

**DANCING WITH AUSTRALIAN FEMINISM: HELEN  
GARNER'S *POSTCARDS FROM SURFERS* VIEWED  
FROM A BUGINESE PERSPECTIVE WITH A PARTIAL  
TRANSLATION INTO INDONESIAN**

**By**

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*To my beloved parents and husband*

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## Abstract

This study is a literary analysis on five stories from Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers*. This study also translates these five stories from English into Indonesian and discusses some challenges that occurred in the process of translation.

The aim of the study is to investigate Garner's feminist ideas as reflected in the stories from *Postcards from Surfers* viewed from a Buginese perspective. The five stories are "Postcard from Surfers", "La Chance Existe", "The Art of Life", "All Young Bloody Catholics", and "Civilization and Discontents". Through these stories, how Garner expresses her feminist ideas are juxtaposed with Buginese culture.

By using Edward Said's work on contrapuntal reading, Mohanty's feminist-as-explorer model, and Lazar's Critical Discourse Analysis, I move back and forth between Buginese culture and Australian culture to consider how Australian women and men are represented and how mainstream Australian society engages with, or challenges discourses of patriarchy and power. This movement back and forth I have theorised as "dancing".

My study examines the potential dialogue between Australian culture and Buginese culture in terms of feminism and its resulting cultural hybridity where some Australian feminist thoughts are applicable to Buginese culture but some are not. From this dialogue, it is found that both Australian women and Buginese women have their own sets of issues stemming from male domination. The way they empower themselves to resist are also different. Therefore, my study centres a Buginese standpoint while dialoguing with Australian feminisms.

## Introduction

*buranê mallémpa', makkunrai ma'jujung*

*(men carry on their shoulders, women carry on their heads)*

Buginese saying

In the first part of this Introduction, I present the rationale for choosing short stories as the objects of analysis and for taking gender relation and inequality as feminist issues to be analysed. I also present the scope and limits, the outline, and the significance of the study. Following these, I equip the reader with some historical background of individuals and movements in Indonesia that struggled for women's equality and rights. I also provide cultural information about Buginese and cultural attitudes toward women. I end by presenting my personal connection to Australian feminism starting from experiences living in patriarchal society and the relation between the Australian Culture and Literature course in the English Department at my home institution, Hasanuddin University, with my study on Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers*.

This study as a whole consists of two parts. The first presents a literary analysis on Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* viewed from a Buginese perspective. The second presents some challenges in translating *Postcards from Surfers* into Indonesian. The Indonesian translation of this work is a significant part of the project. It does contribute to the literary analysis of the work. The whole translation of the five stories including "Kartu Pos Dari Surfer" ("KPDS"), "La Chance Existe" ("LCE"), "Kehidupan Seni" ("KS"), "Anak-Anak Muda Katolik Itu" ("AAMKI"), and "Peradaban dan Kekecewaan" ("PDK") can be read in Appendix.

I have chosen five short stories from Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* (*PFS*) to be the objects of this study and to be translated into Indonesian. The five stories include "Postcards from Surfers" ("PFS"), "La Chance Existe" ("LCE"), "The Life of Art" ("TLOA"), "All Those Bloody Young Catholics" ("ATBYC"), and "Civilization and Its Discontents" ("CAID").

## **Rationale**

Endang writes that short stories are becoming more popular in the industrial era in Indonesia and they have become vehicles for writers to articulate the realities of social life such as poverty, marginalization, and unfairness (141-144). In addition, Noor states that the short story has become a new literary form particularly effective for assisting writers in their goal to help the marginalized because its shortness can function as a weapon to directly "scoop up" the targeted issues and "knock them out at a blow" (Endang 144-145). Indeed, Helen Garner uses short stories in a way similar to that described by Endang: as a defiant act towards the government and current circumstances (145). My study of Helen Garner's short stories explores the way she her stories engage with and resist gender relations and inequality between men and women in Australian society through four themes prevalent in the narratives: the kitchen, landscape, language, and sexuality.

Indonesia has achieved considerable progress in addressing the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the target of which is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education (Edmunds 2). However, Edmunds adds, that despite the progress made towards gender equity, the core structure of gender beliefs has not changed due to the result of hegemonic cultural beliefs about gender (1). In addition, Edmunds confesses that Indonesia has a long record of legislation empowering women,

but the biggest hurdle that women face in the fight for rights is the cultural perception that women are not equal to men (3-4). Meanwhile, women in Indonesia are marginalized socially, culturally, economically, and politically, even though, demographically speaking, they constitute the majority (Seda 1). This is in line with what Parawansa has observed in the political arena: in 2002, women only held 9.2% of the positions in Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia) compared to men who held 90.8 % (45). The reason for this, states Parawansa, is that national and local development programs do not reflect principles of political equality and social justice, or the needs and interests of women (1). Therefore, strengthening women's political participation is a necessity. Nurland identifies three problems and obstacles faced by women. First, Indonesian national culture is both feudalistic and patriarchal. Second, society has adopted a very conservative understanding and interpretation of various religious teachings. Third, state hegemony is still too dominant and this is reflected by the state institutions which support the patriarchal culture at both national and local levels (Seda 2). Like Seda, Utomo also argues that in the face of rapid increase in women's labour force participation and educational attainment, gender disparities in other measures of labour force outcomes in Indonesia remain persistent due to a tendency to place women as secondary earners (1).

The realities that women are still marginalized and that gender inequality and disparities persist in Indonesian society become a motivation to carry out this study. The opportunity to study Australian culture and literature in the native country, allows me to increase my global and local complexity as an individual what Pieterse refers to as "a process of hybridization" and to become as Beck terms an "actor" and "manager" of my life, building social links and networks with a "polygamy of place" (Edmunds 1).

Gaining greater autonomy and reconceptualising both masculinity and femininity are also dominant themes in Garner's work. Edmunds writes that interactions across regions, countries and continents through globalization profoundly changes and influences everyday life and have the potential to impact gender relations within the family, community, and workplace (1). In addition, Connell argues that gender structures are always changing as humans create new situations (Edmunds 2). The knowledge that informs this study and will inform the teaching of Australian literature will therefore prove very useful for providing students with a sense of the cross-cultural and the global in order to strengthen the implementation of gender equality, especially in Buginese society. In other words, this study results in hybridized knowledge of Australian concepts of feminism and Buginese societies, that offers a reference for students to understand and engage with different feminist thought. By learning how feminism is understood differently by Australians and Buginese, they can decide what aspects of feminist ideas from a Western perspective can be applied to Buginese culture without transgressing Buginese customs and habits.

Voragen writes that literature is a useful tool for gaining insight into a foreign culture, and to do so, it is best to become familiar with another culture by reading its literary works through translation (38). Meanwhile, Bassnett states that translation involves intercultural transfer between the original and its destination (Da Sousa Correa and Owens 168). Therefore, this study also translates the five short stories of Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* into Indonesian. This translation is essential because it facilitates tertiary students a way to learn more about Australian culture. Furthermore, it will also help the students to discuss more easily the stories and to translate feminist ideas from the Western context into the Buginese context.

There are few Australian literary works that have been translated into Indonesian. Those that have include Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* and *My Life is a Fake*, James Vance Marshall's *Walkabout*, Emma Darcy's *The Billionaire Bridegroom*, Sally Morgan's *My Place*, and Colleen McCullough's *The Thorn Birds*. My translation of five short stories from *Postcards from Surfers* will complement these works and will enrich the diversity of Indonesian translations of world literary works, the bulk of which tends to come from the United Kingdom, America, the Middle East, and Japan.

### **Scope and limits**

Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* consists of eleven short stories. This analysis focuses on five of them, which are chosen based on the feminist issues they represent. My analysis has been grouped into four themes: the kitchen, language, landscape, and sexuality. These themes are analysed from a Buginese feminist perspective. The five short stories chosen for analysis are also the ones translated into Indonesian. Due to the time constraints involved in the completion for a doctoral thesis, I have not translated and analysed all eleven stories. Instead, I have chosen to forgo quantity for quality, and while I hope someday to complete the translation of all eleven stories from *Postcards from Surfers*, I feel that the five stories I analyse and translate here will be sufficient for the project.

### **Outline**

In the Introduction, I provide the rationale, scope and limits, outline, and significance of the study. I also provide historical background about the Buginese, Indonesian women's efforts and movements, and my personal connection to Australian feminism.

In Chapter One, I provide a background of the theories and methodologies which underpin the analysis, including the notion of “dancing” as a postcolonial feminist praxis. For literary analysis, I take Edward Said’s work on contrapuntal reading and employ it as a signifier of movement between insider and outsider (of Australian feminism). I also take Mohanty’s feminist-explorer model to position Australian women as ‘foreign’ (Western), to make them the object and subject of engaging knowledge of feminism, and to juxtapose that knowledge with Buginese culture, especially with the concept of *siri*’ which is inherent in Buginese female identity. The application of Critical Discourse Analysis is also taken to integrate three guiding principles of inclusive feminist inquiry to build complex analyses, avoid erasure and specify location. For the translation part, I apply both foreignization and domestication strategies. These strategies are applied with some considerations of the skopos and register of the Indonesian translation. I also use additional adjustment techniques including addition, interpolation, and footnote.

In Chapter Two, I introduce Helen Garner and her works. This chapter consists of a biographical sketch, critical reception of Garner’s works, Garner’s controversial feminist approach and reception, and an overview of *Postcards from Surfers*.

In Chapter Three, I present a critical analysis of the five short stories of *Postcards from Surfers* viewed from a Buginese perspective with an awareness of potential issues presented by Western feminism. The sequence of analysis is centred on the issues of feminism through the themes of the Kitchen, Language, Landscape, and Sexuality. In these themes I personify my movement from engaging with Australian feminism and Buginese culture as “dancing”.

In Chapter Four, I present some challenges that occurred when translating *Postcards from Surfers* especially words and expressions related to the four themes of the Kitchen, Language, Landscape, and Sexuality.

Chapter Five concludes my thesis with my account of hybridized knowledge of the different concepts of feminism as understood by Australians and Buginese to open a space for continued dialogue between the two.

### **Significance**

This study provides pioneering research that engages with Australian feminism from a Buginese perspective. This is because it provides a clear understanding of the different ways Australians and Buginese view the concept of feminism. Therefore, it will be used to engage students and readers with Australian feminism, literature and culture in order to form a comparative perspective with Buginese culture. The analysis of Garner's work and the translation of her five short stories will support the teaching of gender education through literary-based materials in Indonesia. Last but not least, this study will promote Australian culture and literature to Indonesians and will build a cross-cultural networking and understanding between Australian and Buginese societies.

In terms of translation, this study will enrich the Indonesian translation of Australian literary works and will contribute to the course of translation practice especially in translating words and expressions related to feminist issues.

### **Historical Background of Indonesian Women's Efforts and Movements**

The idea of improving the quality of women's lives and experiences is not new to Indonesians. There are many women who campaigned for women's rights, as

recorded in the history of Indonesia. Before feminism was popular, Kartini, the daughter of an aristocratic Javanese family during the Dutch colonial period, had already fought to increase the status of women, which was subordinated to men. During this period, Indonesian women lived in the shackles of patriarchal society, which prevented them from pursuing further education, secluded them for marriage, and supported polygamous marriages. Kartini experienced this situation when at the age of 12 she was asked to quit school and seclude herself for marriage. Abiding the rules of nobility, she continued to educate herself through newspapers and European magazines sent by her Dutch pen friends. Through these writings, she learnt European concepts related to feminist thinking, which fostered her desire to improve the condition of native Indonesian women who had a very low social status at that time. She wanted Indonesian women to have equal opportunities with men in terms of education and social position. However, Kartini had little power to do much. Eventually she gave up her quest and accepted the role of fourth wife to the Regent of Rembang. Kartini died at the very young age of 25 in 1904 in childbirth. To reward her sacrifice, in 1964 the first president of Indonesia Soekarno declared Kartini's birth date, 21st April, "Kartini Day". Although Kartini passed away, her honourable ideas have motivated Indonesian women to improve their situation and to emancipate themselves in every sector of life.

Following the efforts of Kartini was Dewi Sartika. Sartika, born in 1884, belonged to an aristocratic Sundanese family. Unlike Kartini, Sartika's parents insisted she go to the Netherlands to study. As a result, when she came back to Indonesia, she built a school for women behind her house and taught them reading, writing, sewing, knitting, and embroidery. The establishment of another new school for women around Sundanese Regency followed her efforts.

Prior to Kartini and Dewi Sartika, in other parts of Indonesia there were heroines who struggled to fight with the colonialists to obtain independence. They include Nyi Ageng Serang from Central Java, Martha Christina Tiahahu from Maluku, and Cut Nyak Dhien and Cut Meutia from Aceh. Although they battled for Indonesian independence, they also paved the way for Indonesian women to fight for the sake of the state, nation, and homeland. Kartini followed their efforts by focusing on the struggle for Indonesian women's rights, especially for the right for women to get the same education opportunities as men. Kartini's effort through the motto "emansipasi perempuan" (women's emancipation) to improve women's condition and position has become the foundation of Indonesian feminism. After Kartini and Dewi Sartika, a women's organization called Poetri Mardika was formed.

The formation of the women's organization Poetri Mardika in 1912 was the third major push for gender equity, fighting for equality between men and women especially concerning the law. This organization published their own magazine entitled *Poetri Mardika*. This organization was followed by other women's organisations. The Women's Congress I (1928), II (1930), and III (1938) advocated for equality with agendas that demanded education for children, reformation on Islamic law on marriage, trafficking, and women's right to vote, and participation in politics. The Congress III succeeded and proclaimed the date of 22nd December as Mother's Day nationwide.

Following the above efforts and movements, Indonesia declared its independence from the Dutch in 1945, which the Dutch officially recognized in 1949. Under the reign of Soekarno, the first president, women were allowed to participate in politics and the government officially issued Law No. 80/1958 on gender equity in terms of salary and wage. However, issues relating to polygamy emerged because the

president had two wives. As a result, a women's organization called PERWANI (Indonesian Women Movement) was formed and they advocated against polygamy, asking the government to make laws on marriage.

It was during the reign of the second president, Soeharto, that the laws on marriage were approved in 1974, stating that a civil servant was allowed to have only one wife. During Soeharto's reign, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Role of Women was created. Marching writes that "although the practice of polygamy was restricted during the New Order, other forms of gender oppression towards women were emphasised" (Marching, *The Discrepancy Between the Public and the Private Selves of Indonesian Women: A Comparison of Published and Unpublished Autobiographies and Diaries* 28).

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Role of Women currently in presidential reign under Bambang Soesilo Soedarman is called the State Ministry for Women's Empowerment. The Indonesian government through the State Ministry for Women's Empowerment, the Women's Studies Centre at universities, and women activists have made efforts to improve women's lives and social positions and to achieve gender equality between men and women.

Schroter writes that women's organizations in Indonesia are now actively trying to increase women's political participation and representation by making efforts to change the position of women in decision-making institutions (1). Unfortunately, Schroter adds, ideas of "women's empowerment" and "gender mainstreaming" have been challenged because many religious leaders have perceived them as transgression of Islamic rules and values and argue for a return conservative gender models (1). In addition, Hellwig states that "Hindu-Javanese values, as expressed in the wayang

(shadow puppet theatre), and Islam justify polygamy .... Christian creeds deny women full autonomy over their bodies (contraceptives, abortion)” (Hellwig, 1994, 14) (Marching, *The Discrepancy Between the Public and the Private Selves of Indonesian Women: A Comparison of Published and Unpublished Autobiographies and Diaries* 32). It is clear here that religious apparatuses play a dominant role in sustaining patriarchy in Indonesia.

There are still many Indonesians who have an aversion to anything related to gender or feminism due mostly to the fear that Western perspectives and feminist ideas would harm Indonesian cultures. In addition, some are also confused because they believe that gender equality was already achieved a long time ago in the pre-independence period, thanks to figures like Kartini. Despite the achievements of individual women’s efforts and various movements, women continue to be subordinated in many areas of life. The underlying basis for this project is that there is still much to be done in order to implement gender equality and to make a thorough change. This study can establish a dialogue between Indonesians and Australians to encourage Indonesians especially Buginese to achieve equality between men and women.

### **The Buginese**

The Buginese, also known as the Bugis, along with the Makassar, the Mandar, and the Toraja, are one of the four main ethnic groups of the province of South Sulawesi in Indonesia. According to Pelras, a French ethnologist who did some research on ethnic groups in South Sulawesi and wrote about the Buginese society in a book entitled *The Bugis*, the Bugis (over three million) occupy mainly the lowland and hilly areas to the south, with a few living in the Luwu plain, mostly near the coast around and to the south of Palopo, while the homeland of another ethnic group—the Makassar (about two

million)—is at the southern end of the peninsula, both along the coasts and in the mountains (12).

The population of the Buginese in South Sulawesi spreads into major states (Bone, Wajo, Soppeng, and Sidenreng) and some minor states (Pare-Pare, Suppa, and Sinjai). The Buginese have been well-known as eminent sailors for centuries. Therefore, the Buginese diaspora extends to Southeast Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, Papua, Sumatra, and Malaysia. Tuwo and Tresnati add that even in the 1600s the Buginese and Makassarese voyaged throughout the entire archipelagic region of Southeast Asia, up to and including the waters of northern Australia with their traditional *pinisi*' (sail boat) to develop social, economic and cultural connections with the Aboriginal communities of the land they called *Marege*' (black skinned people) which in the past referred to the Aboriginals of Arnhem Land (1).

Like other ethnic groups living in other islands of Indonesia such as the Javanese, the Sundanese, the Minang, the Batak, the Balinese, and the Ambonese, the Buginese have their own culture and traditions. The Buginese, especially those who live in the villages, are still bounded strictly by *ade*' (custom) or *pangadereng* (customary law). This concept of *ade*' provides living guidelines for Buginese and consists of five components including *ade*', *bicara*, *rapang*, *wari*', and *sara*'. Pelras clarifies that *pangadereng* is 'adat-hood', a corpus of interlinked ruling principles which, besides *ade*' (custom), includes also *bicara* (jurisprudence), *rapang* (models of good behaviour which ensure the proper functioning of society), *wari*' (rules of descent and hierarchy) and *sara*' (Islamic law and institution, derived from the Arabic *shari'a*) (190). So, *pangadereng* is an overall norm which includes advice on how Buginese should behave towards fellow human beings and social institutions on a reciprocal basis. According to

Mattulada, these noble principles become guidelines for Buginese for their everyday life, both in the family and working place (58).

In addition, the Buginese together with Makassarese mind what is called *siri'* (honour and shame), that is the sense of honour and shame. Abdullah writes:

In the life of the Buginese-Makassar people, the most basic element is *siri'*. For them, no other value merits to be more detected and preserved. *Siri'* is their life, their self-respect and their dignity. This is why, in order to uphold and to defend it when it has been stained or they consider it has been stained by somebody, the Bugis-Makassar people are ready to sacrifice everything, including their most precious life, for the sake of its restoration. So goes the saying.... 'When one's honour is at stake, without any afterthought one fights.' (Pelras 206)

Furthermore Idrus states that *siri'* (honour and shame) is central to the Buginese world view, and is regarded as the soul and the spirit of each individual in society (44). La Side suggests a variety of meaning for *siri'* (honour and shame), namely *malu-malu* (shame), *seگان/kerendahan-hati* (humility), *takut* (fear), *hina/aib* (disgrace), *irihati/dengki* (envy), *harga-diri* (self-respect), *kehormatan* (honour), and *kesusilaan* (morality) (Idrus 44). In short, *siri'* (honour and shame) deals with principles relating to honour and prestige that the Buginese preserve and the only way to restore when it is stained, is through fighting. Mattulada writes that it can be observed in social reality that *siri'* (honour and shame) has an impact on the cultural character of Buginese who have a reputation for being very sensitive, daring to use violence and taking revenge for the sake of their honour (66). Similarly, Errington points out that "a person who has *siri'* is sensitive to, hence vulnerable to, other people" (145). However *siri'* (honour and shame) cannot be viewed from only one perspective. Mattulada argues that the meaning of *siri'* (honour and shame) can be understood by looking at three kinds of *siri'* (honour and shame). They are as follows (67):

1. *Siri' emmi ri onroang ri lino* (people live only for *siri'*) means someone lives only for honour and prestige. Someone whose life does not have honour and prestige is nothing.
2. *Mate ri siri'na* (die for *siri'*) means it is honourable if someone dies defending his/her honour and prestige.
3. *Mate siri'* (die of *siri'*) means someone who loses his/her honour and prestige is like a living carcass. Therefore, it is better to *mate napatettaggi siri'na* (die by fighting) rather than lose honour and prestige.

In addition to discussing the three levels of *siri'*, Sikki et al. also note how people are meant to react. There is a violation of *siri'* which can still be tolerated, a more extreme violation, which is supposed to be followed by anger, and most extreme violation which has to be paid for with killing (Idrus 46-47).

From the explanation above, it does not mean that *siri'* related to killings are a common issue in everyday Buginese life. Mattulada admits that day to day defence of honour and prestige through violence is less common (66). Furthermore, Pelras argues that two of the most extreme violations of *siri'*—the kind which have to be paid for by killing— involve *silariang* (elopement) and *ipakasiri'*: that is when someone has been humiliated by words or actions he/she considers improper (206). In *silariang* (elopement), it is believed that the man has stained the honour and prestige of the woman's parents. Therefore, to restore it, the male relations of the woman will kill the culprit. Similar results may follow if someone is humiliated publicly with insulting words or treated with impudent behaviour. Regardless of the concern with *siri'*, the Buginese are also perceived as very *mabessa* (friendly), tough, respectful, and faithful.

With regards to the role of women in society, Buginese history records that there were some women who ruled the kingdoms in different Buginese areas in the nineteenth century. Even the Buginese literary epic *La Galigo*, which is longer than *Mahabharata*, features Buginese women in prominent and important roles. According to this manuscript, the ancestors of Buginese were *tomanurung* (people descended from heaven). It is written that We Nyiliq Timo, the wife of Batara Guru who was a *tomanurung*, played a very significant role in proposing good opinions about the foundation of Buginese culture. Another great Buginese woman was Colliq Pujie, an aristocratic woman, a writer, and a politician who compiled the manuscript of *La Galigo*. Other great Buginese women include Siti Aisyah We Tenti Olle (Queen of Tanete), We Tenri Rawe (Queen of Luwu) Adatuang We Abeng (Queen Sidenreng), Datu Pattiro We Tenrisoloreng (Queen of Bone), Soledatu We Ada (Queen of Soppeng), and Andi Ninong (Queen of Wajo).

Hamzah argues that in Buginese society “neither gender is considered intrinsically dominant over the other” (Pelras 160). To this Pelras also comments that “the Buginese take the principle of non-differentiation between genders” (160). What Hamzah and Pelras argue may apply to the Buginese who live in the villages and work as farmers. For this particular occupation, both men and women fundamentally help each other in their daily life. Men go to work in the rice field and women prepare the lunch for them. While waiting for the men to finish their work for the day, the women also do light work in the field. In other words, men and women play an equal role in this domain. A Buginese saying states that a man’s place reaches the borders of the sky while a woman’s place is around the house. This means that the man acts as the breadwinner whose activity is outside the house. Meanwhile the woman takes care of the children and prepares food for the family which is mainly done in the house or not

far from it. However, in reality there are also many women who work to support the family income, for instance, by weaving, embroidery, or making cakes or snacks for sale. Others who have educational qualifications work as civil servants. Helping each other like this is an overview of gender role division between Buginese men and women, especially who live in the villages.

Unfortunately, in practice Buginese women are still often treated differently. On the one hand they are respected as equals with men but on the other hand they are still placed subordinate to men in many instances; for example, making decisions. In such cases, men act as decision makers while women are expected to follow whatever the men decide. Education is another sphere where gender roles and expectations are differentiated. If one family has a son and a daughter, the family will let the son receive an education before the daughter. Most Buginese parents usually arrange an early marriage for the daughter. Furthermore, they believe that despite the level of education a Buginese woman achieves, she will finally end up in the kitchen. In many Buginese families, after getting married, even those educated at the undergraduate level spend their lives being housewives. My intention is not to trivialise or ignore the importance of this role, especially if a woman desires it; rather my concern is with their option to choose this role or not, that is, if they want to be *maju* (modern) and use their high education qualifications, they should be able to without social, cultural, economic or familial repercussions. From this evidence, it is not surprising that gender inequality still persists in Buginese society. My research is aimed at encouraging my students to empower themselves, to struggle against gender inequality, as well as at the same time inviting them to be together both men and women to *sipakatau* (to respect each other) and *sipakatokkong* (to support each other).

## **Personal Connection to Australian Feminism**

I write this thesis in the first person because I do not stand as an outsider of the Buginese whom I am studying, but as an insider of the group, having experienced directly the institution of patriarchal society. Marching writes that in “self-representational life writing “I” can be a means of challenging or questioning the traditional male paradigm of the self” where there is a “will to be heard” (Marching, *The Discrepancy between the Public and the Private Selves of Indonesian Women: A Comparison of Published and Unpublished Autobiographies and Diaries* 1). Long adds that “female first person” is “a threat to control and order” (Marching, *The Discrepancy between the Public and the Private Selves of Indonesian Women: A Comparison of Published and Unpublished Autobiographies and Diaries* 1).

I have been dancing with Australian feminism for over four years. What I mean by the term “dancing” in this study will be theoretically defined more in Chapter One. My use of the word “dancing” signifies my challenge to articulate and engage with Australian culture, literature, and feminism by viewing it from a Buginese perspective as opposed to a “Non-Western” perspective. As a Buginese woman and scholar, I centre my specific cultural standpoints instead of accepting them generally and therefore dismiss the altering label of “Non-Western”. Juxtaposing Australian feminism with Buginese culture has not been easy. However, as my research progressed I saw interesting cultural differences between Australian and Buginese cultures that could result in a hybridized way of engaging feminist issues. Here, I found myself in an ideal position to “dance” out.

My background as a Buginese woman strongly informs the way I approach the research for this study. I grew up in a very strongly patriarchal Buginese society.

Furthermore, I experienced two main events in my life where I had to transgress my family's traditions and go against my parents' hopes. When I graduated from Junior High School, my parents asked me to get married to someone from our close relatives whom they had chosen. At that time in my life, this felt like a disaster to me. I could imagine that if I accepted my parents' wishes I would end up living my whole life being a typical traditional Buginese housewife, spending most of my time in the kitchen.

Furthermore, it would prevent my dream to continue my studying and get a job. I had to rebel. I argued with my parents telling them I wanted to be a *makkunrai macca* (clever woman) and *maju* (modern). At first they were worried I would be a *makkunrai lado*' (spinster) because there is a fear in Buginese families that the more education a daughter gets, the less likely it will be that a man will ask her to be his wife. If this happens, it causes shame for the family. They were also worried my higher education would make me *mabangka*' (arrogant) and would make me *pappada urane'e* (control like a man). Doing so would decrease the family status. I convinced them that finishing my studies at a higher institution would keep me *malebbi*' (modest), *pamase-mase* (humble), and would increase the family status. I also promised that I would get married after I got a job. Finally, they agreed. My success in finishing senior high school and my undergraduate degree, as well as getting a job as a *dosen* (lecturer) significantly affected my extended family. My younger cousins followed my example, pursuing education at higher institutions.

This study has been shaped by a combination of this ongoing dedication to promote women's empowerment in the Buginese context and my role as an academic teaching English literature at the university level. I hope my study on Australian literature focusing on Helen Garner's ideas of feminism portrayed in *Postcards from*

*Surfers* will broaden the insight of my students who are mostly Buginese and of Buginese descent, about the concepts and intentions of feminism. Through this study, I will apply interpretive principles that will enable my students to see how the ideas of feminism conveyed through western literature can positively improve the quality of women's lives and be implemented in Buginese culture without compromising our identity as Indonesians and Buginese people. At the same time, it provides a cultural comparison with Australia that allows a space for further conversations to occur.

My study of Australian feminism in the work of Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* aims to examine aspects of Western feminism to juxtapose them with ideas of feminism as understood by Buginese Indonesians. To do this I prioritise Buginese perspectives while at the same time accepting and/advocating certain changes. This is my goal: to encourage my students in my English Department at Hasanuddin University to understand more clearly aspects of feminism and invite them to be more gender sensitive. My position as a lecturer allows me to make strategic changes.

This study also aims to contribute to the study of Australian culture and literature at Hasanuddin University, where I am already employed as a lecturer. Hasanuddin University features a course on Australian Culture and Literature in the curriculum. This course is an optional course offered to students in the English Department. The first time the course was offered in 2005, there were 15 students registered. In 2009, the number increased to 24 students. In 2011, the number increased remarkably to 95 students (English Department data). An increase in student number and staff expertise can upgrade a course, making it compulsory. There is already precedent for this at Hasanuddin University, where an increase in student number and staff expertise has led to American Literature becoming a compulsory subject.

Therefore, to promote and upgrade a course on Australian Culture and Literature to compulsory status, it is necessary to recruit staff expertise in this subject. As part of that recruitment I have undertaken my doctoral thesis in Australia. This study of Australian literature is also a part of the aim to meet those requirements. Through teaching representations of gender and feminism through literary-based materials, students will have the opportunity to engage with the possibilities and the confinements of feminism and to explore for themselves feminist concepts that they can apply within the Buginese and Indonesian cultural contexts.

My work place in a field of formal education strategically allows me to change and advance the status and position of women through the students I teach. Therefore, in my analysis I view Australian feminism in Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* from a Buginese perspective, and discuss which ideas are suitable for application in Buginese culture, in order to increase the status and the position of Buginese women in relation to men. In other words, I play the role of a mediator, transferring the knowledge of Western literary studies of feminism to Buginese individuals, especially to my students through a course of Australian Culture and Literature. In doing so, I envision myself as a Buginese woman living in Buginese culture who is working in a Western institution, dancing with Australian feminism. Rizvi and Lingard have argued that learning through teaching and the presence of students "is an important insight for all pedagogues, wherever their institutional location" (294).

Goldsworthy has already set a precedent for analysing feminist themes in Helen Garner's work. She states that she has three aims in investigating Garner's works. They are "1. to use ideas from feminist literary theory to explore aspects of Garner's writing that have not been much talked about before; 2. to locate her work in its cultural and

historical contexts; 3. to show her writing represents some of the life-dilemmas solved, and posed, for women by competing demands and claims of feminism” (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 7). Thus, Goldsworthy argues, “from the beginning of her writing career Garner was regarded as, and frequently called, a stylist, a realist, and a feminist” (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 1). Building on Goldsworthy’s observations, I further examine how Garner portrays the idea of feminism through five stories from *Postcards from Surfers*.

Critics have examined and discussed Garner’s works and the influence of feminism. Richardson explores Garner’s ideas of feminism in *Cosmo Cosmolino*, and Ashcroft examines it in *The Children’s Bach*, not to mention Willbanks who investigates it in *Monkey Grip*. However, there are few who have published about her feminist influence in *Postcards from Surfers*. Moreover, all critics view Garner’s ideas of feminism from a Western point of view. My research addresses this gap by viewing it from a Buginese perspective. By doing so, my research engages in cross-cultural dialogues and movements between Australian literature, Australian feminism, Buginese culture and Indonesian literary pedagogy.

## Chapter One

### Theoretical Background

*Rekko mupakalebbi tauwwe, alemu tu mupakalebbi*

*(If you praise other people, you praise yourself)*

Buginese saying

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section provides theoretical background for my literary analysis of Helen Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* viewed from a Buginese perspective. The second section provides theoretical background on translation theory for the discussion of some challenges that occurred when translating the five stories from *Postcard from Surfers*.

#### Theory on Literary Analysis

First of all, I would like to stress that the theoretical approaches that inform my analysis cannot be separated from the personal. In the title of this study, I use the term “dancing” to indicate a dialogue with white Australian women by moving back and forth between Australian culture and Buginese culture. I use the term “dancing” as an extension of Edward Said’s work on contrapuntal reading but employ it as a signifier of my movement between insider and outsider (of Australian feminism), that is, I extend it from just a literary reading to a whole body experience. According to Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, the “essence of Said’s argument is to know something is to have power over it, and conversely, to have power is to know the world in your own terms” (83). Ashcroft and Ahluwalia add how through music, particularly the work of pianist Glenn Gould, Said formulated a way of reading imperial and postcolonial texts contrapuntally. Such a reading acknowledges the hybridity of cultures, histories and literatures,

allowing the reader to move back and forth between an internal and an external standpoint of cultural references and attitudes in “an effort to draw out, extend, give emphasis and voice to what is silent or marginally present or ideologically represented” (Said 66). While Said’s work on Orientalism is well known, how this can be applied in educational discourses has been less widely discussed. Rizvi and Lingard write that:

issues central to the cultural politics of education were never too far away from his gaze. He did mention in an interview that he always learned through teaching and the presence of students provoked thinking and learning in a productive mediation absent from the solitary work of the scholar. This is an important insight for all pedagogues, wherever their institutional location. Issues of representation, popular culture, the media, the colonial formation of knowledge, and the institutions of imperialism were, for example, central in the vast collection of his literary and popular writings. He viewed formal education as a key institution through which colonial modes of thinking were produced and reproduced and where postcolonial aspirations could also be worked towards (294).

In addition, Said points out that contrapuntal analysis means that students and teachers can cross-culturally “elucidate a complex and uneven topography” (318). He adds that “we must be able to think through and interpret together experiences that are discrepant, each with its particular agenda and pace of development, its own internal formations, its internal coherence and system of external relationships, all of them co-existing and interacting with others” (32).

A contrapuntal reading is important “partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure; all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic” (Said xxix). Furthermore, Singh and Greenlaw convey that:

Contrapuntal pedagogy is a comparative method in which teachers juxtapose Eurocentric and post-colonial texts about Asian people and

cultures. The term contrapuntal is a metaphor Said has taken from musical theory and which means to counterpoint or to add one rhythm, melody, or theme to another as an accompaniment. In order for students to begin to recognize some of the complexities that exist within relationships among Asian and Anglo-Pacific communities, we argue that it is necessary for their teachers to enable them to compare representations of Asian and Anglo-Pacific peoples and cultures in a variety of texts written from both postcolonial and Eurocentric perspectives. (194)

Meanwhile, Warrior argues for an indigenous critique of how power and knowledge is read and in doing so he writes that “the subaltern can dance, and so sometimes can the intellectual” (85). In his rereading of Spivak, he argues that subaltern and intellectual positions can meet “and in meeting, create the possibility of communication” (86). He refers to this as dancing partly because it implicitly acknowledges without silencing the voices of the subaltern (once the subaltern speaks it is no longer the subaltern, so the notion of dancing allows for communication, “a movement from subalternity to something else” (90) which can mark “a new sort of non-implicitous relationship to a family, community or class of origin” (91). By “noncomplicit” Warrior means that when a member of the subaltern becomes a scholar and therefore a member of those who historically silence the subaltern, there are other methods for communicating, of moving, between political and cultural spaces that allow for a multiplicity of voices and responses. Warrior uses a traditional Osage in-losh-ka dance as an example of how he physically and intellectually interacts with multiple voices and positions: “While the music plays, our usual differences, including subalternity and intellectuality, and even gender in its own way, are levelled. For those of us moving to the music, the rules change, and those who know the steps and the songs and those who can keep up with the whirl of bodies, music and colours hold nearly every advantage over station or money. The music ends, of course, but I know I

take my knowledge of the dance away and into my life as a critic, and I would argue that those levelled moments remain with us after we leave the drum, change our clothes, and go back to the rest of our lives” (93). For Warrior, the dance becomes theory into practice. I hope the same will be true of my own dancing here, and although in some fields it is still considered unacceptable practice to use the first person ‘I’, this research makes it necessary.

I use the first person “I” to signify my identity as a Buginese woman and position myself as an insider of my community with a hybrid western feminism with Australia in mind. Marching notes that “some critics believe that uttering “I” in a text is one of the means of confirming one’s identity and a means of challenging or questioning the traditional male paradigm of the self” (Marching, *The Discrepancy Between the Public and the Private Selves of Indonesian Women: A Comparison of Published and Unpublished Autobiographies and Diaries* 1). In the context of this study, uttering “I” confirms my position and aims.

In this study, I use a feminist approach to see the problems of Western women represented by (white) Australian women, portrayed in Garner’s *Postcards from Surfers*. Then after that I compare them with what Buginese women experience. Hughes writes that “feminism is an enormous collection of theories, of ways of explaining why women and men are treated differently in contemporary societies, and why this has been the case for so long” (5). Meanwhile, Frye states that “feminism can be understood as theory – systems of concepts, propositions and analysis that describe and explain women’s situations and experiences and support recommendations about how to improve them” (Code 195). In employing the term in this sense, Frye adds that there are many feminisms – many feminist theories (Code 195).

