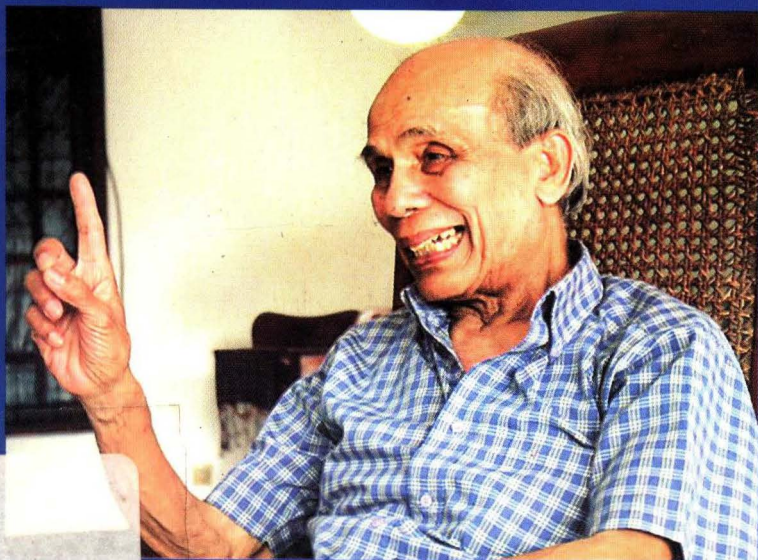




SASTRAWAN INDONESIA

INDONESIAN WRITER



PENERIMA HADIAH SASTRA ASIA TENGGARA

AWARDEE OF THE SEA WRITE AWARDS

PUSAT BAHASA

DEPARTEMEN PENDIDIKAN NASIONAL

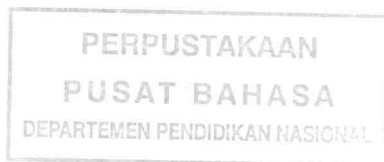


**SASTRAWAN INDONESIA
INDONESIAN WRITER**

Sastrawan Indonesia
Indonesian Writer

SITOR SITUMORANG

Penerima Hadiah Sastra Asia Tenggara 2006
Awardee of the S.E.A. Write Award 2006



Pusat Bahasa
Departemen Pendidikan Nasional
National Language Center
Ministry of National Education
Jakarta
2006

ISBN 979-685-580-1

HAK CIPTA DILINDUNGLUNDANG-UNDANG

PERPUSTAKAAN PUSAT BAHASA	
Klasifikasi PB 001-44 SAS 5	No. Induk : 412 Tgl. 2/11/2006 Ttd. : _____

Isi buku ini, baik sebagian maupun seluruhnya, dilarang diperbanyak dalam bentuk apa pun tanpa izin tertulis dari penerbit, kecuali dalam hal pengutipan untuk keperluan penulisan artikel atau karangan ilmiah.

No part of this book may be copied or reproduced without written permission from the publisher, except for research and scientific writing purposes.

PUSAT BAHASA
DEPARTEMEN PENDIDIKAN NASIONAL

Buku ini disusun dan disunting oleh J.J. Rizal dan Prih Suharto dengan bantuan John McGlyn (Yayasan Lontar), yang telah mengizinkan penerbitan kembali terjemahan bahasa Inggris sejumlah sajak Sitor Situmorang dalam buku *To Love, To Wander: The Poetry of Sitor Situmorang* (Lontar Foundation, 1996) dan menerjemahkan beberapa sajak baru dari kumpulan *Biksu Tak Berjubah* (Komunitas Bambu, 2004). Selain John McGlyn, Harry Aveling juga terlibat dengan menerjemakan cerpen Sitor Situmorang yang berjudul "Ibu Pergi ke Sorga". Buku ini disusun dalam rangka penyerahan Hadiah Sastra The SEA Write Award 2006 oleh Putra Mahkota Kerajaan Thailand Yang Mulia Vajiralongkorn, tanggal 8 Oktober 2006, di Bangkok.

