

**Article**

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**Negotiation in A. Fuadi's *Ranah Tiga Warna*  
(*The Land of the Three Colors*)**

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**Abstract**

Travel writing is one of the literary genres that has received attention today. This paper discusses the work of A. Fuadi's *Ranah Tiga Warna (The Land of the Three Colors)* telling the main character's experience in three lands: Bandung (Indonesia), Amman (Jordan), and Saint Raymond (Canada). This paper is to analyze the negotiation process between 'the self' and 'the other' experienced by the main character in the third land: Saint Raymond. This uses the concept of negotiation of 'the self' and 'the other' by Thompson, and Deleuze's and Guattari's segmentarity. The results show that the main character can play a flexible interplay between 'the self' and 'the other', negotiation and accommodation, and even transduction. The successful negotiation process can be seen from the difference and how the main character has willingness to bring the difference to his home country. The main character's mention of 'return home' when revisiting Saint Raymond years later becomes the evidence of the successful negotiation as well.

**Keywords:** travel writing, negotiation, the self, the other

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**1. Introduction**

Travel writing is becoming one of literary genres that is burgeoning today. Globalization, chiefly tourism, supports the flourishing of this new writing as the contact with other cultures and nations is inevitable (Thompson, 2011:1-2).<sup>[1]</sup> As part of literary studies, travel writing has just received attention in 1980s, when the studies began to move from the high literature to the mundane literature. The interests from the 'grandeur', global works have been superseded with the interests to the 'new localism', which has later opened the opportunity for the wider array of studying texts (Kuehn and Smethurst, 2015:1).<sup>[2]</sup>

In Indonesia, travelogues have been increasing in line with the spirit of going abroad emerged from the young people for many reasons. A lot of the new writings take the plots and settings abroad, in which some of them are of the authors' experiences. Ahmad

Fuadi's *Ranah 3 Warna (The Land of the Three Colors)* is one of the Indonesian best-selling novels telling the authors' experiences in three places out of his Sumatra homeland: Bandung (Indonesia), Amman (Jordan), and Saint Raymond (Canada). As the second part of *Negeri 5 Menara* trilogy, this novel describes the author's exploration in the three lands (Indonesia, Jordan, and Canada) that becomes one of the author's dreams to explore the world despite his economic limitation. This novel is actually intended to motivate the Indonesian youths to chase the dreams through hardwork even though they encounter financial difficulties.

This paper aims at analyzing the negotiation of the main character as 'the self' and his social environment as 'the other.' The writer would like to limit the discussion on the third land: Canada, for some reasons. First, it is where the character is out of his geographical and cultural borders in the scope of nation term. Second, it is where the character stays for a much longer duration of time compared with that of the second land, Jordan; so that it is a situation that enables the character to experience the more dynamic situation of living abroad.

## **2. Methods**

Thompson (2011:9-10) mentions that travelling is "a movement through space".<sup>[1]</sup> As travelling means that people move beyond their geographical origin area, there they will encounter the "differences and otherness" that lead people to share 'a common humanity.' Inevitably, the process of negotiation, will happen, as Thompson says as a process of alterity. Thus, travel is a negotiation process between self and other, and this is "an interplay between alterity and identity, difference and similarity" (2011:9).<sup>[1]</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* write that human being's life "is spatially and socially segmented" (1987:208).<sup>[3]</sup> Deleuze and Guattari divide the state of segmentarity into two kinds; namely rigid and supple segmentarity. Rigid segmentarity can be divided further into primitive segmentarity and rigid line; in which they lead into binary opposition. Supple segmentarity is more flexible, where there is deterritorialization. However, these segmentarities do not stand alone, as they swing each other, in which one can move and transform into one another (222-223).<sup>[3]</sup> In travelling, the situation of the self when faced with the other may result in the process of 'negotiation and translation, and even transduction' (223-224).<sup>[3]</sup> At first people in different territory may feel different from other in the new territory, but through the three processes, the new understanding will reveal as the result of the interaction between the self and the other.

## **3. Discussion**

### *3.1. Negotiation*

Graduated from Pondok Madani, an Islamic Boarding House in East Java, Ali Fikri, the character, with a very hard struggle is finally admitted to Padjadjaran University.

With a big dream to explore the world despite the financial difficulties, he is chosen as the participant of Indonesia-Canada Youth Exchange Program to Saint Raymond, Canada. During his stay in Canada, as other foreigner, Alif also experiences the culture shock, as what Alif feels in his 'self' is different from others. His first culture shock is when having his Western breakfast in YMCA hotel in Montreal.

This is my first Western breakfast. The difference is like the earth and the sky, compared with my breakfast during my hardship in Bandung: a half portion of chicken porridge with extra water or my breakfast in PM with *salatah rohah* and *makrunah*. When seeing my around, my friends must be having their culture shock with their first breakfast as well. (Fuadi, 2011:260).<sup>[4]</sup>

Even though has arrived in Canada, Alif still has the mindset of living in his origin country; however, he has high willingness to learn the other by observing and and then imitating the way the other prepare the breakfast and eat it (260).<sup>[4]</sup> There is a process of translation of the new habit from the origin's one to the new one. When he usually sees milk is drunk separately with the food, in the new country the milk is poured into the mix of cereal, raisin, and fruits. There is a process of transduction by diminishing the old habit and accepting the new habit.