In addition to this, Cawagas and Swee-Hin argue that “feminist theories encompass enormous geographical, demographic, social, economic, political, and cultural diversity” (Code 29). Cawagas and Swee-Hin clarify by quoting Mohanty’s insight that women are constituted through the “complex interactions between class, culture, religion and other ideological institutions and frameworks”. This suggests a need to formulate “autonomous, geographically, historically, and culturally grounded feminist concerns and strategies” (Code 29). It is not surprising that there is Western feminism, African feminism, Australian feminism, Asian feminism and Indonesian feminism.

Different concepts of feminism in different countries can create misunderstanding about the intentions of a feminist movement. For instance, Indonesian people often view Western feminism as unsuitable for Indonesian culture. Therefore, many Indonesians do not agree with feminism as they identify it as a concept coming from Western countries. The concern is if it would cause harm to Indonesian culture.

Essentially, feminism is a theory concerning women’s oppression and aimed at improving women’s lives. Therefore, feminism in each country has general concepts about women’s oppression and how feminism helps to improve women’s lives. Kilic claims that “what white middle-class women perceive and experience is believed to be the same as the perceptions and experiences of women from non-English-speaking backgrounds and black women- and that this is inherent in feminist theory” (Hughes 13). The difference perhaps is the problems they encounter. For instance, women in developed countries experience different problems compared with women from developing countries. And Black, First Nations, and Indigenous women are facing issues that western women may not be aware of. Even in a country like Indonesia,

women from one ethnic group have different problems compared with women from another ethnic group. In East Nusa Tenggara for instance, Mboi writes that “women in rural and urban poor communities allocate food to their husbands and guests first; hence they consume food that is inferior in quantity and in quality” (Barlow 181). Another example is a problem faced by women in the Minangkabau ethnic group: Nordin states that “the matrilineal character of the Nagari system traditionally does not guarantee women’s participation in decision-making, which is dominated by *ninik mamak* (male elders)” (Robinson 182). These facts reinforce Seda’s argument that “Indonesian women are not a homogeneous social group, and that each group faces different problems and obstacles to be identified” (Seda 2).

The problem of identifying different women’s concerns and oppression in another country, without just assuming them, is addressed by Mohanty. Mohanty suggests three models to solve this problem: “feminist-as-tourist model, feminist-as-explorer model, and feminist solidarity or comparative feminist studies model” (518-524). Although Mohanty suggests these models as a way of understanding women’s problems in Third World countries (developing countries), they are applicable too to women’s problems in First World countries (developed countries).

In the first model, feminist-as-tourist, Mohanty identifies pedagogical strategies that privilege Euro-American narratives as primary sources, which remain uncriticised while examples from non-Western or Third World/South cultures are used to supplement and “add” to the narrative (518). Mohanty refers to this model as a “white woman’s burden or colonial discourse” from a “Eurocentric women’s studies gaze” (518). In the second model, feminist-as-explorer, Mohanty outlines a “pedagogical strategy that places ‘foreign’ woman as the object and subject of knowledge, which in

the larger intellectual project is entirely about countries other than the United States” (519). Here, Mohanty adds, “the local and the global are both defined as non-Euro-American” (519). This model, Mohanty argues can “provide a deeper, more contextual understanding of feminist issues in discretely defined geographical and cultural spaces” (520). The last model, feminist solidarity or a comparative feminist studies model, defines “the local and the global as based not on physical geography or territory but as existing simultaneously to constitute each other” (521). According to Mohanty, this strategy is a “comparative course that shows the interconnectedness of the histories, experiences, and struggles of US woman of colour, white women, and women from the Third World/South” (522).

According to Nagel, “the first two models are fraught with problems and are typical ones chosen in a US women’s studies course” (2). Nagel adds that these two models are basically old models; “add-and-stir” model and “separate-but-equal” model (2). Meanwhile, Dalmiya says that “these two models both construct difference as simple diversity” (303). The concern here is that Third World/South voices and experiences are still subordinate to the “white woman’s”, whereas the third model can link global and local issues.

Although Nagel and Dalmiya seem do not support a feminist-as-explorer model, however, in my analysis of the five stories from Helen Garner’s *Postcards from Surfers*, this model is applied with a comparative perspective included. This is because Australian women are treated as the “Western woman”. So, from a Buginese perspective I view the “Western” woman as the object of analysis and at the same time as the subject of engaging knowledge of feminism. In this study, Mohanty’s feminist-as-explorer model is applied to see women’s problems in Australia through literary

works. However, because of my location in the production of knowledge, I apply the feminist-as-explorer model strategically to link Buginese and Australian issues. In my analysis of Garner's work I seek out what Zinn and Dill write as "intersecting forms of domination that produces *both* oppression *and* opportunity" (327).

Datuin argues that traditional disciplines of the humanities, sociology, anthropology and political science rely on a binarist logic between male and female: "women are either relegated to a private space, and, therefore, excluded in the public domain, or assimilated into the public/political sphere becoming apparently less invisible, but still absorbed into the paradigm of the productive male" (96). Part of my notion of dancing between insider and outsider positions and between Western and Indonesian ideas of feminism, involves dismantling this dualism; grappling with the complexities and tensions that emerge "puts forward the idea of multiple, fluid structures of domination, collaboration, and resistance which locate women [and men], not only in distinct historical conjunctures but also in spaces where oppositional agency is possible in their daily lives and as part of their communities" (Datuin 104). Moving away from a binarist logic means that women cannot simply be made to act like men to be accepted in the status quo nor that in entering traditionally defined women's spaces men do not become effeminised. Instead, the agency of each in any space is enacted.

In terms of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Lazar points out that:

The masculinization of talk by women in power, and the feminization of forms of masculinity in the home, on one level may appear to redefine conventional gender norms for women and men in particular communities. However, on another level, these gender crossings index (and perpetuate) the underlying dualism of the gender structure – the behaviour of the masculine woman and the feminine man gets read against the expected behavioural norm of the 'other'. These studies also suggest that deviations from gender-appropriate norms are policed and contained in the presence of a prevailing discourse of heteronormativity. (147-148)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) contributes to emancipatory social justice by critiquing patriarchal discourses and surrounding social ideologies. Lazar adds that “analysis of discourse which shows up the workings of power that sustain oppressive social structures/relations contributes to on-going struggles of contestation and change through what may be termed “analytical activism” (145). Such analytical activism is referred to by Lazar as “raising critical awareness through research and teaching” (146). A neutral stance cannot be employed, or pretended, biases are part of the argument – another reason I have written my thesis in first person and located my researcher role within a Buginese standpoint. My country, my culture, my language, my experiences, inform my theoretical and practical approach: it shapes the theory and guides practices for developing strategies for resistance and change. By employing elements of feminism and CDA, I have opted for praxis-oriented research which allows a dialectical relationship between theory and practice.

Poststructuralist theorization offers a critically useful view of discourse as a site of struggle, where forces of social (re)production and contestation are played out. Within feminist scholarship, the discursive turn is reflected in books outside linguistics as well as within linguistics under the rubric of ‘gender and language’ research. Feminist CDA, with its focus on social justice and transformation of gender, is a timely contribution to the growing body of feminist discourse literature, particularly in the field of gender and language where feminist CDA has occupied a surprisingly marginal position (Lazar 144).

Van Dijk notes that the west and north are bound by an academic ethnocentrism and this is a particular area my own research has had to negotiate. Methodologically I have provided a comparative rather than a universalising perspective, engaging with middle-class, heterosexual, western, white women feminism but not privileging them. Regarding this, Lazar states that “the task then of feminist CDA is to examine how

power and dominance are discursively produced and/or (counter-) resisted in a variety of ways through textual representations of gendered social practices, and through interactional strategies of talk. Also of concern are issues of access to forms of discourse, such as particular communicative events and culturally valued genres (van Dijk, 1993, 1996) that can be empowering for women's participation in public domain" (149). To achieve this, my critique involves using critical discourse analysis.

According to van Dijk "CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political contexts" (Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton 354). Garner's use of particular discourses justifies van Dijk's statement. It is important for Buginese to use language discourses as a weapon to gain power, particularly because as McGlynn claims, "generally Indonesians are not particularly outspoken" (38). So, Garner's short stories are examples of resistance to male domination and empowerment through language. The application of CDA analysis allows me to integrate three guiding principles of inclusive feminist inquiry in my analysis that is to "build complex analyses, avoid erasure and specify location" which were identified by Frankenberg and Mani (Zinn and Dill 328).

*Postcards from Surfers* is not merely a small collection of short stories portraying women's voices and experiences; rather it offers an insight into the way in which diversity and domination intersect and are culturally constituted. I then translate these differences and culturally constituted experiences for Indonesian readers to consider – both men and women. This links with van Dijk's theoretical framework that relates "discourse, cognition, and society with language use, discourse, verbal interaction, and communication as micro-level signifiers of social power, while power,

dominance, and inequality between social groups typically belong to a macro-level of analysis” (354). Therefore, van Dijk claims that “CDA functions to bridge the gap between micro and macro levels and can be done through different ways including personal and social cognition where language users as social actors have both personal and social cognition which govern the collective actions of a group” (354).

To some extent, Western culture or foreign culture for Indonesians is different from Buginese culture. However, Garner’s portrayal of how her characters in *Postcards from Surfers* gain their power may encourage Buginese women to empower themselves. It does not mean that they have to just follow what western people do but recognising their own agency and gendered subjectivities that can contribute to resistance of patriarchal expectations if they feel they are oppressed, controlled, dominated, or discriminated.

### **Theory on Translation Discussion**

Translation is generally known as transferring the message from a source language (with the same message) to a target language. When transferring the message from a source language to a target language, a translator deals with not only linguistic aspects but also cultural aspects. Bhabha points out that “in the process of translation there will be intercultural transfers which implies negotiation between the original and its destination” (Da Sousa Correa and Owens 168). Unfortunately, in the negotiation between the original and translated text many problems can arise, so translators should have adequate knowledge of translation theory. Newmark states that “translation theory is “the body of knowledge” translators should have, which provides them with a framework of principles, rules, and hints that assist the translator in overcoming translation problems” (19). Sanchez reveals that “translators share a number of

problems whatever the type of text to be translated, but some of the problems are very specific to literary translation” (124).

Finlay states that the term “literary translator” is used to describe translators of “all types of fiction and covers such genres as novels, plays, poetry, film scripts and the like, as well as, in many cases, biographies, travel-books and similar basically non-technical types of non-fiction” (45). In the theory of translation, more attention is given to the notion of literary translation as it is different from other kinds of translation. Finlay emphasizes the differences between literary translation and technical, scientific, commercial translation or the so-called non-literary translation. His argument is that literary translation is more complex than non-literary translation because in literary translation, the style and mode of expression is far more important than purely factual material. He also believes that “the responsibility of the translator is greater because s/he passes through the language or cultural barrier” (45).

In addition to what Finlay points out, Toury states that the “literary translator” can refer to two different aspects (Sanchez 124). They are as follows:

1. The translation of texts which are regarded as ‘literary’ in the source culture
2. The translation of a text (in principle, at least, any text) so that it is acceptable as ‘literary’ to the recipient culture.

From these two aspects, it can be concluded that the meaning of literary translation depends on whether the source text or the target text or both are regarded as literature.

Furthermore, Sanchez divides literary translation, or as she also terms it ‘specialized translation’ into two categories (125). First, literary translation covers a very wide spectrum within the above two basic kinds of text with very different

methods of analysis and approach which differentiates it from technical and scientific translation. Second, literary translation focuses its attention not just on the content but also on the manner in which this content has been expressed (126).

Meanwhile, Bassnett does not explicitly give an explanation on the definition of literary translation. However, she provides a direct explanation of how to approach literary translation through poetry, prose, and dramatic text. In translating prose for example, she applies an exercise to discover how the translation of a novel is approached. She suggests that the translator should not start translating by immediately beginning with the opening paragraph but by reading the whole work first in order to find the relation between the opening paragraph and the structure of the work as a whole (Bassnett 110). Furthermore, Bassnett recommends that the prose translator consider six rules set up by Bellock. The rules are as follows (Bassnett 116):

1. The translator should not 'plod on', word-by-word or sentence by sentence, but should 'always "block out" his work'.
2. The translator should render idiom by idiom 'and idioms of their nature demand translation into another form from that of the original'.
3. The translator must render 'intention by intention', bearing in mind that 'the intention of a phrase in one language may be less emphatic than the form of the phrase, or it may be more emphatic'.
4. The translator should remember about *les faux amis*, those words or structures that may appear to correspond in both SL (Source Language) and TL (Target Language) but actually do not.

5. The translator is advised to “transmute boldly” and the essence of translating is the resurrection of an alien thing in a native body.
6. The translator should never embellish.

This study provides a partial translation of an Australian fiction text into Indonesian. *Postcards from Surfers* is a collection of short stories written by Helen Garner. This partial translation research is in line with Finlay’s definition of a literary translation which involves any type of fiction such as short stories. Furthermore, in this study, *Postcards from Surfers* is positioned as a literary work that is translated into a literary work in the Indonesian version. This is in line with Toury’s two categories of literary translation where the original/source or target language is a literary work. This study applies the definition that the literary work form of the source/original language (Australian English) is translated into the same message in the target language (Indonesian). The Indonesian translation of this work is a specialized translation because, as Sanchez writes, that literary translation involves translating not only the content but also the manner. Therefore, when translating this work, rules such as those suggested by Bassnett are considered. Some other important considerations include the purpose, the register, and the strategies apparent in the text.

The purpose of the translation refers to the so-called skopos theory developed by Hans J. Vermeer in the 1970s with the contribution of Katharina Reiss. Some people say that skopos theory has a close relationship with literary translation. The word ‘skopos’ was derived from Greek which means ‘purpose’ or ‘goal’. According to Palumbo (Palumbo), this theory governs how to choose and to determine the purpose of the text during the translation process. Thus, as Palumbo writes, “translating is seen as a purposeful activity: it essentially means to have a skopos and accordingly transfer a

[text] from its source-culture surrounding to target-culture surrounding, which by definition are different from the former” (107).

Meanwhile, Munday reveals that skopos theory “deals with a translatorial action which is based on a ST, which has to be negotiated and performed and which has a purpose and a result” (79). The reason to determine the purpose as Munday adds is “to determine the translation methods and strategies that are employed in order to produce a functionally adequate result” (79).

There is a critique related to the purpose of literary texts directed to skopos theory given by Nord and Schaffner. According to them, “literary texts are considered either to have no specific purpose and/or to be far more complex stylistically” (Munday 81). To this, Vermeer replies that literary texts are claimed to be “aimless” (Venuti 230). However, he is sure that aim is attributed to an action. Therefore, if an author produces writing as an action, it means that she/he gives a specific purpose (Venuti 230). This critique corresponds to the other critique admitted by Vermeer himself which states that the translator of literary texts also does not have any specific goal, function or intention in mind, instead, he just translates “what is in the source text” (Venuti 232). Vermeer contributes to the discussion by giving the example of advertisements. This kind of text is goal-oriented. The more successful the advertisement is, the better the text evidently is (Venuti 232). This applies also in its translation. Therefore, when translating literary texts, basically the translator also has a specific purpose.

Vermeer also suggests that the notion of skopos can be applied in three ways:

1. the translation process, and hence the goal of this process;
2. the translation result, and hence the function of the translatum;

3. the translation mode, and hence the intention of this mode. (Venuti 230)

The purpose of the Indonesian translation of *Postcards from Surfers* is based on Helen Garner's feminist ideas and concerns as expressed through literary narratives. In this case, the Indonesian translation of the work or *translatum* as Vermeer calls it, functions as a tool to help Indonesian readers understand the stories and then to help them engage with different thoughts of feminism. In doing so, they are also contributing to an ongoing dialogue with "Western" feminisms from a centred Buginese/Indonesian standpoint. Based on the above purpose, this study applies foreignization strategy to make the readers learn more about Australian culture.

In terms of register, Crystal defines register as a "socially defined variety of language" (Landers 59). In addition Landers writes that "there are various categories of register for instance non-technical/technical, informal/formal, urban/rural, standard/regional, jargon/non-jargon, vulgarity/propriety" (59).

In addition, referring to Halliday's term "systematic functional grammar" in his model of discourse analysis, Munday writes, that "register comprises three variable elements" (91). They are as follows:

1. field: what is being written about
2. tenor: who is communicating and to whom,
3. mode: the form of communication.

For Palumbo, register is "useful in helping the translator as reader to reconstruct the situational variables relating to a text or in particular circumstances and distinguished by particular choice of vocabulary or style" (152). Furthermore, Fawcett reveals that "there are two parameters that cause language to vary: namely, language

user and language use” (75). According to Fawcett, “language users can be described by the place they occupy in terms of time, space, and society, while language use can be described by tenor, mode, and domain” (77).

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that register deals with language use and language user. Therefore, it is important to determine the register before doing the translation. In this study, the Indonesian translation of *Postcards from Surfers* uses Indonesian standard as it is a national language for all Indonesians. Considering that the original work contains coarse/vulgar language, the intended readers are people who are twenty years old or over or in tertiary levels of study. Therefore, all Indonesians from any ethnic groups who are twenty years old or over are able to read it.

In terms of strategy, in translating *Postcards from Surfers* into Indonesian, I mostly apply both Foreignization and Domestication depending on contexts, and occasionally use other adjustment techniques including Addition, Interpolation, and Footnote. I use foreignization and domestication strategies to give a chance for the readers to “go abroad” by learning more about Australian culture while they are reading the Indonesian translation in Indonesian context.

I would like to start with the former two. Foreignization and Domestication are two basic strategies offered by Venuti which provide both linguistic and cultural guidance. Venuti writes that foreignization “entails choosing a foreign text and developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language” (145). He clarifies that foreignization, as he also terms it “resistancy”, is designed “to make visible the presence of the translator by highlighting the foreign identity of the ST and protecting it from the ideological dominance of the target culture” (145). Although Venuti advocates this strategy, he admits that this

strategy gains some contradictions namely “that it is a subjective and relative term that still involves some domestication because it translates a ST for a target culture and depends on dominant target-culture values to become visible when it departs from them” (145). Venuti states that foreignizing translations are “equally partial (as are domesticating translations) in their interpretation of the foreign text, but they do tend to flaunt their partiality instead of concealing it” (145).

Meanwhile, Hatim claims that this strategy “breaks target linguistic and cultural conventions by retaining some of the ‘foreignness’ of the source text” (46). In addition, Palumbo states that “the aim of this technique is to render the ST conspicuous in the target text; therefore, the dominant culture in TL is excluded” (48).

Domestication is the opposite of foreignization. According to Venuti, domestication involves “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home” (20). For Venuti this strategy is concerned with “the mode of linguistic and stylistic transfer chosen for foreign texts and with the choice of texts to be translated” (Palumbo 38). Meanwhile, Yang notes that “domestication designates the type of translation in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text to target language readers” (77).

“Addition” is one of three techniques of adjustment proposed by Nida. According to Molina and Albir, addition, subtraction and alteration are used: “1) to adjust the form of the message to the characteristics of the structure of the target language; 2) to produce semantically equivalent structure; 3) to generate appropriate stylistic equivalences; 4) to produce an equivalent communicative effect” (502). How these theories are applicable in the practice of translating Postcards from Surfers into Indonesian will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Interpolation is the next adjustment technique that helped when translating the five stories from *Postcards from Surfers*. According to Landers, interpolation is “another way to impart essential information from the source language, where in its basic form it is nothing more than adding a parenthetical word or phrase as unobtrusively as possible to make the readers outside the source language engage as readers in their homeland” (94). Landers suggests that “interpolation should always be short, never more than a few words, and avoid the temptation to overdo it” (94). This strategy allows more explanation about words or expressions in the source language which are not accessible in the target language. Its role is somewhat less important compared with the two previous strategies but it is still necessary.

The last adjustment technique I use is footnote. Footnote is another adjustment technique that are sometimes necessary to use especially in translating particular words or expressions from the source language which do not have equivalent words or expressions in the target language. To give more information of such words or expressions, a footnote helps the gap. Molina and Albir state that “footnote has two functions: 1) to correct linguistic and cultural differences; and 2) to add additional information about the historical and cultural context of the text in question (502). Lander admits that “the translation that includes a footnote is a warped reflection” because “they destroy the mimetic effect, the attempt by (most) fiction writers to create illusion that the reader is actually witnessing, if not experiencing, the events described” (93). However, Lander writes that some translators adopt this approach routinely. For this study, engagement with the source language and culture requires footnote at times to help bridge the cultural barriers.

## Chapter Two

### Helen Garner and Her Works

*Sipakatau, Sipakalebbi, Sipakainge, Sipatokkong*

*(Respect, entertain, remind, and support each other)*

Buginese saying

This chapter presents a brief outline of Helen Garner as a feminist writer. It includes biographical details, critical reception of her work and her feminist approach, as well as a synopsis of the five short stories from *Postcards from Surfers*. It is important to note the influence of Garner in contemporary Australian literature and how she has been received as a feminist writer: she has complicated the nature of feminism and strategies of engaging with feminist knowledge. An underlying aim of this research is to create a space for dialogue and debate about feminist thought for Indonesian tertiary students, rather than reinforce dualistic notions of the opposition between male and female, Western and “non-Western”.

#### Biographical Sketch

Helen Garner was born in Geelong in 1942 and grew up in a family of six children in Melbourne. Before she became an author, she worked at a variety of occupations including as a teacher and a journalist. Workplace experiences and personal, everyday experiences, including her (at times) conflicting relationship with men, have influenced and shaped her literary works. In one interview with Jennifer Ellison, Garner discusses her difficult relationship with her father which has been a site of discord throughout her life (Withlock 398). Such discordance in male-female relationships, whether between father or daughter or husband and wife, are examined in

my analysis of *Postcards from Surfers* and Garner's feminist position. Hayes among others has argued persuasively that Garner's literary plots and characters' developments function as a means of expressing her personal opinions (Hayes, "The Incredible Helen Garner" 20).

Experiencing the hardship of life in Melbourne as a single mother has also influenced her work. According to Gelder and Salzman, Garner's fiction "has documented the changing mores and habits of inner city Melbourne from the early seventies to the new life of the eighties" (103). Richardson also writes that Garner's "small world of fiction is around relationships between educated men and women, family love, its duties and satisfactions, and the tension between this and the world of romantic sexual love of Melbourne's inner suburbs" (97).

In an interview with Ray Willbanks, Garner discusses the breakdown of her first marriage and her need to stay strong for her daughter (88). She depicts the plight of a single mother vividly in *Monkey Grip* (1977), a story about a woman, Nora, who has to battle with the hardships in life bringing up a child in the city of Melbourne—a city she recalls as filled with a lot of music, a lot of drugs, and a lot of theatres (Willbanks 88). Regarding her portrayal of Nora, Birns and McNeer add that Garner's novel is "especially interested in white women's sexual liberation and everyday experience in urban, middle-class counterculture" (140). Therefore, critical reviews have also focused on music, drugs, and counter culture in her works.

Another book she wrote detailing experiences of living in Melbourne is *Honour and Other People's Children* (1980). This book is a collection of two stories, *Honour and Other People's Children*. In *Honour*, Garner depicts a story of a wife with a daughter who has to face the reality when her husband wants to divorce so that he can

remarry. While in *Other People's Children*, Garner again portrays the life of a mother with a daughter who has a conflict with her female friend with whom they live in collective household. So, like Nora in *Monkey Grip*, Honour and *Other People's Children* seems based on Garner's difficult life living and raising her daughter in Melbourne.

Apparent in Garner's work is her perspective of women and their role in society. Her literary works tend to deal with challenging not only patriarchal thought, but also certain strains of feminist thought. Garner was raised in the period of first wave feminism but solidified her positioning in the second wave of feminism. Therefore, experiencing life between these two waves of feminism has contributed significantly to her works. In *Postcards from Surfers* reformist outcomes from first wave feminism in Australia are apparent in the background of the stories and their characters while in the foreground they deal with what discourses of difference the second wave of feminism surfaced. *The First Stone* is her other book which portrays the life between these two waves. About this book, Ion states that "there is a notion of a generational and divisive gap between 'older' and 'younger' feminists that stands in the way of 'feminist progress'" (109). Furthermore, Genovese states, Garner is continuously developing an intertwined rhetoric of what contemporary Australian feminism subjectively means (147). Garner has been explicit about her concern that feminism too easily constructs an historical 'we-ness', she has asked the questions "What kind of feminism? And to whom does it belong?" (Genovese 148).

### **Critical Reception of Garner's Works**

Understandably, critical reception of Garner's work has considered the role of her personal experiences in influencing her writing. Darcy writes that "Garner's first

novel *Monkey Grip*, was derived from Helen Garner's diaries and its characters were heavily based on real people" (96). Borphy notes that despite the innovations of Garner's novel, "the reviews tended to describe the book in conventional terms, as a 'love story, feminist in love story, story of sex and drugs in the counter-culture', or 'the story of Helen Garner's life'" (Darcy 95).

Furthermore, Corris also claimed that "Helen Garner has published her private journal rather than written a novel" (Darcy 98). Gilbert explains that "the 'I' of *Monkey Grip*, Nora, represents the author herself" (8). In addition, Corris considers that "the book is not a novel but simply a personal journal" (Gilbert 9). In *Monkey Grip*, the presence of Javo with whom Nora falls in love is assumed by Goldsworthy to represent Garner's female desire for romantic love (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writer: Helen Garner* 6). Juncker, referring to Cixous' suggestion, argues that "woman must write her body in order to discover herself and she must explore her sexual pleasure to change the world" (426). In addition, Goldsworthy describes Garner's heroines being "represented as strong and shrewd: they are rescuers, supporters and survivors" (Goldsworthy, "Feminist Writings, Feminist Readings: Recent Australian Writing by Women" 513). Stevenson, Everingham and Robinson present Garner as "an activist for women's rights and sexual freedom: a feminist whose message to all women is don't be victims, be agents of change" (126).

According to Richardson the way Garner portrayed Nora and her junkie lover "made reviewers of the time—often men—complain that Garner was simply rabbiting on about herself and her friends" (98). Bennett supports this by stating that Garner's personal experience living in this place shapes "the jumping-off point for further explorations of thought and feeling" (241).

Goldsworthy states three aims in investigating Garner's works: "to use ideas from feminist literary theory to explore aspects of Garner's writing that have not been much talked about before; to locate her work in its cultural and historical contexts; and to show her writing represents some of the life-dilemmas solved, and posed, for women by competing demands and claims of feminism" (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 7). We need to remember that this was all happening in an era when (white) Australian women were garnering their voice(s). For Garner's work to not only be well-received but to also be translated into a popular contemporary Australian film was quite an achievement of the time.

Willbanks observes that "the rhythm structure in *Monkey Grip* is a 'sexual rhythm', something that Garner identifies as 'female rhythm'" (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 38). Willbanks senses that, "the domestic routine, the absence of the man in Nora's life, his presence, his absence, falls on the reader like ocean waves" is a rhythm (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 38). Goldsworthy herself claims that *Monkey Grip* reflects "the battles with the implications of sexual freedom that women in particular were going through at that time" (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 40). Gelder and Salzman support this by arguing that this novel "moved from being seen as radical to being seen as liberal feminist" (180).

In *Honour and Other People's Children* (1980), Garner tells in the first story, Honour, of a conflict between an old wife and a new wife where children become the ones that should be saved. Goldsworthy highlights the idea of feminism in this work by stating that it is impossible to occupy two women in the same piece of space. Or in other words, this kind of situation highlights the fact that "women in patriarchal society

are relative creatures” (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 42). Women attempting to survive and thrive in male-dominated situations can be seen in the second story, *Other People’s Children* (1980). In this work Goldsworthy illustrates Dennis’ arrogance of “being a man who benefits from women’s desire for and exercise of sexual freedom” (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 43). The subordination of woman is portrayed vividly here.

In *The Children’s Bach* (1984), Athena, the female protagonist focuses on child rearing, food preparation and health maintenance, and the manufacture and care of family clothes reflect female-specific modes of communication. Goldsworthy writes this is “the female voice working outside the usual use of language, and other codes developed through the female culture of the despised ‘house work’” (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 44).

Garner’s *Joe Cinque’s Consolation* (2004) has also been reviewed as the representation of her life experiences. The death of Cinque and the trial of Singh are intertwined with Garner’s psychological effect of her failed marriage; as Maher, McCulloch, and Pickering write that Garner “weaves the narrative of her current life status into the death of Cinque and the trial of Singh” (237). The idea of this novel as refracted through Garner’s experience is supported by Liddlelow who states that the two sisters portrayed in the novels are “law students, who allegedly killed the boyfriend of one of them in Canberra in 1999” (91). Garner became interested in the story and investigated it. Rooney comments that Garner’s investigation of the two law students Anu Singh and Madhavi Rao, is a “true-crime narrative that revolves around the courtroom drama and Garner’s encounters with the Singh and Cinque families” (159).

All the above works show that what Garner has written is strongly reflective of what she experiences in her life. This is in line with her own observations: “I’m writing a book because I’m writing to save myself. I’m writing to understand, to try to make sense out of my experiences, and those of other people I’ve witnessed and imagined...” (Lindsay 361).

The style and the modesty of Garner’s works have also been observed by some critics. This is due to Garner’s expressions which are thought to be unusual among contemporary Australian fiction authors. Goldsworthy agrees to this as she writes: “from the beginning of her writing career Garner was regarded as, and frequently called, a stylist, a realist, and a feminist” (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 1). Furthermore, according to Richardson, the reason Garner is called the stylist is because of the ‘economy’ which has become one of Garner’s trademarks. What is meant here is that “the story proceeds with an absolute clarity that never becomes over-explicit (tact, again)” (99) as it is in *The Children’s Bach*. Here, Richardson adds, “the book is carried out by dialogue and images of actions’ and it is ‘so skilfully and modestly woven into the text that it is as though the author has largely disappeared” (100). Richardson comments on this style, noting that it is as if “the author sits invisible behind her work, paring her nails” (100).

Hayes concurs with Richardson’s comments about Garner’s style. Hayes argues that in writing in a “competent journalistic style, Garner does much, much more-to say” (Hayes, “Helen Garner: The Stylist” 86). Hayes admires Garner by referring to *The First Stone* which was “a book worth reading for its writing” and that “Helen Garner writes the best sentences in Australia” (Hayes, “Helen Garner: The Stylist” 86). However, Hayes also provides criticism, noting that “Garner’s writing displays faults

on practically every other line’ such as the ‘careless mishandling of individual words- such as meniscus for example’” (Hayes, “Helen Garner: The Stylist” 86). Therefore Hayes contends that “in reading Garner’s work one rarely has long to wait for an awkward phrase or cumbersome sentence to appear” (Hayes, “Helen Garner: The Stylist” 87). Meanwhile, Bird states that “Garner’s writing is deceptively simple, rhythmically evocative of the minutiae of domestic life and the endless, many-layered quality of female conversation” (Webby 199). With her unique writing mode in expressing the complexity of feminist ideas, her writings sometimes create debate among feminist readers and critics.

In addition, Ashcroft writes that especially in *The Children Bach*, “the question of feminine language is located in the character’s relationship with and control over the performance of music’ where ‘music constructs a political scenario in which the relationships of men and women as well as their respective relation to language are questioned’” (489). Ashcroft adds that music operates in this novel as “metonymy for language, not because it is a way in which individuals communicate with one another, but because it demonstrates the different access they have to the possibility of self-expression” (489). This differential access will be further related to the way I dance with Australian feminism and will be examined in the proceeding analytical chapters on Helen Garner’s stories from *Postcards from Surfers*.

### **Garner’s Controversial Feminist Approach and Reception**

Even as Garner’s work has been hailed as “feminist”, it has also been branded as “anti-feminist”. When Garner was working as a journalist, in 1991 she became intrigued by a case of sexual harassment involving two female students and the Master of Ormond College, Dr Alan Gregory. The case was brought to the courts twice. In the

first court proceeding, Dr Gregory was found guilty. Garner read the case in the *Age*, wrote a private letter to him to express her sympathy and support, and condemned the two female students. She attended the second court proceeding when Dr Gregory was found not guilty. However, her letter to him was soon circulated and it evoked anger among women. Her book, *The First Stone* (1995) resulted from this sexual harassment case.

Goldsworthy argues that this work was written based on Garner's controversial investigation of what led two young women (also law students) to bring to court their allegations of sexual assault against the Master of Melbourne University's Ormond College (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 64-65). When *The First Stone* was published, it provoked much criticism, especially from Australian feminists. According to Taylor one of the reasons is that in this novel Garner is assumed to be 'betraying the idea of feminism' (Taylor, "Feminist 'Misreading'/'Misreading Feminist'" 81). This provoked and enraged many feminists, who attacked Garner. Goldsworthy writes that even Jenna Mead, the feminist academic and former employee of Ormond College "identified herself as the original of six or seven different figures in this novel" (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 4). To counter Garner, Mead published a "forcefully argued piece and pointed out that Garner's power and influence as a public figure made it impossible for other points of view to hold their own in media representation of the whole affair" (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 4).

In response to the attack, Garner gave a speech to the Sydney Institute whose edited transcript of this speech also appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, and *The Australian*. Taylor states that throughout this speech, Garner defended herself

by writing that “feminism is an interpretive framework in a dual sense; that is, the focus of the speech’s critique is both feminist “(mis)readings” of the book and feminist “(mis)reading of certain behaviour as sexually harassing” (74). Taylor adds that Garner clarified that she was there not here to bash feminism (80). In addition, when Garner was interviewed about “this mass-mediated so-called feminist battle, she conflated her authorial self with the publicly performed self/selves of other cultural texts such as interviews and this speech, particularly as she rearticulated many of the central propositions of *The First Stone*” (Taylor 75). Garner was concerned that monolithic and all-consuming notions of feminism were actually disempowering young women, as well as at times, men.

Richardson admits that *The First Stone* was perceived as Garner’s “betrayal of feminism for her apparent support for the Master and disapproval of the women for bringing formal legal charges against him” (101). However, according to Richardson, this is one way in which Garner developed a capacity to surprise her readers, as Garner has written that “the grand thing about being fifty is how tough you can be. You don’t have to care what people think. You can let things rip” (103).

One of my reasons for using Garner’s work is because of her ability to challenge, dismantle and reconsider the power of feminist thought to both provide a space for different voices as well as potentially silence certain voices. My translation of her works allows Indonesian readers, especially students, access into an important female Australian writer’s work, diverse uses of feminist thought, and insight into the challenges Australian women do and do not encounter.

Garner questions the “authority academic feminists were beginning to enjoy” (Curthoys 16). *The First Stone* appeared at a time when, as Curthoys states “partially

assimilated into the mainstream, part demonised authoritarian extreme, feminism has fragmented and diffused recognition” (Mead 208). *The First Stone* marked a defining moment in Australian feminism due to the public response because of Garner’s defence of the man being accused.

The cultural reverberations of Garner’s book have continued, at varying levels of intensity, since its publication [...]. The impact of the book’s publication on its author is invoked every time Garner enters the public domain. Taylor writes (Webby) that from within the media event itself, the effects of its publication were the subject of much early commentary; as one of its key speaker observes in *The Sydney Morning Herald*; “I can’t remember a debate which has had people so opinionated, and so polarised (Summers, 1995c).” (Taylor, *Mediating Australian feminism: Rereading the First Stone Media Event* 14)

However, all the above critical reviews deal with works other than *Postcards from Surfers*, and to fill this gap, this study explores Garner’s feminist ideas in selected five stories from that short-story collection. Up to now, no one has approached this work from a non-western point of view, much less from a Buginese perspective. Moreover, Goldsworthy observes that *Postcards from Surfers* is the only one of Garner’s books that has not caused some discussion about its generic definition like *Monkey Grip* which is called “not a novel” (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 48). By readings and examining Garner’s stories and their embedded feminist portrayals and purposes, Indonesian readers will be provided with an insight into contemporary mainstream Australian culture and life that reveals the benefits and the silences of feminism.

### *Postcards from Surfers*

*Postcards from Surfers* is a collection of Helen Garner's short stories which was first published in 1985. The book consists of eleven short stories. Five stories of the book become the objects of this study including "Postcards from Surfers", "La Chance Existe", "The Life of Art", "All Those Bloody Young Catholics", and "Civilization and Its Discontents". These stories were chosen deliberately as they possess a variety of themes which represent Garner's feminist concerns and which provide relevant links to Indonesian cultures.

