

**THE IMPACTS OF TRAUMA IN NAM LE'S *SELECTED
SHORT STORIES*: FROM VIETNAMESE DIASPORA TO
TRANSNATIONAL POSTMEMORY**

SKRIPSI

BY

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**ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN INDONESIA
JAKARTA**

2026

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SKRIPSI

Presented to Fakultas Sastra dan Bahasa Universitas Kristen Indonesia in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Sarjana Sastra

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Sisilia Novita Sari



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Jakarta, 25 June 2026

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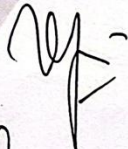
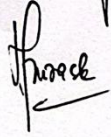
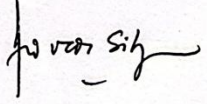
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SKRIPSI DEFENSE APPROVAL SHEET

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The author offers praise and thanksgiving to the Lord Jesus Christ, for through His abundant grace, guidance, and wisdom, the author was able to successfully complete this thesis titled *“The Impacts of Trauma in Nam Le’s Selected Short Stories: From Vietnamese Diaspora to Transnational Postmemory.”* This thesis was written as one of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Faculty of Literature and Languages at the Indonesian Christian University.

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The author realizes that this *skripsi* is still far from perfect due to the limitations of my ability and knowledge. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly expected for future improvements. Finally, the author dedicates this thesis with the hope that this work can provide benefits for the development of science, especially in the field of Literature, and be for the honor and glory of God's name."

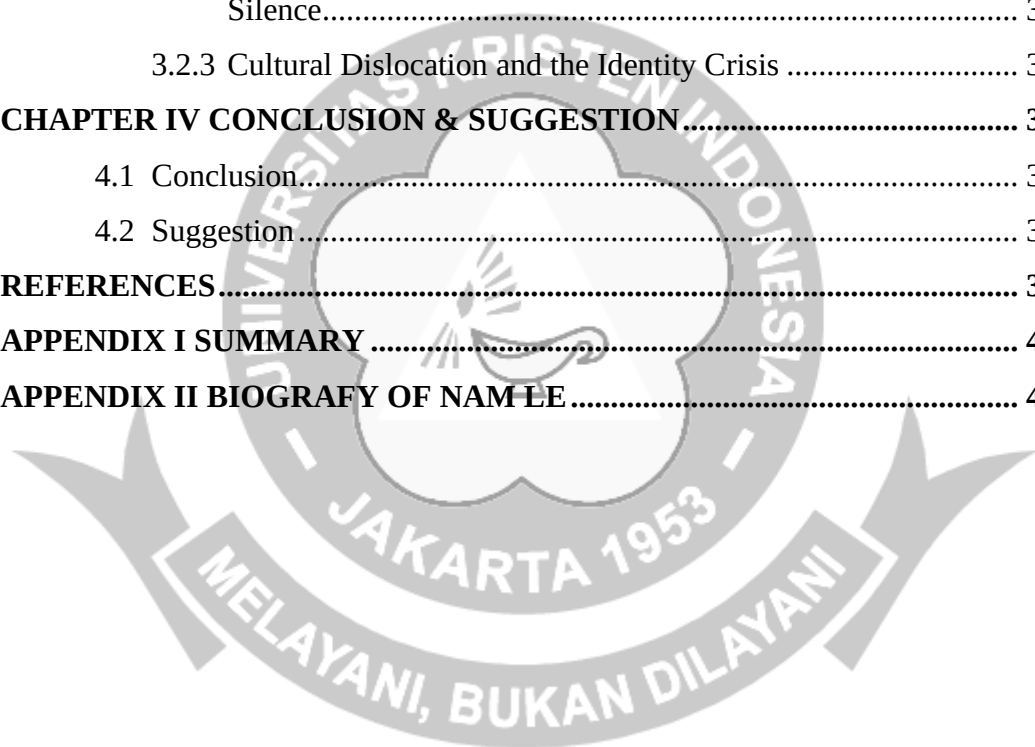
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ABSTRAK

Studi ini menganalisis representasi pengungsian, trauma antar generasi, dan identitas budaya di antara karakter diaspora Vietnam dalam cerita pendek Nam Le: "Love and Honor and Pity and Pride and Compassion and Sacrifice," "Hiroshima," dan "The Boat". Menggunakan metode analisis tekstual kualitatif, penelitian ini mensintesis teori trauma psikoanalitik Cathy Caruth dengan konsep poskolonial Graham Huggan tentang "Postcolonial Exotic". Studi ini membahas bagaimana kekejaman sejarah masa lalu membentuk struktur psikologis karakter dan bagaimana ingatan budaya mereka dinegosiasikan dalam ruang global. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa trauma beroperasi sebagai kekuatan yang mengganggu yang terwujud melalui laten, ketakutan yang diwariskan, dan krisis bahasa yang radikal yang menegakkan "keheningan yang dipelajari" yang menyedihkan dalam ranah domestik. Selain itu, analisis tersebut mengungkapkan bahwa subjek diaspora menghadapi krisis identitas yang parah dan dislokasi budaya akibat tekanan institusi Barat. Industri penerbitan Barat dan lokakarya penulisan akademis mengurangi penderitaan kolektif para pengungsi menjadi komoditas eksotis, memaksa penulis minoritas ke dalam dilema moral di mana mereka harus memanfaatkan trauma pribadi untuk visibilitas komersial. Pada akhirnya, tabrakan antara luka sejarah yang belum sembuh dan ekspektasi pasar kapitalis menghasilkan krisis kebenaran yang mendalam, rasa bersalah yang parah dari para penyintas, dan perpecahan hubungan yang tidak dapat diperbaiki antar generasi. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa karya Nam Le berfungsi sebagai interogasi metafiksi yang kuat terhadap komodifikasi sistemik dari marginalitas, menunjukkan bagaimana jejak psikologis perang secara permanen meninggalkan subjek diaspora terfragmentasi dalam ruang liminal.

Kata Kunci: Diaspora Vietnam, trauma antargenerasi, eksotisme pascakolonial, krisis identitas, Nam Le, The Boat.

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the representation of displacement, intergenerational trauma, and cultural identity among Vietnamese diaspora characters in Nam Le's short stories: *"Love and Honor and Pity and Pride and Compassion and Sacrifice," "Hiroshima,"* and *"The Boat"*. Using a qualitative textual analysis method, this research synthesizes Cathy Caruth's psychoanalytic trauma theory with Graham Huggan's postcolonial concept of the *"Postcolonial Exotic"*. The study addresses how past historical atrocities shape the characters' psychic structures and how their cultural memories are negotiated within global spaces. The findings demonstrate that trauma operates as a disruptive force manifesting through latency, inherited fears, and a radical crisis of language that enforces a suffocating "learned silence" within domestic spheres. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that diaspora subjects face an acute identity crisis and cultural dislocation due to Western institutional pressures. The Western publishing industry and academic writing workshops reduce the collective suffering of refugees into an exotic commodity, forcing minority writers into a moral dilemma where they must weaponize personal trauma for commercial visibility. Ultimately, this collision between unhealed historical wounds and capitalist market expectations results in a profound crisis of truth, severe survivor's guilt, and an irreparable relational fracturing between generations. This study concludes that Nam Le's work serves as a powerful metafictional interrogation of the systemic commodification of marginality, showing how the psychic footprint of war permanently leaves diaspora subjects fragmented in a liminal space.

Keywords: *Vietnamese diaspora, intergenerational trauma, postcolonial exotic, identity crisis, Nam Le.*