for them. Moreover, their prayers reflect their desire for change and acceptance. They pray for a body they can love, the strength to tell their desires to family, or wings to leave their place behind. These prayers reveal the girls' complex identities, where they simultaneously embrace and resist their cultural heritage. The girls' reactions to these spaces are complex, hybrid and ambivalent, as some of them feel frightened while others find comfort.

The girls' prayers reflect a desire for transformation and change, which is a key feature of diasporic identity. The prayers are not simply requests for improvement but also reflections of a desire to escape their current constraints and a will to forge new, more fulfilling identities. They prayed to leave Queens, where the rhizomes of the cathedral, the mosque, the temple, and their grandmothers are entangled.

2.3 .The Rhizomatic Identity of Brown Girls

Throughout the novel, the characters start to develop a sense of unease and discomfort when confronted with people from the same cultural background, suggesting a desire to create a sense of autonomy and independence by distancing themselves from their cultural roots. In the previous presented extracts, there is a manifestation of Rhizomatic Identity, as Deleuze and Guattari propose. The aunt giving henna, the cousin sharing her country music collection

and affording a romance novel, represent different connections and influences that can create a network of identities. These established links and impacts are not linear or hierarchical. They, instead, spread and intertwine like the roots of plants, creating a web of identities constantly evolving and changing with buds from the homeland and others from the host land. Painting their faces lighter in the second extract represents a desire to assimilate and fit into the dominant culture.

Nevertheless, it is not a rejection of their identity but rather an attempt to modify and expand it. This act of experimentation, modification, and exploration is a hallmark of Rhizomatic Identity, as it rejects a fixed and stable identity in favor of a constantly changing and evolving one. The bones are there, but the skin is colored; the colors can be removed through the ongoing growth of the rhizome. Rhizomatic Identity is also represented through the description of the cathedrals, mosques, and temples in the third extract. The varied cultural and religious influences on the characters are represented in these spaces, described in sensory detail. The matches snapping in half and the scent of hard-working feet in the mosque, Buddha's eyelids, for example, represent these spaces' visceral and sensory experience, contributing to the complex and multifaceted identities of the characters. The connections and the influences come from all directions. Rhizomatic Identity is the ingredient to understanding and tolerating the mechanism of their identity (Sasa & Al-Othman, 2022).

2.4 .The Self-Determinism of the Brown Girls

As the events progress and the girls grow up, they begin to construct their determinations and desired identities, a fact that is lucid in many passages, including the following:

"Our minds have already wandered to happy hour. We cannot wait to have a cocktail, a beer—You know what? Make it two—because the day is already shit. (We wouldn't call ourselves functioning alcoholics.) Many of us are still seething from the promotions we didn't receive, our job reports deeming our work "unsatisfactory," the less-than-stellar reviews and comments on our latest gallery exhibits, dance performances, articles. In short, we are so wrapped up in ourselves." (Andreades, 2022, Trish)

In this part, in later chapters of the novel, they seem to be building a life of their own and trying to perform the life they desire, independent of their roots that are symbolized through their aunts, grandmothers, mothers and conservative traditional cultures at the beginning of the novel. They live an American life and look for happiness and salvation, even in cocktails and beer. They are probing Self Determination and their American identity; hence, cocktails and beer, can symbolize American culture.

The passage above reflects the Self Determinism Theory, emphasizing the importance of personal drive and individual choice in shaping one's life. The characters actively pursue the life they desire, even if it means going against the culture they originally belonged to, as they become students and workers going away from Queens, meaning their prayers were

granted. The characters are so wrapped up in their new selves, a fact that they declare, in the following passage: "For some of us, brown and brown means unease—after leaving the dregs of Queens far behind, we are no longer used to people whose backgrounds mirror our own." (Andreades, 2022, Brown& brown means)

Self Determination and diasporic identity meet again in the context of the characters' experience of growing up and moving away from their roots. The quoted part above suggests that the more the characters grow and advance through time, the more they experience discomfort when confronted with people from the same cultural background with them. The phrase "brown and brown" in the quote implies a sense of familiarity and cultural similarity.

However, the girls' discomfort suggests a desire to abandon it and inaugurate their independent identities. Similar to the moments when they were painting their faces lighter at a young age while being aware of the bones, in this phase, they are aware of the brown color, but they want to leave it behind in the dregs of their past. When interpreting the passage, and in the context of Self Determination Theory, one can understand that the characters try to create a sense of autonomy and independence by distancing themselves from their cultural roots. They are no longer part of their people; even their mothers become insignificant. The lines below can confirm:

"WHEN YOU GROW UP, YOU'LL SEE, our mothers said. As if, one day, we would suddenly understand why they were the way they were in our girlhoods: overly critical, casually cruel, lacking imagination, and close-minded. Afraid. We vowed, then, never to become them. For months, which solidify into years, we do not call much. And when we do, we tell our mothers only what they want to hear, what we believe they can handle: Yes, work is going well. Yes" (Andreades,2022, Our not- reflections)