"Postcards from Surfers" centres on a white Australian female protagonist who visits her parents on the Gold Coast. Through the characters of the protagonist's mother and father, the reader is given insights into middle class Australian life and retirement. During the story the protagonist recalls postcards she has from different places that remind her of relationships and the influence of environment.

In "La Chance Existe" the two main characters are a homosexual white Australian male and a heterosexual white Australian female, who were once in relationship, sojourning in Boulogne. During their time together on this trip, themes surrounding love, sexuality, patriarchy and degradation are raised.

Garner's short story "The Life of Art" is comprised of many short sentences and paragraphs. This structure allows the reader brief glimpses into a friendship between two Australian women over many years. The first person point-of-view speaks directly to the reader about 'my friend' and how this friend has lived through the effects of the first and second wave of feminism in Australian culture.

“All Those Young Bloody Catholics” is written as a monologue, an almost stream-of-consciousness style. This monologue, at times a tirade, spews forth from a white Australian male character in a pub who bumps into an old female acquaintance. Throughout the speech he manages to insult, berate and generalise about Australian women, sex and place.

The final story, “Civilisation and Its Discontent” focuses on an illicit relationship between a married man and his mistress. This story raises issues surrounding sexuality and power, place and language and the role of motherhood.

From my translation of these stories (and the many difficulties that arose due to cultural clashes and inappropriate concepts for Indonesians) as well as my critical analysis of them, in chapter Three I will identify four main themes that are apparent and significant in all five short stories and that are relevant to Indonesian cultures and experiences. These themes, The Kitchen, Language, Landscape, and Sexuality are all closely interrelated and have been influenced by feminist thought since the first wave of feminism. They are representative of the changing culture of feminism in the country and they evoke important concepts for Indonesian readers to consider.

## Chapter Three

### A Critical Analysis of Postcards from Surfers Viewed from a Buginese Perspective

*Malebbi, Macca, Warani*

*(Modest, Clever, Brave)*

Buginese saying

JE: How did feminism directly influence your writing?

HG: It directly influenced my writing in the sense that I felt that it was all right for me to be writing in the first place. I still have trouble even now with the thought that I am not as worthy as a man. I have to put on a bit of bravado sometimes to get past that. I mean as a writer. It's the kind of female cringe that we recognised in ourselves when feminism gave us a way of looking at ourselves usefully. An act of will isn't enough to break out of female conditioning. You can't just bounce on the sofa drawing attention to yourself, saying "Look at me! I'm terrific!" You have to believe it, quite quietly, right inside you. That's a lifelong process.

(Extract from interview by Jennifer Ellison)

This chapter presents a critical analysis of Garner's ideas of feminism viewed from a Buginese perspective. The chapter has been divided into four main sections: The Kitchen, Language, Landscape, and Sexuality. Each section examines discourses of power and identity as they manifest in domestic and public spaces according to my analysis of Garner's five short stories. These themes are viewed in the context of Australian feminism as well as through a Buginese lens to highlight cultural similarities and differences between mainstream Australian feminism and Indonesian cultures and knowledge. Embedded in each theme are examples of repressive and productive power.

#### **The Notion of Power**

In patriarchal society, power has a close relationship with gender inequality. Gender inequality exists because there is one group who dominates another group. In *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, it is stated that the meaning of "power, "influence",

“control”, and “domination are uncertain, shifting, and overlapping” (424). Therefore, instead of seeking a single analysis of ‘power’, there are five main features that can be considered:

1. an intention manifest in the exercise of power;
2. the successful achievement of this intention;
3. a relationship between at least two people;
4. the intentional initiation by one of actions by the other;

a conflict of interest or wishes engendering a resistance that the initiator overcomes (*The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* 424).

Bullock and Trombley write that “power is defined as the ability of its holders to exact compliance or obedience over other individuals” (678). Power, as Bullock and Trombley add, is “one of the central concepts of political theory which sociologists have sought to define by distinguishing it from authority on the one hand, and from force on the other” (677-678). The four main themes that frame my analysis of Garner’s five stories are sites of authority and control that are implicitly inter-tangled, shifting and overlapping.

My analysis of Garner’s stories is not framed by the notion of women simply being dominated by men. I also argue that masculinities need to be redefined as dynamic and potentially transgressive. In exploring how power operates in the kitchen, in language, in landscape and in sexuality, I draw from poststructuralist discourses on power. As Foucault has argued: “In power relations there is necessarily the possibility of resistance because if there were no possibility of resistance (of violent resistance, flight, deception, strategies capable of reversing the situation), there would be no power

relations at all” (292). Foucault points out that sexual knowledge develops through a multiplicity of sites. In an Indonesian context, such sites include family, marriage, state, religion.

His concept of power includes the “juridico-discursive” model. Sawicki writes that “this model underpins both liberal theories of sovereignty (that is, legitimate authority often codified in law and accompanied by a theory of rights) and Marxist theories which locate power in the economy and the state as an arm of the bourgeoisie” (20). According to Sawicki, there are three basic assumptions involved in this model (20):

1. Power is possessed (for instance: by the individuals in the state of nature, by class , by the people)
2. Power flows from a centralized source from top to bottom (for instance: the law, the economy, the state)
3. Power is primarily repressive in its exercise (a prohibition backed by sanction)

In brief, Sawicki summarises power as exercised rather than possessed, primarily repressive but also productive and analysed as coming from the bottom up. Foucault emphasizes power as an exercised action or ability that can be performed by individuals and comes from the individual themselves. Approaching Garner’s narratives with a Foucauldian notion of power in mind allows the reader to transgress binary oppositions (of the West and the East for example, or of male versus female) and instead engage with different manifestations of feminist purposes and achievements in Australian society.

Dreyfus argues that “power is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society and it produces reality, that is, it determines what makes sense and is believed or done” (2). According to Dreyfus, for Foucault, power controls the actions of people while nonetheless leaving them free. Power is understood as actions engaged in by a free subject, both individuals and a society, who are faced by possibilities in which they have to behave and react (2). From this point of view, it is obvious that women both as individuals and as social creatures have the potential to behave or to react towards all possibilities that will happen to them.

Meanwhile, Hartsock, a leading feminist critic of post-structuralism emphasizes the differences between theories of power about women and theories of power for women. According to her, “the former theories include the subjugation of women as yet another variable to be considered, and the latter theories begin from the experience and point of view of the dominated” (Nicholson 158). For Hartsock, these theories give attention not only to the ways women are dominated, but also to their capabilities, abilities, and strengths. In each section of this chapter I draw from examples in the narratives to explore the ways in which women in Australian society perform their capabilities and strengths, while at the same time being dominated by surrounding discourses of the domestic space signified by the kitchen, language, landscape, and sexuality. Responding to Foucault’s idea of power, Hartsock argues that “Foucault’s world is not her world because, in Foucault’s world, things move rather than people; this is a world in which subjects become obliterated or, rather, recreated as passive objects, a world in which passivity or refusal represent the only possible choices” (167).

Furthermore, Bartky believes that “power is an ability that has already been there within the individual that may come out when the individual is under the control or domination of other people” (65-68). So, Bartky claims that when women are faced with a problem, their potential power emerges to react and to resist to the problem. For some women, however, this power struggle depends on their socio-cultural or political condition. In addition, Bartky states that as “modern industrial societies change and as women themselves resist patriarchal forms, older forms of domination are eroded and new forms arise, spread, and become consolidated” (80).

The purpose of this research is to contribute to opening spaces for Indonesian tertiary students to rethink ideas of male and female agency through the interpretation and analysis of Australian feminism as it manifests in Garner’s texts. By examining the way Garner uses language and narrative as instances of power, Indonesian tertiary students will gain an insight into Australian women and culture as represented by Garner, and knowledge of how power can be dominant or resistant, or a combination of both. By establishing a dialogue between Australian literature and Indonesian schemata, individual Indonesian readers will be able to begin to configure their own complex gendered agency. In her paper “Islamic Feminist Activism in Indonesia: Muslim Women’s Paths to Empowerment”, Parvanova outlines the importance of grassroots promotion of women’s rights, gender equality and better strategic positions to counter discrimination:

Gender equality forms the central theme that permeates and binds the work and ideas of Indonesian women activists and women’s rights advocates. Through their engagement with social equality and justice they consciously and meticulously create a discursive space for women’s issues, in order to articulate their pioneering concepts and ideas of gender sensitivity [...] However, as long as Indonesian women still depend on the authority and support of men in order to implement their ideas within a men-dominated political arena, their main sphere of

activism remains the local community within the scope of grassroots politics, training and education. The impact of this form of activism is not strictly limited to the premises of the local community, but reaches far beyond its precincts to construct and deconstruct existing social perceptions and motivations. It is a sensitive bottom-up approach, through which roles and social positions are directly challenged and transformed. (23)

## **Critical Analysis**

The following analysis examines the construction and deconstruction of existing social and cultural perceptions in mainstream Australian society as portrayed in the five short stories translated, with the aim of challenging and transforming relations between Indonesian students and their engagement with Australian society as well as with their own identity and each other. The analysis is viewed from a Buginese perspective which is divided into four themes; the kitchen, language, landscape, and sexuality.

### **1. The Kitchen**

The physical space and purpose of the kitchen, in both Australian and Indonesian contexts, is read as a cultural space in my analysis, that is, a particular physical location and a metaphorical site. According to Yuval-Davis it is a space that offers multiple and overlapping ways in which “women’s distinctive experience as women occurs within spaces that have been socially lived as the personal – private, emotional, interiorized, particular, individuated, intimate” (364). My analysis considers the implications of this gendered space for both feminine and masculine identities.

In the history of kitchen design in Australia, Johnson writes, the 1920s was a time in Australia when the servant disappeared and the use of new technologies such as the ice-box, electrically powered mixers and the stove lead to the inception of the “housewife” (125). Parallel to this is the development of the model kitchen space that

incorporates a “working triangle” which links food storage, sink and cooking facilities in a space of approximately 4-6 feet apart (Johnson 126). The kitchen space became a place occupied solely by women. As the role of women changed throughout generations, from household manager in the 1920s to super women in 1980s and 1990s, the kitchen design altered to become a small work space open to other spaces where children could play. Physically it is usually located just adjacent to the living room without a dividing wall. It is a place where members of the family meet each other, mostly at breakfast, lunch and dinner times. In Australia it is also a place where guests can be served since open-plan living is popular, where there is no dividing wall between the kitchen and living room. In this situation, the kitchen becomes the heart of the house. This change in design was influenced by the involvement of women in the paid labour force and the creation of the double burden (Johnson 128). In contemporary settings most of Australian houses resemble modern ones where the kitchen is usually equipped with electric or handy appliances for example stove, oven, dishwashing machine, water system, water heater etc. Johnson states that the kitchen in western countries has undergone significant changes in its size, location, equipment, look, social relation and value (124). From this illustration, it is clear that the kitchen, which used to be a place predominantly for women, has gradually opened for every member of the family to participate in activities in this space. This is in line with Bennett’s claims that “the kitchen is the place where gender roles are remade and subverted” (Johnson 129). Johnson adds that “the kitchen is the site where patriarchal social relations are both affirmed and challenged” (129).

In “Postcards from Surfers” there is one particular scene that centres the kitchen space as open to both men and women. The protagonist’s father is preparing his lunch in the kitchen by himself.

Twelve o'clock,' says my father.

'Getting on for lunchtime,' I say.

'Getting towards it. Specially with that nice cold corned beef sitting there, and fresh brown bread. Think I'll have to try some of that choko relish. Ever eaten a choko?'

'I wouldn't know a choko if I fell over it,' I say.

'Nor would I.'

He selects a serrated knife from the magnetised holder on the kitchen wall and quickly and skilfully, at the bench, makes himself a thick sandwich. He works with powerful concentration: when the meat flaps off the slice of bread, he rounds it up with a large, dramatic scooping movement and a sympathetic grimace of the lower lip. He picks up the sandwich in two hands, raises it to his mouth and takes a large bite. While he chews he breathes heavily through his nose.

'Want to make yourself something?' he says with his mouth full. (*PFS* 4-5)

The women move, in, around and outside of the kitchen while the father, recognising his lunch time, enters the space to prepare food by himself. For Australians, the illustration of a man being in the kitchen preparing his lunch is presumably a normal occurrence. Many Australian men do not mind cooking and preparing food for family meals especially when the wife is busy. It is clear from this depiction of the kitchen as both a physical and culturally constructed space that the female homemaker and the male breadwinner are no longer oppositional figures. This traditionally domestic sphere is opened to all individuals. The kitchen has been reimagined as a shared feminine and masculine space.

In Garner's "Civilisation and Its Discontents", at the very end of the story the female protagonist returns to her home where she is met by her son at the airport. She observes a young man carrying a baby in a sling, gazing with adoration at the child and is reminded of the day she gave birth to her son.

The birth was long and I lost my rhythm and made too much noise and they drugged me, and when it was over I felt that now I knew what the prayer book meant when it said the pains of death got hold upon me. But crossing the road that day, still sore from knives and needles, I saw a pregnant woman lumbering towards me, a woman in the final stages of waiting, putting one heavy foot in front of the other. Her face as she passes me was as calm and as full as an animal's: 'a face that had not yet received the fist'. And I envied her. I was stabbed, pierced with envy, with longing for what was about to happen to her, for what she was ignorantly about to enter. I could have cried out, Oh, let me do it again! Give me another chance! Let me meet the mighty forces again and struggle with them! Let me be rocked again, let me lie helpless in that huge cradle of pain! [...] I wanted to say to him [her son], to someone, 'Listen. Listen. I am hopelessly in love'. But I hung on. I knew I had brought it on myself, and I hung on until the spasm passed. And then I began to recreate from memory the contents of the fridge. (*PFS* 100-101)

Giving birth remains the solitary domain of women. The extract begins with the recognition that giving birth in an incorrect manner may result in being silenced – as happened to the protagonist. However, even though “they” silenced her with drugs, she embraces the ability to give birth, to rhythmically and helplessly be cradled by pain that only women can experience. For her, the physical pain of birthing her son remains intertwined with her role as mother and caretaker. In this instance, her memory of the contents of the fridge is not a sign of female domestic restriction, but feminine empowerment. The protagonist has moved from being a mistress in an illicit affair with a man she loves but will never “have,” to a mother with a son who is now all grown up to finally the purveyor of the fridge and what it holds. Throughout this piece discontent is a prominent theme and the protagonist’s recollection of how she birthed her son and her desire to do it again is reminiscent of “The Life of Art” where one’s desires are complex and contradictory.

Garner’s reconsideration of the kitchen as traditionally representative of a domestic and feminine site, imbues her male and female characters with a sense of their own agency. Gendered subjectivities become shifting and fluid. Associated masculine

and feminine practices become flexible and multiple. However, she does not simply present a shared domestic space as utopian or harmonious, but constantly forces the reader to consider the new restrictions or experiences that this reconsideration of the space opens up.

A different representation between the construction of feminine and masculine is metaphorically reflected through the symbolic meaning of the kitchen as in Garner's "The Life of Art". In this narrative, the main character speaks to the reader about a close friend, referred to as "my friend". This particular short story explicitly deals with the double burden that Australian women potentially carry with them throughout their lives. This narrative relays incidents from two women's friendship during their lifetime and poignantly ends with their realisation that they will not be loved by men that they can respect. At the beginning of the story, the protagonist tells the reader:

When I first met my friend she was engaged. She was wearing an antique sapphire ring and Italian boots. Next time I saw her, in Myers, her hand was bare. I never asked. We were students then. We went dancing in a club in South Yarra. The boys in the band were students too. We fancied them, but at twenty-two we felt ourselves to be older women, already fading, almost predatory. We read *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone*. This was in 1965; before feminism. (*PFS* 56)

The specific identification of a pre-feminist era reinforces the dilemma these two women ultimately discover themselves in at the end of the narrative. The presence of a ring signifies that a marriage is imminent (the Italian boots signify a particular class of society). When the ring is gone, its absence and the protagonist's refusal to question its absence, reinforces the fear of being unwanted. This is further emphasised by their belief, at the age of 22, that they are no longer desirable to "boys". While these women enjoy a certain amount of freedom, they can go dancing and shopping whenever they

desire, there is an underlying awareness that male companionship is important.

Throughout the story the narrator continually reminds the reader that these events – engagements, abortions, marriages – were in the “1960s; before feminism.” At the end of the narrative, the protagonist is ill and being looked after by her friend. Her friend is sad and lonely and cries that she wants a man.

‘You could have one,’ I said.

‘I don’t want just any man,’ said my friend. ‘And I don’t want a boy. I want a man who is not going to think my ideas are crazy. I want a man that will see the part of me that no-one ever sees. I want a man who’ll look after me and love me. I want a grown-up.’ [...]

‘Women like us,’ I said to my friend, ‘don’t have men like that. Why should you expect to find a man like that?’

‘Why shouldn’t I?’ said my friend.

‘Because men won’t do those things for women like us. We’ve done something to ourselves so that men won’t do it. Well- there are men who will. But we despise them.’ (*PFS* 62)

“This was in the 1980s; after feminism.” (*PFS* 60). Garner’s narrative offers a glimpse into the everyday nuances of mainstream Australian women’s positionings: before feminism they were challenged by the requirement of having a man; post feminism, they are challenged by their desire to be wanted by a man. In this particular piece, both constructions of femininity and masculinity are provided by the two women. The statement “women like us” shows an awareness of their own identities and how society perceives them. What is also important here is their perception of masculinities and how certain types of men, post-feminism, are now despised by them. Yet there remains a desire for a man. Masculinity, here, is something that is shifting and fluid, yet in being dynamic it potentially delimits the agency of what a man should be before he is despised by women. When viewing epigraphs on tombstones at the beginning of the

story, the friend points a headstone that says “She lived only for others”. This causes her to state that she wants her epigraph to be “She lived only for herself” (*PFS* 55). This binary between living for others and living only for yourself needs to be dismantled so that the space in-between can be explored further, that is, it cannot simply be viewed as women being restricted by men before feminism and equal with men after feminism. There are many shifting and contradictory feminine and masculine constructions brought into play. It is much like the metaphorical and physical space signified by the Kitchen, and who can enter it and who can leave.

However, in Buginese society, it should only be women, not men, who carry out food preparation in the kitchen. It is a paradox because one of the ceremonial requirements that a Buginese man must fulfil in order to get married is that he should be able to walk around the kitchen seven times. This signifies that the man should be ready mentally, physically, and financially to build a family. Seven times here refers to the seven days of a week that a man should be able to feed his family. Many Buginese men think that as long as they can provide the needs of *sandang* (clothing) and *pangan* (food) for the family, that they have fulfilled all their responsibilities. As a result, other responsibilities including preparing food, taking care of children, helping the children doing their homework are imposed on women. However, there are also many Buginese women who work and earn money for the family; but they still have to do domestic work. Having a husband who is willing to help with food preparation, like the father figure in “Postcard from Surfers”, can reduce women’s domestic workload.

A traditional Buginese house consists of three spaces including *rakkeang* (under the roof), *ale’ bola* (the body of the house) and *awa sao* (beneath the house). *Ale bola* (the body of the house) is divided into three parts based on gender division: the front,

the middle, and the back. Pelras writes that “the space within the house is divided according to gender: the front part is considered the men’s portion and the back part the women’s” (161). The front is where a living room is usually situated. When there is a male guest, the female family member will enter the house through the back door. The guest or *to laing* (outsiders) can only enter the front area. The middle of the house is for the married couple. If they have children, the children will be in another room next to their parents’ room. The back is where the kitchen is situated. This place is a place for women and forbidden to guests or *to laing* (outsiders). Any activities related to house work including cooking, washing dishes, and cleaning are the responsibility of women. Male members of the family are only allowed to enter the kitchen if they want to take the daily meals that have been prepared by the female member. Idrus writes that “the front of the house is regarded as the place for guests and men, usually a space with no walls, symbolizing ‘freedom’ and the back part of the house is considered the place for women and family, limited by walls in accordance with the principle of ‘protection’” (80).

In Indonesia, the present kitchen has been constructed socially and culturally to be the place for women. Any housework related to the kitchen is regarded as the responsibility of women including cooking, washing, and cleaning. This gender division structure of a house is also applicable for other ethnic groups in Indonesia including the Javanese. Koentjaraningrat writes that “there is a belief especially among Javanese people that the kitchen is the weakest part of the house because it is occupied by women” (Sumintarsih 19). Daldjoeni adds that “generally the kitchen is an additional house built after the main house is finished” (Sumintarsih 18). Therefore, according to Sumintarsih, it is not surprising that “the Javanese often call a wife *kanca wingking* (friend at the back), a female mate who works at the back or in the kitchen” (19). This

term defines and limits a woman's dignity because it labels women as the ones who do not have the capability to emerge into the public domain.

In addition, Hermawati notes that “in Javanese society there are three basic criteria a woman should fulfil in order to be chosen as a wife. They are *manak* (able to give birth), *macak* (to dress up), *masak* (to cook)” (20). Other things associated with a woman are *dapur* (kitchen), *pupur* (cosmetic), *kasur* (sexual intercourse), and *sumur* (doing laundry). For many Indonesians these associations are perceived as something that absolutely cannot be changed by or for women—they are *kodrat* (innate nature)—not simply gender roles constructed for them by their culture.

According to Sadli and Porter (Sumintarsih), while “notions regarding so-called *kodrat* are supposed to be applied to both men and women, they are actually only applied to women and their ‘natural’ duties as wives and mothers” (446). In other words, gender and sex are viewed as synonymous rather than socially and culturally constructed.

From a Buginese perspective, a man who is involved in any activity in the kitchen can be called *lakkai matunreng* (a parsimonious husband). Generally this kind of husband also controls the money for the household which is customarily regarded as women's business, so it is viewed as shameful for a woman to have such a husband. When examining the portrayal of the father who prepares his lunch in the kitchen in “Postcard from Surfers”, it cannot be perceived as the same patriarchal prerogative of Buginese man. We cannot judge this man according to Buginese social norms. His wife is out, he wants his lunch, so he prepares it (ultimately the wife washes the dirty dishes). The implication is, if a man enters the kitchen it does not mean he controls the money or that he is stingy. Sharing domestic duties is not a signifier of male shame. Usually lunch

is the most preparation intensive meal for Buginese people however, in “Postcards from Surfers”, the kitchen is not the exclusive domain of the women.

The application and enforcement of gender role divisions in Australian culture allows the individual to choose how they interact with the kitchen and its connotation of domestic duties. This means for both men and women, the kitchen can be an empowered space. For my Buginese students, by translating and examining “Postcards from Surfers”, they are provided with a specific gendered site, the kitchen, which has been reconceptualised into a hybridised feminine and masculine space and works as a literary and cultural example of how they can define other physical and cultural spaces.

Garner’s stories complicate the natures and desires of both women and men: they both adhere to and challenge traditional “pre-feminist” gender role norms. In doing so her work reveals how power can be shared and exchanged when these natures and desires are seen as more fluid between men and women. In Buginese culture, there is a strict delineation between the *kodrat* of men and women (signified by the partitions of the house for men and women), though there are instances where such strict delineations are relaxed (for example the ceremony where the man must walk around the kitchen). From this theme, it can be concluded that if Buginese women want to be free from the shackles of patriarchy, they should be ready to accept men as their *mitra* (partners) instead of *lawan* (opponents) and be ready to make a change without transgressing Buginese custom and culture. In other words, the ideas of feminism that Buginese can take should be the ones which are applicable to the Buginese culture.

## 2. Language

Garner is an Australian author who engages with language and its forms of domination both covertly and overtly in her constructions of femininity and masculinity.

This is in line with Rowbothan who states that “language conveys a certain power and it is one of the instruments of domination” (Elshtain 603-604).

There are two significant points from Garner’s *Postcards from Surfers* that I find reflect her feminist ideas – her use of lexical items and her content. Garner’s use of lexical items is not “women’s language” as termed by Lakoff. Lakoff characterizes “women’s language” into:

1. a large stock of words related to women’s interests, generally relegated as “woman’s work”: magenta, shirr, dart (in sewing), and so on. If men use these words at all, it tends to be tongue-in-cheek.
2. “Empty” adjectives like divine, charming, cute .....
3. Question intonation and rising declaratives and intonations: for instance “It’s so hot, isn’t it” “What your name, dear?” “Mary Smith?”
4. Hedging phrases: Women’s speech generally contain more instances of “well,” “y’know,” “kinda,” and so forth: words that convey the sense that the speaker is uncertain about what he (or she) is saying, or cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement.
5. Related to this is the use of the intensive “so”. Again, this is more frequent in women’s than men’s language, though certainly men can use it.
6. Hypercorrect grammar: women are not supposed to talk rough.
7. Superpolite forms. This is the point alluded to earlier: women are supposed to speak more politely than men. This is related to their hypercorrectness in grammar, of course, since it is considered more mannerly in middle-class society to speak “properly”. But it

goes deeper: women don't use off-color or indelicate expressions; women are the experts at euphemism; more positively, women are the repositories of tact and know the right things to say to other people, while men carelessly blurt out whatever they are thinking.

#### 8. Women do not tell jokes. (53-56)

The existence of these characteristics marks the difference between men and women in communication. Furthermore, Hobbs notes that "when talking with the same sex peers, women will use many positive politeness strategies while men do not show this tendency" (Mahmud, "Language and Gender in English Language Teaching" 173). According to Mahmud, the difference between male and female communication becomes a critical point of gender inequality because it influences attitude and expectations (Mahmud, "Language and Gender in English Language Teaching" 174). In addition, Lakoff notes that "women experience linguistic discrimination in two ways: in the way they are taught to use language and in the way general language use treats them (4). As a result, these two ways tend to relegate women to certain subservient functions: that of a sex object or servant; and therefore certain lexical items mean one thing when applied to men and another when applied to women, a difference that cannot be predicted except with reference to the different roles the sexes play in society (Lakoff 4). Garner's work offers examples of language in action as both repressive and productive agents of power. The male and female characters communicate according to their social, cultural, historical and gender positioning and they resist these positions at times too. Garner's use of language, at times "men's language", provides examples of resistance to social and cultural expectations. Lakoff argues that the tendency to use "men's language", which conveys lexical items classified as "men's language", is

increasingly being used by women but men do not adopt women's language (3). For Lakoff, "this is comparable to the recent social phenomenon where men's jobs are being sought by women, while few men are rushing to become housewives or secretaries" (3). Garner's use of "men's language" proves Lakoff's recognition of women's efforts to resist inequality through language.

In translating and analysing Garner's short stories, I was concerned with translating both linguistically and culturally the "bad" language. My reading suggests that she resists male oppression through the use of her lexical style. She protests against women being differentiated by the use of language and the associated expectation of the feminine. She gains power by using "bad" language and showing that women can also use languages which tend to be "men's language". By doing so she resists patriarchal ideology of what is appropriate language and forces notions of masculine and feminine to be reconsidered and at times, repositioned. This is contrary to typical Buginese language use, especially their use of lexical items.

To be called *malebbi*' (modest), Buginese women are supposed to speak politely and not use coarse and vulgar language. Mahmud writes that "the Bugis people have high expectations of practicing and maintaining politeness which is influenced by Bugis cultural, religious, and hierarchical characteristics" (Mahmud, "Pronoun Choices in Bugis: The Road to Encode Politeness" 2). According to Mahmud, there are at least three factors why Buginese should maintain politeness. First of all Buginese people adhere to the concept of *siri*' (honor, shame) very strongly. Therefore, one way to preserve this concept is by speaking politely. The second is as the adherents of Islam religion, the Buginese are expected to maintain their politeness. The last factor is hierarchical and depends on social status, age differences, and gender differences which

influence Buginese use of politeness (Mahmud, “Pronoun Choices in Bugis: The Road to Encode Politeness” 2).

Buginese women are supposed to not be talkative and outspoken. Even in some situations like arguing, they are expected to be reticent or silent rather than to speak. There are Indonesian mottos such as *mengalah untuk menang* (succumbing in order to win) and *diam adalah emas* (silence is golden) that emphasise this need to be silent. For Buginese women, Garner’s engagement with feminist discourse exemplifies a freedom to speak. In *Postcards from Surfers*, the narratives implicitly and explicitly suggest the need for women to resist the control of dominant patriarchal languages and expectations according to their own needs, positions and desires.

As a Buginese woman, my focus on Garner’s language, and her use of coarse and vulgar signifiers, required that I moved from a Western use of language to an appropriate Buginese translation, as in the following excerpt:

‘I mean if both of you have the same equipment does that mean it’s more equal? Do people fall into habits of fucking or being fucked? Or does everyone do everything?’ (PFS 47)

This excerpt from “La Chance Existe” is spoken by Julie, the female protagonist to the male character. Buginese women are not supposed to utter such language because it will lower their dignity, not only of the women who speak but also of their family. This is due to the *siri*’ (honour) the Buginese women have to preserve in their life. In the Buginese manuscript *Lontarak* there is a saying - ‘*padecengi bicarae, parakai ampe-ampe malebbi*’-e, *gau-gau lalo*’ *tengnga-e, pari tengngai bicara ri tennga-e*. (speak politely, behave honourably, be humble, be fair). This saying consists of four lessons Buginese should apply in their daily life: 1. to speak politely which means no

coarse and vulgar language; 2. to behave well, therefore preserving honour; 3. to be humble and not arrogant; 4. to be fair. In a Buginese family, the parents teach these moral and social lessons to their children at a very young age, especially their daughters. These lessons are one of the guidelines applicable to Buginese no matter when and where they are. Buginese parents usually emphasize these lessons especially where their daughters are concerned because women are regarded as fragile if they break the siri'.

The use of coarse and strong language is a potential danger for Buginese women. For instance, if a Buginese woman needs to use the word "vagina", they have to replace it with the word *permata* or *intan* (diamond). Those who use this kind of language are regarded to *de'gaga sikolana* (uneducated people). It is shameful to be called this because to *de'gaga sikolana* (uneducated people) implies not only that you are not able to read and write but that you are *tidak tahu tata krama* (no manners). No one wants to be referred to as to *de'gaga sikolana* (an uneducated person). Therefore, the opportunity to get an education, at least until junior or senior high school is important for most Buginese people because as well as the home, school is the place where children learn not only knowledge but also manners.

The second point I would like to address concerning Garner's engagement with feminism is the content of the language she uses, that is the implicit meanings and connotations of language. Power is embedded within language use and shifts or is exercised according to the context and intent of the story. Consider the following example:

'How long've known this feller?

'I beg your pardon?'

'I said, how long've you known this feller you're travelling with?'

You can't take that tone to a woman these days. 'What's that got to do with you?' said Julie. (*PFS* 48-49)

In this excerpt, the female character argues bravely with the Customs officer who naggingly asks her personal questions about her gay friend. The officer exerts his power by intimidating her with the question but Julie remains unperturbed. She responds angrily and reminds the officer not to speak with that tone to a woman. A woman arguing in public with a man is not inappropriate here. However, for Buginese women, this is something beyond *kebiasaan* (custom). A woman arguing with a man can be regarded *de' na malebbi* (not modest) or *pappada urane* (to behave like a man). In other words, this woman is considered manly because her masculinity is more dominant than her femininity. For Buginese women, this label can negate their power as female by positioning them as too masculine. Something as seemingly simple as Julie defending herself to a man in authority, and refusing to answer his questions, establishes a sense of contemporary Western cultural and gender norms for Indonesian readers.

"All Those Bloody Young Catholics" is another example of Garner's use and manipulation of language to convey dominant representations of masculinity and femininity but at the same time challenge these notions. This story is written in first person from the perspective of a working class, white, male Australian. It is only via his monologue that the reader is made aware of his positioning and how he positions others – in this case white, Catholic, Australian men and women. In the following extract, the male protagonist is informing the two women he is talking to about their mutual friend Gerry:

Gerry? Still in Perth. I saw him not so long ago. Still a young pup, still a young man, a young Apollo, a mere slip of a lad. I went over to Perth. I always wanted to go over. I've been everywhere of course in Australia,

hate to hear those young shits telling me about overseas? what's wrong with here? Anyway what? Yeh well I've got this mate who's the secretary of the bloody Waterside Workers, right? I say to him, think I'll slip over to Perth. He says, Why don't you go on a boat? I says, What? How much? Don't shit me, he says. For you- nothin'. Was I seasick? On the Bight? No fear. Can't be seasick when you're as drunk as. Can't be the two at the same time. All those seamen drunk, playin' cards, tellin' lies – great trip, I tell you, great trip. Course I got off at the other end, had a bit of trouble, once you're back on dry land the booze makes itself felt, but anyway there I was. Yeah yeah, I'm gettin' to Gerry. (*PFS* 65)

The use of a monologue here emphasises the notion of dominant male voices as the reader is not provided with any other voices or perspectives. Explicitly, his language is indicative of his position, role and power in mainstream Australian society: his use of Australian slang, nicknames, Australian names, places and cultural icons, or instance, “the bloody Waterside Workers” represents both an iconic movement in colonial Australia's history as well as working-class Australia's association with social drinking and activities. This particular story centres working class Australia, emphasising mateship, drinking, religion, class and places and in doing so makes visible discourses of gender and power that run through them. Throughout the 1900s, mainstream Australian society experienced what has been termed a “cultural cringe” and the male speaker's centring of Australian culture, for example, when the speaker refers to those “young shits” preferring overseas to their own country, stems from this

Throughout the monologue, the speaker reminisces with an old female friend he refers to as “Watto” about their mutual friend Gerry, with whom Watto once had a sexual relationship. His manner of speaking to and about Watto, and other women, is jovial but coarse: “they used to fuck all day and all night, I swear to you love – no shutup Watto! it's true isn't it? I dunno what the other young Catholics in the house thought was goin' on in there – but one day I gets this lettuce and I opens their door a

crack and I shoves the lettuce through and I yells out, If you fuck like rabbits you better eat like ‘em too! He he! Look at her blush! Ah Watto weren’t they great times. Drinkin’ and singin’ and fightin’ over politics.” (*PFS* 67). The power of the male to publicly speak about Watto’s sexual experiences, causing her embarrassment, achieves two purposes: it reveals the imbalance of power between the two genders but in doing so it challenges that imbalance by representing the speaker as coarse, vulgar and offensive.

In Indonesia there is a group of female writers whose writings belong to a body of work termed *sastra wangi* (fragrant literature). Machali and Nurhayati state that “the basic similarity in this genre is that they talk about sex in a liberal way” (2). One of these writers who depict female sexuality explicitly in is Ayu Utami. Ayu published her controversial novel, *Saman*, in 1998. Other female writers followed Ayu Utami’s debut including Djenar Maesa Ayu, Fira Basuki, and Nova Riyanti Yusuf. The use of vulgar language combined with the depicting female sexuality were criticised by some as degrading. Anwar writes that “this new trend in women’s literature was perceived as akin to ‘sastra mesum’ or pornographic literature” (Marching, “Description of Female Sexuality in Ayu Utami's *Saman*” 134). Ismail also states that “the current group of young female Indonesian writers are competing with one another in terms of the sexual explicitness in their work” (Marching, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 134). Loekito also argues that *Saman* “depicts a form of Western sexual freedom that is not suitable for Indonesian ethics and morality” (Marching, “Description of Female Sexuality in Ayu Utami's *Saman*” 134).

Garner uses certain coarse language and expressions as a means of signalling empowerment of female characters. She also shows female characters using language to stand up for themselves against men. In Buginese culture, as well as Indonesian national

culture, women using such vulgar language is unacceptable and automatically lowers the esteem of readers for these female characters and for the literary text itself, which poses a significant challenge and one I address in more depth in Chapter 4. However, the Buginese/Indonesian aversion to vulgarity becomes an advantage in a story like “All Those Bloody Young Catholics”, where the speaker uses coarse language and subject-matter. This means the Indonesian reader is likely to not sympathise with the speaker and sympathise with the woman he is addressing. Furthermore, scenes where women are verbally defending themselves or sparring with men offer positive examples of possible behaviour for women, challenging Buginese norms by inviting them to reconsider whether verbally challenging men might be possible.

### 3. Landscape

In this section, my focus is on the embedded discourses of power apparent in the landscape. My use of landscape refers to culturally and physically powered sites – whether from the natural or built environment or a specific locality in time and place. This also includes depictions of the physical environment in paintings and poems and representations of cultural and social settings in magazines and other intertextual references in Garner’s texts.

