

ABSTRACT

ERTANTO, BOY. (2022). **Reconfigured Self: Integral Entanglement of Intergenerational Trauma, Migration, Sexuality and Masculinity in Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*.** Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

The contemporary development of literary trauma theory negates the notion that trauma is unspeakable. The attempt to narrate and represent one's trauma under this perspective must not be seen as a trial to reduplicate an exact portrayal of trauma. Instead, the process of remembrance in trauma should be seen as a site where meaning is created and even reconstructed. Furthermore, according to Balaev (2008) the process of traumatic remembrance can be assisted by signifying the establishment of place as a space where the organization of one's perception to experience occurs. The traumatic memory retrieval is specifically emphasized in *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2020). The process of remembering where Little Dog's trauma is reenacted for narration through his connection with his place in the novel becomes the focus of this research.

This research has three objectives. The first objective involves the way how traumatic accounts belonging to Little Dog are narrated. The second objective then focuses on how the traumatic narrative of Little Dog can be associated with intergenerational trauma, migration, sexuality, and masculinity. The third objective observes how the narration of trauma contributes to reconfiguring Little Dog's self.

The research operates under library research methodology with the use of postmodernism as the approach for the analysis. The primary data were taken from the novel entitled *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*. The first objective is examined through the theory of point of view, theory of plot in trauma fiction and the theory of epistolary novel. The result of analysis for the first objective is further correlated with the second and third objective using Balaev's theory of place.

The analysis found that Little Dog's traumatic narration is mediated through the epistolary style. Within the letter, first-person point of view is used as a narrative technique that creates fragmentation and plot non-linearity. These techniques are correlated with the discourses of family trauma, migration, sexuality and masculinity through the significance of place(s). The first place signified is the family apartment in Hartford which foregrounds the reenactment of trauma for Little Dog's parental figures and Little Dog's perception of trauma in the post-migration context. The second place which materializes in the tobacco farm marks the internalization of Little Dog's queer identity. The shift of Vietnam as the locus of family trauma from mental space to physical space in the death of Little Dog's grandmother is revealed as a third place. The shift highlights Little Dog's disconnection from family trauma and self-reconfiguration of his trauma.

Keywords: epistolary novel, narrative technique, place theory, trauma

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Perkembangan kontemporer teori trauma sastra meniadakan anggapan bahwa trauma tak mampu untuk dinarasikan. Upaya untuk menceritakan dan menggambarkan trauma dalam perspektif ini tidak selayaknya dilihat sebagai percobaan untuk mereduplikasi penggambaran trauma yang sepenuhnya akurat. Sebaliknya, proses mengingat dalam trauma harus dilihat sebagai situs di mana makna diciptakan dan bahkan direkonstruksi. Selanjutnya, menurut Balaev (2008) proses rekonstruksi ingatan trauma dapat terjadi dengan memberikan signifikansi pada keberadaan tempat sebagai ruang persepsi terhadap pengalaman. Hal ini secara spesifik menjadi inti kisah dalam *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*. Proses mengingat di mana trauma milik Little Dog dimunculkan kembali melalui narasi yang berkaitan dengan hubungan dirinya dengan ruang dalam novel menjadi fokus penelitian ini.

Penelitian ini memiliki tiga tujuan. Tujuan pertama menyangkut bagaimana kisah traumatis milik Little Dog dinarasikan. Tujuan kedua kemudian berfokus pada bagaimana narasi trauma Little Dog dapat dikaitkan dengan trauma antargenerasi, migrasi, seksualitas, dan maskulinitas. Tujuan ketiga mengamati bagaimana narasi trauma berkontribusi dalam konfigurasi ulang identitas Little Dog.

Penelitian ini dilangsungkan dengan metode penelitian pustaka dan pendekatan postmodernisme. Data primer terkumpul dari novel berjudul *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*. Tujuan penelitian pertama diperoleh melalui penggunaan teori sudut pandang, teori plot dalam fiksi trauma dan teori novel epistolari. Hasil analisis dari tujuan pertama selanjutnya dikorelasikan dengan tujuan kedua dan ketiga menggunakan teori signifikansi ruang milik Balaev.

Narasi trauma Little Dog dilakukan melalui penulisan gaya epistolari. Di dalam surat, sudut pandang orang pertama digunakan sebagai teknik narasi yang menyebabkan fragmentasi kisah dan plot yang tidak linear. Teknik tersebut diaplikasikan sebagai penghubung surat dengan diskursus trauma keluarga, migrasi, seksualitas dan maskulinitas terhadap signifikansi ruang. Signifikansi ruang pertama terdapat pada keberadaan apartemen keluarga di Hartford. Ruang ini mengedepankan reka ulang trauma figur orang tua Little Dog dan persepsi Little Dog perihal trauma dalam konteks pascamigrasi. Ruang kedua yang terwujud di pertanian tembakau menandakan internalisasi identitas queer Little Dog. Ruang terakhir ditandai dengan bergesernya Vietnam sebagai pusat dari trauma keluarga yang dahulu terbatas pada ruang mental ke ruang fisik. Pergeseran yang terjadi karena kematian sang nenek menunjukkan terhentinya ikatan Little Dog akan trauma keluarga dan proses konfigurasi ulang diri Little Dog terhadap trauma.

Keywords: epistolary novel, narrative technique, place theory, trauma