Diterbitkan oleh
Pusat Bahasa
Departemen Pendidikan Nasional
Jalan Daksinapati Barat IV, Rawamangun 13220, Jakarta, Indonesia

This publication is compiled and edited by J.J. Rizal and Prih Suharto by supporting John McGlyn, who gave permission to republished his English translations of Sitor Situmorang's *To Love To Wander: The Poetry of Sitor Situmorang* and also translated Sitor's recently poems from *Biksu Tak Berjubah* (*A Monk with No Robe*). Besides John McGlyn, Harry Aveling contributed the English translation of Sitor's short story, *Ibu Pergi ke Sorga* (*Mother Goes to Heaven*). This book published in conjunction with The Presentation of The SEA Write Award 2006 by H.R.H. The Crown Maha Vajiralongkorn of Thailand on 8 October 2006, at the Grand Ballroom, the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

Published by
National Language Center
Ministry of National Education
Jalan Daksinapati Barat IV, Rawamangun, Jakarta 13220
Indonesia

DAFTAR ISI/CONTENTS

Daftar Isi/Contents	iv
Kata Pengantar Kepala Pusat Bahasa	1
Preface The Head of the national Language Center	2
Biografi Ringkas	3
Buku dan Penghargaan	6
Brief Biography	8
Puisi/Poems	12
<i>Malam Kebumen</i>	12
<i>Night in Kebumen</i>	13
<i>Pelarian</i>	14
<i>Refuges</i>	15
<i>Si Anak Hilang</i>	16
<i>The Prodigal Son</i>	18
<i>Bunga Batu</i>	20
<i>Flowers of Stone</i>	21
<i>Ziarah dalam Gereja Gunung</i>	22
<i>Pilgrimage to a Mountain Church</i>	22
<i>Biksu Tak Berjubah</i>	23
<i>A Monk with No Robe</i>	24
<i>Dialog dengan Salibku</i>	25
<i>Dialogue with My Cross</i>	27
<i>Tembok Pura Gautama</i>	29
<i>The Walls of Gautama Temple</i>	30
<i>Cerbang</i>	31
<i>Gateway</i>	32
<i>Bukan Pura Besakih</i>	33
<i>Not Besakih Temple</i>	34
<i>Belajar Kembali Alifbata</i>	35
<i>Relearning ABCs</i>	37
Cerita Pendek/Short Story	39
<i>Ibu Pergi ke Sorga</i>	39
<i>Mother Goes to Heaven</i>	47
Dewan Juri Pemilihan Sastrawan Indonesia	55
Panel for the Selection of the Indonesian Awardee	55

KATA PENGANTAR
KEPALA PUSAT BAHASA
DEPARTEMEN PENDIDIKAN NASIONAL

Sejak tahun 1978 hadiah sastra The S.E.A Write Awards diberikan kepada sastrawan berprestasi di Asia Tenggara. Dalam hubungan itu, Pusat Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, setiap tahun membentuk Panitia Pemilihan Sastrawan Indonesia. Tugasnya memilih dan menentukan tiga orang sastrawan terbaik untuk tahun yang bersangkutan. Salah seorang dari mereka ditunjuk menjadi wakil sastrawan Indonesia untuk menerima The S.E.A. Write Awards dari pihak Kerajaan Thailand.

Tahun 2006 ini, Indonesia telah menetapkan sastrawan Sitor Situmorang untuk menerima hadiah itu. Dalam rangka penyerahan itu, Pusat Bahasa menyusun buku Sastrawan Indonesia Penerima Hadiah Sastra Asia Tenggara 2006 untuk keperluan upacara penyerahan The S.E.A. Write Awards di Bangkok, Thailand.

Kepada semua pihak yang telah mengupayakan penerbitan buku kecil ini, saya sampaikan penghargaan dan terima kasih yang tulus.

Jakarta, September 2006

Dr. Dendy Sugono

PREFACE
THE HEAD OF THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE CENTER
MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

Since 1978 The S.E.A. Write Awards has been given to prolific writers in South East Asian countries. In relation to this, National Language Center, Ministry of National Education, every year sets up a committee for selection of Indonesian literary writers for the corresponding year. One of them is pointed to represent Indonesian writers to receive The S.E.A. Write Awards from the Kingdom of Thailand.

For year of 2006 Indonesia has chosen Sitor Situmorang as the recipient of the award. In this connection, the National Language Center has published the booklet *Sastrawan Indonesia Penerima Hadiah Sastra Asia Tenggara 2006* (Indonesian Writer: Awardee of the S.E.A. Write Award 2006) for the presentation of the award in Bangkok, Thailand.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to those who enabled this booklet to be published.

