

Towards an Eco-Material Repository: Representations of Trauma in Han Kang's *We Do Not Part*

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the representations of historical and generational trauma in Han Kang's 2021 novel *We Do Not Part* through the primary lens of material ecocriticism. The study excavates an eco-material archive of history from Kang's work, contending that the landscape bore witness to the Jeju massacre of 1948 and its bloody aftermath, presenting an alternate account of the events that de-centers official records. The motifs of black logs, snow, and the two pet birds function as ecological metaphors in the novel to remember and narrate what has largely been repressed by state-enforced amnesia. More than passive symbols, Kang's treatment of them as agential matter animates the otherwise dormant local geography of Inseon's village with a trans-corporeality that both disrupts and supplements the narrative by rupturing human consciousness. In conclusion, the paper analyses how landscapes themselves become sites and means of recollection and articulation of trauma rather than merely staging the psychological processes that constitute re-memory, supplying the gaps in human memory and testimony.

Keywords: Han Kang, Eco-materialism, Post-memory, Historical trauma, Transcorporeality.

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