According to Denis and Cosgrove “a landscape is a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolising surrounding’, whether it is written or painted, grown or built, its meanings draw on the cultural codes of the society for which it was made” (89). Tuan argues that a location becomes a place which is accompanied by a “sense of place” (Gale 389). The history and experience of a place merge with an individual’s understanding of themselves and their location. Berdoulay argues “the study of place has a strong narrative component [which] has to reflect the actual

interweaving of the relationships among those people, objects, and messages, which produces place and which may be viewed as a discourse” (Agnew 134). It should be remembered too that Australia has a history of colonisation that has seen the physical environment being rewritten in historical and cultural collective memories. This history has significantly contributed to how non-Indigenous Australians understand their sense of place and belonging. My analysis of Garner’s stories under this subheading focuses on the representation of place and its relationship with (Western) male domination through the narratives from *Postcards from Surfers*.

In all five of Garner’s stories, mapping the land, physically, historically, culturally and generationally provides a strong foundation for understanding the positioning of male and female subjectivities. In “The Life of Art”, Melbourne and its urban, cosmopolitan and feminist history provide the backdrop. The two female characters move from pre- to post- feminist Melbourne, documenting the effect it has had on the own experiences.

My friend and I worked one summer in the men’s underwear department of a big store in Footscray. We wore our little cotton dresses, our blue sandals. We were happy there, selling, wrapping, running up and down the ladder, dinging the register, going to the park for lunch with the boys from the shop. I was happy. The youngest boy looked at us and sighed and said, ‘I don’t know which one of youse I love the most.’ One day my friend was serving a thin-faced woman at the specials box. There was a cry. I looked up. My friend was dashing for the door. She was sobbing. We all stood still, in attitudes of drama. The woman spread her hands. She spoke to the frozen shop at large.

‘I never said a thing,’ she said. ‘It’s got nothing to do with me.’

I left my customer and ran after my friend. She was half-way down the street, looking in a shop window. She had stopped crying. She began to tell me about . . . but it doesn’t matter now. This was in the 1960s; before feminism. (*PFS* 59)

Garner locates these female characters in a specific time and place – a department store in the Melbourne suburb of Footscray. These characters, in their cotton dresses and blue sandals, signify the privilege of white, middle-class women in the 1960s (in an era of major political upheaval for Indigenous Australian women) while at the same time attempting to negotiate the restrictions and expectations of dominant patriarchal society. For these two women, the confines of the home and the shopping centre have slowly expanded to include life outside of Melbourne and Australia. However, in this extract, life in 1960s Footscray shapes how they are positioned by their environment: what they do, where they go and how they read their environment. In the urban cultural landscape of the 1960s, single women and sex was not to be spoken about, as signified by “but it doesn’t matter now.”

Davies has developed a theory of body/landscape where landscapes are coextensive with bodies: that is, “the concept of inscription is developed as texts written on the deep/surfaces of the body/landscape [...] bringing the subject into being” (11). In her analysis of the body and the landscape, Nash argues that neither should only be perceived in a Western context as being oppressed:

the land can be entered into, the body can be earth, landscape can be a motherland, the motherland can be deconstructed, history evident in the landscape can be mourned through ideas of the female body and emotion, the female body can be reclaimed as a landscape or the male body can be re-visioned as land to change conceptions of both male and female sexuality [...] Certain forms of visual representation may support patriarchal power relations, but looking is never only or just masculine. To view body as land or land as body has no essential meaning, yet neither can it ever be innocent. Its politics are always contextual; there are different kinds of looking. (167)

In “Postcards from Surfers” the protagonist associates perception of self and place very distinctively with landscape.

I buy the tampons and look for the postcards. There they are, displayed in a revolving rack. There is great deal of blue. Closer, I find colour photos of white beaches, duneless, palmless, on which half-naked people lie on their backs with their knee raised. The frequency of this posture, at random through the crowd, makes me feel like laughing. Most of the cards have GREETINGS FROM THE GOLD COAST or BROADBEACH or SURFERS PARADISE embossed in gold in one corner: I search for pictures without words. Another card, in several slightly differing version, shows a graceful, big-breasted young girl lying in a seductive pose against some rocks: she is wearing a bikini and her whole head is covered by one of those latex masks that are sold in trick shops, the ones you pull on as a bandit pulls on a stocking. (*PFS* 7)

The representation of the physical landscape here is inscribed with the materiality of bodies, that is “half-naked people” becomes the signifier for specific Australian locales i.e., the Gold Coast, Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise. The exploitation of women’s bodies as commoditised objects is depicted by a big-breasted young girl in a postcard used to advertise a location. Instead of promoting the natural environment of the Gold Coast, the woman’s body is used to attract visitors to the Gold Coast. The female body is used as the focus to draw attention to the highlights of the Gold Coast yet in being the focus, the object of “the gaze”, she is silenced by the mask that completely covers her face. A similar construction of the female body is apparent in “All Those Bloody Young Catholics” when the male protagonist publicly states to his female friend: “You’re lookin’ in great shape Watto. Your tits are still little though aren’t they.” (*PFS* 69). “Little” is presented as not as good as “big-breasted” by the dominant male voice who has the power to publicly gaze at and judge the female body.

This particular story, “All Those Bloody Young Catholics”, explicitly deals with male power and domination. This narrative is set in an Australian pub, which is a popular place for Australian men to contribute to the construction of masculinity.

Watto. Me old darling. Where have you been. Haven't seen you since..... let me buy you a drink. Who's your mate? Jan. Goodday Jan. What'll be, girls? Gin and tonic, yeah. Lemon squash. Fuckin' – well, if that's what you. Hey mate. Mate. Reluctant barmen around here. Mate. Over here. A gin and bloody nonsense, a scotch and water for myself, and a –Jesus Mary and Joseph – lemon squash. I know. I asked her but that's what she wanted. (*PFS* 65).

Kirkby and Luckins have examined the gendered space of the Australian pub:

“Drinking, not working, was distinctly Australian [...] drunkenness was very much part of what Australians equated with living the good life. The culture of the Australian pub, captured by [Craig] McGregor as egalitarian yet exclusively male, was possible because it equated ‘the Australian pub’ with the public bar” (75). From the kinds of drink which are mentioned in the monologue, gender differences in terms of power and domination can be vividly seen. The protagonist reinforces his position at the bar by denigrating the requested drinks of the two women – a gin and tonic and a lemon squash. In other words, the act of ordering a gin and tonic and a lemon squash is not what is typically requested by him at the bar “fuckin' – well, if that's what you want.” This narrative monologue emphasises the silencing of women, particularly in the landscape of mainstream Australia's culture of drinking, because the reader only hears the man's voice at the bar and is only provided with his perception of the women.

In Indonesia, these places are only available in big cities and are only visited by people who are in a good financial condition. Furthermore, Buginese are mostly Moslems who believe that drinking such alcohol breaks Islamic rules and it is regarded

as *haram* (forbidden). However, in Buginese society, spaces which symbolise the cultural codes reflected in the landscape, that is physical spaces to entertain and to construct masculinity in a similar vein to the pub in a Western landscape, are *bola ronda* (guard houses). This space is usually built in every district to be the place of male villagers who are on duty at night guarding the security of the district. To keep themselves awake, they usually drink *tua' fai* (traditional palm bitter drink). The construction of masculinity in this landscape can be identified through the *bola ronda* (guard house) and the *tua' fai* (traditional bitter palm drink). Only men (and not women) who have the responsibility to guard the district at night are allowed to drink this kind of drink. So, this landscape shows the construction of domination where men are physically and culturally positioned as empowered. Women can drink this kind of traditional palm drink, a sweeter version called *tua' cenning* (traditional sweet palm drink) but they mostly drink it at home. Those women who drink *tua' cenning* are not regarded as degraded. On the contrary, if women drink *tua' fai*, especially when they get drunk, they will be regarded *de' namalebbi'* (not modest).

Idrus writes that in Buginese society, a “woman’s body is often thought to represent the moral integrity of the family (and the society), breaking the code for conduct is considered to dishonour the family and the society” (46). Therefore a Buginese woman who lets her sexual body be visualized and gazed at for commercial purposes is regarded as having no *siri'* (honour, shame). Idrus states, if this happens to a Buginese woman, other people will regard her *de'na maringngerrang* (she was not conscious) (45). “She was not conscious” means she is insane or idiotic for behaving this way because any Buginese woman willing to sell her *siri'* for money is considered mad or stupid. The importance of the *siri'* being preserved for Buginese women compared to men is stated in a Buginese saying: *'urane seddimi siri'na, makkunraie*

*asera pulona asera siri'na'* (men have only one siri', women have ninety-nine) (Idrus 46). This implies that Buginese women are especially vulnerable when it comes to possibilities that could cause her to transgress the *siri'*. For Indonesian readers, this particular insight into Western objectification of the female body, and women involvement in it, or resistance to it, provides a comparative perspective of Indonesian and Australian patriarchy.

The right of a woman over her body, how far those rights extend according to the place/space you are positioned, is also considered in “Civilisation and its Discontents” when the local newspapers report the “scandal” of a woman who was having a childless couple’s baby but when the baby was born she refused to give it up (PFS 96). The female protagonist in this narrative than has a dream:

I dreamed that I was squatting naked with my vagina close to the ground, in the posture we are told primitive women adopt for childbearing (‘They just squat down in the fields, drop the baby, and go on working’). But someone was operating on me, using sharp medical instruments on my cunt. Bloody flesh was issuing from it in clumps and clots. I could watch it, and see it, as if it were somebody else’s cunt, while at the same time experiencing it being done to me. It was not painful. It didn’t hurt at all. (PFS 98)

Garner’s narratives create spaces for traditionally silenced female experiences to begin to emerge in more public and less taboo conversations that society is having. A woman’s body, what it experiences and how that is viewed by hegemonic ideals are interrelated with where they are, that is, how they have been positioned and how the environment around them. What has been positioned as a “natural” thing, i.e., giving birth, is entangled with cultural notions and forced to be reconsidered.

Saugeres states that “women are seen as embodying nature and nature embodying women, while men are seen as representing culture” (375). This is in line

with what Ortner writes that “women tend to be identified with ‘nature’ while men tend to be identified with ‘culture’” (Yuval-Davis 6). Yuval-Davis adds that “the identification of women with ‘nature’ has been seen not only as the cause for their exclusion from the ‘civilized’ public political domain but also as the explanation of the fact that in certain cultures women are less valued socially than men” (6). So, potentially, it could be read that through the different landscapes Garner portrays – physical, urban and cultural -- she shows that ‘men’s domination and mastery over women is parallel to men’s domination over nature’ as stated by Saugeres (375). In “Postcards from Surfers” for instance, Garner transforms the connection between physical space and domination when the protagonist and her father visit one of the real estate’s built with lure signs.

‘From the other side you can see the sea,’ says my father.

‘Would you live up here?’

‘Not on your life. Not with those flaming pillars.’

From the bedroom window he points out another high-rise building closer to the sea. Its name is Chealsea. It is battle-ship grey with a red trim. Its windows face away from the ocean. It is tall and narrow, of mean proportions, almost prison-like. ‘I wouldn’t mind living in that one,’ he says. I look at it in silence. He has unerringly chosen the ugliest one. It is so ugly that I can find nothing to say. (*PFS* 10-11)

In this scene, the landscape of the battle-ship grey colour of the almost prison-like high-rise building that her father would not mind living in, is associated with the ideology of power and domination of men over women. Battle-ship grey colour and prison-like high-rise building connote authority, and being shackled. Her father’s attraction to the phallic entities aligns him strongly with patriarchal society. In other words, he feels empowered in the circumstance. On the contrary, when the protagonist responds to the

ugliness of the building she refuses to be aligned with her father and what he symbolises. Throughout this particular story, the protagonist frequently reminisces about events and conversations with her father in postcards she writes to her ex-partner Phillip. She informs him of many occasions that her father has punished her, spied on her, rebutted her and silenced her. The connection between the place her father chooses and her father's domination and control is in line with what Cox and Holmes write that "place has dramatic effects on the human spirit" (64).

Domination and destruction of the physical landscape is apparent in Garner's "La Chance Existe". In this scene the male and female characters are strolling through the city of Boulogne through a huge archway which leads to the old city.

It was eleven o'clock on a weekday morning in July, and there was no-one about. A nippy breeze came up off the channel. The water was grey and disturbed, a sea of shivers.

We tramped along merrily for twenty minutes, round the shoulder of the hill the old city stood on, turning back now and then look at the view. The track became narrower. (*PFS* 44)

However, the beautiful landscape is disturbed again by an encounter with a castle with a terrible smell.

'Let's go back,' I said. 'You can't see the sea around this side. It stinks.'

'Not yet. Look. What are those caravans down there?'

'I dunno. Gypsies or something. Come on Julie.'

She pressed on. The track was hardly a track at all; it was brambly, and was obviously about to run out against a wing of a castle about a hundred yards ahead. I was ten steps behind her when she gave a sharp cry of disgust and stopped dead. I caught up with her. There was a terrible smell, of shit and things rotting. At her feet was the mangled corpse of a large bird: it looked as if it had been wrenched off, and there were dirty feathers everywhere, stuck in the spiky bushes, fluttering in the seawind.

The shit was human. Its shapes were man-made; it was meat-eater's shit, foul. (*PFS* 44)

Here Garner again portrays two different landscapes which symbolize the presence of one's dominant power over the other. The natural beauty of the ocean landscape is influenced by the culture of a particular group. As a result, the beautiful landscape becomes a terrible one. In other words, the construction of female identity represented by the beautiful landscape in the story is ruined by male domination as represented by the behaviour of the people who defecate everywhere and the corpse of the bird. The entanglement of nature with the representation of women is also stated by Bhreathnach-Lynch who claims that "the representation of the land as female articulates another kind of domination; the patriarchal belief in a symbolic relationship between women and nature in which woman is defined as the passive and voiceless embodiment of nature" (27). Carolyn also documents that "European cultures have long imagined nature as feminine" (Alaimo 2). Therefore, Alaimo argues that "since nature has been at the heart of a plethora of misogynist arguments and ideologies, the concept of nature has been an extraordinary important component of feminist thought" (3). In addition, Beauvoir confirms that "one of the reasons why women are positioned as the second sex is because they are indistinguishable from the natural world" (Alaimo 3).

Travelling through a changing country, whether Australia or France, is correlated with moving through changing social and cultural environments. In "Postcards from Surfers", the characters have physically travelled around Australia which typifies where they are socially and culturally located.

We are driving north from Coolangatta airport. Beside the road the ocean heaves and heaves into waves which do not break. The swells are dotted with boardriders in black wet-suits, grim as sharks [...]The road takes a

sudden swing round a rocky outcrop. Miles ahead of us, blurred in the milky air, I see a dream city; its cream, its silver, its turquoise towers thrust in a cluster from a distant spit.[...] Close up, many of the turquoise towers are not yet sold. 'Every conceivable feature,' the signs say. They have names like Capricornia, Biarritz, The breakers, Acapulco, Rio. I had a Brazilian friend when I lived in Paris. He showed me a postcard, once, of Rio where he was born and brought up. The card bore an aerial shot of a splendid, curved tropical beach, fringed with palms, its sand pure as snow.

'Why don't you live in Brazil,' I said, 'if it's as beautiful as this?'

'Because,' said my friend, 'right behind that beach there is a huge military base.' In my turn I showed him a postcard of my country. It was a reproduction of that Streeton painting called *The Land of the Golden Fleece* which in my homesickness I kept standing on the heater in my bedroom. He studied it carefully. At last he turned his currant-coloured eyes to me and said, 'Les arbres sont rouges?' Are the trees red? (*PFS* 3-4).

Here the landscape plays an integral role in how place and social positioning are traversed: while physically moving from one place to another, the protagonist's gaze moves from natural scenes to man-made scenes. These man-made ones then appropriate other cultural names, creating a hybridity of places and cultures. How landscape is read is then represented by colour, photos, paintings, narratives to construct other meanings or for other purposes. Since colonisation, Australia has been renamed, reshaped and remapped according to the colonial gaze. How the physical landscape is read depends on how it is presented to the reader.

James argues that "a landscape could occupy the background space where with "charm due principally to naivety and childlike simplicity" it complemented the sophisticated figurative compositions of the foreground space" (Grishin 46). So, analogically "the background space that is the landscape of the sea is changed to the foreground space that is a modern city because of 'advancing civilization'" as James terms it (Grishin 46) which is a part of cultural advances. How civilisation is read is

shaped by discursive discourses of power and place. Throughout all of these stories Garner has included intertextual references which contribute to the reading of background and foreground spaces. Classic Australian paintings and poems, popular cultural artefacts (such as when the protagonist reads a *Woman's Day* - a popular mainstream women's magazine) and cities create layer upon layer of meaning about how the physical environment becomes read by dominant society and disseminated to outsiders.

In Buginese culture, the connection between physical space and discourses of power and domination takes a different form. Typically, traditional Buginese dwellings signify the social strata of the occupants. Who will have more power can be seen through the architecture of their house. Mattulada writes that there are three kinds of Buginese houses including *saoraja*, *saopiti*, and *bola to sama* (24). *Saoraja* is a big house occupied by the family of a king or of nobility. This house has five or seven partitions. It also has five or three rooftops and covered stairs called *sapana* which has a roof above the stairs. *Saopiti* is smaller than *saoraja*. It has no more than four partitions and has one or three rooftops. Those families with power usually occupy it. *Bola to sama* is a house for ordinary people. It has three partitions and has two rooftops. It does not have *sapana*. If the colour and the shape of a high building in Garner's narrative can be used to identify the link between power and domination and the occupant, in Buginese culture, the number of rooftops can be used to identify the social strata of the occupants.

Mattulada writes that "Buginese believe in the mythology of nature as 'sulapa' eppa' walasuji' (a four sided square)" (21). This four sided square has three different symbols. First, it symbolises four sides of the human's body including the top of the

head, the left and right sides are arms, and the bottom is legs. Second, it symbolises the elements of life such as God, human, sky, and earth. Third, it symbolises wind, water, fire, and soil. This four sided square suggests Buginese people live harmoniously with nature and utilize it as necessary. Regarding the above landscape, the greediness to dominate nature with skyscraper buildings without considering the environmental impact can be a boomerang, for instance, it causes floods which trouble the residents.

Based on Nash's argument, my interpretation of the existence of male domination through Garner's landscapes in *Postcard from Surfers* is reinforced by Garner's use of cultural codes through the various environments she presents and their association with women's bodies. By considering the relationship between place and personal agency, the importance of one's environment becomes an active force in identifying male domination and control. Topographical features of the landscape are related to historical and cultural meanings. How landscape is conceptualised, how it becomes historically and culturally arranged, contributes to gender relations.

Examining the representation and influence of landscapes means that locally meaningful differences become clearer. Recognition of how one's physical and cultural environment can influence discourses of power, agency and control, intrinsically means the individual I contributing to and engaging with such discourses. By conveying different landscapes, Garner provokes the reader into considering the conditions under which "women" are constructed, making visible dominant attitudes and expectations. In doing so, her characters and her readers not only challenge those social norms but are empowered to decide how they contribute to them. According to Fox, "landscape is thus variously represented as a topographic vista, as an intimate emplacement of local experience, and as the 'interanimation' of sense, speech and memory" (2).

#### 4. Sexuality

Sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism: that which is most one's own, yet most taken away ... Sexuality is the social process through which social relations of gender are created, organized, expressed, and directed, creating the social beings we know as women and men, as their relations create society. (MacKinnon, 1989, p.3)

Under this subheading of sexuality, my analysis of Garner's stories focuses on her representation of sexual subjectivities and heteronormative expectations. Sex, gender and sexuality are terms which are interconnected. In general, sex refers to biological differences between male and female; gender refers to social and cultural role differences between male and female; and sexuality refers to individual personality and related sexual behaviour. This is in line with what Oakley writes that "sex refers to biological maleness and femaleness while sexuality refers to behaviour related to copulation" (Jackson and Scott 35). Meanwhile, Jackson and Scott write that "gender is the cultural distinction between femininity and masculinity along with the social division between women and men" (35). From these statements, it can be concluded that when sex is related to biological differences between male and female it is termed "sex"; when sex is related to the role of male and female socially and culturally, it is termed "gender"; and when sex is related to sexual behaviour between male and female, it is termed sexuality.

Melliana divides "sexuality into three categories including reproductive sexuality, erotic sexuality, and gender sexuality" (Munfarida 123). According to Melliana, "reproductive sexuality focuses on the sex in relation to the reproductive organs; erotic sexuality focuses on the body's pleasure resulting from the sexual organs; and gender sexuality focuses on the social division between male and female"

(Munfarida 123). These categories can be applied to my analysis of how Australians and Buginese address issues of sexuality and power.

When I first met my friend she was engaged. She was wearing an antique sapphire ring and Italian boots. Next time I saw her, in Myers, her hand was bare. I never asked. We were students then. We went dancing in a club in South Yarra. The boys in the band were students too. We fancied them, but at twenty-two we felt ourselves to be older women, already fading, almost predatory. We read *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone*. This was in 1965; before feminism. (*PFS* 56)

This example suggests the potential power Garner gains through language expression which is implicitly reflected by the idea that marriage is both empowering and disempowering. The implicit message is that an engagement or marriage can be a form of domination where it limits the power of women, while strengthening the power of men, especially in terms of sexuality. Josephson argues that “women are marked by the institution of marriage as sexual beings in need of control, so that paternity can be definitively established” (275). Josephson adds that this function of marriage is seen as so crucial to social order historically that it justifies intimate and physical control of women by their husbands. What Josephson writes here is in line with Wolf’s statement that “women sometimes find there is a gap between their ideal of sexuality with the reality of it” (Munfarida 122). The lack of a ring and the protagonist’s unwillingness to mention it reveals power being exercised both repressively and productively. As a woman from post-1965 Australia, it can be empowering to be single but at the same time it is disempowering to be positioned as spinsterish, predatory and unmarried.

The complexity of linguistically translating cultural constructions of marriage and shame informs both my research and my analysis of Garner’s *Postcards from Surfers*. The cancellation of an engagement in Buginese society is something that

cannot be done easily. It is a very difficult and complicated process because it has a relationship with *siri*'. If it happens, the cancellation usually comes from the groom's side. If the groom does something bad before the marriage and the bride wants to cancel the engagement, she usually will not do so until after the marriage ceremony is held. Then she will ask for a divorce. Buginese women and their family usually do not dare break an engagement because it creates hostility between the bride and the groom's families. To prevent dissention, the bride's family usually prefer to succumb, especially if the groom's family have a powerful position.

Sexuality is a central issue in Australian feminism where feminist artists and writers represent female desire in new ways (Caine et al 286). Whereas in Indonesia, as

Marching notes:

the image of women's bodies has often been subject to state constructions, to 'the law of the father', to fit the ideal national identity prescribed by the government. During the New Order in Indonesia (1966-98), the ideal Indonesian woman who could restrain her sexual expression was highly promoted, and women were also expected to perform as 'boundary markers' of Indonesian culture, identity and decency. (Marching, "The Representation of the Female Body in Two Contemporary Indonesian Novels: Ayu Utami's *Saman* and Fira Basuki's *Jendela-Jendela*" 232).

In relation to the fulfilment of human sexual desire, what Garner presents is her feminist "expansionist" thinking on sex and sexuality to admit women's sexual desires and pleasure, and the need for women to expand, by their own choosing, the range of their sexual experiences (Caine et al. 286-287). Garner's focus on the issue of sexual desire in her works is supported by Goldsworthy who claims that "sexual desire and family are two things that almost all Garner's fictions addresses" (Goldsworthy, *Australian Writers: Helen Garner* 28). The representation of sex and sexuality in

Garner's work, explores discourses of power and domination between male and female bodies, male and male bodies and female and female bodies. In Indonesia, critics and scholars continue to debate the significance of women's bodies presented in literature and whether explicit descriptions of sexuality degrade or empower women. Garner's stories offer a point of entry for masculinities to be reconsidered as well. The act of having sexual intercourse makes Julie's gay friend, in "La Chance Existe", feel empowered. He tells Julie where there is a physical place to pick up men and why he loves it so much: "It's like a dance. It's mysterious. People move together and apart, no-one speaks, everyone's faceless. It's terrifically exciting, and graceful. The point of it is nothing to do with who." (*PFS* 50).

Garner's recognition of sexual desire is in line with what Wood, Koch, and Mansfield note that "sexual desire is viewed as spontaneous sexual thoughts and fantasies and biological urges creating a need to self-stimulate or initiate sexual activities with a partner" (237). Julie is accompanied by her male friend while going to London to meet her boyfriend, and they stay in the same room and sleep in the same bed. Their expression of sexuality allows them to act on their sexual desire and have spontaneous intercourse as a female heterosexual with a male bisexual. In this story a manifestation of the feminist "expansionist" idea of sexuality is represented by sexual intercourse between a bisexual man and a heterosexual woman outside of matrimony. Grieve and Burns state that "some Australian feminists focus attention on issues such as women's physical exploitation and vulnerability; on domestic violence and rape, and on questions of sexuality, female and male, lesbian and heterosexual" (21). It has been argued by Jackson and Scott that "sexuality is a gateway to ecstasy, enlightenment and emancipation" (26). If it is so, it is in line with what Melliana categories as erotic sexuality in which sexual intercourse fulfils desire without any repression. What I mean

here is, as Wolf writes, “there is a gap between the ideal of women’s sexuality and the reality they experience” (Munfarida 122). This gap is caused by “external factors which socially repress creativity and activity of women’s sexuality as something taboo and assertive” (123).

In Buginese society there is a so-called *Assikalaibineng*, a sexual manuscript written in *Lontara*, Buginese alphabetical letters, containing Buginese knowledge and philosophy on sexual intercourse between a husband and wife. According to Hadrawi this manuscript provides “much knowledge on sexuality including the concept of sexual intercourse, reproductive organs, steps in performing intercourse, prayers, mantra, foreplay techniques, intercourse styles and movements, a woman’s G spot, deciding the baby’s sex, family planning, when and when not to have intercourse, procedures for cleaning the body, genital therapy and some others” (2). The manuscript, based on Islamic religion and culture, was only allowed to be accessed by Buginese nobles but a lot of Buginese men continue to apply this knowledge when they make love to their wives. There are not many Buginese women who learn this knowledge because the manuscript is only taught to men. Basically sexuality for Buginese is something to keep between and for husband and wife and it is done not only for sexual desire but also for worship to the Almighty.

In Indonesian society including Buginese, anything related to sexuality is something never talked about or explained openly and clearly. This is somewhat odd, because in Buginese society, sexuality has a very close relationship with *siri*’ (honour, shame) which is essential for a Buginese woman to preserve. The sex organs of a Buginese woman, and her virginity, are often likened to a jewel that should be carefully kept, and like a mirror, should be prevented from being broken. This is in line with what

Idrus states about how a Buginese woman is placed in a ‘position of honour,’ as *intang paramata* (jewel, diamond) of the family (51) and what Elders writes that a woman is *pappada kacae* or like a mirror (Idrus 53). So, according to Idrus, once it is broken, it becomes *de’gaga bua’-bua’na* or worthless (53). If this is the case, it would be better for Buginese children to be provided with the information about sexuality in order for them to decide to preserve the *siri’* well.

In comparison, Australian society has undergone significant changes regarding the education of children about sex since the end of the First World War. Featherstone shows “the ways in which [...] early forays into sex education were designed to mould and design the attitudes and behaviours of the Australian girl [...]the forms of education offered to young and adolescent girls were intangible, elusive and often deliberately baffling. It was an incomplete knowledge, designed to promote chastity rather than understanding, forming a moral agenda rather than a useful knowledge base on sex and the body” (460). Before the 1970s, state governments in Australia excluded sex education from the official curricula. After the 1970s it became a formal part of school education in most Australian states. A heterosexual paradigm was the foundation for sex education – how it was narrated, depicted, understood – until the late 20th century. Gibson notes that the fundamental message of school sex education was “‘don’t do it’ or ‘if you must do it don’t get pregnant’” (240).

The greater visibility of sexual activity outside of marriage after World War II, as evidenced by venereal disease and teenage pregnancies, led to the promotion of sex education as a possible way of both controlling this activity and also producing an acceptable form of heterosexuality characterized by particular forms of gendered relations within marriage. This is consistent with Foucault’s argument that “the sex of

children and adolescents has become, since the eighteenth century, an important area of contention around which innumerable institutional devices and discursive strategies have been deployed". (Gibson 240-241)

Women's desire in Buginese society, Idrus writes, is not to be openly expressed. Women have to restrain themselves from expressing their desire, while men's desire should be demonstrated (54). Garner's way of expressing female desire effectively explores the gap between Wolf's "ideal" of sexuality and the "reality" women experience.

In the final scene from "La Chance Existe" when Julie's gay friend is making love to her, and suddenly senses someone, a male prowler, peeping in on them, the protagonist is welcoming, in fact desires, the attention of the other male. Marching states that:

Since 1945, when Indonesia declared its independence and formulated its state law, same-sex relationships have not been legally criminalised. However, during the long New Order period (1966–1998), the stigma attached to same-sex relationships was escalated by the emphasis on gender differences, normalised family, religious norms, as well as the concepts of ideal roles for women. Women became subject to various disciplines: they should be ladylike, sexually pure and good mothers; and anything other would be considered as a transgression of God's given nature, known as kodrat (Wieringa 1999). For this reason, school girls were taught how to be good wives and mothers (Parker 1992). (Marching, "Description of Female Sexuality in Ayu Utami's *Saman*" 8).

Blackwood identifies three different state approaches to sexuality since 1980. Under the New Order regime of Suharto, with the help of print media, certain representations of homosexuality were stigmatised and popularised (294), "concepts of proper manhood and womanhood were advanced" (295). During the 1990s, same-sex marriages and sexual rights were positioned outside of normative gender behaviour as

“abnormal”. Blackwood conveys that by the end of the Suharto regime in 1998, “discourse on sexuality moved from strategically linking normative gender with heterosexuality and marriage to directly legislating heterosexual marriage through efforts to criminalise a wide range of sexual practices” (294). By translating Garner’s work into Indonesian, readers have discursive representations of the effects, fall out, benefits, limits, discontents of Western feminism as it is enacted and engendered in contemporary mainstream life for example, Julie’s desire: “I never want to fuck with anyone unless it puts me in danger,’ she said suddenly. ‘I don’t mean physical. I mean unless there’s a chance they’ll make me sad.’” (*PFS* 47).

In Garner’s “Civilisation and its Discontents”, when the protagonist is meeting the married man she is having an affair with, he says to her

‘You’ve had your hair cut. You look like a boy.’

‘I know. I do it on purpose. I dress like a boy and I have my hair cut like a boy. I want to be a boy. So I can have a homosexual affair with you.’

He laughed. ‘Good girl!’ he said. At these words I was so flooded with well-being that I could hardly get my breath. ‘If you were a boy some of the time and a girl the rest,’ he said, ‘I’d be luckier. Because I could have both.’

‘No,’ I said. ‘I’d be luckier. Because I could be both.’ (*PFS* 93)

There is an obvious play with ideas of gender here: while implicit historical discourses of power remain (that of the older man referring to the correct behaviour of the “good girl”, the older man wanting a young boy) the reader can see an example of Foucauldian repressive and productive power possessed by both characters. This interplay between ideas of gender power and construction reinforce for the reader that “boundary markers” can be fluid, shifting and at time, conflicting. Garner is not only transgressing heteronormative ideas but entangling notions of sexuality and power.

Among the members of Buginese society there is a community whose members consists of three different genders. They are identified as *calabai* (male-bodied with feminine behaviour), *calalai* (female-bodied with masculine behaviour), and *bissu* (male-bodies but feminine and masculine behaviour who functions as a priest). A *calabai* practices homosexual sex with a man and functions as a chef and a bridal make-up artist for the wedding ceremony. A *calalai* practices female homosexuality with other women and functions as the breadwinner for hir (I use Graham's abbreviation term 'hir' which stands for 'his' and 'her') wife. A *bissu* is a special identity because s/he combines aspects of male and female for example, s/he grows whiskers on hir right face to present hir masculine side and pluck the whiskers on hir left face to present hir feminine side.

Graham writes that "there are five different identities in Buginese society. They are real woman, real man, *calabai*, *calalai*, and *bissu*" (107-116). According to Graham, "the notion of gender is constituted through a variety of intersecting factors, including biological sex, spirituality, sense of self, roles, behaviours, occupation, dress, sexuality, government and religious ideology, and subjectivity" (107). Therefore gender and sexuality are tightly interwoven and this aspect of Buginese culture potentially opens a space for resonance and understanding between the feminisms of Garner's work and the traditional norms of Buginese culture.

## Chapter Four

### Some Challenges in Translating *Postcard from Surfers* into Indonesian

*Resopa natemmangingngi, namalomo nalete pammase dewata*

*(God bless only those who work hard and perseveringly)*

Buginese saying

This chapter presents some challenges that arose when translating some words and expressions in the five stories from *Postcards from Surfers* into Indonesian. The following discussion is organised around the four themes analysed in Chapter Three: the Kitchen, Language, Landscape, and Sexuality.

As Voragen writes, a powerful way to become familiar with another culture is by reading its literary works through translation (38). The Indonesian translation of *Postcards from Surfers* will provide Indonesian tertiary students with an insight into mainstream Australian society and a number of its cultural aspects that they can engage with and reconsider for their own agency. Before considering further what is meant by cultural aspects in this study, I provided a definition of culture. Generally, culture is defined as the way of life of one group of community or society. In a broader sense, Kroeber and Kluckhohn compile a definition of culture as follows:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values. Culture system may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand, as conditioning elements of future action (Katan 16).

Furthermore, Kidd divides the way of life of a group into the following categories (9):

1. The dominant values of a society.
2. The values that guide the direction that social change might take.
3. Shared linguistic symbols (language).
4. Religious belief.
5. What is considered to be the correct way for people to behave in their day-to-day lives.
6. What is considered to be the highest intellectual and artistic achievements of a group, including science, art, literature, music and so on.
7. Formal behavioural tradition and rituals.
8. Dominant patterns of living, including styles of architecture and patterns of land use.

With reference to the intrinsic link between culture and language, Gladstone points out that:

Language and culture are inexorably intertwined. Language is at once an outcome or a result of the future as a whole and also a vehicle by which the other facets of the culture are shaped and communicated. The language we learn as a child gives us not only a system for communication, but, more importantly, it dictates the type and the form of the communication we make. [...] Our language reflects and reinforces our cultural pattern and value system. (Sanchez 107)

In the specific context of translating, Ivir notes that:

Translation is a way of establishing contacts between cultures. One might even claim that cultural contact as such presupposes translation and that the exchange of goods of material and spiritual culture is not

possible without translation. The reason for this is the fact that language and culture are inextricably interwoven and that the integration of an element into a culture (and into the conceptual framework of its members as individuals) cannot be said to have been achieved unless and until the linguistic expression of that element has been integrated into the language of that culture. The transference – of the linguistic expression is precisely an attempt to integrate elements of one culture into another. Translating means translating culture, not language. (Sanchez 107)

In addition to what Ivir notes, Casagrande insists that “one does not translate language, one translates culture, and therefore, a perfect translator has to be bicultural as well as bilingual” (Sanchez 107). In this case, the translator is in the position of a mediator between languages and cultures. Hatim and Mason believe that a good translator, “when rendering the source language into the target language, will have to decide how best to solve – i.e. to express – the different ways in which the two cultures perceive reality” (Sanchez 109).

In fact, barriers are still faced by the translator especially in terms of equivalent linguistic and cultural meanings. The following discussion proves how challenging it is when translating cultural aspects of Australian words and expressions into Indonesian.

#### 1. The Kitchen

Under this subheading, the discussion does not deal with the physical and metaphorical meaning of the kitchen, as in the literary analysis in Chapter Three, instead it deals with translating words related to the meals Australians usually make and consume, for example: the food “corned beef” in the following excerpt.

‘Twelve o’clock,’ says my father.

‘Getting on for lunch time,’ I say.

‘Getting towards it. Specially with that nice cold corned beef sitting there, and fresh brown bread. Think I’ll have to try some of that choko relish. Ever eaten a choko?’

‘I wouldn’t know a choko if I fell over it,’ I say.

‘Nor would I.’ (*PFS* 5)

‘Pukul dua belas sekarang,’ kata ayahku.

‘Waktunya makan siang,’ jawabku.