Jakarta, September 2006

Dr. Dendy Sugono

BIOGRAFI RINGKAS

Sitor Situmorang lahir pada tanggal 2 Oktober 1924 di Hariamboho, sebuah desa di kaki Gunung Pusuk Buhit yang dianggap sebagai tempat asal suku Batak. Ia adalah keturunan keluarga pemangku adat Batak yang diharapkan menjadi teladan dalam pemeliharaan tradisi, tapi diizinkan mengikuti pendidikan modern sekolah kolonial Belanda. Sejak sekolah dasar, Sitor telah meninggalkan tanah kelahirannya dan memasuki berbagai lingkungan budaya.

Setelah menamatkan sekolah dasar di Sibolga, Sitor masuk MULO (*Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*) di Tarutung (1938). Pada pertengahan tahun 1941, Sitor berangkat ke Batavia untuk bersekolah di CMS (*Christelijke Middelbare Scholen*).

Cita-cita Sitor menjadi ahli hukum kandas karena kedatangan Jepang. Setelah Proklamasi Kemerdekaan Indonesia, Sitor menjadi redaktur *Suara Nasional*, kemudian di mana bakat jurnalistik dan sastranya mulai tampak. Namun, esai, kritik, dan sajaknya baru mulai dipublikasikan setelah Sitor ditugaskan meliput suasana revolusi di Yogyakarta tahun 1947–1948. Saat itu ia juga menjadi wartawan Kantor Berita Nasional Antara. Ketika pecah Agresi Militer Belanda II pada tahun 1948, ia ditangkap Nefis (*Netherland Forces Intelligence Service*) dan dipenjarakan di Wirogunan, Yogyakarta, sampai penyerahan kedaulatan RI di akhir tahun 1949.

Pada 1950, atas undangan Sticusa (*Stichting culture samen werking*), Sitor pergi ke Eropa. Sepulang dari Eropa (1953) namanya semakin menanjak sebagai sastrawan. Puisi, drama, cerita pendek, cerita film, esai, dan kritiknya dianggap memberikan sumbangan penting bagi pencerahan dan pembaruan seni-budaya Indonesia. Pada masa inilah bukunya banyak dipublikasikan, seperti kumpulan puisi *Surat Kertas Hijau* (1953), *Dalam Sajak* (1955), dan *Wajah Tak Bernama* (1955), drama *Jalan Mutiara* (1954) serta kumpulan cerpen

Pertempuran dan Salju di Paris (1956) --yang memperoleh hadiah pertama untuk sastra nasional tahun 1955/56 dari Badan Musyawarat Kebudayaan Nasional (BMKN).

Sitor juga banyak menerjemahkan buku-buku sastra seperti karya-karya John Wyndham, John Galsworthy, William Saroyan, Maenocol, Dorothy Sayers, J.A. Rimbaud, Rabindranath Tagore, Hoornik, dan Shen Chi Shi. Selain itu, Sitor juga menerjemahkan penukiran kebudayaan dan sejarah, seperti kumpulan esai karya E. du Perron dan telaah mengenai Multatuli karya Rob Nieuwenhuis.

Di dunia film, selain dikenal sebagai kritikus film yang tajam dan juga mengajar kritik di Akademi Teater nasional Indonesia (ATNI), Sitor juga sempat melahirkan cerita film *Darah dan Doa* (1950) yang dianggap sebagai tonggak pertama film Indonesia. Ia juga dikenal sebagai kritikus film yang tajam dan mengajar kritik di Akademi Teater Nasional (ATNI). Sitor juga sering menjadi juri festival-festival film dan diundang dalam kerja sama pembuatan film antarnegara.

Pada pertengahan tahun 1950-an Sitor mendapat beasiswa untuk belajar sinematografi dan seni panggung di Los Angeles (University of Southern California) dan di New York (Actor's Studio) Amerika Serikat.

Pada waktu yang sama Sitor juga kembali aktif dalam lapangan politik dengan memasuki lembaga pendukung gagasan Demokrasi Terpimpin Presiden Soekarno. Sitor terlibat di dalam Dewan Nasional dan kemudian Dewan Perancang Nasional sebagai wakil golongan seniman.

