

**REIMAGINING INDEGENOUS ECO-NARRATIVES FROM ORAL
ROOTS TO DIGITAL ROOTS IN “*FROM UNINCORPORATED
TERRITORY*” BY CRAIG SANTOS PEREZ**

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines Craig Santo's “*FromUnincorporated Territory*” amidst the lens of indigenous digital ecocriticism emphasizing Chamoru's identity, environmental decadence and colonial histories in the digital era. Perez, a Guam born California poet connects cultural displacement and ecological trauma using the multimedia elements such as hypertext, footnotes, cartography and online archives. The paper also highlights how Craig Santos transform his ecological imagination into ancestral ties and digital tools, where his poetry serves as the bridge between the oral narratives to the contemporary environmental poetics. Thus, the paper concludes that how Indigenous Ecological writing in digital framework offers powerful mode of healing, defiance and reterritorialization in the colonized ecological outlooks.

KEYWORDS: Indigenous Eco-criticism, digital tools, oral narratives, digital platform, modern digital era.

1.INTRODUCTION:

In the advent of the modern world, Indigenous eco-narratives play a crucial role of cultural memory, resistance and environmental consciousness against the colonial abolition. In earlier, these narratives are often had its root in the oral traditions, that intricates the relationship between language, land and identity. But in the 21st century, the digital turn of platforms in literature had brought new possibilities for reshaping and reimagining these narratives into a technological intervened form. The usage of multimedia platforms extended the range of storytelling beyond the geographical boundaries. The usage of digital tools such as hypertext, notes, maps, cartography assist in bringing up the ideas and awareness to all other geographical spaces.

Craig Santos Perez, a Chamoru poet, where he is a Guam born California poet who has an influential voice in the contemporary ecological poetics, where he transforms his thoughts of indigenous narrative traditions into a digital innovation. His multi-volume series "*From unincorporated territory*" (Perez) that intertwines political, cultural, personal and ecological histories of their tradition using various digital techniques, creating layered textual where oral memory co-exists with hyperlinked archives and counter-cartographic practices digitally. Perez's work not only to document environment depletion and Chamoru identity and their history and culture but focuses on reclaiming indigenous geographies of decolonized interventions in the digital space.

This paper examines how Craig Santos employs specific digital tools to reformulate the indigenous eco-narratives framework. It also argues that these tools-whether visual cartography (or) linguistic hybridity- function not simply in the realm of aesthetics, but as narrative strategies that re-territorialize indigenous ecological memory in the digital world.

2. NEED FOR THE STUDY:

While scholars broadly interpret digital literary practices through indigenous ecological storytelling as a pan-Canadian and non-domestic semantics, this remains as an overlooked intersection in the field of literary scholarship. While postcolonial studies, ecocriticism and indigenous studies have contributed much to our understanding of cultural resistance and environmental activism, little research has been conducted in exploring

the intersections between narrative theory in the analysis of indigenous literature and modern digital tools.

Craig Santos Perez's poetry provides a unique cast to address this gap. His usage of online archives, cartographic terms multilingual texts that reflects a serious blending of oral tradition with the modern digital aesthetics. Understanding how these digital tools assist as a narrative device, is not only important for the literary criticism but also for the conservation and evolution of the indigenous ecological ideas and knowledge.

Moreover, in an era where the cultural displacement and environment problems and global issues, studying this kind of hybrid narrative practices emphasizes the adaptability and flexibility of oral tradition in existing cultural identity and ecological awareness in this modern era. This study also aims to offer a framework that can stretched to other indigenous writers who engages with the other digital platforms.

3.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- 1.To investigate how Craig Santos Perez uses digital tools such as footnotes, hypertexts cartography, typography, maps in his "*From unincorporated territory*"
- 2.To analysis how these digital tools can be examined through meaningful concepts in the narrative theory such as spatial narrative, polyphony, intertextuality and narrative identity.
- 3.To consider how these digital narrative approaches can relate to the disruption, presentation and propagation of indigenous ecological narrative.
- 4.To evaluate the amalgamation of oral tradition with contemporary digital storytelling as a form of decolonial ecological writing.

4.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The primary critical framework of this research located in narrative theory, with insights provided by indigenous eco-criticism. Narrative theory, broadly considers the structure conceived, function meaning of narrative and focuses as how these narratives are manufactured, interpreted & mediated. In looking through Perez's work these are some concepts that would provide foregrounding for the narrative traditions

1.INTERTEXTUALITY (JULIA CRISTEVA):

The concept that texts are related, each produced out of the previous texts and discourses. Perez's use of online archives and hypertext recalls the intertextual layering and intertwining poetry and historical/ecological documents. (Cristeva)

2.PARATEXT THEORY (GERARD GENETTE):

Perez's footnotes work as a secondary narrative that layers on top of the performance of the indigenous memory. By analyzing the secondary textual paraphernalia such as endnotes and footnotes meant both to be contextualize and frames the main text.

3.SPATIAL NARRATIVE (MIEKE BAL)

It is a framework to understand the vital role of place and space in narratives. Perez's ideas and knowledge of cartography and visual poetry in the shape of islands, individually function as spatial narratives, retrieving Chamoru's geography from the previous histories of colonial and geographical mapping.

4.POLYPHONIC NARRATIVE (MIKHAIL BAKHTIN)

It is a narrative structure where the countless voice co-exists. Perez's multilingualism and code-switching depict polyphony, preserving the linguistic diversity alive and challenging single – language colonial narrative.