‘Hampir. Apalagi dengan irisan daging kornet sapi dingin dan roti tawar dengan biji gandum. Aku mau coba dengan acar labu siam. Pernah makan labu siam?’

‘Melihat labu siam pun belum pernah,’ kataku.

‘Aku juga.’ (“*KPDS*” 4)

Australians use the same word for “corned beef” whether it is silverside or packaged in a can. In this particular excerpt, the Australian family are eating “corned beef” for lunch by putting it between slices of bread. Indonesians, however, recognise “corned beef” as chopped beef packaged in a can. Or in other words, they do not recognise corned beef as a silverside cut of meat. Moreover, Indonesians usually eat “corned beef” by putting it in many kinds of Indonesian recipes as a substitution for fresh beef including vegetable stir fries, potato croquettes, omelettes and others.

In translating the words “corned beef” into Indonesian, I needed to either keep it as it was originally written in the target language or provide the Indonesian equivalence. Since Indonesians recognise “corned beef” as a kind of canned food which is usually consumed by foreign people, by applying the foreignization strategy, I translated the words into “irisan kornet sapi”. This means that Indonesian readers can still understand that it is a kind of food that belongs to a foreign culture. Considering the skopos of this

translation, I use the foreignization strategy to keep the word “cornet”, I also use an “addition” technique of adjustment by adding the word “irisan” (sliced) to describe that the kind of “corned beef” here means the silverside one. By giving the additional word “irisan”, what is exactly meant by the source language message can be understood clearly by Indonesian readers. The reason to add the word “irisan” (sliced) is because it is written implicitly in the text following the extract above that the father slices the corned beef to put in his bread.

He selects a serrated knife from the magnetised holder on the kitchen wall and quickly and skilfully, at the bench, makes himself a thick sandwich. He works with powerful concentration: when the meat flaps off the sliced bread, he rounds it up with a large, dramatic scooping movement and a sympathetic grimace of the lower lip. (*PFS* 5)

I decided to put the word “irisan” (sliced) into the translation of “corned beef” becoming “irisan daging kornet sapi” because there is a cultural signifier in this word. Most Indonesians recognise that “corned beef”, which to them is beef in a can, can only be scooped out with a spoon, or fork.

Another example of Australian food that needed careful consideration when translating into Indonesian was “ASPIC” as in the following excerpt:

‘Five down, spicy meat jelly. A S P I C. Three across, counterfeit. B O G U S! Howzat.’ (“PFS” 8)

‘Lima menurun, jeli daging pedas. A S P I C. Tiga mendatar, palsu. B O G U S! Gimana.’ (“KPDS” 8)

There is no equivalent word for “ASPIC” in Indonesia. Most Indonesians would not be familiar with this kind of jelly food made from meat. Indonesians usually eat jelly foods made from fruits or chocolate which is sweet and usually served for dessert. In order to

make Indonesian readers understand that there is cultural aspect embedded in the word, I applied foreignization strategy by “sending the reader abroad” (20) as Venuti writes. Thus, I kept the word as it is written in the original language and gave a footnote. Giving a footnote is in line with the so-called “gloss translation”: a type of translation termed by Nida that “permits the reader to understand as much as they can of the customs, manner of thought, and means of expression” (Venuti 156). The meaning of “ASPIC” is hinted at with the term “spicy meat jelly” (jelli daging pedas). However, by providing a footnote for the word “ASPIC”, Indonesian readers can understand more about the customs of Western people represented by Australians. In this case, Indonesian readers get not only a new word but also learn the broad meaning of the word.

The next example, “sherry”, also inferred a cultural meaning that I needed to consider when translating:

‘Look at this,’ he says. ‘Mum remember that seminar we went to about investment in diamonds?’

‘Up here?’ I say. ‘A seminar?’

‘S’posed to be an investment that would double its value in six days. We went along one afternoon. They were obviously con-men. Ooh, setting up a big con, you could tell. They had sherry and sandwiches.’ (“PFS” 11)

‘Lihat ini,’ katanya kepada ibu. ‘Masih ingat seminar yang kita hadirinya tentang investasi berlian?’

‘Di sini?’ tanyaku. ‘Sebuah seminar?’

‘Katanya investasi yang bisa berlipat ganda dalam enam hari. Kami pergi bersama ke seminar itu pada suatu sore. Mereka memang dasar penipu. Mereka berdalih dengan menyiapkan minuman anggur *sherry* dan sandwich.’ (“KPDS” 12-13)

For Australians, sherry is an alcoholic drink which is usually drunk by social matrons and the elderly. As this word has an implied cultural meaning I considered the skopos of the translation and kept the word as it is written in English. However, the risk was that Indonesian readers might not understand it as sherry is not popular in Indonesia because drinking alcohol is not an Indonesian habit. It is forbidden in some religions adhered to by Indonesians. Therefore, to enhance understanding, I applied foreignization and additions, making the word more accessible in Indonesian language. In this case, I add “minuman anggur “ (similar wine drink) after the word “sherry”, so that the readers can understand clearly.

## 2. Language

Language is an integral component in my literary analysis of this study. Some of Garner’s feminist ideas are reflected through the lexical items and the content of discourses she uses. As in literary analysis, language is an important topic to discuss in this translation section. Translating Garner’s choices of words in *Postcards from Surfers* into Indonesia was challenging as she uses many Australian slang and colloquial terms, or the so-called Lingo, as well as expressions which are not easy to translate into Indonesia.

According to Seal, “Lingo is the language that many, perhaps most, Australian use in factories, shops, offices, schools, on building sites, on the road, at home, in the pub and wherever Australian English is spoken. This language is made up of words, phrases, and expressions that are mostly not found in any dictionary of standard English or even Australian English. It indicates the cultural distinctiveness of Australians as a nation and as a people” (2).

Ditaranto writes that “it is crucial to know the colloquial references of each culture because an ordinary word in one culture can take on unintended and even sexual connotations in another” (2). Ditaranto’s point is obvious when translating *Postcards from Surfers* into Indonesian. I experienced some cultural barriers that needed to be traversed when translating some Australian slang/colloquial terms, for instance the word “dero” in the following expression:

Course, I was never allowed to bring no women home, bloody Barney he tell me, Don’t you dare bring those hooers of yours back here, you old dero-I had to sneak them round the lane and into me loft out the back. (“ATBYC” 67)

Tentu, aku tak pernah boleh membawa perempuan ke rumah, si bangsat Barney mengatakan kepadaku, Jangan kamu membawa pelacur ke sini, *old dero* - gelandangan tua - aku harus menyelinapkan perempuannya lewat loteng belakang. (“AAMKI” 46)

The word “dero” in Australian slang means a homeless person. In translating this word, I applied both foreignization and domestication strategies because this word implies cultural aspects of Australian society that is distinct from other native speakers of English. Therefore, I kept the word “dero” as Australian slang, written as it is in the original language to “send the readers abroad” as Venuti writes. Indonesian readers do not only learn Australian slang but they are also provided with some insight into class and culture, that is, that there are some Australians who are marginalised by dominant society. Meanwhile, I apply the domestication strategy to provide an accurate Indonesian equivalent of the word.

There is another equivalent for the word “dero” in Indonesian that is “tuna wisma”. However, this word is usually written for formal matters including government news. So in this particular situation, considering the word “dero” is uttered by someone

who is drunk, it is not suitable to equate “dero” with “tuna wisma”. In this case, the skopos and the register are the main considerations before deciding the choice of word to use. Therefore, I decided to use “gelandangan” instead of “tuna wisma”.

The translation of another common Australian slang word—“sheila”—into Indonesian proved difficult, as one can see in the following excerpt:

So I stays away and that night I come back real late from the Waiter’s Club with this sheila and we’re up in the loft and in the morning I didn’t know how I was goin’ to get her out of there! (“ATBYC” 67)

Akhirnya aku pergi menjauh dan malam itu aku pulang tengah malam ke rumah dari Club Waiter membawa seorang *sheila* atau cewek dan kami tidur di loteng, dan esok paginya aku tak tahu bagaimana mengeluarkannya dari situ! (“AAMKI” 46)

Again I applied foreignization and domestication strategies to translate the word “sheila” into Indonesian. “Sheila” for Australians means “a woman”. There are some equivalents for this word in Indonesian including “cewek”, “perempuan”, “wanita”, “betina”, and “perek”. I decided to use “cewek” because the utterer of the monologue in Garner’s story is drunk and he describes his experience of bringing a woman home. I kept the term “sheila” as well as offering its accurate equivalent in Indonesian to provide the Indonesian reader with the source language’s slang but a meaningful definition of it. Another important reason for providing the Indonesian equivalent of this word is because if the readers do not carefully read it, they might think it is the name of a woman. “Sheila” (with capital letter “S”) is a common personal name for Indonesians. So applying the domestication strategy here is also to prevent any misunderstanding of the word.

The next example of Australian slang/colloquial language that proved challenging to translate into Indonesian was the word “dunny” in the following excerpt:

‘Someone’s looking at us from one of those caravans,’ said Julie without moving her lips. ‘This is their shitting place. It’s their fucking dunny. They must be laughing at us.’ She gave a high-pitched giggle, pushed past me, and ploughed away through the prickly bushes, back the way we’d come. (“LCE” 44-45)

‘Seorang dari gerombolan gipsi itu memandang kita,’ kata Julie tanpa menggerakkan bibirnya. ‘Tempat ini adalah kakus mereka. Sialan, kakus mereka. Mereka pasti menertawai kita. ‘Julie tertawa terkekeh-kekeh, melewatiku sambil menyenggol dan pergi menembus semak berduri tersebut dan kembali ke arah kota. (“LCE” 23)

The word “dunny” in Australian slang can mean both an “outside lavatory” and an inside “toilet”. In Indonesian, the suitable equivalent of this word is “kakus”. The word “toilet” has been adapted into Indonesian language, however, it has a different meaning with “kakus”. The reason for not using ‘toilet’ instead is because in Indonesia, “toilet” refers to a modern lavatory. So, before deciding which one to choose, I considered the register the word “dunny” implies. In this example the word “dunny” is uttered by the male character when he refers to the nomadic group of people he thinks of as Gypsies and their use of the natural landscape as a toilet.

The last example of Australian colloquial lingo is the word “ute” like in the following excerpt:

‘What do you do all day, up here?’ I say on the way home.

‘Oh ... play bowls. Follow the real estate. I ring up the firms that advertise these flash units and I ask ‘em questions. I let ‘em lower and lower their price. See how low they’ll go. How many more discounts they can dream up.’ He drives like a farmer in a ute leaning forward with his arms curved round the wheel, always about to squint up through the windscreen at the sky, checking the weather. (“PFS” 9-10)

‘Apa kegiatan ayah setiap hari di kota ini?’ tanyaku dalam perjalanan pulang ke rumah.

‘Oh..... main bowling. Lihat-lihat perumahan. Biasanya ayah menelfon perusahaan yang mengiklankan apartemen mewah dan mengajukan pertanyaan-pertanyaan. Ayah pancing mereka agar menurunkan harga serendah-rendahnya, melihat seberapa rendah mereka turunkan, dan berapa banyak tambahan diskon yang mereka bisa berikan.’ Ayah layaknya seorang petani mengemudikan *ute* (mobil pick up), menyandarkan tangannya melengkung di kemudi, seakan-akan selalu siap melihat lewat kaca depan, memandang ke langit mengecek keadaan cuaca. (“KPDS” 11)

In Australia the term “ute” refers to a utility vehicle with a cargo tray at the rear. Since “ute” is Australian slang for “utility”, a cultural meaning is implied. This kind of vehicle is also common in Indonesia, but Indonesians have an equivalent word for “ute”. Basically “ute” can be translated into “mobil bak belakang terbuka” (a car with an open rear tray) but this is a long phrase to put in the sentence and can disturb the rhythmic flow of the language (94) as noted by Landers. Therefore, for this particular word I translated it by borrowing a word from the English language, “pick up” with the additional word “mobil” (car) to make it clearer. To translate the word “ute” I applied foreignization, addition - by adding “mobil” - and put it together with “pick up” in parentheses. So, there is a combination of foreignization with additions and interpolation adjustment techniques.

### 3. Landscape

Translating the name of an Australian memorial, “The Shrine of Remembrance”, presented a challenge as well. It is one of the largest memorials built in dedication to all the men and women of Victoria who served in World War I. When translating “The Life of Art” in *Postcards from Surfers* where the name of the memorial is mentioned, I

applied foreignization to send the readers abroad, imagining the landscape of the Australian surrounding where the memorial is situated.

My friend was the first person I ever saw break the taboo against wearing striped and floral patterns together. She stood on the steps of the Shrine of Remembrance and held a black umbrella over her head. This was in the 1960s. (“TLOA” 58)

Sahabatku adalah orang pertama yang aku lihat melanggar tabu dengan mengenakan baju bermotif garis dipadu dengan motif bunga. Ia berdiri di anak tangga tugu peringatan Shrine of Remembrance dengan payung hitam di atas kepalanya. Kejadian itu tahun 1960s. (“KS” 36-37)

As in the previous cases, again I was challenged to add additional words, in this instance “tugu peringatan” (memorial) by putting the words before The Shrine of Remembrance. The challenge was to give additional information to Indonesian readers while again “sending them abroad” (77) as Venuti states, so that they know “The Shrine of Remembrance” is an Australian memorial. If I did not add the additional words “tugu peringatan” (memorial), the Indonesian readers would not understand what The Shrine of Remembrance is. The reason for doing this is based on the purpose or skopos of the translation of Postcards from Surfers.

In *Postcard from Surfers*, Helen Garner mentions one Australian well known supermarket, Coles, and one department store, Myers. How the Indonesian readers can identify what these Australian cultural aspects mean can be measured through how understandable the Indonesian translation of Postcards from Surfers is:

‘Dear Philip. One Saturday morning I went to Coles and bought a scarf. It cost four and sixpence and I was happy with my purchase. He whisked it out of my hand and looked at the label. “Made in China. Is it real silk? Let’s test it.” He flicked on his cigarette lighter. We all screamed and my mother said, “Don’t bite! He’s only teasing you.”’ (“PFS” 13)

‘Dear Philip. Di suatu Sabtu pagi, aku pergi ke supermarket Coles dan membeli sebuah selendang. Harganya waktu itu 4 shilling 6 pence. Aku sangat senang dengan belanjaku itu. Ayahku menarik selendang itu kemudian melihat labelnya. “Buatan Cina. Apakah sutra asli? Mari kita tes.” Ayahku menyalakan korek api. Kami semua berteriak dan ibuku berkata, “Jangan terpancing. Dia hanya menggodamu.”’ (“KPDS” 15)

Since Coles is an Australian supermarket name, I kept it as it is written for the Indonesian translation. In the original text the word “supermarket” is not written before the word Coles to signify that it is a supermarket. Australians who read “Postcards from Surfers” will automatically understand what Coles is. However, Indonesian readers when they read the Indonesian translation of the work, may not. They may think it is the name of a department store, the name of a regular store, or perhaps the name of the market. In Indonesia, although department stores are now common in every big city of Indonesia, regular stores which are situated everywhere either in both big cities and small cities are still necessary to buy anything. Even traditional markets or semi-modern markets are places to buy anything including a scarf. Therefore, to signify that Coles is a supermarket, I had to determine whether to add the word “supermarket” before Coles. This is a specific case because while I apply Venuti’s foreignization strategy by keeping the original language written in the target language, I add another English word, not Indonesian as in previous cases, to give additional information about what Coles is. There is actually an Indonesian equivalent for the word “supermarket” that is “pasar swalayan”. However, the word “supermarket” is more popularly used by Indonesians. Therefore, I determined to use it. From this particular case, it can be seen that on the one hand Venuti’s foreignization strategy is applied, but on the other hand it is juxtaposed with a word in the target language which is basically a foreign word. My decision to translate using this strategy was based on the need to produce an adequate, meaningful

result. This proves what Vermeer calls *translatum*, that is, the result of translation where the strategy and method are done based on the purpose of translation (Munday 79).

The other example where I was challenged to apply this same strategy is in the translation of the name of the department store Myers. This department store is very well known in Australia and it becomes a destination place to shop (especially on Boxing Day, when the post-Christmas sales attract amazing numbers of consumers). So, I added the words “department store” before “Myers” to provide clues to Indonesian readers that it is a department store in Australia.

When I first met my friend she was engaged. She was wearing an antique sapphire ring and Italian boots. Next time I saw her, in Myers, her hand was bare. I never asked. We were students then. We went dancing in a club in South Yarra. The boys in the band were students too. We fancied them, but at twenty-two we felt ourselves to be older women, already fading, almost predatory. We read *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone*. This was in 1965; before feminism (“TLOA” 56)

Dia sudah bertunangan ketika pertama kali aku bertemu dengannya. Saat itu dia mengenakan cincin safir antik dan memakai sepatu bot Italia. Namun ketika aku bertemu kembali dengannya, di department store Myers, di jarinya sudah tak ada cincin lagi. Aku tidak pernah menanyakannya. Lalu kami sama-sama menjadi mahasiswa. Kami pergi menari di club di Yarra Selatan. Anak-anak di band club tersebut juga masih mahasiswa. Kami menggodanya, tapi di usia kami yang dua puluh dua tahun rasanya kami sudah tua, sudah memudar, hampir menjadi pemangsa. Kami membaca *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone*. Kejadian itu tahun 1965, masa sebelum feminisme. (“KS” 34)

In this particular case, I used Venuti’s foreignization strategy but I added foreign additional words “department store” which are known in the target language to signify that there is a cultural aspect of Australian society reflected in the original text.

The Nullarbor Plain is an area of flat, almost treeless, arid or semi-arid country of southern Australia. It is the world's largest single piece of limestone and occupies an area of about 200,000 square kilometres. This area has cultural significance for many Australians, particularly Indigenous people from that country, because those who cross it, have a quintessential experience of the “Australian Outback”. It signified an element of national pride for them.

‘Look at that,’ says my mother. ‘A WA number-plate. Probably trashed it across the Nullarbor and now they reckon they’ll flog it.’ (“PFS” 3)

‘Lihat mobil itu,’ kata ibuku. ‘Plat nomernya WA (Western Australia). Mungkin ringsek karena melintasi daerah gersang Nullarbor dan sekarang mereka ingin menjualnya.’ (“KPDS” 2).

To keep the Australian local colour and to imagine what the Nullarbor looks like, I applied foreignization and the additions technique by using “daerah gersang” (arid region) before the word “Nullarbor” as additional information for the readers. By providing this phrase, the Indonesian readers have a clue to what the Nullarbor is.

The same strategy and technique was also used when translating “Surfers” as in the following excerpt:

‘What – is that Brisbane?’ I say.

‘No,’ says my mother. ‘That’s Surfers.’ (“PFS” 3)

‘Apakah itu Brisbane?’ tanyaku.

‘Bukan,’ jawab ibuku. ‘Itu kota wisata Surfers Paradise.’ (“KPDS” 1)

To let Indonesian readers know that Surfers is a popular place, and not people riding waves, for not only Australians but also for tourists, I added “kota wisata” (tourist city) before “Surfers” in the Indonesian translation. In this case, foreignization and additions were used to make the source language easily understood by Indonesian readers so that “Surfers” is understood as a cultural aspect of the Australian landscape.

#### 4. Sexuality

As well as language, sexuality is also an integral component of my literary analysis in Chapter Three. This theme is integral to all of the five short stories. In “La Chance Existe”, it is most apparent through the “vulgar language” Garner uses. I had to be careful when translating the related words and expressions into Indonesian, due to the culture of Indonesians who do not express their sexual desire publicly. I also had to consider register. The words and expressions in this particular theme were indeed a challenge for me, for instance in the following excerpt:

We rolled towards each other and into each other’s arms. I pushed myself against her belly, pushed my face into her neck and she took me in arms, in her legs. I cooled myself on her. Her limbs were as strong as mine. Her face hung over me and blurred in the dim room. I could smell her open flesh, she smelled like metal, salty. I swam into her and we fucked, so slow I could have fainted. She turned over and lay on her back on me; I was in her from behind and had my hand on her cunt from above as if it were my own, my arm holding her. (“LCE” 50-51)

Kami saling berhadapan sambil berpelukan. Aku menekan tubuhku di atas perutnya, menekan wajahku di lehernya. Yuli memelukku erat. Kakinya pun erat mendekap kakiku. Badannya terasa sejuk. Tungkainya sekuat tungkaiku. Wajahnya berada di atas wajahku dan terlihat samar-samar dalam kamar yang redup. Aku bisa mencium aroma kemaluannya, seperti bau logam, asin. Aku terjun ke dalamnya dan kami bersetubuh, dengan pelan sekali sehingga mau pingsan rasanya. Dia membalikkan badan membelakangiku. Aku memasukinya dari belakang. Tanganku meraba kemaluannya seakan itu milikku. (“LCE” 32)

For Indonesians, the excerpt above contains “vulgar” words and expressions. These words and expressions are very rude to express and even taboo for Indonesian culture. The excerpt portrays a sexual relationship between a man and a woman. They are not husband and wife. They are friends. In Indonesia, it is very risky to have a sexual relationship without matrimony. It breaks the rules of not only religion but also of society and tradition. Often, a couple who are found doing so, will be arrested and punished directly by the surrounding communities. In Australian society, the value attached to sexual relation varies but is predominantly the right of the individual to decide. It is the right for everybody to fulfil their sexual desire whether with or without matrimony. Therefore, it was challenging when translating the above expressions into Indonesian. On the one hand, I needed to keep the implicit meaning of the Australian attitude to sexuality, but on the other hand, I needed to carefully choose acceptable expressions for the Indonesian readers. So, in this particular case, I applied the domestication strategy by paying close attention to the words I chose. Considering that the characters of this story are educated adults, I use Indonesian words that are more polite in order to express the Australian “terms”. While there certainly may be good reason to translate the “vulgarity” of these terms directly or to leave them untranslated, such boldness may prevent me from being able to teach the text at all. Widespread public opposition to such vulgarity in literature has been amply demonstrated in the controversy caused by the so-called ‘*sastrawangi*’ works of female writers like Ayu Utami and Djenar Maesa Ayu. To prevent the translated version, and myself, from being labelled “ngeres” (indecent) by my institution and causing too much controversy, I found it necessary to translate the coarser words into less “vulgar”, but nonetheless

sensual equivalents. I translated the word “fucked” as “bersetubuh” (make love) and for the word “cunt” I translated to “kemaluan” (privates).

The following excerpt presented another challenge:

There was a scandal in the papers as I passed through the airport that evening, about a woman who had made a contract to have a baby for a childless couple. The baby was born, she changed her mind, she would not give it up. Everyone was talking about her story. (“CAID” 96)

Ada berita heboh di koran ketika aku lewat di bandara malam hari itu, tentang seorang perempuan yang telah menandatangani kontrak untuk meminjamkan rahimnya bagi pasangan yang tak punya anak. Ketika si anak lahir, perempuan itu berubah pikiran. Dia tak mau menyerahkan anak tersebut. Setiap orang membicarakan peristiwa itu. (“PDK” 53)

The above excerpt is about the news of a woman who signs a contract to give birth for a childless couple. The practice of in-vitro fertilization and surrogacy appears to be becoming more common in Western countries, including Australia. This can be seen through advertisements in newspapers of women who offer their womb to give birth for childless couples. However in Indonesia, it is still a controversial debate since some Islamic religious scholars think that the Holy Qur’an forbids it.

To direct the Indonesian translation to this particular value, I applied the domestication strategy. However, I made some changes in giving the equivalent for the phrase “made a contract to have a baby for a childless couple”. Instead of translating it into “menandatangani kontrak untuk melahirkan bayi bagi pasangan yang tak punya anak” (sign the contract to give birth for a childless couple), I translated it as “menandatangani kontrak untuk meminjamkan rahimnya bagi pasangan yang tak punya anak” (sign the contract to lend her womb for a childless couple). Although the idea of

lending the womb is a controversial, I did this because the term “meminjamkan rahim” (lend the womb) is already known since it is sometimes used in health magazines or newspapers. Even one of Indonesia’s female novelists, Mira W., who wrote *Cinta Tak Melantunkan Sesal* (*There is No Regret in Love*), tells a story about a woman who lends her womb to a childless couple. So, I decided to use this term because the term is quite familiar for Indonesian readers.

From the discussion above, it is clear that language and cultural differences in translation determine which strategy to apply. In the theory of translation, some strategies including Venuti’s foreignization and domestication have been offered to bridge the differences. However, in the case of translating Helen Garner’s *Postcard from Surfers* into Indonesian, these two strategies have been juxtaposed with the additions and interpolation adjustment techniques to ensure that the source language texts are accessible to the target readers. The above discussion proves what Brower states: “since successful translation depends on a double awareness of the cultural context in which the original was produced and of the context into which it is to be projected, it will often reveal strikingly the likeness and differences between two civilizations” (Vid 9).

My final example of translating cultural meanings about sexuality involved an implicit meaning:

‘Pro’ly stolen,’ says my father. ‘See the sticker? ALL YOU VIRGINS, THANKS FOR NOTHING. You can just see what sort of a pin’ead he’d be. Brain size of a pea.’ (“PFS” 3)

‘Mungkin juga mobil curian,’ kata ayahku. ‘Perhatikan stikernya. TERIMA KASIH PARA PERAWAN, KOQ PELIT BANGET. Kamu bisa bayangkan seperti apa orang itu. Orang yang tidak punya otak.’ (“KPDS” 2)

It is very difficult to translate denotatively the words in capital letter in this expression into Indonesian because its meaning lies behind the sentence. It deals with the way the utterer of the meaning of the sticker (and by association the person who has placed it on the car), a man, underestimates the value of “virginity”, so that he could easily label all women who do not want to sleep with him as “pelit” (stingy). It seems that he is disappointed with being refused, therefore, he puts the sticker on the car to let all people know that he mocks women. For this expression I translated it into Indonesian by using a kind of Indonesian commonly spoken in Jakarta. Jakartan expressions and words are useful because they can convey a tone of mockery and cynicism implicit in the meaning of the original text that standard “proper and correct” Indonesian (“Bahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar”) cannot. Were I to use standard Indonesian—“TERIMA KASIH PARA PERAWAN, KAMU KIKIR SEKALI”—the implicit disappointment and mockery would not be represented. So, in this case I was challenged to “reconstruct the situational variables relating to a text” (152) as stated by Palumbo. For Palumbo, this is the so-called register, which helps to pinpoint the variety of language used in a particular text (152).

## Chapter Five

### Conclusion

*Tupui mu terri, turunggi mu cawa*

*(You climb up you cry, you go down you laugh)*

Buginese saying

In their work on Canadian and Indonesian feminist studies, Sadli and Porter conclude that “there is a long way to go before what is called ‘western’ feminism does not dominate” (441). Throughout my research, a literary analysis of Helen Garner’s five short stories from *Postcards from Surfers*, with an Indonesian translation of this work, I have centred my Buginese heritage and knowledge to engage with “western” feminism without allowing it to dominate.

Buginese is one of Indonesia’s ethnic groups where men and women are intended to perform equal roles in society, especially those who live in the Buginese states of South Sulawesi where they are still bound strictly by *ade*’ (custom) or *pangadereng* (customary law). These two basic concepts are guidelines for daily life, both in the family and the work place. Buginese also praise what is called *siri*’ (honour and shame), that is a sense of honour and shame. It is because of this sense of honour and shame that we have a saying, *siri*’ *emmi ri onroang ri lino* (people live only for *siri*’) which means one lives only for honour and prestige. *Siri*’ has been a guiding principle in my theoretical and methodological approach to this research. It is also a guiding principle in the resulting pedagogical praxis that this work has established for my course in Australian culture and literature at Hasanuddin University.

Five short stories from Garner's *Postcards from Surfers* were selected and translated into Indonesian. Garner's works, critical reception of her work, and her representation of Australian masculinity and femininity have caused controversy and debate amongst Australian feminists and critics. Her understanding of feminist ideas and challenges will provide Indonesian tertiary students and Indonesian readers in general, with insights into discourse of power as both productive and repressive in an Australian context. This insight into a "western" perspective allows Indonesian readers to maintain their own cultural positioning while at the same time developing an awareness of how it has been constructed for them.

Having such a cultural background and then responding to the way Garner presents her feminist ideas in *Postcards from Surfers*, especially in terms of sexuality, is to an extent a cultural shock. However, considering that the aim of engaging with the knowledge of Western feminism is not to emulate all the ideas, the study of Helen Garner's feminism is the embodiment of communication between Australian and Buginese women. This is to respect other differences and to see the way Australian women empower themselves in four themes derived from *Postcards from Surfers*.

In the first theme, the Kitchen, I provided a cultural and historical overview of how this particular space is understood and embodied by Australian and Indonesian femininity and masculinity. In Australia, the advent of feminism has meant that this physical place symbolises an emerging equal relationship between male and female, the kitchen functions as the heart of the house where it is occupied not only by women but men and other members of family. The Australian kitchen has developed from a domestic space for women to a space men can enter and occupy with women. In other

words, the kitchen functions as both a physical and culturally constructed space where the female homemaker and the male breadwinner are no longer oppositional figures.

Typical houses in Indonesia, especially in Buginese states, have been constructed to differentiate between men and women's places. Unlike in Australia, currently a Buginese kitchen is still a restricted space for women or for members of the family only. Guests are always served in the living room which is situated at the front. Therefore any work related to the kitchen as a physical space including cooking, cleaning, washing dishes, and doing the laundry become women's responsibility. This links to the misinterpretation of kodrat (nature) of women by many Indonesians especially men that create inequality in such gender role divisions. Therefore, having a husband who is willing to help with food preparation as portrayed in "Postcards from Surfers" will reduce woman's domestic workload and enable men to participate in such domestic domains.

The next theme, Language, focused on the power embedded in cultural, communicative and spoken forms. In "La Chance Existe" from *Postcards from Surfers*, Garner uses lexical items which appear to not belong to "women's language". In doing so she reveals how ways of using language as a form of gaining power contributes to constructions of femininity and masculinity. In other words, Garner's use of "men's language" provides examples of resistance to social and cultural expectations.

This is contrary to Buginese women who are supposed to speak politely and not use "men's language". For Buginese women, Garner's engagement with feminist discourse exemplifies a freedom to speak. In *Postcards from Surfers*, the narratives implicitly and explicitly suggest the need for women to resist the control of dominant

patriarchal languages and expectations according to their own needs, positions and desires.

The third theme is Landscape. In this theme, the focus is on the relationship between place and discourses of power. Representations of place and (Western) male domination are intrinsically linked in Garner's narratives from *Postcards from Surfers*. The importance of examining landscape lies in the ability to read one's environment and identify how male domination and control can manifest. For both Australian and Indonesian contexts, mapping the landscape provides insight into cultural and historical constructions of gender. For Indonesian readers, insight into Western objectification of the female body, and women's involvement in it, provides a comparative perspective of Indonesian and Australian patriarchy.

Sexuality, the last theme, focused on how Garner's feminist perspective engages with constructions of heteronormative discourses. The way Australian feminist authors represent female desire is different from Indonesian representation. Garner, in *Postcards from Surfers*, presents her expansionist thinking on sex and sexuality to admit women's sexual desires and pleasure, while in Indonesia the ideal woman is expected to restrain her sexual desire. What Garner presents is the fulfilment of sexual desire without any repression.

In Buginese society sexuality is something taboo to talk about. Women are never expected to express their sexual desire. Their silence has a close relationship with the concept of *siri'* that they have to preserve. It is because sexuality may refer to sexual organs that for Buginese it is considered as fragile as a mirror. Therefore, once it is broken, it becomes worthless. In the theme of Sexuality, I used Garner's work to surface Western notions of desire for a Buginese consideration.

The notion of “dancing” has been employed as a signifier of movement between insider and outsider knowledge. Throughout this research I “dance” with Australian feminism as the basis of a pedagogical approach by applying Edward Said’s work on contrapuntal reading and Robert Warrior’s employment of a traditional Osage dance as a self-reflexive, embodied praxis, that is, I extend it from just a literary reading to a whole body experience. The notion of “dance” allows for movement, change, contact, tension, touch and distance: it means that for those who have historically been marginalised or confined, they are no longer silenced..

Although in some fields it is still considered unacceptable practice to use the first person “I”, this research makes it necessary. I use the first person “I” to signify my identity as a Buginese woman and position myself as an insider of my community with a hybrid western feminism with Australia in mind. In my feminist approach, I use the feminist-as-explorer model proposed by Mohanty as a way of understanding women’s problems in Third World countries. This model outlines a pedagogical strategy that places “foreign” woman as the object and subject of knowledge. I apply the feminist-as-explorer model strategically to link Buginese and Australian issues.

I also use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts. The application of Critical Discourse Analysis allows me to integrate three guiding principles of inclusive feminist inquiry in my analysis to build complex analyses, avoid erasure and specify location. By employing elements of feminism and CDA, I have opted for praxis-oriented research which allows a dialectical relationship between theory and practice.

By using these theoretical approaches in “dancing” with Australian feminism through Helen Garner’s *Postcards from Surfers*, Sadli and Porter’s statement that an equal partnership means equally respecting each other’s differences (441) is achieved. So, the fear of many Indonesians that Western feminism will change the culture of Indonesia is avoided because it is neither imported nor applied, rather it is a continuous, dynamic and moving interaction

As translation can be used to become familiar with foreign culture through reading its literature, this study includes the Indonesian translation of *Postcards from Surfers*, as well as a discussion on some challenges that occurred when translating the five stories. The result shows that foreignization is mostly used while domestication is used to make the target language texts are more accessible for Indonesian readers. Furthermore, adjustment techniques including addition, interpolation, and footnote are also used to make the target language text more accessible for an Indonesian context.

This study offers pioneering research into an Indonesian and Australian feminist conversation. It enriches Indonesia’s body of translated Australian literature as well as enriching the opportunities for Indonesian readers to “dance” with western feminism with honour and prestige maintained.

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**Appendix:**

**Indonesian Translation of *Postcards from Surfers***

1. “Kartu Pos Dari Surfers”

‘Suatu malam, aku bermimpi aku tak punya cinta,  
dan malam itu, lepas dari segala ikatan  
aku terbaring seolah-olah dalam kematian yang tenang.’

Colette

Kami sedang melaju ke arah utara dari bandara Coolangatta. Di sisi jalan, lautan membentuk gelombang yang besar. Di balik gelombang tersebut menyembul peselancar berpakaian hitam yang nampak seram seperti ikan hiu.

‘Lihat orang tolol itu,’ kata ayahku.

‘Mereka pasti menggigil,’ kata ibuku.

‘Tapi mereka kan pakai baju selam. Di antara kulit dan baju selam itu ada lapisan tipis air yang menyebabkan tubuh menjadi hangat .....’

‘Mungkin,’ kata ayahku.

Jalan tiba-tiba berkelok mengelilingi puncak berbatu. Nun jauh di depan, terhalang oleh awan putih, aku melihat sebuah kota impian. Terlihat dari kejauhan deretan gedung tinggi berwarna krem, perak, dan biru kehijauan, terpancang membentuk satu rangkaian.

‘Apakah itu Brisbane?’ tanyaku.

‘Bukan,’ jawab ibuku. ‘Itu kota wisata Surfers.’

Mobil ayahku dilengkapi dengan peralatan canggih. Jika laju mobil melebihi kecepatan, maka dasbornya akan mengeluarkan bunyi berdenting terus menerus tanda harus mengurangi kecepatan. Lampunya berkelip, dan tekanan kaki kanan ayah melemah. Ayah mengontrol seluruh jendela mobil dari panel yang berada di antara kedua kursi depan. Kami terus melaju melewati sebuah mobil Valiant yang diparkir di dekat jalan raya besar dengan tulisan 'DIJUAL' terpasang di jendela belakangnya.

'Lihat mobil itu,' kata ibuku. 'Plat nomernya WA (Western Australia). Mungkin ringsek karena melintasi daerah gersang *Nullarbor*. Sekarang mereka ingin menjualnya.'

'Mungkin juga mobil curian,' kata ayahku. 'Perhatikan stikernya. TERIMA KASIH PARA PERAWAN, KOQ PELIT BANGET. Kamu bisa bayangkan seperti apa orang itu. Orang yang tidak punya otak.'

Dari dekat, terlihat bahwa banyak dari gedung tinggi berwarna toska tersebut yang belum terjual. 'Lengkap sekali,' semacam itu iklannya. Gedung itu ada yang bernama Capricornia, Biarritz, The Breakers, Acapulco, dan Rio.