Pada tahun 1959 menjadi pendiri sekaligus ketua Lembaga Kebudayaan Nasional (LKN), anak organisasi Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (PNI), lalu menjadi anggota Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara sebagai wakil golongan seniman dan anggota Badan Pertimbangan Ilmu Pengetahuan Departemen Perguruan Tinggi dan Ilmu Pengetahuan (1961–1962).

Sitor banyak menulis dan berceramah tentang hubungan sastra dan politik yang kemudian dikumpulkan dalam *Sastra Revolusioner* (1965). Bersamaan dengan itu Sitor juga

menerbitkan kumpulan puisi *Zaman Baru* (1962), kumpulan cerpen *Pangeran* (1963), dan novelet *Rapar Anak Jalang* (1964).

Bersama jatuhnya Presiden Sukarno pada pertengahan tahun 1960, Sitor dijebloskan dalam penjara oleh Presiden Suharto tanpa proses pengadilan. Setelah delapan tahun di penjara, ia muncul lagi di panggung sastra dengan arus sastra baru yang mewakili perkembangan baru. Dari periode ini terbit buku-bukunya *Dinding Waktu* (1976), *Peta Perjalanan* (1977) yang mendapat Hadiah Puisi Dewan Kesenian Jakarta 1976/77, kumpulan *Danau Toba* (1981), *Angin Danau* (1982), dan cerita anak-anak *Gajah, Harimau dan Ikan* (1981). Ia pun memasuki dunia sejarah dan antropologi dengan *Guru Samalaing dan Modigliani "Utusan Raja Rom"* (1993) dan *Toba Na Sae* (1993). Dalam masa itu pula Sitor menulis otobiografinya *Sitor Situmorang Seorang Sastrawan '45 Penyair Danau Toba* (1981) dan mengajar di Universitas Leiden, Belanda.

Karya-karya Sitor telah diterjemahkan ke dalam berbagai bahasa, seperti Belanda (*Bloem op een rots* dan *Oude Tijger*, 1990) dan *Eeuwige Valley*, 2004), Inggris (*To Love, To Wander*, 1996) dan Prancis (*Paris la Nuit*, 2001), serta Cina, Italia, Jerman, Jepang dan Rusia.

Pada perayaan Hari Masyarakat Penutur Bahasa Prancis Sedunia (20 maret 2003), Sitor dianugrahi Hadiah Francophonie karena dianggap sebagai penyair terkemuka Indonesia yang memberikan kontribusi penting dalam mengembangkan bahasa Prancis di Indonesia dengan prinsip-prinsip Franco-phonie, yaitu penghormatan serta pengembangan keanekaragaman budaya, perdamaian, demokrasi dan hak asasi.

Sebagai penyair, Sitor tidak hanya menulis dalam bahasa Indonesia, tetapi juga dalam bahasa Belanda dan bahasa Inggris. Puisi yang ditulisnya langsung dalam bahasa Inggris, *The Rites of the Bali Aga*, diterbitkan tahun 2001).

Pada usianya yang ke-80, Sitor masih menunjukkan eksistensinya sebagai penyair dengan menerbitkan kumpulan puisi *Biksu Tak Berjubah* (2004).

BUKU & PENGHARGAAN

Puisi

- Surat Kertas Hijau* (1953)
Dalam Sajak (1955)
Wajah Tak Bernama (1955)
Zaman Baru (1962)
Dinding Waktu (1976)
Peta Perjalanan (1977)
Angin Danau (1982)
Bunga di Atas Batu (1989)
Rindu Kelana (1993)
The Rites of the Bali Aga (2001)
Biksu Tak Berjubah (2004)
Sitor Situmorang: Kumpulan Sajak 1948--1979
Sitor Situmorang: Kumpulan Sajak 1980--2005

Cerita pendek

- Pertempuran dan Salju di Paris* (1956)
Pangeran (1963)
Danau Toba (1981)
Salju di Paris (1994)
Kisah Surat dari Legian (2001)

Cerita anak-anak

- Gajah, Harimau, dan Ikan* (1981)

Prosa

- Rapar Anak Jalang* (1964)

Drama

- Jalan Mutiara*

Sejarah-antropologi

- Guru Samalaing dan Modigliani "Utusan Raja Rom"* (1993)
Toba Na Sae (1993)

Kumpulan esai

Marhaenisme dan Kebudayaan Indonesia (1956)