This illustration further emphasizes the theme of Diasporic Identity and Self-Determination, particularly in how the characters relate to their mothers, who, in turn, represent their cultural roots and origins. The quote also suggests that the characters have a complicated relationship with their mothers, an evident antipathy, and criticism. In addition, the words "when you grow up, you'll see" at the beginning of the quote, show a kind of foreboding or warning from the mothers, as if they are trying to prepare their daughters for a problematic future. The characters, however, reject this way of thinking and vow never to become like their mothers. This implies a desire for, again, independence and autonomy, and a rejection of the cultural norms and values that their mothers represent and adhere to. They are self-determined to be all the opposite of whatever their mothers stand for being the first generation of immigrants in this Diaspora tree.

The expression "we tell our mothers only what they want to hear, what we believe they can handle" highlights the tension between the characters' desire for independence and their self-creation, yet they remain aware that their mothers may disagree with what they are doing. Ultimately, this conclusion pushes them to avoid the details that contradict with their mothers'

beliefs. A contradiction that is similar to the paints, the bones, the hasty prayers, and the brown color. Deci and Ryan would likely argue that the characters full of contradictions are trying to build autonomy.

2.5 .Brown girls' re-invention of identity

The characters in the novel face different challenges and experience multiple tensions between their cultural traditions and their desire for autonomy; these interactions and their resulting emotions lead these women to embrace their reinvented identity as diasporic in America. Palasi Andreades unveils the themes of Diasporic Identity and Self Determination through the experiences of the girls. The characters are reinventing their Diasporic Identity by growing into Americans despite the complexities and contradictions they constantly face. This reinvention is reflected in the concept of Rhizomatic Identity that they came across when interacting with henna, blond singers, cocktails, beer, mosques, cathedrals, temples, the color brown, Queens, mothers, grandmothers, and introspectiveness. Influences and connections create a network of identity that is evolving and changing.

The characters' pursuit of self-determination is a natural and necessary part of this process as they interact with the knottiness of diasporic identity in an incessantly changing world. The expression "Make it two—because the day is already shit" in the earlier extracts speaks of the Self Determinism Theory, emphasizing the role of personal drive in their self-reinvention journey. The characters are trying to do anything that can contradict their native cultures and help them move away from cultural roots. The quote "brown and brown means unease" in the earlier extracted passage reveals the characters' discomfort when confronted with shadows of their ethnicity. In their journey in life, the characters live through a Rhizomatic Identity that spreads and intertwines like the roots of a plant. They interact with different cultures and experiences, shaping and reshaping their Identity. They persistently explore and experiment with their identity, seeking to reconcile their diasporic heritage with their desire for American life like many characters in literature (Al Dwakiat & Maani, 2023). In this process of reinvention, they face challenges and tensions between their cultural traditions and their desire for autonomy and independence. The end of the novel showcases the decision of reinvention:

"Brown girls, brown girls, brown girls. Who ages and wonders, is it time that mellows us and our feelings toward our mothers? That make our memories of them less painful? **COME VISIT**, our mothers say on the phone. **YOU'LL SEE**, they once said, and, in fact, we do, caught in the cycle of our jobs (we are ICU nurses, computer programmers, high school history teachers, art professors, opera singers, bartenders, social workers, accountants)" (Andreades,2022,Our not- reflections)

The passage is about the brown girls being busy with their chosen white partners and their children. Their developed identities absorb them; they have reinvented them in their journey away from their mothers, away from the dregs of Queens, and the dregs of ethnic cultures. The brown girls have moved on from their previous identities and have created new lives for

themselves, while their mothers still hold on their old ways. The brown girls' busy new lives, with their careers and responsibilities, indicate that they have become independent individuals who have taken charge of their lives.

The contrast between the brown girls' newly chosen lives as American women and their mothers' old ways depicts the theme of growth and reinvention of identity out of the rhizome which was exposed through the previous passages. As adults, the brown girls, coming from South America, Africa and Asia reinvented their Diasporic Identity in America.

3. Conclusion

This paper offered a comprehensive study of identity in diasporic communities. It has exposed Daphne Palasi Andreades' *Brown girls* as a case study and extracted from it the fundamental elements of Rhizomatic Identity and Self Determinism. And as the novel uses the first person plural to deliver common experiences, the findings of the present research paper can be seen as conclusive ideas regarding any attempt of reinvention in a work of art. Towards this end, the study relied on Self Determinism and Rhizomatic Identity theories to finally arrive at the possibility of exploring new ways of being and creating opportunities to grow and prosper within the host land and, subsequently, inspiring people to continue pushing the boundaries of what is possible regarding cultural identity and self-expression. The article contributes to the talk concerned with the future of diasporic communities in America and adds to the literature on Diaspora in general.

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