Dulu aku punya teman orang Brasil ketika tinggal di Paris. Sekali waktu dia memperlihatkan kepadaku sebuah kartu pos kota Rio de Janeiro, tempat dia lahir dan dibesarkan. Kartu pos itu dipotret dari udara dan menggambarkan sebuah pantai tropis yang melengkung indah, dengan pohon palem yang melambai, serta pasirnya yang tampak seperti salju.

'Mengapa kamu tidak tinggal di Brazil jika pemandangannya seindah ini?' tanyaku kepadanya.

‘Sebab di belakang pantai tersebut terdapat pangkalan militer yang besar sekali,’ jawab temanku.

Tiba giliranku, aku memperlihatkan sebuah kartu pos dari negaraku. Gambarnya berupa hasil reproduksi lukisan Streeton berjudul “The Land of the Golden Fleece”, yang aku letakkan di atas pemanas ruangan di kamarku sebagai pengobat rindu. Dia memperhatikan kartu pos tersebut dengan seksama. Kemudian dia mengalihkan pandangan matanya yang berwarna coklat ke arahku dan berkata,

‘Apakah pohon-pohon di Australia berwarna merah?’

Beberapa tahun kemudian tepatnya enam bulan yang lalu, aku sedang membongkar-bongkar kartu pos tua di sebuah kotak di toko loak Rathdowne Street. Di antara kartu pos bergambar rumah lembab di Galway, reruntuhan hotel Raj – hotel jaman Inggris yang sudah mau roboh di kota Colombo yang penuh dengan sepeda, dan danau yang tenang Kanada dengan riak kecil karena dilewati kano, akhirnya aku menemukan dua buah kartu. Aku membelinya dengan harga masing-masing satu dollar. Kartu yang satu berwarna hitam putih, dengan gambar pusat kota Rio de Janeiro. Kartu yang lainnya berwarna warni, dengan gambar kota kelahiranku, Geelong. Ketika memotret gambar ini, pemotretnya pasti berdiri di atas rerumputan tinggi di tepi sungai yang di bawahnya terhampar pemandangan pantai Eastern Beach. Si pemotret membidikkan kameranya melalui air mancur yang tidak pernah mengalir dengan kuartet patung burungnya (entah burung bangau atau burung jenjang, aku belum pernah menanyakan pada ayahku: burung ini memiliki paruh yang panjang berwarna oranye dan semuanya membengkokkan satu kaki ke atas, seakan-akan hendak melangkah). Dia membidik melalui air mancur lewat tempat berjalan yang melengkung di tepi air dan pijakan kayu bengkok di atasnya, arah di mana kami biasa menyelam sepanjang musim

panas, tanpa pengawasan, melompat ke air yang tenang, menyeberangi teluk menuju You Yangs, puncak gunung berapi berpuncuk dua, satu-satunya penghalang yang terletak di antara Geelong and Melbourne. Kedua kartu pos ini kutemukan di dalam kotak yang sama! Tidak disangka! ‘Dear Rubens,’ tulisku. ‘Bersama surat ini aku kirimkan kartu pos bergambar kedua kota kelahiran kita ....’

Bibi Lorna baru saja pergi untuk berjalan-jalan di pesisir pantai. Ibuku membuka pintu dan juga pintu kawat nyamuk. Dia keluar di siang yang cerah untuk bercerita kepada temannya tentang kedatanganku. Lautan samudra yang membentang luas di depan apartemen, jaraknya hanya kurang lebih seratus lima puluh meter. Bagaimana mungkin orang begitu yakin membangun gedung perumahan di atas tanah yang sangat dekat berbatasan dengan laut. Pesisir itu bergerak terus.

‘Pukul dua belas sekarang,’ kata ayahku.

‘Waktunya makan siang,’ jawabku.

‘Hampir. Apalagi dengan irisan daging kornet sapi dingin dan roti tawar dengan biji gandum. Aku mau coba dengan acar labu siam. Pernah makan labu siam?’

‘Melihat labu siam pun belum pernah,’ kataku.

‘Aku juga.’

Ayah kemudian mengambil pisau bergerigi dari tempat pisau bermagnet yang menempel di dinding dapur. Sambil duduk di meja dapur, dengan cepat dan cekatan ayah membuat sandwich. Dia membuatnya dengan penuh konsentrasi. Ketika dia menaruh daging ke roti, dia menaruhnya dengan gerakan yang sungguh-sungguh dan dengan bibir yang menyeringai simpatik. Kemudian dia memegang sandwich tersebut

dengan kedua tangannya, mengangkatnya lalu menggigitnya. Sambil mengunyah, dia mengambil nafas dalam-dalam melalui hidung.

‘Mau membuat sendiri untukmu?’ tanya ayahku dengan mulut yang masih penuh.

Aku berdiri. Ayah menyorongkan sebuah roti yang besar yang perlu dipotong ke arahku dengan punggung tangannya. Kemudian dia meletakkan sisa sandwichnya ke piring roti berwarna hijau dan menaruhnya di atas meja. Sambil duduk dengan meletakkan siku di atas meja kayu, lututnya dibuka lebar. Perutnya bertumpu nyaman di atas pahanya sementara kakinya yang panjang berpijak di atas lantai tegel. Dia memandang ke laut lepas sambil makan. Bunyi suara decakannya memenuhi ruangan.

Ibu dan bibi Lorna muncul setelah usai berjalan-jalan di pesisir pantai. Aku berdiri di balik dinding kaca sambil memperhatikan mereka. Mereka membersihkan pasir yang melekat di kakinya dengan air kran sebelum melintasi jalan rerumputan menuju pintu. Mereka sudah tua. Dengan satu tangan mereka harus berpegang pada kran untuk menjaga keseimbangan ketika berdiri di atas kaki kiri dan kanan. Menurutku mereka sudah tua, tapi sebetulnya mereka paru baya. Ibuku dan bibi Lorna adalah dua orang yang sangat penting. Mereka membuka pintu kawat nyamuk sambil tersenyum.

‘Awat, pasirnya jangan berceceran ke mana-mana,’ kata ayahku dari bangku tempatnya duduk.

Ibu dan bibi Lorna acuh saja. Bibi Lorna menciumku, memegang bahunya dan melihatku dengan kepalanya miring ke samping. Ibu menyiapkan makanan dan sesudah itu kamipun makan bersama sambil memandang ke lautan lepas.

‘Pasukan kawanan kepiting merah sudah lewat,’ kata ayahku. ‘Mereka biasanya datang ke pantai pada pukul sembilan. Mereka bisa ketahuan karena capitnya diayunkan tinggi-tinggi ketika berjalan. Ayah tertawa sambil menunduk ke bawah.

‘Apakah Ayah juga berjalan kaki setiap hari?’ tanyaku.

‘6,6 kilometer,’ jawab ayahku.

‘Pakai alat pengukur langkah?’

‘Hanya mengira-ngira,’ jawab ayah. ‘Kami biasa berjalan sampai ke gedung putih yang tinggi itu, yang ke arah sana, kemudian kembali. Hitungan jaraknya 6,6 kilometer pergi pulang.’

‘Kapan-kapan aku mau ikut ayah berjalan kaki.’

‘Boleh kalau kamu mau,’ jawab Ayah. Ayah mengambil piring bekas makannya lalu membawanya ke dapur. ‘Kita pergi setelah sarapan pagi. Hari ini kamu terlambat.’

Ayah menuju ke dipan dan membentangkan surat kabar di atas meja pendek. Dengan kacamata di hidung, dia membaca surat kabar tersebut dengan lengan di paha dan tangannya di antara lututnya. Yang perempuan mencuci piring.

‘Adakah toko dekat sini?’ tanyaku pada ibu. ‘Aku harus membeli pembalut tampon.’

‘Tidak bawa persiapan ya?’ kata ibu. ‘Ibu kira ada dijual di pusat pertokoan sepanjang Sunbrite Avenue dekat klub bowling. Mau ibu temani?’

‘Aku bisa mencarinya.’

‘Ibu tidak pernah bisa menggunakan pembalut seperti itu,’ kata ibuku sambil berbisik dan memandang ke arah ayahku. ‘Hazel pernah bercerita tentang kejadian yang tidak menyenangkan yang terjadi pada dirinya gara-gara memakai pembalut seperti itu. Waktu itu sehari-hari dia mencium bau yang tidak enak berasal dari ..... itunya. Sudah berulang-ulang kali dia membersihkannya, namun bau tersebut tidak hilang-hilang juga. Akhirnya dia memutuskan untuk ke dokter. Tetapi sebelum ke dokter, dengan menggunakan cermin, dia membungkukkan badan untuk melihat ke arah sumber bau tersebut. Tampak olehnya sehelai benang. Dia lalu menariknya. Benda tersebut ternyata pembalut tampon yang sudah berwarna hijau dekil. Dia pasti lupa mengeluarkan setelah sehari-hari dipakainya.’

Kami tertawa sambil menutup mulut dengan lap piring. Ayah yang berada di seberang ruangan, memandang ke arah kami dengan senyum dikulum tanpa mengetahui apa yang sedang kami tertawakan. Aku selalu kagum jika ibu mengucapkan bahasa halus seperti ‘...berasal dari itunya’. Di rumahku, aku punya buku berjudul “An Outline of English Verse” milik ibu yang dulu dipakainya ketika tahun terakhir di sekolah menengah. Di bagian pinggir sajak *The Rape of the Lock*, ibu membuat beberapa catatan kecil: ‘kesentimentalan; teringat akan Virgil; parodi Homer.’ Tulisan tangannya yang ditulis empat puluh lima tahun lalu menggunakan pensil masih persis sama dengan tulisan tangannya sekarang. Ini membuat aku berpikir ketika jauh darinya, bahwa beliau adalah seorang cendekiawan terselubung.

Dalam perjalanan dari apartemen ke pusat pertokoan, sekali atau dua kali sepertinya aku melihat bunga mawar yang tumbuh di sepanjang pagar. Tapi sayang bunganya tidak harum dan kelopak bunganya terlalu besar. Aku mundur. Di sisi hamparan rumput kuning, terdapat jejeran pepohonan mungil dengan bunganya yang

mekar berwarna putih berjatuhan. Tetapi pepohonan tersebut kelihatan aneh. Aku tak mengetahui pohon apa namanya. Bunganya terlalu besar, sementara rantingnya kecil sekali. Kepala aku masih agak pening setelah melakukan perjalanan udara. Di Melbourne musim dingin masih berlangsung. Seluruh pepohonan nampak gundul.

Aku membeli pembalut tampon kemudian mencari deretan kartu pos. Ternyata dipajang di rak tinggi berputar. Dalam kartu pos itu ada banyak warna nuansa biru. Setelah mendekat, aku melihat sejumlah kartu pos yang bergambar pantai berpasir putih, tanpa bukit pasir, tanpa pohon palem, di mana sejumlah orang setengah telanjang sedang berbaring dengan lutut ditekuk ke atas. Seringnya cara berbaring seperti itu muncul membuat aku jadi ingin tertawa. Hampir semua kartu pos tersebut bertuliskan SALAM DARI GOLD COAST, BROADBEACH atau SURFERS PARADISE, yang ditulis dengan tinta emas di salah satu sudutnya. Aku mencari kartu yang tanpa tulisan. Kartu yang lain, dalam beberapa gambar yang sedikit berbeda, memperlihatkan perempuan muda berpayudara besar berbaring dengan gaya menggoda membelakangi batu karang. Dia mengenakan bikini dengan kepala dan wajah yang ditutup dengan topeng karet. Topeng yang banyak dijual di toko sulap yang ditarik kebawah, seperti cara perampok menutup wajahnya dengan mengenakan stocking tembus pandang. Topeng tersebut menggambarkan wajah menyeringai seorang nenek sihir tua yang mengerikan. Aku memandang kartu tersebut berlama-lama. Apakah sederhana, atau adakah arti atau simbol misteri tersembunyi di baliknya?

Aku membeli kartu sebanyak dua belas lembar, kartu dengan tulisan “salam dari”, termasuk yang bergambar pemandangan yang dipotret dari udara dan daratan. Harganya masing-masing dua puluh lima sen.

“Mau amplopnya?” tanya pelayan toko. Si pelayan memakai pakaian bermotif bunga yang kainnya ditarik di antara kedua pahanya seperti *nappy* atau popok.

‘Boleh.’ Amplop tersebut penuh dengan gambar peta, logo, dan fauna Australia sehingga sedikit saja menyisakan tempat kosong untuk menulis alamat. Ada sesuatu dari amplop tersebut yang menarik perhatianku. Aku juga membeli sebungkus permen kunyah Licorice yang kuhabiskan sepanjang jalan pulang ke rumah. Aku mengunyahnya dua sekaligus. Mulutku terasa penuh dengan air liur. Tak ada tong sampah di sekitarku sehingga aku memasukkan pembungkus permen tersebut ke dalam sakuku. Karena aku sudah berbelanja di sini dan punya sampah yang harus dibuang, aku merasa bukan lagi orang asing di sini. Di Paris, dulu ada tulisan di jalan ‘Belanja adalah kehidupan kota ini’. Setiap wisatawan mengetahui kebenaran tulisan tersebut.

Ibu dan bibi Lorna sedang merajut sambil berbisik-bisik. Apa yang mereka bisikkan tidak memerlukan jawaban. Ayah menajamkan sebuah pensil dengan pisau sakunya lalu melipat surat kabar menjadi halaman yang berukuran seperdelapan ukuran aslinya.

‘Lima menurun, jeli daging pedas. ASPIC. Tiga mendatar, palsu. BOGUS! Gimana?’

‘Ayah memang cerdas.’ kataku. ‘Aku tentu tak sanggup menebak kata B O G U S. Mengapa ayah tidak mengerjakan lebih sulit?’

‘Oh, aku tak bisa menjawab yang sulit.’

‘Ayah harus hafal karya-karya Shakespeare dan Al Kitab jika ingin menjawab teka teki itu,’ kataku.

‘Ya. Tentu saja, jika kamu bisa mendapat jawabannya dan mengisi TTS sambil melihat jawaban itu, dengan latihan berulang-ulang kamu akan bisa mengetahui cara berpikir orang yang membuatnya. Dulu ada teka-teki silang yang bagus di surat kabar *Weekly Times*. Tapi mungkin karena mendapat banyak keluhan dari para *cockies* (petani) yang tidak bisa menjawabnya sehingga mereka membuatnya lebih mudah.’

Aku masih gak enak menulis kartu pos yang kubeli. Jika kutulis nanti dikira gak tahu diri karena baru datang langsung sibuk dengan kartu pos. Jadi aku bolak-balik buku pola baju ibuku.

‘Ada beberapa model baju yang menarik di situ,’ kata ibuku. ‘Bagaimana pendapatmu dengan model yang kerahnya menjuntai?’

‘Kamu mau membeli benang wol?’ tanya ayahku. Dia melempar teka-teki silang yang telah dijawabnya ke atas meja kecil kemudian berdiri sambil menguap besar. ‘Oh - ee - oh - ooh. Ayo nona. Mari ayah mengantar kamu ke Pacific Fair.’

Aku memilih benang wol dan menghitung jumlah gulungan benang yang dibutuhkan untuk model yang kupilih. Ayah memundurkan kepalanya melihat dengan seksama. Ketika aku masih usia belasan tahun, cara ayah memundurkan kepala untuk melihat seperti itu membuat aku takut sekali. Tetapi sekarang aku baru menyadari bahwa cara ayah melihat seperti itu karena matanya sudah plus.

‘Wol asli bukan?’ tanya ayahku. Begitu dia menyentuhnya pasti dia akan tahu. Ayah lalu merabanya dan memandang ke arahku.

‘Bukan,’ jawabku. ‘Ada sedikit campuran sintetisnya. Memang begitu yang diperlukan sesuai polanya’.

‘Mengapa kamu tidak ....’ Ayah tiba-tiba menghentikan kalimatnya. Dulu dia pernah melarangku membeli benang wol seperti itu. Bulu domba yang masih hangat dibentangkannya dengan tangannya yang besar dan kasar ke atas meja yang berminyak. Tangannya nampaknya tidak sensitive ketika menyentuh bulu domba tersebut. Tetapi tangan-tangannya itu memilah-milah bulu tersebut, menilainya, menggolongkannya, menaksir kehalusannya, dan menentukan ke negara mana misalnya akan dikirim: Italia, Switzerland, Jepang. Sering dia pulang ke rumah dengan duri menancap di telapak tangannya. Dia berdiri dengan sabar ketika ibu berusaha mengeluarkan duri tersebut dengan jarum. Kalau musim mencukur domba, ayah pergi menggunakan mobil kuning yang ada papan pijakannya. Kami naik di papan itu sampai ke ujung jalan rumah kami kemudian berjingkrak pulang ke rumah. Pernah juga ayah ke Melbourne untuk bekerja di sebuah pameran. Bukan untuk berwisata. Ketika pulang, dia membawakan aku oleh-oleh sebuah terompet plastik. ‘Fordie,’ panggilnya kepadaku seraya mengajakku ke dermaga dan berkata. ‘Kamu lihat tali itu? Itu bukan tali tapi tambang kapal.’ ‘Tambang kapal,’ kataku mengulangi kata ayah agar dia tahu kalau aku sungguh-sungguh memperhatikannya. Kami berjalan bergandengan tangan sepanjang Strachan Avenue dan Manifold Heights. ‘Dengar,’ kata ayah. ‘Dengarlah angin berbunyi melalui kabel itu.’ Aku pasti masih kecil waktu itu karena aku tidak ingat lagi aku melihat ke kabel yang begitu tinggi itu.

Ayah berpaling dari benang wol yang berwarna merah muda dan menunggu aku membayar sambil memasukkan tangannya ke saku.

‘Apa kegiatan ayah setiap hari di kota ini?’ tanyaku dalam perjalanan pulang ke rumah.

‘Oh..... main bowling. Lihat-lihat perumahan. Biasanya ayah menelfon perusahaan yang mengiklankan apartemen mewah dan mengajukan pertanyaan-pertanyaan. Ayah pancing mereka agar menurunkan harga serendah-rendahnya, melihat seberapa rendah mereka turunkan, dan berapa banyak tambahan diskon yang mereka bisa berikan.’ Ayah layaknya seorang petani mengemudikan mobil *ute* (mobil pick up), menyandarkan tangannya melengkung di kemudi, seakan-akan selalu siap melihat lewat kaca depan, memandang ke langit mengecek keadaan cuaca.

‘Apakah mereka tidak menanyakan nama ayah?’

‘Ya.’

‘Ayah menjawab apa?’

‘Oh, Jackson atau siapa saja.’ Ayah menoleh ke arahku sejenak. Kemudian kami tertawa sambil berpaling arah.

‘Jelek sekali di sini,’ kata ayahku. Membangun serampangan. Menyedihkan. “Setiap kemewahan yang bisa anda bayangkan”! Mereka tidak bisa. Mereka putus asa. Ayo kita ke atas melihat-lihat gedung tersebut.’

Lift di apartemen Biarrits dilapisi dengan karpet yang berwarna seperti jamur. Kami menyandarkan punggung ke dinding lift yang segera membawa kami ke atas dengan cepat. Karyawan di apartemen yang dibuka untuk umum berkumis, memakai banyak gelang emas, mengenakan jas warna krem dengan papan pengalas menulis yang mepet di dadanya. Tampaknya dia sedang sibuk melayani sepasang lanjut usia sehingga kami bisa melangkah melewatinya menuju ke ruang tamu.

‘Kamu lihat anak bodoh itu?’ kata ayahku.

‘Anak muda yang dipoles,’ kataku. “Matanya tampak kuyu, kepalanya pipih, sama sekali tidak punya otak.”

Ayah kelihatan terkesan seakan-akan tahu aku baru mengarang sendiri kata-kata itu. ‘Pemuda naif seperti dalam *The Man from Ironbark*,’ tambahku.

‘Ayah hanya hafal *The Geebung Polo Club*,’ katanya. Kemudian ayah meniruniru gaya naik kuda sambil menunduk dan mengayunkan benda yang berat. Kami mendengus sambil tertawa. Di balik pintu ruang tamu berdiri lima tiang gaya Yunani melengkung berbentuk bulan sabit. Di belakangnya, di balik kaca, terlihat sebuah sungai dan pegunungan. Sungainya berliku-liku melewati sebuah daratan dan gunungnya berkelok-kelok.

‘Dari seberang sana kamu bisa melihat laut,’ kata ayahku.

‘Maukah kamu tinggal di apartemen ini?’

‘Sama sekali tidak. Tidak dengan tiang yang sialan itu.’

Dari jendela kamar tidur, ayah menunjuk ke sebuah bangunan apartemen lain yang lebih dekat dengan laut. Nama bangunannya Chelsea. Warnanya abu-abu seperti warna kapal perang dengan pinggiran berwarna merah. Jendelanya tidak menghadap ke lautan. Tinggi dan kelihatan sempit seperti penjara. ‘Aku tidak keberatan tinggal di situ,’ kata ayahku. Aku memandang ke bangunan tersebut dengan terdiam. Ayah dengan mantap memilih yang paling jelek. Begitu jeleknya sehingga aku tak bisa bilang apa-apa.

Sekarang Sabtu sore, sambil menunggu siaran sepak bola Victoria di TV, ayah membolak balik surat kabar.

‘Lihat ini,’ katanya kepada ibu. ‘Masih ingat seminar yang kita hadiri tentang investasi berlian?’

‘Di sini?’ tanyaku. ‘Sebuah seminar?’

‘Katanya investasi yang bisa berlipat ganda dalam enam hari. Kami pergi bersama ke seminar itu di suatu sore. Mereka memang dasar penipu. Mereka berdalih dengan menyiapkan minuman anggur *sherry* dan sandwich.’

‘Padahal kita datang memang hanya untuk itu,’ kata ibuku.

‘Orang-orang seperti apa saja yang hadir dalam seminar itu?’ tanyaku.

‘Ya... orang-orang seperti kami,’ jawab ayahku.

‘Apakah ada yang membeli?’

‘Tentu saja ada. Yang pasti orang yang bodoh. Ngomong-ngomong coba tengok surat kabar *Age* hari ini. “Impian tentang berlian”. Pasar berlian dunia merosot.” Ha ha ha.

Ayah menghidupkan TV tepat pada saat jadwal acara sepak bola dimulai. Aku membuat tusukan permulaan sebagaimana mestinya kemudian mulai merajut. Ibuku dan bibi Lorna sudah banyak membuat baju dengan pola yang rumit untuk pakaian putri remaja kakakku, berbicara sendiri-sendiri. Ayahku bergumam seperti sedang memberi petunjuk kepada para pemain bola, sambil tertawa mengejek. ‘Bodoh sekali,’ katanya.

Aku beranjak ke kamar di mana aku tidur bersama bibi Lorna dan kembali dengan membawa bungkusan kartu pos. Ketika aku mengeluarkan pulpen dan perangko, dan siap-siap untuk menulis di meja, ayahku memandang ke arahku dan berteriak di tengah gemuruh penonton bola.

‘Sudah berhenti dengan rajutannya?’

‘Belum. Hanya mau menyelesaikan beberapa kartu pos dulu. Orang-orang suka kalau dikirimi kartu pos dari Queensland.’

‘Ayah, ada baiknya rajin menulis surat,’ kata ibuku.

‘Aku akan lanjutkan merajut nanti,’ kataku.

‘Seberapa banyak yang telah engkau rajut?’ tanya ayahku.

‘Sebanyak ini.’ Jawabku sambil melebarkan ibu jari dan jari telunjukku.

‘Dear Philip,’ tulisku. Aku sengaja menulis dengan tulisan sekecil mungkin, bagian belakang kartu pos, bukan depannya, adalah seni. ‘Lihatlah di mana aku sekarang berada. Seekor anjing red setter basah dari laut, berjalan terseok-seok di jalan setapak samping gedung apartemen, kelihatan bingung dan cemas seperti kebiasaan anjing sejenis itu. Orang tuaku mengusir anjing tersebut sambil mengumpat dengan suara yang tidak jelas. Pergilah, ayo pergi!’

‘Dear Philip. PENGENALAN UNGGAS DAN IKAN. *Ayah*: “Lihat burung elang laut itu. Mereka pasti punya mata yang tajam untuk melihat sejauh seratur mil. Begitu ada yang menyelam, maka akan bermunculan yang lain. Lihat cara mereka menyelam! Bang! Mereka menyelam ke bawah.” *Aku*: Ikan apa yang mereka tangkap?” *Ayah*: “Ikan putih. Mereka hanya makan ikan putih.” *Aku*: “Tidak!” *Ayah*: “Bagaimana aku tahu ikan apa yang mereka makan.”’

‘Dear Philip. Ayahku mengatakan itu elang laut, tetapi ibuku (setelah itu di dalam kamar mandi) mengatakan kepadaku bahwa elang laut memiliki leher yang lebih pendek dan bengkok.’

“Dear Philip. Aku dan Bibi Lorna tidur sekamar. Dia juga sedang menulis kartu pos dan baru saja menanyakan kepadaku bagaimana mengeja kata TOO. Aku sangat suka padanya dan sebaliknya *diapun suka kepadaku*. “Aku mau pegawai kantor pos di Woomelang mengira-ngira siapa pengirimnya,” katanya. “Aku tak akan menulis namaku di bagian belakang amplop.””

‘Dear Philip. DI LUAR KANTOR POS. Ayah, bibi Lorna dan aku menunggu dalam mobil ketika ibu pergi mengambil surat di kotak pos. *Ayah*: Oh Tuhan, tidakkah sungguh keterlaluan apa yang orang lakukan? Coba lihat tanda M A S U K itu, tidakkah panahnya mengarah ke atas? Apa maksudnya dengan tanda panah mengarah ke atas itu? Apakah itu perbuatan iseng atau kelakuan orang tolol? Perempuan itu pasti telah berbicara di kamar telfon itu selama setengah jam. Bagaimana kalau kamu harus menunggu perempuan itu selesai berbicara dari A ke Z, sementara ada hal penting yang segera kamu harus sampaikan. Kejadian itu terjadi pada kami suatu ketika di – Ibu membuka pintu mobil dan masuk. “Tiga surat,” katanya. “Semuanya untuk Ibu.”

Kadang-kadang cerita singkatku memenuhi seluruh kartu pos sehingga aku harus lanjut pada kartu pos yang kedua. Ini berarti harus mengisi sisa tempat di kartu kedua dengan cerita yang lebih singkat atau menulis sesuatu yang tidak nyambung. ‘*Aku*: (membuka lemari) “Hei! Scrabble! Kita bisa main Scrabble sesudah makan malam!” *Ayah*: (dengan tawa yang sinis) “Aku tak sabar menunggu.”’

‘Dear Philip. Aku tahu kamu tak akan membalas. Bahkan aku tak tahu apakah kamu masih tinggal di alamat ini.’

‘Dear Philip. Di suatu Sabtu pagi, aku pergi ke supermarket Coles dan membeli sebuah selendang. Harganya waktu itu 4 shilling 6 pence. Aku sangat senang dengan belanjaku itu. Ayahku menarik selendang itu kemudian melihat labelnya. “Buatan Cina.

Apakah sutra asli? Mari kita tes.” Ayahku menyalakan korek api. Kami semua berteriak dan ibuku berkata, “Jangan terpancing. Dia hanya menggodamu.””

‘Dear Philip. Suatu waktu ketika aku berumur empat belas tahun, aku berkata sesuatu yang kurang ajar pada ayahku. Dia menamparku. Tak ada suara. Adik laki-lakiku sedikit histeris tertawa terkekeh-kekeh, dan akupun ikut tertawa kaget. Ayah menamparku lagi. Sesudah mencuci piring aku dipanggilnya. Ayah sedang duduk di kursi sambil menunduk. “Alasan mengapa kita tidak bersahabat lagi,” kata ayah, “karena kita sangat punya kemiripan.” Pernyataan ini membuat aku begitu mual sehingga aku memalingkan wajahku yang sembab. Sembab karena menangis, bukan karena pukulan yang kekuatannya yang lebih simbolik dibanding fisik.

‘Dear Philip. Beberapa tahun kemudian ayahku menemukan suratku dan membacanya. Dia juga menemukan beberapa pil anti hamil. Dia langsung berangkat ke Melbourne dengan mobil untuk menemuiku dan memaksaku pulang. Dia mengatakan aku telah membiarkan badanku dipakai laki-laki. Katanya aku harus berkonsultasi dengan psikiater. Aku duduk di kursi depan, sementara ibuku duduk di belakang. Aku berpikir, “Jika aku membuka pintu dan melompat keluar mobil, aku tidak harus mendengar kata-katanya itu lagi.” Ibuku mencoba membelaku. Ayah membentak ibuku. “Ini salah kamu,” kata ayahku. “Kamu terlalu bersikap lunak kepadanya.””

‘Dear Philip. Aku tahu kamu sudah mendengar tentang hal ini sebelumnya. Aku juga tahu ceritaku ini tidak lebih buruk dari pada cerita-cerita yang lain.’

‘Dear Philip. Kembali beberapa tahun kemudian ayahku bertanya kepadaku dengan pertanyaan yang pribadi. Dia sedang mengemudi, aku duduk di sampingnya, “Apa yang terjadi,” katanya, “antara kamu dan Philip?” Kembali aku memalingkan wajahku. “ Aku tak mau membahas soal itu,” kataku. Semua terdiam. Ayah tak pernah

menanyakan itu lagi. Beberapa tahun sesudah itu ketika hendak menuju ke kantor, di sebuah kafe di Paris, cukup jauh darinya, aku teringat kembali pertanyaan itu dan menangis. Yang terhormat Philip. Aku memaafkan atas segala yang telah kamu lakukan kepadaku.

Sore harinya Ibu, Bibi Lorna dan aku berjalan-jalan menyusuri pantai menuju Surfers. Air laut sedang surut: kaki kami yang telanjang hampir tak meninggalkan bekas di pasir. Suara ibu dan bibi Lorna terdengar. Yang satu tinggi, yang lain rendah. Jika aku berbicara mereka berpura-pura mendengar, sama seperti ketika aku berpura-pura memperhatikan percakapan mereka yang tiada hentinya. Inilah aturan sopan santun kami. Inilah cinta. Semuanya dikatakan, tidak ada yang diucapkan. Dalam perjalanan pulang ke rumah, aku menunjukkan kepada mereka langit oranye dengan awan yang berarak melintas di atas lautan hingga turun ke horizon. Patuh, mereka berhenti dan memandang ke lautan. Kami berdiri berjajar, bibi Lorna dengan roknya yang cantik sambil menenteng sandal, ibu dan aku dengan celana panjang yang digulung ke atas. Sekali waktu aku menanyakan pertanyaan yang bodoh kepada temanku orang Brazilia. Dia sedang mendengarkan percakapanku dengan seorang Prancis tentang sistem pemilihan umum di negara kami masing-masing. Dia tidak berbicara sepele kata pun, sehingga aku berpikir untuk mengajaknya ikut dalam percakapan kami juga. Aku tanyakan, 'Bagaimana cara orang-orang memberi suara di negara kamu, Rubens?' Dia memandanguku sambil tersenyum kecil. 'Kami tidak melakukan pemilihan umum,' jawabnya. Di sebelah mana Rio de Janeiro dari sini? 'Coba lihat awan itu!' kataku. 'Kan kelihatan seperti ada kota lagi di sana yang sedang terbakar?'

Waktu malam mulai turun, udara sub-tropis mulai berubah warna dan lembab. Aku berjalan ke luar lewat pintu kawat dan meletakkan minuman gin di tiang pagar.

Sambil bersandar di pagar, aku memandang ke lautan lepas. Tak lama lagi bulan akan menampakkan wajahnya. Seandainya aku melukis pemandangan langit seperti itu, aku akan menggambar sederetan huruf V terbalik dan yang bergoyang karena seperti itulah yang kulihat ketika memandangnya. Datarnya horizon itu ciptaan pikiran kita saja. Aku mendengar suara sumbat gabus botol dibuka di balkon lantai atas di belakangku. Aku menoleh ke atas. Dalam remang-remang aku melihat dua orang pria berkumis tersenyum ke arahku.

‘Minum sampanye malam ini?’ kataku.

‘Suaranya asyik kan?’ kata salah seorang yang memegang botol.

Aku kembali memandang ke langit yang tanpa bulan. Tahun lalu aku pergi berkemah di sungai Murray. Aku membeli kartu pos di Tocumwal. Aku harus menulis cepat karena hari mulai gelap dan suara yang menakutkan dari arah pepohonan mulai terdengar. ‘Dear ayah,’ tulisku. ‘Aku sedang berada di dekat sungai Murray, duduk dekat api unggun. Sekarang hari hampir gelap tapi tadi pemandangan sangat indah ketika matahari mulai turun dan embun mulai muncul. Dua minggu kemudian, di rumah, aku menerima balasan dari ayah yang ditulis dengan tulisan tangan yang cepat, miring, dan kokoh di mana setiap kata berakhir dengan ujung yang miring mengarah ke atas. Isi surat itu mengenai masalah keuangan yang sepele, terdiri dari dua kalimat memenuhi separuh dari halaman kwarto. Tapi di bagian belakang amplop ayah menulis pesan pribadi: ‘N.B. Embun tidak muncul. Dia terbentuk.’

Bulan mulai menampakkan diri, bulat seperti jeruk, di atas laut di depan apartemen. Seorang anak kecil di lantai atas juga sedang memandang bulan tersebut sambil melolong seperti manusia serigala. Ibuku menyiapkan makan malam dan kemudian kami makan bersama. ‘Mau membantu ibumu mencuci piring non?’ kata

ayahku yang duduk di sofa. Bahuku terasa jadi kaku. Memang aku mau membantu. Aku berbaring di atas kursi panjang dan membaca majalah edisi lama *Woman's Day*. Putri Caroline dari Monaco mengenakan baju berwarna hitam dan topi lebar putih. Jarum rajutan terdengar berdenting. Bibi Lorna dan ayah berasal dari kota yang sama, Hopetoun di Malee. Ketika ayah selesai membaca koran, mereka bertiga melanjutkan lagi percakapannya.

‘Aku selalu bias mengingat mobil-mobil milik orang,’ kata ayahku.

‘Ada mobil Dodge tua empat silinder kepunyaan siapa itu namanya. Mobil itu punya-’

‘Bukankah itu milik salah seorang anggota keluarga O’Lachlan?’ kata bibi Lorna.

‘Jim O’Lachlan. Mobilnya memiliki knalpot yang besar sekali di bagian belakang. Aku ingat ketika suatu waktu aku menyumbatnya dengan sebuah kentang.’

‘Sebuah kentang?’ tanyaku.

‘Dia seorang anggota dewan kota,’ kata ayahku. Dia keluar dari gedung dewan, masuk ke dalam mobil Dodgenya dan menyalakan mesin mobilnya. Baru berjalan lima puluh meter tiba-tiba BAP-BAP-BAP! Kentang penyumbat itu terlempar keluar. Melesat jauh. Ayah mengatup bibirnya dan menyandarkan kepalanya di sofa sambil menahan ketawanya.

Aku berjalan melewati Biarritz di mana cahaya bola-bola lampu terpantul di antara semak. Di beberapa balkon dari gedung yang masih setengah kosong itu, terlihat orang-orang kaya di udara yang pekat. Seorang laki-laki bertelanjang kaki melangkah keluar dari toko makanan siap saji dengan membawa sebungkus burger di tangannya.

Dia bersandar di tembok membuka bungkus burgernya, melihat ke arahku yang ragu-ragu membuka kotak pos, yang memegang beberapa kartu pos dan membacanya berulang-ulang diterangi cahaya lampu yang redup dari boks telepon umum. 'Sudah terlambat untuk merubahnya,' kata laki-laki itu. Aku menengadahkan memandangnya. Dia tersenyum dan mengangguk lalu mulai menggigit burgernya. Di sebelah kotak pos terdapat tong sampah dengan penutupnya yang berputar. Aku membukanya kemudian membuang kartu pos tersebut.

Sepanjang malam aku tertidur dengan lelap di tempat tidurku. Ombak bergemuruh, berdesis, menghempas seperti pintu. Bibi Lorna mendengkur, tetapi ketika aku tarik sudut selimut dia mendesah, bernafas lebih pelan. Di pagi hari matahari menyinari jendela depan dan memenuhi ruang dengan sinarnya yang begitu kuat menembus kain jendela berwarna putih. Semuanya berwarna merah muda dan keemasan. Di bak cuci piring seekor kecoa sedang bersembunyi. Aku mencoba mengusir dengan menyiramnya tetapi tidak mempan. Dia bertahan dengan kuat. Langit terang benderang, putih dengan buih ombak. Ayahku sudah bangun. Sementara menunggu air mendidih, dia berdiri di atas rumput sudut rumah, ujung propertynya, memandang ke laut lepas.