Sastra Revolusioner (1965)

Otobiografi

Sitor Situmorang Seorang Sastrawan '45, Penyair Danau Toba (1981)

Terjemahan ke bahasa asing

Bloem op een rots (1990) –kumpulan puisi

Oude Tijger (1990) –kumpulan cerpen

To Love, To Wander (1996) –kumpulan puisi

Paris la Nuit (2001) –kumpulan puisi

Eeuwige Valley (2004) –kumpulan puisi

Penerjemahan dari bahasa asing

Triffid Mengancam Dunia (1953) karya John Wyndham

Menentukan Sikap (1954) karya E. du Perron

Hikayat Lebak (1979) karya Rob Nieuwenhuis

Penghargaan

Hadiah I Sastra Nasional 1955/56 dari Badan Musyawarah

Kebudayaan Nasional (BMKN) untuk kumpulan cerpen

Pertempuran dan Salju di Paris

Hadiah Puisi Dewan Kesenian Jakarta 1976/77 untuk

kumpulan puisi *Peta Perjalanan*

Hadiah Francophonie 2003 dari Penutur Bahasa Prancis

Sedunia

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Sitor Situmorang was born at 2nd October, 1924 at Harianboho, a village which is located at the slope of Pusuk Buhit Mountain, a village which is assumed to be the origin of Batak ethnic group. Sitor is a descent of Bataknese customs functionary who was expected to be a model in maintaining the Bataknese tradition. However, Sitor was still allowed to attend modern education at the Dutch colonial school. Since he was in primary school, Sitor had left his mother land and entered various kinds of cultural environments.

After finishing his primary school at Sibolga, Sitor studied at MULO (*Meer Uitgebreid Lagere Onderwijs*) at Tarutung (1938). In the middle of year 1941, Sitor went to Batavia in order to study at CMS (*Christelijke Middlebare Scholen*).

His ideal to be a lawyer run aground due to the coming of Japanese. After Indonesian Independence Proclamation, Sitor became an editor of *Suara Nasional*, in which his journalistic and literary talent had emerged. Nevertheless, his essays, critics, and poems had just begun to be published after he was ordered to report the revolution situation in Yogyakarta in 1947—1948. At that time, he was also worked as a reporter of Kantor Berita Nasional Antara (the National News Office Antara). When the second Dutch Military Aggression took place in 1948, Sitor was caught by Nefis (*Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service*) and arrested at Wirogunan, Yogyakarta, until the transfer of sovereignty of Republic of Indonesia at the end of year 1949.

In 1950, on the invitation of Sticusa (*Stichting culture samen werking*), Sitor went to Europe. Returning from Europe in 1953, his name had become increasingly arise as a writer. His poems, dramas, short stories, movie scripts,

essays, and critics were considered to be important contributions in the enlightenment and the renewal of Indonesian art and culture.

In this period, his works were largely published, such as collected poems *Surat Kertas Hijau* (1953), *Dalam Sajak* (1955), and *Wajah Tak Bernama* (1955), drama *Jalan Mutiara* (1954) as well as collected short stories *Pertempuran dan Salju di Paris* (1956)—which won the first prize for national literature year 1955/56 from Badan Musyawarah Kebudayaan Nasional (the National Culture and Deliberation Council).

Sitor had also translated many literary books such as, the works of John Wyndham, John Galsworthy, William Saroyan, Maenocol, Dorothy Sayers, J.A. Rimbaud, Rabindranath Tagore, Hoornik, and Shen Chi Shi. Besides, Sitor had also translated thought on culture and history, such as a compilation of essays by E. du Perron and a study on Multatuli by Rob Nieuwenhuis.

In filming, besides knowing as a sharp-witted film critic and as critique teacher at Akademi Teater Nasional Indonesia (National Academic Theater Indonesia), Sitor also had a chance to create a movie called *Darah dan Doa* (1950) which was believed to be the milestone of the Indonesian movie. Sitor was also often trusted to be a jury of movie festivals and invited to work together in an international movie production.

In the middle of 1950s, Sitor got scholarships to study cinematography and art performance in Los Angeles (University of Southern California) and in New York (Actor's Studio) United States of America.

At the same time, he had also involved actively in the political field by joining an institution which supported the Guided Democracy ideas of President Soekarno. Sitor involved in National Representatives and afterwards involved

in National Planning Representatives as the representative of artists.