5.NARRATIVE IDENTITY (PAUL RICOEUR)

It is a narrative structure where identities are formed in narratives, by bracketing the pronouns. Perez disrupt the fixed, identity categories that reflects the indigenous ecological concepts of identity as a collective.

Moreover, Perez's work mainly focuses on the intersection of indigenous eco-criticism and narrative theory reveals the boundary between digital tools as mere additions and mere tools. The digital tools are a part of narratives, that layers and constitutes cultural and ecological memory.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN:

This paper adapts a qualitative and interpretive research design that roots in the textual analysis. The aim is not to look on to quantify the occurrence of the stylistic digital devices, but to interpret their meaning and function within the context of indigenous ecological narratives. This study also employs close reading as its vital method by analyzing both textual content and formal innovations in Craig Santos's "From unincorporated territory" series.

5.2 DATA COLLECTION

5.2.1 PRIMARY DATA

Craig Santos Perez's selected poems and visual layouts "From Unincorporated Territory" series- such as (Hacha)2008, (Saina) 2010, (Guma) 2014, (Lukao) 2017 and (amot) 2020. The paratextual elements within the poetry including footnotes, maps, diagrams and typographical symbols serves as a primary data.

5.2.2 SECONDARY DATA

The online archives, reviews and multimedia materials associated to Perez's works including Omnidawn press resources and scholarly blogs. The academic articles on narrative theory, digital literature on indigenous ecological criticism serves as a secondary data.

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The data is analysed in three correlated stages.

1. TEXTUAL EXAMINATION

Examining a few chosen poem closely to determine how specific digital tools such as hypertext, footnotes, cartography, endnotes are used.

2. THEORETICAL MAPPING

Assuring that the analysis is based on accepted academic frameworks by connecting each tool that has been identified to an appropriate notion in narrative theory.

3.CULTURAL AND ECO-CRITICAL INTERPRETATION

Examining these digital tools of showing how narrative capabilities in the lights of indigenous ecological worldviews, literary practice of the digital age and chamoru's oral tradition.

6.DIGITAL TOOLS IN CRAIG'S POETRY: A THEORETICAL NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

Craig Santos Perez's "From Unincorporated Territory" which intertwines multiple digital and multimedia elements. Although his works are published in the print form but their structure and form intricate and engage with the digital age by bridging the oral ways of traditional storytelling in the digital era.

1.HYPertextUALITY AND ONLINE ARCHEIVE

It brings out the references of the historical documents, intertwines archival materials, usage of cross- references of layering between the poetry and the sources of real world. It relates with the Intertextuality concept of Julia Kristeva where it creates the network of living with indigenous memory of relating with ancestral knowledge to modern ecological crisis.

2.MAPS AND CARTOGRAPHY

Maps and cartography structure the outline of guam. This Digital tool relates with the concept of spatial narrative and counter- mapping where it reclaims the geographical areas from the colonial cartography.

3.MULTILINGUILISM

The usage of multilingualism with the aid of digital tools where it interweaves the chamoru phrases into English text and sometimes it left without any translation into English. It relates with the polyphonic narrative concept by Bakhtin which maintains the language diversity and defying colonial language interventions and dominations.

4.FOOTNOTES AND ENDNOTES

It offers the translations of the chamoru words, their cultural histories and context. It relates with the paratext theory by Genette that works as parallel narratives, that permits the oral history to co-exist with the present academic style contexts.

5. VISUAL TYPOGRAPHY AND POETRY

The usage of tildes, slashes and text blocks and waves like layouts aligns with narrative eco-poetic concepts where the ocean currents, migration flows and current mirrors chamoru's cosmogeny.

7.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Thus, the perez's engagement with the digital tools is not just an ornamental thing but it was fundamentally narrative in nature. Whereas, each digital tools performs a dual action-aesthetical invention and cultural reimagination.

1.REPRESENTATION OF SPATIAL DECOLONIZATION

With the usage of spatial narrative and counter mapping, craig defys the intervention of colonial representation of guam as a marginal zone. He reshapes the island into a poetic form, he asserts the indigenous ecological supremacy.

2.MEMORY OF ARCHIVAL IN THE DIGITAL ERA

The usage of archival materials and hypertextual references outreach the indigenous eco-narratives by transforming the poetry into a living digital archive. It maintains not only memory but positions it within a global ecological discourse.

3.AMALGAMATION OF ORAL TRADITIONS INTO A DIGITAL TOOLS

Perez's usage of footnotes, maps, cartography, endnotes, typography provides the echoes of oral storytelling patterns but translates them into a familiar form in this digital age. And the usage of digital tools makes the cultural and historical stories remain accessible and relevant to contemporary age.

4.ENVIRONMENTAL IMPERMANENCE

The typographical mimicking waves and ocean currents signals a temporal structure connected to ecological cycles instead of linear and colonial time. Similarly, this narrative structure embraces chamoru's values, while not elevating purely chamoru's environmental ethics.

5.FORMATION OF IDENTITIES AND RESISTANCE OF LANGUAGE

The replication of “WE” by bracketing the pronouns that represents both the community identity and the interrelatedness of humans and the ecosystems.

8.CONCLUSION

Thus, the ecological temporalities serve as a reminder that time is not a flat concept but it is intricately linked to indigenous knowledge, environmental rhythms and cultural adaptability. Thus, by acknowledging these multi-layered temporalities promote ecological awareness, subverts colonial narratives and incorporates the range of perspectives into the sustainability conversation in the digital age.

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