## 2. “La Chance Existe”

Aku termasuk orang yang selalu tertahan di bagian pabean bandara. Julie mengatakan hal itu disebabkan karena aku selalu menengok kiri kanan. ‘Kamu kelihatan gelisah seakan-akan mencari-cari jalan keluar,’ katanya. Aku kira dia tak akan mau percaya lagi padaku. Hal itu menjengkelkan tapi aku tak bisa menyalahkannya. Aku mencintainya. Itu saja. Dan aku merasa ingin mengabdikan diri untuknya.

Ketika tiba di Boulogne, kami harus menunggu ferry selama tiga jam karena ada pemogokan kerja di pelabuhan Inggris. Aku ingin duduk di sebuah cafe dan membaca *Le Monde*, tapi Julie ingin jalan-jalan dan melihat-lihat karena dia baru beberapa hari berada di Prancis. Bahasa Prancisnya kacau dan dia tidak mau mempraktekkan karena gengsi. Ketika aku menjemputnya di bandara Orly, dia sudah gelisah karena tidak mengerti bahasa Prancis. Kami langsung ke bar di dalam bandara dan dia bersikeras mau memesan minumannya. Pelayan, yang tertipu dengan aksennya yang bagus, menyapanya dengan ramah dan mengharapkan jawabannya. Wajah Julie berubah menjadi kaku dan gelisah. Kemudian dia membalikkan badan. Pelayan tersebut mengangkat bahu dan kembali di balik konter. Julie memukul meja dan mendecakkan gigi. ‘Kasih deh aku! Mestinya aku bisa! Aku tidak bodoh!’

‘Demi Tuhan, nona,’ kataku. ‘Kamu baru tiba di negara ini lima belas menit yang lalu. Apa yang kamu inginkan dari dirimu sendiri?’

Boulogne kota yang suram, sesuai dengan dugaanku. Aku tak henti-hentinya mengajak dia ke selatan, menuju Italia yang belum pernah dikunjunginya. Tetapi dia bersikeras harus ke London, katanya untuk menemui pria yang telah membuat dia jatuh

cinta, sesaat sebelum meninggalkan Australia. Pemuda itu akan menyusulnya ke Eropa. Rasanya Julie ingin mati saja kalau tak melihatnya lagi. Dia tergila-gila kepada pemuda pemain musik itu ketika melihat pemuda itu sedang duduk sendiri sambil membaca buku berjudul *The Meaning of Meaning*. Julie menceritakan kepadaku bahwa pemuda tersebut sangat ceking. Menurutku bakal hancur nanti. Cinta tak akan bertahan sepanjang penyeberangan selat Inggris, yakinku. Apalagi tiga puluh enam jam dari Melbourne ke London. Tapi aku bahagia bisa bersamanya lagi dan dia tak mendengarkan pendapatku.

Dengan bersepatu yang cocok untuk jalan-jalan mulus di Paris, kami melewati jalan berbatu kota Boulogne. Terlihat ada gapura menuju jalan setapak dari tanah membelok pas di luar kota tua, tepat di bawah sebuah tembok yang tinggi. Julie sangat senang. ‘Bangunan tua! Pasti tembok ini dibangun supaya kotanya tidak bisa dimasuki musuh!’ ‘Jalannya sempit. Jalan satu per satu, bergaya Indian,’ Julie bersenandung, mendahului aku berjalan.

Hari pukul sebelas pagi di hari kerja bulan Juli, tak ada siapa-siapa. Angin dingin berhembus dari Selat Inggris. Air laut nampak berwarna kelabu dan berombak seakan-akan airnya menggigil.

Kami berjalan dengan riang selama dua puluh menit, mengitari punggung bukit di mana kota tua itu berada. Sewaktu-waktu berbalik arah untuk melihat pemandangan. Jalannya semakin sempit.

‘Mari kita pulang,’ ajakku. ‘Kamu tidak bisa melihat laut dari sini. Tempat ini berbau.’

‘Tunggu. Lihat. Rombongan mobil caravan apa di bawah sana?’

‘Entahlah. Mungkin rombongan gipsi. Ayolah kita balik Julie.’

Dia berjalan terus. Jalan yang dilalui bukan lagi berupa jalan, penuh dengan semak berduri dan jelas akan buntu dalam jarak seratus meter di depan. Aku berjalan sepuluh langkah di belakang Julie ketika tiba-tiba dia berteriak dan berhenti. Aku menghampirinya. Tercium bau tai manusia bercampur dengan bau bangkai yang menyengat. Di dekat kakinya terlihat bangkai burung besar yang telah tercabik-cabik. Kepalanya terpisah satu meter dari lehernya, separuh paruhnya terkatup dan bulu yang kotor berceceran di mana-mana, tersangkut di semak dan terkibas oleh angin laut. Kotorannya adalah kotoran manusia. Bentuknya bentuk kotoran manusia. Kotoran manusia pemakan daging, busuk.

Kami saling memandang satu sama lain. Pembunuhan ini baru saja dilakukan. Dalam hembusan angin sepoi-sepoi, bulu di bagian dada burung tersebut terkibas dan kembali tersusun rapi seperti pangkasan rambut yang mahal. Suasana sangat sunyi di atas sana.

‘Seorang dari gerombolan gipsi itu memandang kita,’ kata Julie tanpa menggerakkan bibirnya. ‘Tempat ini adalah kakus mereka. Sialan, kakus mereka. Mereka pasti menertawai kita. ‘Julie tertawa terkekeh-kekeh, melewatiku sambil menyenggol dan pergi menembus semak berduri tersebut dan kembali ke arah kota.

Ketika kembali berada di antara rumah-rumah, kami berdiri di bagian atas sebuah lorong di mana dua orang anak laki-laki kecil memainkan sebuah permainan dengan bola dan tali yang sangat rumit. Yang satu menjatuhkan ujung tali yang dipegangnya . Yang satunya lagi berkaca mata dan berponi. Dengan wajah yang sangat putih dia berteriak kepada temannya dengan suara yang jelas sehingga Julie pun mengerti.

*'La chance existe!'*

'Ucapan yang canggih,' kata Julie.

Di atas ferry ketika akhirnya ferry tersebut muncul, kami sama sekali tak punya uang bahkan untuk membeli minuman. Langit dan laut berwarna kelabu. Garis pembatas antaranya kelihatan miring ke satu sisi, yang satunya miring ke sisi lain.

'Akankah ferrynya bergoyang?' tanya Julie. 'Bagaimana jika saya muntah?'

'Kamu tak akan muntah. Kita akan jalan-jalan sambil ngobrol. Aku akan mengalihkan perhatianmu agar tidak muntah.'

Kaca matakku katanya jenis kaca mata yang bisa menyesuaikan diri dengan cahaya secara otomatis. Tetapi ketika kami masuk kembali ke dalam ferry malah tetap hitam. Kaca mata murahan. Cahaya di lantai bawah ferry kurang terang. Aku benci harus kembali ke Inggris. Aku benci suasana di mana apa saja yang terjadi langsung bisa dimengerti. Aku rindu suasana di mana orang-orang di sekitar kita saling berbicara dalam bahasa yang berbeda.

Julie melesat turun ke lantai bawah dan langsung mengambil dua kursi. Kami mengeluarkan buku dan menendang tas kami di bawah meja kecil. Di dinding dekat kami duduk terdapat peringatan akan bahaya penyakit anjing gila dan denda yang dikenakan ditulis dalam berbagai bahasa. Julie berlutut di kursinya dan membaca petunjuk tersebut dengan seksama.

'Penyakit anjing gila. Bahasa Prancisnya *la rage*. Ha, artinya bukan anjing saja yang bias mati kena penyakit itu.

Julie orangnya suka curigaan dan sering merasa jijik. Ketika dia tertawa, terlihat satu gigi geraham kirinya sudah ompong. Dia adalah tipe orang yang kalau mencintai seseorang dia akan benar-benar mencintainya, tapi tidak segan-segan memarahi orang yang mengecewakan diri sendiri. Dia selalu kelihatan sedikit sinis ketika suasana hatinya lagi tenang. Dia bilang dia tak akan mau pulang. Semua orang juga mengatakan hal yang sama ketika pertama kali tiba di sini.

Julie menghempaskan diri ke kursi. ‘Aku bertemu Lou sesaat sebelum meninggalkan Melbourne,’ kata Julie. ‘Aku katakan kepadanya aku akan mengunggulimu. Dia tertawa. Katanya, “si homo kecil itu!”’ Julie melirik.

‘Berita cepat saja menyebar.’ Aku sudah Lou pasti bilang begitu. Aku jemu jadinya. Sekarang dia bias mengurus sendiri masalah ganja dan cek kosong. Aku menarik nafas kemudian mulai membicarakan yang sulit-sulit.

‘Ketika pertama kali aku tiba di sana,’ kataku, ‘aku tahu aku harus melakukan sesuatu. Aku memang datang untuk itu. Dulu aku sering jalan berkeliling kota Paris di malam hari, kadang mencari teman pria dan sekaligus menghindari mereka. Contohnya, suatu malam aku sedang berada di metro. Penumpang sudah penuh dan aku berdiri berpegang pada tiang vertikal. Seorang lelaki naik di Clignancourt. Dia menyusup di antara penumpang yang berjejal dan mendekati aku.

‘Dia tidak melihat ke arahku, tapi aku bisa merasakan kedekatannya. Mungkin perasaanku saja tapi kehangatan terasa di antara kami. Hatiku bergetar tak karuan. Tangannya yang berpegang pada tiang sangat dekat sekali dengan mulutku sehingga aku bisa menciumnya. Kereta bergoyang, seluruh penumpang ikut bergoyang. Aku menggeser tanganku ke atas tiang hingga hampir menyentuh tangannya. Dadaku terasa sesak. Betapa aku ingin menyentuhnya. Aku bisa merasakan wangi kulitnya. Aku pikir

aku mau pingsan. Kemudian pada pemberhentian berikut dengan tenang dia melepaskan pegangan pada tiang lalu menyelinap turun.'

Julie meletakkan kakinya di sebuah meja pendek yang berada di antara kami, melingkarkan lengannya di kaki, dan meletakkan kepalanya di atas lutut. Agak sulit dia mengontrol mulutnya. 'Apa nama stasiun metro kesukaan kamu?' tanyanya.

'Apa?' Aku tak tahu. Trocadero.'

'Kalau aku Chateu d'Eau.'

'Pernah naik ke atas stasiun itu? Kamu pasti tidak suka. Tidak aman untuk perempuan.'

'Kamu ingat ketika kamu mencret di atas jaket Lois Laneku yang hijau?'

'Tidak sengaja. Aku kena diare!'

'Kamu sibuk sekali bercermin sehingga kamu tidak sadar kalau kamu berdiri di atas bajuku.'

'Tukang binatu bias membersihkannya! Mengapa kamu mengingatkan aku dengan kejadian itu?'

'"Itu kotoran anjing," begitu jawab kamu ke tukang binatu. Kotoran anjing.'  
Katanya tukang binatu sambil tertawa mendengus.

'Bisa dibersihkan.' Aku membuka surat kabar sambil mengibas-ngibaskannya.

'Menjadi seorang homoseksual mesti punya arti,' katanya. 'Apa yang terjadi? Apakah semuanya menjadi mungkin?'

‘Apa maksudmu?’ Apakah dia aka bertanya apa yang kami lakukan? Aku akan menceritakannya. Aku akan menceritakan semuanya.

‘Maksudku, jika kalian berjenis kelamin sama berarti lebih adil kan? Siapa yang disetubuhi dan siapa yang menyetubuhi? Apakah orang menjadi terbiasa menyetubuhi atau disetubuhi?’ Atau apakah kedua-duanya melakukan semuanya?

‘Memang tidak begitu berbeda,’ kataku dengan perasaan malu-malu tapi mencoba membantu menjelaskannya. ‘Paling sedikit kalau lagi telah menjadi pasangan.’

‘Oh.’ Dia kelihatan agak kecewa sambil memandang ke luar melalui jendela kapal melihat ke langit yang kelabu dan air yang kelabu. Lengan kardigannya digulung hingga siku dan aku bisa melihat bulu halus rambut pirangnya yang menyelubungi kulitnya. Kakinya juga berbulu halus seperti itu. Kami seukuran baju. Tingginya juga sama tapi panggulnya kelihatan agak lebih kobo. Cahaya menembus di sela paha atasnya.

‘Aku tak pernah mau disetubuhi orang kecuali kalau dalam keadaan terancam,’ katanya tiba-tiba. ‘Maksudku bukan fisik. Maksudku jika ada kemungkinan orang itu menyakiti hatiku,’

‘Membuatmu patah hati.’

‘Aku tak akan pernah menikah. Atau bahkan mungkin tak akan tinggal serumah dengan seseorang lagi.’

‘Bagaimana dengan si brengsek. Si pemain bass itu? Bukankah karena dia kita melakukan perjalanan ini?’

‘Apakah kamu takut menjadi tua?’ tanyanya dengan suara yang aneh.

‘Rambutku mulai menyusut.’ Aku menarik rambut yang di dahi untuk memperlihatkannya.

‘Oh, bohong. Berapa umurmu, dua puluh lima? Coba lihat keningmu yang kecil. Bulatan kecil yang indah.’

‘Dan punggungku mulai ditumbuhi bulu,’ kataku, ‘seperti ayahku.’ Aku tak menyebutkan kalau aku berputar di depan cermin kamar mandi dengan pingset di tanganku.

‘Cukup tidak uang kita untuk membeli satu minuman untuk berdua?’ tanyanya.

‘Tidak. Kita masih harus naik bis ke tempat Rowena.’

‘Minggu lalu,’ katanya, sambil kepalanya masih di atas lututnya, ‘Aku di Louvre. Aku sedang di lantai atas melewati salah satu ruang pameran utama. Aku melihat seorang pemuda sedang duduk di atas sebuah bangku dengan ransel kecil di punggungnya. Usianya kira-kira sama dengan kamu. Sepertinya orang Inggris. Dia kelihatan letih, kesepian, dan memandangi ke arahku. Aku serasa ingin beranjak ke dekatnya dan mengatakan, “Mari kita pergi minum kopi. Atau mari kita ngobrol-ngobrol.” Tapi aku sangat .... aku terus berjalan ke tangga dan turun ke ruangan di mana ada banyak lukisan Rubens, lukisan Louis yang ke sekian, dan Marie de Medici. Aku berkeliling di ruangan itu selama sepuluh menit. Aku tidak suka lukisan itu, membuat aku mual. Banyak mulut yang mencibir. Aku kembali ke atas tapi pemuda itu sudah tak ada.’

Ferry melaju ke Folkstone.

‘Mengapa begitu susah bicara soal seks?’ katanya hampir menangis.

‘Setiap kali ketika sudah ingin menyampaikan sesuatu, pikiranmu justru menjauh, sehingga yang kamu mau sampaikan malah bukan itu.’

Apa yang mereka ketahui tentang musim panas di sini? Anginnya berhembus kencang. Bibir orang-orang yang sedang antri tampak pucat. Sebelum masuk ke pabean, aku dihentikan oleh seorang petugas yang berpakaian preman yang sedang memeriksa antrian turis yang masing-masing memegang paspor.

‘Jaketnya,’ gumam Julie. Berpola ‘houndstooth’ dan warnanya norak oranye hitam. ‘Tuhan. Apa yang telah terjadi dengan negeri ini?’

‘Jangan memancing aku dengan topik itu.’ Aku berdiri diam dan mempersilahkan dia memeriksa tasku. Wajahku pasti berubah, atau mungkin mengeluarkan aroma ketakutan yang katanya bisa tercium oleh anjing. Dia jahat, tapi jahatnya iseng. Tidak ada gunanya marah-marah. Sementara dia memeriksa dengan seksama tas kami, Julie berdiri dengan tangan dilipat sambil mengangkat dagu dan matanya memandang ke atas bahunya yang norak itu. Petugas itu menanyakan beberapa pertanyaan yang tidak semestinya.

‘Sudah berapa lama kamu mengenal orang ini?’

‘Maaf?’

‘Aku tanya, sudah berapa lama kamu mengenal teman seperjalanan kamu ini?’ Sudah bukan jamannya lagi bersikap sombong kepada perempuan. ‘Apa urusannya dengan bapak?’ kata Julie.

Petugas tersebut berhenti menggeledah dan melihat ke arah Julie sambil memegang salah satu baju Julie. Ya Tuhan, Julie masih menyimpan baju merah muda dengan krah yang sudah dipermak. Petugas tersebut mengernyitkan alis dengan mulut terbuka setengah inci. Nah ini kesempatan, petugas tersebut pasti berpikiran begitu. Aku menendang pergelangan kaki Julie. Dia mengulurkan tangan mengambil kaos pink tersebut, melipatnya dengan rapih seperti seorang pelayan department store Georges, ‘Enam tahun atau lebih. Jas yang bagus. Bukankah mereknya Harris?’

Petugas itu tidak begitu bodoh untuk menjawab. Dia menyusupkan kembali baju merah muda tersebut di antara pakaian-pakaian lain dan berjalan pergi. Tas-tas kami masih terbuka memperlihatkan barang-barang pribadi kami.

Di dalam kereta menuju London aku membaca dan Julie memandang ke penumpang yang ada. Di Leicester Square kami berlari-lari turun menuju lift. Aku menangkap mata seorang anak muda tampan yang sedang menuju ke arah kami. Aku membalikkan badan untuk melihat ke arahnya begitu dia lewat dan Julie mengibaskan mantel hujannya ke wajahku. Ritsletingnya hampir mengenai mataku.

‘Apa yang kamu –’ teriakku.

Julie tertawa terkekeh-kekeh. ‘Wah, kalau kamu bias melihat ekspresi mukamu tadi’

‘Kelihatan seperti apa?’

‘Seperti ini.’ Dia meniru ekspresi dengan mulut setengah terbuka, mata melihat ke atas ke bawah, seperti pelacur dungu.

Di dalam kamar di basement, seharusnya kami menutup jendela kayunya karena kata Rowena kadang ada orang yang mengintip berdiri di depan jendela tersebut. Tapi

kamarnya gelap dan pengap. Aku membuka pakaianku, kemudian mendorong jendela bagian atas separuh terbuka. Julie membuka dengan cepat bajunya kemudian memandang ke arahku.

‘Kamu seperti Pan, dewa yang berbadan manusia tapi berkaki seperti kambing.’  
katanya.

Aku masuk ke dalam sprei. ‘Ayo mari kita tidur.’

‘Aku belum bias tidur. Aku mencari sesuatu untuk dibaca.’

‘Jangan berisik sepanjang malam.’ Aku menelungkupkan badan dan menutup mata. Ketika dia naik ke atas tempat tidur aku hampir tak merasakannya karena badannya begitu ringan.

‘Ceritalah kepadaku,’ katanya dari belakangku.

Aku menelentangkan badan dan melihat dia sedang berbaring dengan kedua tangan di bawah kepalanya. ‘Cerita apa?’

‘Apakah kamu masih semurung sekarang disbanding dulu waktu kamu belum menjadi ‘gay’?’

‘Kamu bercanda?’

Dia bergeser sehingga kaki kami sedikit bersentuhan dari atas ke bawah. ‘Ayo. Ceritakanlah.’

‘Mungkin lebih murung,’ kataku. ‘Semua jadi nyata sekarang. Sebelumnya, aku hanya bermimpi saja bahkan ketika bersamamu. Semuanya suram dan kacau. Sekarang aku tahu apa yang aku mau. Dan aku juga tahu aku tak akan pernah mendapatkannya.’

‘Busyet.’

‘Apa?’

‘Apa yang kamu inginkan?’

‘Semuanya. Aku ingin mencintai seorang laki-laki selamanya dan pada waktu yang bersamaan aku ingin bersetubuh dengan siapa saja yang aku temui. Kadang-kadang aku bisa ngentot sama pohon. Tiang lampu! Anjing! Udara!’

Dia bersiul pelan dan tertawa.

‘Di Tuileries,’ kataku, ‘ada debu berwarna putih.’

‘Apalagi?’

‘Tempat itu adalah tempat gay mencari pasangan sementara di malam hari. Tempatnya bukan yang ada jejeran pepohonan. Yang itu digembok pada malam hari. Tempatnya berada di antara pintu gerbang dan patung Maillol. Aku suka banget tempat tersebut.’

‘Mengapa’

‘Seperti sebuah tarian. Misterius. Orang mendekat dan menjauh, tak ada suara, wajah orang itupun tak kelihatan. Benar-benar menyenangkan dan indah. Siapa yang didapat itu tidak penting.’

Wajah Julie cukup tenang. Matanya memandang ke langit-langit kamar. Ketika aku membalikkan kepala ke arahnya aku bisa melihat wajahnya pucat berbintik, beranting emas, dengan bibirnya bawahnya yang pecah-pecah. Kulit kakinya terasa sangat hidup, hampir bergetar dengan kehidupan.

‘Suatu hari,’ katanya, ‘aku sedang menuruni tangga sempit berkelok di salah satu menara *Notre Dame*. Dua orang pria Amerika juga berjalan turun di belakangku. Aku mendengar salah seorang dari mereka mengatakan, “Hei! Ini curam banget! Perkiraanku tentang kedalamannya kacau jadinya!’

Kami saling berhadapan sambil berpelukan. Aku menekan tubuhku di atas perutnya, menekan wajahku di lehernya. Julie memelukku erat. Kakinya pun erat mendekap kakiku. Badannya terasa sejuk. Tungkainya sekuat tungkaiku. Wajahnya berada di atas wajahku dan terlihat samar-samar dalam kamar yang redup. Aku bisa mencium aroma kemaluannya, seperti bau logam, asin. Aku terjun ke dalamnya dan kami bersetubuh, dengan pelan sekali sehingga mau pingsan rasanya. Dia membalikkan badan membelakangiku. Aku memasukinya dari belakang. Tanganku meraba kemaluannya seakan itu milikku.

Kemudian di tengah desahan nafas, aku mendengar suara langkah pelan seorang laki-laki di balik jendela. Tangannya mencengkeram tepi jendela dan kepalanya terlihat menunduk dalam kegelapan. Darahku berdesir menyambutnya.

### 3. “Kehidupan Seni”

Aku dan sahabatku sedang berjalan-jalan di sebuah pemakaman ditemani seekor anjing. Saat itu sedang musim gugur di Melbourne. Angin bertiup sepoi-sepoi, udara terasa nyaman, dan matahari bersinar cerah. Si anjing yang menemani setengah berlari di depan kami antara makam-makam yang ada. Aku mengantongi sebuah gunting dengan harapan siapa tahu kami melewati belukar mawar yang tumbuh di atas makam yang tak terurus.

‘Aku tidak suka bunga mawar,’ kata sahabatku. ‘Aku tidak suka karena ada durinya.’

Si anjing melewati jalan setapak yang dipenuhi tanaman merambat kemudian berhenti di sana. Dengan berjingkat-jingkat kami melewati tugu peringatan Elvis Presley.

‘Tulisan apa yang kamu inginkan di kuburanmu nanti sebagai kenangan?’ tanya sahabatku.

Aku berpikir sejenak. Kemudian aku menjawab, ‘*Pemilik dari dua ratus pasang sepatu boot.*’

Ketika kami kembali, sahabatku menunjuk pada sebuah makam yang bertuliskan “*Dia hidup demi orang lain*”. ‘Kasihan,’ kata sahabatku. ‘Di batu nisanku nanti aku ingin kamu menuliskan “*Dia hidup demi dirinya sendiri*”.’

Dengan terhuyung-huyung kami meninggalkan jalan setapak tersebut.

\*

Aku dan sahabatku telah saling mengenal sejak dua puluh tahun lalu. Tapi kami tidak pernah tinggal serumah. Ia pulang dari Eropa pada saat yang tepat ketika ada kamar kosong disewakan di rumah yang aku tinggali. Kamar itu dulunya ditempati oleh seorang pria. Tapi itu lain ceritanya.

\*

Sahabatku memiliki keyakinan tertentu yang diam-diam selalu aku anggap sebagai sesuatu yang aneh. ‘Dulunya sahabatku ini digelar a dizzy dame (cewek sembrono). Sahabatku percaya pada reinkarnasi, sesuatu yang tidak bisa terima. Di belahan dunia manapun dia berada, kadang dia mengirim surat yang panjang padaku. Suratnya ditulis dengan tulisan tangan yang indah, bahasa yang halus, penuh dengan cerita tentang kisah perjalanan hidupnya dulu. Cerita itu menjelaskan tentang bagaimana dandanan dan perilakunya secara psikis dalam inkarnasinya yang sekarang. Ketika membaca suratnya mataku menari-nari dengan cepat di antara baris-baris tulisan karena malu.

\*

Sahabatku adalah seorang pelukis

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Dia sudah bertunangan ketika pertama kali aku bertemu dengannya. Saat itu dia mengenakan cincin safir antik dan memakai sepatu bot Italia. Namun ketika aku bertemu kembali dengannya, di department store Myers, di jarinya sudah tak ada cincin lagi. Aku tidak pernah menanyakannya. Lalu kami sama-sama menjadi mahasiswa. Kami pergi menari di club di Yarra Selatan. Anak-anak di band club tersebut juga masih mahasiswa. Kami menggodanya, tapi di usia kami yang dua puluh dua tahun rasanya

kami sudah tua, sudah memudar, hampir menjadi pemangsa. Kami membaca *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone*. Kejadian itu tahun 1965, masa sebelum feminisme.

\*

Sahabatku keluar dari pesawat sambil membawa kopernya. ‘Apa kamu pernah perhatikan,’ katanya, ‘bagaimana pria Australia, bahkan di usia empat puluh tahunan mereka masih berpakaian seperti anak kecil? Mereka mengenakan celana pendek dan sandal serta T-shirt bergaris kecil.’

\*

Setiap kali kami membuka pintu di pagi hari selalu nampak seekor kucing tertidur di bawah semak di halaman belakang kami. Kami membawa kucing itu masuk ke rumah. Aku dan sahabatku berkelahi memperebutkan kucing itu untuk diletakkan di paha kami sambil menonton TV.

\*

Sahabatku tuli akan nada. Tapi sekali waktu ia menyanyikan lagu Blue Moon dengan syairnya dalam suara seperti orang sedang berbicara dan tanpa nada. Waktu itu dia duduk di bagian belakang mobil ketika kami sedang menuju ke bukit Punth Road. Dia masih bernyanyi ketika kami turun melewati sungai dan menuju ke arah utara. Dia acuh saja.

\*

Sebagai mahasiswa, sahabatku tinggal di sebuah rumah dekat universitas. Tempat tidurnya tepat berada di bawah jendela, di kamar depan lantai bawah. Suatu sore ayahnya datang berkunjung. Ayahnya mengetuk pintu. Ketika tak seorang pun

menjawab ayahnya kemudian memeriksa melalui jendela. Apa yang disaksikan ayahnya membuat ayahnya syok. Seperti kena serangan jantung, kata sahabatku.

\*

Suatu sore sahabatku pergi berjalan-jalan di sekitar rumah kami. Ia muncul dengan serangkaian dedaunan di tangannya. Ia menemukan jambangan bunga di lemariku yang penuh debu. Rangkaian dedaunan yang dibuatnya sangat indah dan bermacam-macam.

\*

Sebelum salah satu dari kami menikah, aku pergi ke rumah sahabatku untuk membantu mengecat kamar mandinya. Warna catnya oranye, sewarna dengan baju yang aku kenakan. Sahabatku tertawa karena ketika aku berdiri di kamar mandi, yang terlihat hanya tangan dan kakiku saja. Tak lama kemudian ketika hari sudah gelap, kami duduk di meja dapurnya dan ia melinting ganja. Itu adalah obat terlarang pertama yang pernah aku lihat dan coba. Aku takut kalau ada detektif yang memperhatikan kami melalui jendela dapur. Aku tidak mengerti mengapa sahabatku tidak menutup kain gordena jendela itu. Malam harinya di udara yang sejuk kami berjalan-jalan ke Genevieve dan menikmati dua mangkok spaghetti. Nampaknya aku menikmati bulir-bulir makanan tersebut.

\*

Ayah sahabatku itu meninggal ketika sahabatku sedang berada di negara lain.

‘Jadi sekarang aku tau apa arti kesedihan itu,’ katanya padaku.

‘Maksudmu apa?’ tanyaku.

‘Kadang-kadang kesedihan itu adalah apa yang kamu harapkan’. Dan kadang-kadang itu hanya keadaan hati yang sedang buruk saja.

Ketika ayah sahabatku itu meninggal, keadaanya lagi buruk dan dia tak punya uang.

\*

Sahabatku adalah orang pertama yang pernah aku lihat melanggar tabu dengan mengenakan baju bermotif garis dipadu dengan motif bunga. Ia berdiri di anak tangga tugu peringatan Shrine of Remembrance dengan payung hitam di atas kepalanya. Kejadian itu tahun 1960-an.

\*

Sahabatku pulang dari Eropa dan langsung memperoleh pekerjaan. Pada saat ketika dia tidak ada pesanan melukis panggung teater, dia akan pergi ke studionya yang dingin dan kotor di kota. Dia melukis bermacam-macam objek. Dia mengenakan sepatu murahan, menggulung dan menjepit rambutnya sebatas leher.

\*

Ketika masih menjadi mahasiswa, sahabatku bekerja sebagai baby-sitter pada seorang perempuan terkenal berusia empat puluhan yang bekerja di malam hari.

‘Seperti apa perempuan itu?’ tanyaku.

‘Ia mengajakku ke lantai atas dan menunjukkan kamar tidurnya,’ kata sahabatku. Kamarnya penuh dengan bunga. Kami berdiri di pintu sambil melihat-lihat ke dalam. Kata perempuan itu, “Seks bukan masalah bagiku.”

\*

Ketika pria..... yang dulu kamarnya disewa sahabatku sekarang datang untuk makan malam bersama, sahabatku dan pria itu akan bicara selama berjam-jam tentang persepsi dan pemahaman yang berbeda-beda setelah semua orang lain meninggalkan meja. Sahabatku berbicara dengan pelan, menggunakan kalimat panjang yang berbelit-belit, dan menggunakan metafora yang bermacam-macam diselingi dengan tertawa. Lelaki itu seorang ilmuwan. Dia berbicara dengan suara yang ringan dan cepat. Tapi dia berbicara sambil duduk. Mereka rupanya mendengarkan satu sama lain dengan seksama.

‘Yang aku maksud bukan Tuhan dalam pemahaman agama Kristen,’ kata sahabatku.

‘Itu egotisme-lah yang membuat orang-orang menginginkan hidupnya memiliki makna melebihi diri mereka sendiri.’

\*

Di suatu musim panas aku dan sahabatku bekerja di counter pakaian dalam pria di sebuah toko besar di Footscray. Kami mengenakan pakaian katun dan sandal biru. Kami senang bekerja, menjual, mengepak, naik turun tangga, menggunakan mesin kasir yang berbunyi ding, dan makan siang di taman dengan para pekerja pria di toko itu. Aku bahagia. Pria yang paling muda kemudian memandang ke arah kami sambil mendesah dan berkata ‘Aku tidak tahu yang mana di antara kalian yang paling aku cintai.’

Suatu hari sahabatku sedang melayani seorang wanita yang berwajah kurus di bagian kotak barang obralan. Tiba-tiba terdengar tangisan. Aku menengadahkan. Sahabatku tengah berlari cepat ke pintu. Ia menangis tersedu-sedu. Kami semua berdiri, dengan sikap seperti dalam sebuah sandiwara. Wanita tersebut membentangkan tangannya. Dalam suasana toko yang lengang dia berbicara kepada setiap orang.

‘Aku tidak mengatakan apapun,’ katanya. ‘Tidak ada hubungannya denganku.’

Aku meninggalkan pelangganku dan berlari mengikuti sahabatku. Dia sudah agak jauh, memandang ke jendela toko. Tangisannya sudah berhenti. Dia mulai mengatakan padaku tentang .....tapi hal itu sudah tidak menjadi masalah lagi sekarang. Kejadian itu tahun 1960-an, sebelum feminisme.

\*

Kadang-kadang sahabatku pulang ke rumah dari studionya pada malam hari dengan tenang dan riang. ‘Apa yang kita perlukan adalah melepaskan semua yang ada tanpa beban,’ katanya.

Sahabatku mengiris sebuah jeruk nipis kemudian memasukkannya ke dalam tempat air minum sebagai pengganti karena tak ada uang untuk membeli minuman anggur.

\*

Sahabatku berjalan keluar dari kamar bedah. Aku berlari mau menggapai tangannya tapi ia menampik melewatiku dan membungkuk di atas selokan. Aku memberikan sapu tanganku. Melalui sisi trem yang terbuka, angin musim panas berhembus masuk. Kami berdiri dan berpegang pada tali yang bergantung. ‘Aku tidak bisa duduk,’ kata sahabatku. ‘Dokter itu memasukkan kain kasa yang banyak sekali’. Kejadian itu tahun 1960-an, sebelum feminisme. Trem melaju melewati taman. Sahabatku tersenyum.

\*

Sahabatku dan suaminya datang mengunjungi aku dan suamiku. Kami mendengar suara mobilnya dan melihatnya melalu jendela lantai atas. Kami mendengar suaminya membentakinya. Sahabatku menangis tersedu-sedu. Aku berlari turun untuk membuka

pintu. Mereka berdiri di atas keset, terlihat seakan-akan tak terjadi apa-apa. Kemudian kami pergi ke taman Royal Park dan bermain layangan yang dibuat oleh suaminya. Nama panggilan untuk dia dari suaminya adalah nama panggilan yang sama dari ayahnya. Tentu saja keduanya mencintai sahabatku itu. Kejadian itu pada tahun 1960-an.

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Sahabatku kesepian

\*

Sahabatku menjual beberapa lukisannya. Aku pergi melihat lukisan tersebut di studionya sebelum dijual. Bau cat minyak lukisan itu mengejutkan aku. Baunya seperti laki-laki. Kejadian itu pada tahun 1980-an, setelah feminisme. Lukisan-lukisan itu besar. Aku tak 'mengerti' maknanya; tapi mungkin juga memang mengerti karena lukisan tumbuhan dan makhluknya yang aneh berjalan menuju cahaya berwarna kuning yang tidak bisa dilawan.

\*

'Ketika kebahagiaan itu datang, begitu bertubi-tubi dan tidak menakjubkan, sehingga terasa biasa-biasa saja' kata sahabatku.

\*

Sahabatku membeli seekor ayam segar di pasar. 'Oh,' katanya. 'Coba rasakan.' Aku mengambil ayam tersebut dari tangannya. Dagingnya berbintil-bintil dan empuk, dan bergerak di atas tulangnya. Seperti daging tubuh anak bayi.

\*

Aku masuk ke kamar sahabatku ketika ia sedang pergi. Di dindingnya tergantung selembar kertas dengan tulisan tangannya: 'Henry James kepada seorang sahabat yang tengah menghadapi masalah: "hempaskan dirimu ke dalam kehidupan alternative .....yang aku maksud adalah melalui kehidupan seni, yang kalau dimohon dengan khusyuk dan betul-betul dihayati, je vous le garantis, tidak pernah akan mengecewakan pemohonnya yang tulus - membantunya dalam segala hal, dan mengungkapkan rahasia bagaimana dan untuk apa membuatnya begitu.'"

\*

Aku sedang sakit. Sahabatku menghadirkan makanan ringan yang enak pada saat-saat yang tepat. Aku duduk bersandar pada bantal dan memetik lima kunci ukulele yang sudah aku pelajari. Sahabatku duduk di tepi kursi. Tangannya yang kurus memegang sebuah cangkir kemudian berbicara. Dia mengucapkan kata-kata dengan lancar. Tatapannya mengarah ke atas bahu memandangi ke luar jendela menatap awan. Dia seperti mesin yang dirancang untuk berbicara terus menerus. Dia bercerita tentang berapa banyak uang yang harus dia keluarkan untuk membeli cat dan papan lukisan, tentang pencahayaan, optimisme, dan keperempuanan dalam karyanya. Juga tentang lukisan apa yang akan dilukisnya nanti, bahwa lukisannya harus jauh lebih keras dan lebih ganas kalau dia mau mendapat perhatian yang sungguh-sungguh dari para kritikus, tentang apa yang sedang dikerjakan pelukis-pelukis pria, bahwa dia harus mencari informasi tentang apa yang mereka kerjakan.