In 1959, Sitor became a founder as well as a head of the National Culture Institution, a member of Indonesian Nationalist Party, and then he became a member of the House of Representatives. Meanwhile, as a representative of artists, he was also a member of the Foundation on Science Consideration, Ministry of University and Science (1961—1962).

Sitor wrote and gave lecture about the relationship between literature and politics which was then compiled in *Sastra Revolusioner* (1965). At the same time, Sitor had also published collected poems *Zaman Baru* (1962), collected short stories *Pangeran* (1963), and a novelette called *Rapar Anak Jalang* (1964).

In time with the fall of President Soekarno in the middle of year 1960, Sitor was sent to jail by President Soeharto without any justice process. After being in jail for eight years, Sitor started to perform on stage with a new literary flow which represented a new development. From this period, he published his books, such as *Dinding Waktu* (1976), *Peta Perjalanan* (1977) which won the Poetry Prize of Dewan Kesenian Jakarta (Jakarta's Art Council) 1976/77, *Danau Toba* compilation (1981), *Angin Danau* (1982), and children story *Gajah, Harimau, dan Ikan* (1981). Sitor also entered history and anthropology field by writing *Guru Samalaing dan Modigliani "Utusan Raja Rom"* (1993) and *Toba Na Sae* (1993). Within this period, Sitor also wrote an autobiography *Sitor Situmorang Sastrawan '45 Penyair Danau Toba* (Sitor Situmorang a Writer in '45 Period a Poet writer from Lake Toba) and taught at Leiden University, Netherlands, as well.

Sitor's works had been translated into many languages, such as in Dutch (*Bloem op een rots* and *Oude Tijger*, 1990) and *Eeuwige Valley*, 2004, in English (*To love*,

To Wander, 1996) and in French *Paris la Nuit*, 2001, as well as in Chinese, Italian, Germany, Japanese, and Russian.

On the celebration of The World French Speakers Day (20th March, 2003), Sitor was bestowed with Francophonie Prize because he was assumed to be the Indonesian famous poet writer who gave important contribution in the development of French language in Indonesia with Francophonie principles, that is an honor and the development of the variety of culture, peace, democracy, and human right.

As a poet, Sitor did not only write in bahasa Indonesia, but he also wrote in Dutch and English. His poem which was directly written in English, *The Rites of the Bali Aga*, was published in 2001.

In his 80 years age, Sitor had still showed his existence as a poet writer by publishing collected poems *Biksu Tak Berjubah* (2004).

PUISI/POEMS

Malam Kebumen

Siapa nanti yang akan cerita
bila juga pelita ini
padam, enggan menyala,
dan lagi untuk siapa?

Kisah malam bersendiri ini
tak mungkin lalu begitu saja
Goresan di hati gelap
terlalu mendalam untuk lenyap

Di udara masih ada suara
gema lepas
Tarikan napas terakhir
manusia kehabisan kata-kata

November 1948

Night in Kebumen

Who will speak of it
if the flame of this candle
dies, reluctant to glow,
not knowing for whom it burns?

The tale of this night alone
will not simply fade away
The tear in the darkened heart
is too deep to disappear

Voices linger in the air,
solitary echoes
The last draught of breath
of a man without words

November 1948

Translated by John McGlyn

Pelarian

Malam dan gubuk-gubuk menelan deru kota
Lampu-lampu menjauh
Yang ada hanya bayangan dan tubuh

Malam dan deru kota
Aku jalan dengan kenangan cinta lama
Tidak bisa lupa dan membedakan seribu muka

Cinta kamarin?
Ah, pengembara tak bisa membanding dekapan seribu kota
Seperti pelaut berobah rencana di setiap pelabuhan

Angin malam sampai juga
di tempat aku mengusap luka
Terkenang pantai lama makin jauh

Juni 1949

Refuges

Night and the shanties swallow the city's roar
lamplights grow distant
only shadows and bodies here

Through night and the city's roar
I wander with the memory of an old love
unable to forget or differentiate thousands of faces

Yesterday's love?
Oh, the traveler can not compare the embrace of a thousand
towns...
A sailor who changes plans in every port

The night wind finally comes
to the place I lick my wounds
reminding me of another shore, long ago, now growing ever
more distant.