The main character also experiences the awkwardness in using French language which is the main language used in Quebec. At first, there is an inferior feeling when realizing that his French is not good enough to be practiced. He is worried that his bad French is not understandable and then complicate his relation with the natives. "*Ow...the longer she looks at me, the more anxious I am, and more folded my tongue I feel. I am worried that my Minang accent is too thick for French language*" (259).<sup>[4]</sup> Alif then attempts in any way to solve the situation he encounters: asking his homologue to teach him French; on the other hand, he teaches him English. The main character's ceaseless learning of French reflects that he accommodates 'the other', and even enjoys the differences.

### 3.2. Canada as Utopia and Home

Ashcroft (2015:249) writes that as all travellings are started with hopes; thus, the motif of travelling is actually utopia.<sup>[5]</sup> Travel is motivated by the yearning for exploring the new things, the desire to dicover the place where one can put himself in comfort. Bloch in Ashcroft mentions that motivation to travel is the ultimate accomplishment in utopia, as travel is "continuing oriented to the presence of the Not-Yet"(250).<sup>[5]</sup> It is stated that "what we know will only be realized in the process of becoming what we are...(250).<sup>[5]</sup> Furthermore he mentions that "the very core of utopia is the dynamic of travel because the discovery of what we do not yet know is the discovery of further dimensions of being" (250).<sup>[5]</sup>

Alif's motivation to go abroad is based on his desire to explore the world freely and to show that despite limitation he has, he is able to win in fierce competition. In Canada, even though he has already prepared and equipped himself with sufficient knowledge, Alif feels amazed with the orderliness of the infrastructures and community's life. He is amazed when knowing that Canadians never locked their doors when going out due to their zero crime rate. Though never thought about going abroad to find Utopia, however Alif finds that his new home is the utopia.

I used to think that there won't be any country in the real world that can materialize to be a Utopia, the dream one. Apparently, it happened in the era of Khalifah Umar. Eve, right now, where I stand, in small town Saint Raymod I find a piece of Utopia. People live well, the needy receive hepls, the senior citizens are given better elderly houses, almost no crime, so that they feel no need to lock the doors (Fuadi, 2011:309).<sup>[4]</sup>

Alif is still captured in his own self about the home origin, where people should lock the door when going out. He compares his origin country and Canada, and start yearning for the situation that makes him feel secure in his home origin. *When will my country, which is known as friendly and well-manered habits, be free from crimes? When will all people feel secure and comfort in basic term, physically and mentally? As what always said: creating the just and prosperous Indonesia* (308).<sup>[4]</sup> Alif and his counterparts then solve that they would be the part of the solution for their home origin. This stage means that not only receive difference, but they also bring the difference to their home country. Crossing geographical and cultural borders not only change the person, but also the desire of the person to bring the materials they receive in the new land through process negotiation. The negotiation is then more complex, as it will involve not only personal but also communal, and through some adptation and selection process. Alif and friends realize that their country is still far compared with Canada, but they will return with the goodness. *"Canada opens my eyes to imitate the goodness, but it also opens my eyes that we have a lot of goodness"* (389).<sup>[4]</sup>

Living is several months in Saint Raymond leads Alif gets used to with the new environment. After eleven years of his leaving from Canada, Alif took his wife to "return home" to Saint Raymond. The interesting point is that the author puts the term "return home" (*pulang kampung*) at the last chapter. Instead of return to his home origin in Sumatra, "return home" here refers to the return of the main character to Saint Raymond for a short visit of nostalgia, bringing emotional feeling of the past, that Alif always misses. This can be meant that the main character has found the self on himself that has been part of what it is called first as 'the other'. 'The self' in the main character is then now has been integrated with 'the other', making interplays and build a unity that complement each other. The generating process of the interplay between 'the self' and 'the other' to some point is also supported with the main characters' experience exploring some parts of the world—granted some scholarships—for the last eleven years after the program.

And of course, in our straight stands a white wooden house which I feel so friendly welcome me. I has ever been my house, even I have acknowledge to be The Lepines. Today I keep my promise to Mado and Ferdinand. I take a long vacation to “return home” to Saint Raymond (464).<sup>[4]</sup>

Canada’s utopia, the succesful negotiation process, the traveller’s flexibility lead him to be deterritorialization, and finally making his’other’ as part of the self so that regards Canada, his ‘used-to-other’ as his home.

#### **4. Conclusions**

From the discussion it can be drawn that negotiation process in a traveller is fluid. In the case of Alif, he has already prepared himself to be part of the global world, being ready to deterritorialized, and significantly makes some negotiation process in his interaction with the other. Alif’s ‘self’ and ‘other’ can make a flexible interplay, that make the negotiation run smoothly. It can be said that the main character has shown that the flexibility can lead him into the successful negotiation, that later can make himself to be deterritorialized, crossing the geographical and cultural borders, and even make the difference. Furthermore, he would like to bring the differences to his home country, where it can be seen as his will to change to society.

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