'Dengar,' kataku. 'Kamu tidak perlu memikirkan semua itu. Apa yang kamu kerjakan selama ini sudah hebat sekali.'

'Pekerjaanku sudah hebat, 'kata sahabatku dengan nada yang tinggi, 'tapi, aku tidak hebat.' Mulutnya diturunkan ke dagu kemudian dibuka. Ia mulai menangis

tersedu-sedu. Umurku sudah empat puluh tahun,' kata sahabatku, 'dan aku tidak punya uang.'

Aku memetik kunci G, A dan C.

'Aku kesepian,' kata sahabatku. Air mata mengalir membasahi pipinya. Mulutnya terlalu rendah untuk potongan mukanya. 'Aku menginginkan seorang laki-laki.'

'Kamu bisa mendapatkannya, 'kataku.

'Aku tidak mau laki-laki sembarangan,' kata sahabatku. 'Dan aku tak mau anak muda. Aku ingin seorang laki-laki yang tidak menganggap ide-ideku gila. Aku menginginkan seorang laki-laki yang bisa melihat bagian dari diriku yang tidak pernah dilihat orang. Aku menginginkan seorang laki-laki yang bisa menjagaku dan mencintaiku. Aku ingin laki-laki yang dewasa.'

Aku berpikir, seandainya aku bisa memainkan ukuleleku dengan lebih bagus, aku bisa menciptakan lagu dari apa yang baru saja dikatakannya.

'Wanita seperti kita,' kataku kepada sahabatku, 'jangan mengharapkan laki-laki seperti itu. Mengapa kamu berharap menemukan laki-laki seperti itu?'

'Apa salahnya aku berharap seperti itu?' kata sahabatku.

'Karena laki-laki seperti itu tak akan mau melakukan hal-hal itu untuk kita. Kita telah merubah kepribadian kita sehingga laki-laki tidak akan mau melakukannya lagi. Ya, ada juga yang akan mau melakukannya. Tapi kita memandang rendah kepada mereka.'

Sahabatku berhenti menangis.

Aku memainkan ukuleleku. Sahabatku menyeruput minumannya di cangkir.

#### 4. “Anak-Anak Muda Katolik Itu”

Watto! Ini aku teman lama sayangku. Kamu dari mana saja? Sudah lama tidak menjumpaimu, sejak ..... Mari aku traktir minum. Siapa nama temanmu? Jan. Apa kabar Jan. Kalian mau minum apa? Gin dan tonik ya. Sari jeruk. Persetan – jika itu yang kamu mau. Hei sobat. Sobat. Pelayan bar di sini ogahan semua. Sobat. Di sini. Gin dan apa sajarah, wiski dan air putih untukku, dan Yesus, Maria dan Jusuf, sari jeruk. Aku tahu. Aku sudah tanya tapi itu yang dia inginkan. Gimana kabar kamu Watto, duhai teman lamaku? Tidak, aku tidak berkelahi. Aku sedang di sungai Yarra minggu lalu ketika pas lagi panas terik, menyelam dan menghantam sebuah batang pohon di bawah air. Gerry? Masih di Perth. Aku melihatnya belum beberapa lama yang lalu, masih anak-anak sekali, masih bau kencur. Aku pergi ke Perth. Dari dulu aku ingin ke sana. Aku sudah keliling ke mana-mana di Australia, aku benci jika ada orang yang bercerita tentang luar negeri. Ada apa dengan di sini? apa? Aku punya teman yang menjadi sekretaris Serikat Kerja Pelabuhan, kan? Kukatakan kepadanya, Aku akan menyelinap ke Perth. Dia jawab, mengapa tidak naik perahu? Aku jawab, apa? Berapa ongkosnya? Jangan anggap remeh aku, katanya. Untuk kamu – gratis. Apakah saya mabuk laut? Jika melewati Bight? Sama sekali tidak. Nggak mungkin mabuk laut ketika mabuk beneran. Gak mungkin mabuk laut dan mabuk beneran pada saat yang sama. Semua awak kapal mabuk, main kartu, dan membual – perjalanan yang menarik, percaya padaku, menarik. Ketika aku turun rupanya ada masalah, begitu berada di daratan minuman keras terasa mengundang, tapi aku sudah di sana. Ya ya, aku akan cerita tentang Gerry. Anak muda di atas kapal bertanya padaku ke mana aku akan pergi, kataku, jangan kuatir, aku punya teman yang bekerja di universitas – aku tidak memberitahunya bahwa temanku itu

adalah senior – apa? dosen senior? Pembaca. Terus orang pertama yang aku temui adalah Jimmy Clancy, kamu mungkin masih mengingatnya, kamu pasti gak suka padanya, orang yang bu-ee-sar dan kuat, berjenggot hitam, lengkap, selalu mengejar perempuan, dia belum berubah, masih terus mengejar perempuan. Aku memarahinya. Aku menguliahinya sekitar satu jam. Senang bisa bertemu dengannya lagi. Dia dulu sering nongkrong sama Laurie Driscoll, Barney O’Brien, Vincent Carroll, Paddy Sheehan. Paddy Sheehan, kamu tahu? Pad sudah tidak minum – ooh selama delapan tahun. Tapi dulu dia sering mabuk. Kuceritakan tentang Pad. Aku sedang di Sydney belum beberapa lama yang lalu, ke sana untuk nonton tinju. Dalam perjalanan pulang ke rumah aku lewat Canberra dan sungguh sangat mengagetkan, aku katakan mengagetkan. Tau-tau aku berada di tempat penampungan gelandangan. Ya, ketika aku sadar, aku berada di sana – aku ada uang banyak sekali – karena pertandingan – ketika Fammo mengalahkan si Anu di Sydney, aku punya uang banyak sekali, aku ceritakan hal ini kepada seorang Kristen di sana – dia bukan salah seorang dari orang Kristen yang bobrok, dia salah seorang yang punya perasaan – aku katakan padanya, dengar sobat, aku tak mau menetap di sini, aku punya banyak uang – keluarkan aku dari sini – aku punya teman Paddy Sheehan yang sekertaris pemerintahan atau semacamnya, jadi dia menjemputku dengan sebuah mobil yang dikendarai sopir dengan topi runcingnya, dan Paddy dengan wajah yang sedikit pucat dan berbintik-bintik duduk di belakang kayak orang hebat – pelayanannya betul-betul bagus. Aku ucapkan selamat tinggal kepada orang Kristen itu, aku katakan padanya, ambillah uang ini. Berapa banyak? Oh aku tak tau. Aku punya uang bergenggam-genggam, saking banyaknya gak muat di kantong, aku berikan kepadanya segenggam uang kertas dan pergi naik ke mobil hitam yang besar. Baiklah, baiklah, aku akan ceritakan si Gerry. Perth kan? Kami duduk dan bercerita tentang masa-masa yang telah lewat, tentang hal-hal yang dilihat oleh orang-

orang baik yang ada di Perth. Ha ha! Tentu saja kami melakukannya. Dia masih sangat muda, penuh pesona, layaknya anakku saja. Dulu dia seorang pemuda yang tangguh sayang, gagah dan lembut, naif, dan Watto ini jahat sama dia, bener kan Watto? Ya, kamu membuat dia patah hati, dan dia masih kanak-kanak, ya anak manis – siapa nama kamu lagi? Watto sekarang dia gak suka kalau aku menceritakan cerita ini, ya dia benci! Dia hanya seorang anak kecil, keluar dari kependetaan – bukan, pasti biara karena kata dia, dia memakai sandal, tentu dia tak pernah bersetubuh selama hidup. Dia tak tahu harus memanfaatkan bagaimana burungnya. Dan dia dikerjain sama si Watto. Dibikin hancur. Kasihan sekali pemuda itu. Kaget banget. Bikin kami gila karena dia main gitar terus. Perempuan Watto itu mengatakan kepada pemuda itu bahwa dia tak mau punya suami, tapi pemuda itu tak mau mendengar, dia tergila-gila, dia telah melukis perempuan itu, membacakannya puisi W.B. Yeats, memainkan gitar untuknya – mereka bersetubuh sepanjang hari, aku bersumpah padamu sayang – jangan diam Watto! Betul kan? Aku tak tahu pemuda Katolik yang lain yang serumah mengira apa yang terjadi di dalam kamar itu– tapi suatu hari aku ambil sayur selada dan membuka pintu kamar mereka dan aku menyodorkan sayur selada itu sambil berteriak, Jika kalian bersetubuh seperti kelinci maka kalian harus makan seperti mereka juga! He he! Coba tengok wajahnya yang memerah! Ah Watto, asyik waktu itu kan? Minum –minum, bernyanyi dan berdebat masalah politik. Aku teringat sebuah pesta di rumah Mary Maloney ketika Laurie Driscoll muntah dan pingsan di halaman belakang – esok harinya ketika dia bangun di rumah, gigi palsunya sudah tak ada – dia harus menelfon Mary dan minta tolong agar Mary mencarikannya di halaman belakang dan mengorek-ngorek untuk melihat apakah gigi palsunya juga ketinggalan dan bukan hanya isi perutnya. Oh, semua pemuda Katolik, kecuali Gerry, sudah rusak gara-gara Watto – jangan salah, Watto. Sebetulnya dia untung ketemu kamu – hati mereka semua seputih salju – nafsunya kuat

tapi masih mau bertahan sampai mereka menikah, ha ha! Mereka mengira mereka anak brandal waktu itu tapi sudah menjadi suami yang baik sekarang. Tentu, aku tak pernah boleh membawa perempuan ke rumah, si bangsat Barney mengatakan kepadaku, Jangan kamu membawa pelacur ke sini, *old dero* - gelandangan tua – aku harus menyelipkan perempuan lewat loteng belakang. Akhirnya Watto putusin si Gerald. Dia celingak celinguk selama beberapa minggu hingga kami semua sampai setengah gila – kemudian dia bertemu Christine. Cantik. Tidakkah dia cantik Watto? Cantik.... ah.... dia masih sahabat baikku. Gerry ingin sekali mengesankan dia pada pertemuan pertama ketika pulang ke rumah bersamanya. Kata Gerry kepadaku, sekarang kamu pergi, aku tak mau dengar bahasa kasar, dia perempuan baik-baik. Akhirnya aku pergi menjauh dan malam itu aku pulang tengah malam ke rumah dari Club Waiter membawa seorang *sheila* atau cewek dan kami tidur di loteng dan esok paginya aku tak tahu bagaimana mengeluarkannya dari situ!. Mereka semua sedang berada di halaman belakang berolahraga. Barney, Dell, dan Derum – dalam keputusasaan aku mendorong teman perempuanku keluar pintu loteng dan tangganya terlewat sehingga dia jatuh ke halaman, kedua kakinya patah. Untung Barney adalah mahasiswa kedokteran tahun terakhir. Tapi Christine sangat cantik – aku tak pernah lupa kamu dan dia membawa pulang Gerry ke rumah, Watto, dia dalam keadaan mabuk sekali, dia sedang membawa gitarnya ketika ditemukan di tengah-tengah taman bunga di asrama cewek tempat tinggal kamu berdua – kamu menyeretnya, dia bernyanyi sambil tertawa, dan muntah – kemudian kamu pergi, Watto, meninggalkan gadis yang malang dengan pemabuk yang menjijikkan itu yang harus ditangani! Tertawa Aaaahh. Tentu kemudian dia pergi bersama Chappo. Aku ingat ketika malam itu dia menghilang. Dan beberapa tahun kemudian dia bersama dengan orang yang sok itu, namanya McLaughlin. Kamu tidak tahu tentang hal itu? Ya, dia pergi bersamanya – tentu, dia hidup dengan orang lain sekarang. Oh, gadis cantik.

Hebat. Mereka berantem gara-gara dia, kamu tahu. Mereka berantem di bar, and si bangsat McLaughlin menyembunyikan sebuah botol di tangannya sementara Chappo mengangkat kepala dan tangan baik-baik seperti ini – aku ambil botol dari McLaughlin. Paling tidak kalau mau berantem, baik-baik. Berhenti, kamu gak usah berantem gara-gara memek! Jika aku berantem gara-gara perempuan yang pernah aku setubuhi akan ada perkelahian dari sini sampai di Darwin! Mengapa mereka harus berantem gara-gara perempuan? Anak muda Katolik itu? Gerry. Baiklah, baiklah. Dan berkelahi gara-gara perempuan! Kamu jangan berkelahi karena perempuan. Jika aku tidak bisa cari perempuan untuk disetubuhi, ada ribuan panti pijat dari sini hingga Sydney, aku bisa masuk ke salah satunya dan cari perempuan untuk disetubuhi di sana, tanpa harus berkelahi untuk memperolehnya. Aku gak pernah mengajak kamu bersetubuh selama ini, bukan? Benar, Gerry. Ya, dia bahagia, berpenampilan menarik, lelaki yang menyenangkan, aku selalu merasa seperti ayah bagi dia, aku mengajarnya apa saja yang dia ketahui, bisa dikatakan aku membesarkannya. Oh, dia sudah ke London dan beberapa negara tapi dia kembali ke Australia Barat sekarang, seperti dulu. Aaah Watto, aku sudah mencintaimu selama dua puluh tahun. Yang benar. Pasti selama itu. Tengoklah dia – memalingkan badan dan tertawa. Ya, lima belas tahun lalu. Kamu kelihatan gagah sekali. Gerry. Ya, ya.... dia pemuda yang menyenangkan. Tidakkah aku ingat beberapa cerita tentang kamu dan dia di Perth? Cerita tentang tempat telepon umum di tengah malam? Oh. Benar. Aku akan berhenti di situ. Tidak bercerita apapun. Kamu kelihatan bugar sekali Watto. Tapi dadamu masih kelihatan kecil, bukan? Bagaimana kabar bayimu, sobatku? Berapa usianya sekarang? Sembilan tahun, Yesus Kristus. Masihkah dia ingin menikahiku? Sekali waktu aku melihat dia ke sini mencari suamimu, dia minum-minum di sini dengan beberapa teman lama, anakmu muncul di pintu sana dan melihatnya. Langsung menuju ke arahnya dan berkata, ayo pulang!

Tahu-tahu dia berhenti minum, berdiri, dan mengikutinya keluar pintu seperti kerbau dicocok hidungnya. Tolong jangan menjual lagi kepada ayahku/Minuman itu membuatnya menjadi aneh ... dad a dummmm/Oh kasihan anak seorang pemabuk.

Seorang putri kecil. Aku membayangkan seandainya kamu dan aku punya anak bersama Watto – satu menit melayangkan tinju kecilnya di mana-mana, menit berikutnya ke puisiku, musikku, lukisanku! Gila. Aaah Yesus. Minum lagi. Kamu gak mau pergi kan? Di situ saja! Aku hanya bertemu sama kamu sekali dalam lima tahun. Ya, cium dong.

Aku selalu mencintaimu. Ha ha!Jangan berterima kasih kepadaku. Selamat Tahun Baru.

Semua yang terbaik untukmu. Daag.....

## 5. “Peradaban dan Kekecewaan”

Philip tiba. Aku pergi ke hotelnya. Aku tidak sabar untuk cepat sampai di sana. Ia melangkah ke arahku ketika aku sudah berada di pintu, dan memelukku.

‘Hello sayang,’ katanya.

Orang-orang di sini tidak menyapa seperti itu. Rambutku sedikit basah.

‘Kamu naik mobil?’ katanya

‘Tidak. Aku naik bis.’

‘Naik bis?’

‘Susah mencari tempat parkir di pusat kota.’

‘Rambutmu sudah dipotong. Kamu jadi mirip laki-laki.’

‘Aku tahu. Aku sengaja berpakaian dan memotong rambut seperti laki-laki. Aku ingin menjadi laki-laki supaya aku bisa punya hubungan homoseksual denganmu.’

Ia tertawa. ‘Gadis manis!’ katanya. Mendengar kata-kata itu rasanya begitu gembira sehingga aku hampir tidak bisa bernafas. ‘Seandainya kamu jadi laki-laki di satu hari dan jadi perempuan di hari lain, aku akan lebih beruntung. Karena aku bisa memiliki kedua-duanya.’

‘Tidak,’ kataku. ‘Aku yang akan lebih beruntung. Karena aku bisa menjadi kedua-duanya.’

Aku membuka pakaianku.

‘Kamu sangat kurus,’ katanya.

‘Aku tidak makan. Aku sakit.’

‘Sakit? Benar sakit?’ Philip meletakkan kedua tangannya di atas bahunya dan melihat ke mataku seperti lagaknya seorang dokter.

‘Sakit cinta, ya.’

‘Matamu terlihat sehat. Cemerlang. Apa mataku juga begitu?’

Kamarnya berada di lantai paling atas. Di seberangnya, di belakang beberapa atap rumah dan jalan, adalah menara tua dari sebuah gedung yang dulunya tempat ruang dokter gigi yang sering aku kunjungi. Cara si dokter mengebor gigi halus sekali sehingga aku tak perlu disuntik. Aku bernapas pelan sebagaimana yang diajarkan dalam yoga sehingga sakitnya tidak lama terasa. Tidak membuat aku tersentak. Tapi karena uangnya sudah banyak lalu dokter itu pindah ke Queensland.

Gedung itu memiliki tiang bendera. Aku dan Philip berdiri di jendela tanpa busana dan memandang. Kaca jendela membuat kumpulan awan terlihat lebih jelas dan indah dari aslinya.

‘Lihat awan itu, datang entah dari mana,’ kataku.

‘Hanya lewat saja,’ kata Philip. Ia memandang ke gedung yang ada menaranya. ‘Aku suka sekali bendera Australia,’ katanya. Setiap kali aku melihat bendera Australia aku merasa bergetar.’

‘Aku merasakan hal yang sama apabila melihat petanya.’ Aku dulu bekerja di sekolah biara di sebelah timur London. Aku sering ke perpustakaan pada jam makan siang pada saat para biarawati sedang mendengarkan bacan-bacan di ruang makan

mereka yang terkunci. Aku mengambil atlas dan memandang lama halaman peta Australianya. Aku suka bagian tajam di sebelah atas, ceruknya yang sangat banyak, kedua sisinya yang membuncit, yang merupakan kekuatannya, di mana di sudut tenggara adalah tempat kelahiranku. Aku membungkuk di antara tumpukan buku dan menaruh buku yang berat di sisi rak karena tak kuat menopangnya. Aku memperhatikan peta tersebut dan air mataku mulai mengalir.

‘Apakah aku sudah cerita padamu bahwa istriku bilang mungkin mau kembali padaku?’ kata Philip.

‘Apa kamu ingin dia kembali?’

‘Tentu saja aku ingin dia kembali.’

Aku duduk di pembaringan.

‘Mestinya kita sudah mulai berperilaku seperti orang dewasa,’ kata Philip.

‘Kamu punya ide bagaimana melakukannya?’

‘Pasti masalah transformasi. Kita harus merubah apa yang sedang terjadi sekarang menjadi sesuatu yang berbeda.’

‘Kedengarannya kamu berpengalaman.’

‘Memang.’

‘Akan kita ubah menjadi apa?’

‘Kakak beradik? Atau persahabatan seumur hidup?’

‘Oh,’ katanya, ‘Aku tidak tahu apa-apa mengenai hal tersebut. Tidak bisakah tetap punya hubungan rahasia?’

‘Aku tidak suka berbohong.’

‘Bukan kamu yang pembohong. Aku yang pembohong.’

‘Apa yang membuatmu begitu yakin kalau istrimu tak akan mengetahuinya? Orang selalu akan tahu. Begitu dia melihatku, dia akan tahu. Seorang istri memang begitu.’

‘Kita lihat saja nanti.’

‘Bagaimana kamu akan bisa begini terus?’ kataku. ‘Memalukan. Bagaimana kamu bisa membohongi seseorang padahal kamu cinta kepadanya?’

‘Terpaksa. Cinta telah memaksaku untuk menjadi hipokrit.’

Sejenak aku pikir ia sedang bercanda.

‘Kita putus saja sekarang,’ kataku.

‘Apa katamu?’

‘Aku tidak serius.’

Belum. Sprei di hotel itu lembut tapi sedikit kaku. Bagaimana bisa seperti itu? Banyak kanjinya dan disetrika. Pekerjaan yang tak ada lagi ibu rumah tangga mau melakukannya. Tempat tidurnya cukup lebar bagi dua orang lagi berbaring di atasnya. Dan tetap tidak saling bersentuhan. Dan seakan-akan cahaya siang hari kurang terang karena ruangan itu penuh dengan lampu. Aku mulai mematikan lampu-lampu itu satu demi satu. Aku teringat akan istilah ‘penuh dengan lampu’ yang diucapkan oleh suamiku setelah lama kami bercerai. Tentang medley drama Shakespeare yang dia tonton, yang dimainkan oleh pemain tua yang gemetar yang dulunya anggota sebuah perusahaan Inggris terkenal, yang sedang melakukan tour di Australia. ‘Panggungnya’

kata suamiku, ‘penuh dengan mahkota,’ dan dia terpingkal-pingkal. Suamiku adalah satu-satunya laki-laki yang pernah aku kenal yang akan ikut gembira tentang kemenangan sepele dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Aku masuk ke dalam spreng. Aku tak bisa menahan tertawaku. Tapi terlalu rumit untuk dijelaskan.

Philip punya cara tersendiri memelukku ketika kami berbaring. Dia melakukan sebuah gerakan goyangan, begitu pelan yang kadang-kadang aku berpikir bahwa mungkin gerakan itu hanya imajinasiku saja, bahwa dalam bayanganku pelukan telah menjadi buaian.

‘Aku belum pernah bilang kepada siapapun bahwa aku mencintainya’ kata Philip.

‘Jangan konyol,’ kataku.

‘Kamu tidak tahu apa-apa tentang aku.’

‘Di usiamu ini?’ kataku. ‘Seorang pria yang sudah menikah? Kamu belum pernah mencintai siapa pun sebelumnya?’

‘Aku belum pernah mengatakan itu sebelumnya.’

‘Pantasan istrimu pergi,’ kataku. ‘Laki-laki betul-betul dikerjain kan? Sejak kecil.’

‘Lalu mengapa kamu mau menyetubuhi seperti laki-laki?’

‘Hanya untuk senang-senang saja.’

‘Apa itu diperbolehkan?’ katanya.

‘Oleh siapa?’ kataku. Aku hanya mencoba bersikap cerdas. Tapi sebenarnya, siapa yang bilang tidak boleh? Karena itu kan perempuan dan laki-laki bercinta? Untuk membengkokkan sedikit jerujinya, hanya sedikit, untuk meleburkan jerujinya? Philip mencubitku. Ia menjepit puting payudaraku, di antara telunjuk dan ibu jarinya. Aku bisa melihat giginya. Ia menjepitnya dengan keras. Sakit. Aku suka. Kemudian dia menggigitku. Ia menggigitku. Setelah pulang ke rumah, aku perhatikan di cermin. Pundak dan lenganku penuh dengan bekas cupangan yang membiru.

Aku pergi ke rumahnya, di kota di mana dia tinggal. Aku katakan padanya aku akan kebetulan lewat mau menuju ke selatan. Dia mengajakku. Ajakannya kuterima meskipun aku punya banyak teman di sana yang bisa aku tinggal di rumahnya.

Ada berita heboh di koran ketika aku lewat di bandara malam hari itu. Tentang seorang perempuan yang telah menandatangani kontrak untuk meminjamkan rahimnya bagi pasangan yang tak punya anak. Ketika si anak lahir, perempuan itu berubah pikiran. Dia tak mau menyerahkan anak tersebut. Setiap orang membicarakan peristiwa itu.

Walau aku mencintainya, aku merasa tidak nyaman berada di rumahnya dengan daster istrinya yang tertinggal di belakang pintu. Seakan menjadi saksi. Aku tak bisa tidur dengan nyenyak. Aku terjaga sepanjang malam. Rumahnya seakan ditembus dengan suara-suara. Seakan-akan dindingnya terlalu tipis, tidak bisa melindunginya dari jalan, sepatu perempuan yang mencolok dari trotoar, pintu gerbang yang berbunyi, gemerincing kunci gembok, dan bunyi langkah yang turun naik di anak tangga. Di kota besar, tidak pernah benar-benar gelap. Aku membalikkan badan dan memandang ke wajahnya. Dia tertidur, tenang, tersenyum di sampingku seperti bidadari di atas awan.

Philip bangun dari tidurnya dengan wajah yang cerah. ‘Aku merasa seperti

terlahir kembali,' katanya, 'setelah aku bersamamu.' Inilah mengapa aku mencintainya. Tentu saja karena dia berkata seperti itu, menggunakan kalimat yang kebanyakan orang tidak mengucapkannya. 'Ketika aku bersamamu, aku merasa bahagia dan bebas,' katanya.

Ia menyiapkan sarapan pagi dan kami membaca koran di kebun.

'Mestinya dia menepati janji,' ucapnya.

'Kasihannya,' kataku. 'Bagaimana mungkin orang memberikan bayinya kepada orang lain?'

'Tapi dia sudah berjanji. Bagaimana dengan pasangan suami istri itu? Pasti mereka mau mati rasanya karena menginginkan anak itu.'

'kamu juga merasakan begitu?'

'Ya,' katanya sambil memandang ke arahku dengan ekspresi menantang seakan-akan menunggu dibantah. 'Ya benar.'

Kopinya sangat kental. Tidak cocok untukku pada pagi hari. Membuat jantungku berdetak terlalu cepat.

'Aku pikir idealnya setiap orang punya anak,' kataku. 'Dengan punya anak, orang belajar mencintai. Anak-anak merupakan tumpuan cinta.'

'Aku pikir kamu mengira hanya ibu yang tahu bagaimana mencintai.'

'Tidak. Aku tidak berpikir demikian.'

'Walau pun begitu,' katanya. 'Dia telah menandatangani perjanjian. Ia setuju dan telah berjanji.'

‘Philip,’ kataku, ‘Apa kamu pernah mencium bau kepala bayi?’

Telepon berdering di dalam kamar yang tidak pernah aku masuki karena di situ tergantung lukisan besar istrinya, di atas stereo. Aku yakin dia mencintaiku walaupun aku mengerti bahwa cinta kami itu tiada masa depannya, dan aku juga percaya bahwa aku telah menerima kenyataan itu. Aku menghibur diri dengan menyebut kamar itu sebagai Ruang Tempat Istri Pertama Mengigau, atau Bilik Suami Pembunuh Istri. Kamar itu seakan-akan memiliki kekuatan yang dalam menolak diriku, meskipun aku kadang-kadang berdiri di depannya ketika pintunya terbuka dan melihat keramahan dan ketenangannya dengan dindingnya yang putih, dan lantainya yang terbuat dari papan di mana terdapat gambar pantulan cahaya matahari seperti menggambar jendela.

Philip berlari ke dalam untuk mengangkat telepon. Dia pergi cukup lama. Lalu aku berpikir tentang melatih diri: kita bisa belajar mencintai seseorang, kemudian menerapkan pelajaran tersebut kepada orang lain. Dengan kata lain, seseorang mengajarkan kamu bernyanyi kemudian kamu menunggu peran sebuah opera yang tepat. Udara terasa hangat di kebun. Aku terkantuk di kursiku. Aku bermimpi kecil, sebuah mimpi yang terjadi akibat tidur bukan pada saat biasanya waktu tidur. Aku bermimpi sedang berjongkok dengan vagina mengarah ke tanah, seperti cara duduk perempuan primitive ketika melahirkan katanya (‘Mereka hanya berjongkok di ladang, menjatuhkan bayinya, kemudian pergi bekerja kembali’). Tapi seseorang sedang membedahku menggunakan alat medis yang tajam di bagian memekku. Dikeluarkannya seonggok daging yang berdarah. Aku bisa melihatnya keluar seakan-akan aku melihat memek orang lain. Sama sekali tidak terasa sakit.

Aku terbangun ketika Philip turun tangga sambil tersenyum. Dia berjongkok di depanku di antara lututku kemudian berkata sambil memandang ke wajahku.

‘Kamu ingin aku berperilaku seperti laki-laki yang sudah menikah, dan punya anak, bukan?’

‘Apa? Kamu ingin berbuat seperti itu?’

‘Maksudku kamu merasa aku mestinya berbuat seperti itu. Kamu bilang tadi bahwa menurut kamu setiap orang sebaiknya punya anak.’

‘Tentu – jika itu yang kamu inginkan. Mengapa?’

‘Di percakapan telepon barusan aku mengarah ke situ.’

‘Maksudmu kamu membuat janji?’

‘Ya, nggak juga – tapi memang aku mengarah ke situ.’

Aku memandang ke arahnya. Lengannya disandarkan di lututku dan dia jongkok dengan bertopang pada telapak kaki depannya. Dia tersenyum kepadaku. Senyum yang diarahkan ke mataku seakan menunggu aku berkata, anak manis!

‘Katakanlah sesuatu yang bisa menghibur,’ katanya. ‘Katakan sesuatu yang intim, sebelum aku pergi.’

Aku menarik nafas, tapi ia sudah tidak mendengarnya. Ia sudah bersiap-siap untuk pergi bekerja. Dia sangat mencintai pekerjaannya. Dia mengerjakan pekerjaan melebihi dari apa yang bisa dikerjakannya. Setiap malam dia pulang dengan kantong penuh dengan kontrak. Dia tak pernah diam saja yang nadanya naik turun saat kita melewati beberapa jembatan. Esok harinya dari kamar, melalui alat musiknya yang telah dikombinasi dengan ide yang lain berubah menjadi sebuah lagu. Sebulan dua bulan kemudian aku akan mendengarnya mengalun di balik setiap pintu café, di setiap toko-toko musik dan di setiap mobil-mobil yang sedang menunggu di kota. ‘Kamu tahu

apa dulu impianku?’ tanyanya sekali waktu. ‘Aku mengimpikan ketika aku berhenti di lampu stop, semua orang di dalam mobil, di depan dan belakang, semua menghidupkan radio dan menyanyikan lagu yang sama. Walaupun ketika jendela-jendela mobil mereka tertutup, bibir mereka bisa terbaca sedang bernyanyi. Semua orang tertawa dan melambaikan tangan.

Aku melakukan percakapan telepon jarak jauh. ‘Aku akan tiba di rumah sebentar malam, Matty,’ kataku.

Suara Matty dipenuhi rasa kantuk. ‘Mereka menelepon dari toko,’ katanya. ‘Aku katakan pada mereka kalau Mama sedang sakit. Mama sudah bertemu laki-laki itu?’

‘Ya, Mamah sudah mau pulang sekarang. Buang semua kotak pizzanya.’

‘Aku perlu uang Mah.’

‘Nanti kalau Mama sudah tiba di rumah.’

Philip mengantarku ke bandara. Aku takut seseorang akan melihat kami, seseorang yang kenal dengan Philip. Bagiku tidak ada masalah. Tidak ada yang perlu disembunyikan. Aku tidak perlu menyembunyikan apa-apa dari siapa-siapa. Dan aku akan bangga kalau ada orang lain melihat kami berdua. Aku hanya khawatir akan dia. Aku terus menundukkan kepala. Philip tertawa. Dia tidak mau melepaskan aku. Dia mencoba memancing agar aku menengadahkan muka. Memukul daguku pelan-pelan. Pipiku terasa memerah.

‘Aku selalu naik ke pesawat dengan air mata berlinang,’ kataku.

‘Nanti juga orang-orang akan mengetahui siapa kamu,’ katanya. ‘Apa kamu terlalu malu untuk menciumku?’

Aku berlari setelah melalui meja check-in. Aku menoleh ke belakang dan Philip masih berdiri memandangkku. Dia terus tersenyum berdiri di atas lantai yang berkilau.

Di atas pesawat aku berhati-hati dengan diriku. Aku berusaha berpikir tentang pintarnya desain baki makanan, yang posisinya tidak terganggu oleh perubahan posisi sandaran kursi tempatnya menempel. Aku meminta minuman wiski scotch dan meminumnya. Tapi aku terus membuat kesalahan, mulai membaca buku sajak, bahan bacaan satu-satunya yang kubawa. Puisinya tentang seks, kematian, dan kerinduan yang tidak sesuai untuk dibaca di tempat umum. Aku takut jika orang mengetahui tentang aku karena membaca buku dengan tema tersebut. Bahkan ketika aku menutup buku tersebut aku melihat tulisan '*Aku ingin mengetahui, sekali lagi, bagaimana rasanya disetubuhi terus menerus.*' Aku menyimpan buku itu agar tak terlihat oleh dua orang laki-laki yang duduk di antara aku dan jendela. Mereka sedang minum bir Jerman dan berbicara dalam sebuah bahasa Eropa yang sama sekali tidak aku mengerti. Salah seorang dari mereka menoleh ke arahku. Aku berharap agar dia memalingkan wajahnya segera karena aku merasa tidak cantik dan kikuk dalam keadaan sedang bersedih. Tapi dia malah tersenyum.

Putraku sedang menunggu kedatangan pesawatku. Dia tadi naik bis ke bandara. Dia melihat betapa gembiranya hatiku lalu menundukkan muka dengan tersenyum malu. Dia mengizinkan aku memeluknya dan dia menepuk pundakku dengan tepukan kecil yang cepat.

'Muka Mama terlihat berbeda,' katanya. 'Seperti sedang emosional.'

'Mengapa kamu selalu menepuk pundakku ketika memelukku?' kataku.

'Mungkin karena Mama selalu dalam keadaan tidak tenang,' katanya.

Ia memintaku menunggu sebentar sementara ia pergi ke mesin computer game. Jari-jarinya menari-nari di atas di tombol. *Death by Acne* adalah judul thriller yang diciptakannya untuk membuatku tertawa. Tapi ketika berkonsentrasi, wajahnya sudah tidak kaku lagi dan kelihatan tampan. Aku bersandar di dinding terminal dan memandang ke orang-orang yang lalu lalang.

Seorang lelaki muda yang tinggi lewat. Ia sedang membawa seorang bayi mungil dalam gendongan di dadanya. Sang ibu berjalan di belakangnya dengan wajah yang tenang, berambut panjang, sambil menggandeng anaknya yang lain yang memakai popok besar. Si ayah nampaknya benar-benar sayang pada bayinya. Dia berjalan pelan dengan kedua tangannya memeluk badan bayi yang kecil. Kepalanya menunduk sehingga dia bisa melihat wajah bayinya. Dia memandangnya penuh kasih.

Aku menyaksikan keluarga muda itu pergi dengan rukun. Masing-masing berjalan dengan tenang dan puas, dan aku juga mendengar denting kematian meratap dari makhluk angkasa yang sedang dibunuh oleh anakku melalui tombol yang ditekannya dengan cepat dan halus. Aku teringat ketika sedang berjalan menyeberang jalan sehari sesudah aku membawanya pulang ke rumah dari rumah sakit. Proses kelahirannya lama dan aku kehilangan suara karena terlalu banyak berteriak. Akhirnya aku diberi obat. Ketika proses melahirkan selesai, aku merasa baru tahu makna dari apa yang tertulis di dalam kutipan kata-kata mutiara bahwa seperti itulah rasanya sakit menjelang kematian. Ketika menyeberang jalan waktu itu dengan rasa sakit karena habis dibedah dan disuntik, aku melihat seorang perempuan yang sedang hamil berjalan tertatih ke arahku. Seorang perempuan yang sedang menanti kelahiran. Ketika dia lewat di hadapanku, wajahnya begitu tenang dan bundar. Wajah yang belum pernah merasakan sakitnya melahirkan. Aku cemburu kepadanya. Aku merasa tertusuk karena

cemburu. Aku rindu pada apa yang akan terjadi kepadanya. Rindu akan pengalaman yang belum dia mengerti. Rasanya aku ingin berteriak. Oh, biarkan aku merasakannya lagi. Beri aku kesempatan lagi. Biarkan aku merasakan kekuatan yang dasyat itu lagi dan berjuang untuk melawannya. Biarkan aku terbuai lagi. Biarkan aku terbaring tidak berdaya dalam buaian rasa sakit.

‘Dua puluh sen terbang’ kata putraku. Kami berjalan keluar menuju pintu otomatis. Dia membawakan tasku. Aku ingin mengatakan sesuatu kepadanya, kepada seseorang, Dengar. Dengar. Aku lagi tergila-gila. Tapi aku terdiam. Aku tahu aku jadi bernasib begitu karena kesalahan aku sendiri. Aku terdiam hingga keinginan itu hilang. Kemudian aku mulai mengingat-ingat dengan teliti isi kulkas di rumah.