Juni 1949

Translated by John McGlyn

Si Anak Hilang

Pada terik tengah hari
Titik perahu timbul di danau
Ibu cemas ke pantai berlari
Menyambut anak lama ditunggu

Perahu titik menjadi nyata
Pandang berlinang air mata
Anak tiba dari rantau
Sebaik turun dipeluk ibu

Bapak duduk di pusat rumah
Seakan tak acuh menanti
Anak di sisi ibu gundah
– Laki-laki layak menahan hati –

Anak duduk disuruh bercerita
Ayam disembelih nasi dimasak
Seluruh desa bertanya-tanya
Sudah beristri sudah beranak?

Si Anak hilang kini kembali
Tak seorang dikenalnya lagi
Berapa kali panen sudah
Apa saja telah terjadi?

Seluruh desa bertanya-tanya
Sudah beranak sudah berapa?
Si Anak hilang berdiam saja
Ia lebih hendak bertanya

Selesai makan ketika senja
Ibu menghampiri ingin disapa

Anak memandang ibu bertanya
Ingin tahu dingin Eropa

Anak diam mengenang lupa
Dingin Eropa musim kotanya
Ibu diam berhenti berkata
Tiada sesal hanya gembira

Malam tiba ibu tertidur
Bapa lama sudah mendengkur
Di pantai pasir berdesir gelombang
Tahu si Anak tiada pulang

September 1953

The Prodigal Son

In the fiery heat of midday
A speck, a boat, appears in the bay
The anxious mother runs to the shore
To greet the son she's long waited for

In time the speck becomes a boat
The mother's tears, in languid pools float
So many years abroad, yet safe from harm
The son delivers himself to his mother's arms

In the room's center sits the father
Posed as if to wonder what's the bother
The son fidgets at his mother's side
Feelings are something a man must hide

The son is told to sit and speak
A chicken's dressed, the rice readied to eat
The whole of the village wants to know
Is he married, has he kids to show?

The prodigal son is now back home
In a village where he's now unknown
How many harvests have come to pass
What has happened since they saw him last?

The whole of the village wants to know
Is he married, are there kids to show?
The prodigal son has little to say
For all the questions he holds at bay

After the meal and twilight's fall
His mother begs him to recount all
He stares at the queries her eyes hold
But how can he explain Europe's cold?

Though memories rise, the son sits still –
The seasons, the towns, Europe's chill
The mother silent, not from fear
She has no regrets now, only cheer

Late at night the mother quits her chores
The father long before had begun to snore
On the sandy shore waves hiss and foam
Knowing the prodigal son has not come home

September 1953

Translated by John McGlyn

Bunga Batu

Kurasa kau tahu, lebih dari lagu
Kebisuan lebih berkata dari duka
Karena ditinggalkan ia maka setia
Pengetahuan, lama sudah membatu

Kini di atasnya tumbuh bunga
Indah seindah raut wajahmu
Semerbak kenangan sepahit empedu
Darah hitam yang mewarnai jiwa

Seribu tahun sebelum kita dan nanti
Dari dalam tanah orang menggali
Wajah tertera pada lapisan batu
Bergaris cerita mati – masih terharu

1955

Flowers of Stone

I feel you know, even more than the song
Silence reveals more than sorrow
For having been left behind she is more loyal
Past knowledge turns to stone

On top of which flowers now grow
As beautiful as your features
Fragrant memories bitter as gall
And darkened blood that colors the soul

A thousand years before us, and later
In the soil men will find
Faces etched on stone,
The lines of a tale of death – one still powerful

1959

Translated by John McGlyn

Ziarah dalam Gereja Gunung

Di mana aku berada kau ada
Bayangan satu-satunya, demikian kurasa.
Benarkah kau ada di sunyi begini
Di kedinginan ruang gereja sendiri?
Dari luar sampai ke ruang ini
Siut burung yang memuja pagi.
Jika aku ada di sini, hanyalah aku sendiri
Serta dingin udara tak dipanasi matahari.

Amin.

1955

Pilgrimage to a Mountain Church

Wherever I am you are there
The one and only image
Are you really here in this silence
In the chill of this lonely church?

From outside, into this room
Comes the trill of a bird in praise of morning
While I am here, just me alone
With a chill the sun will never warm.

Amen.

1955

Translated by John McGlyn

Biksu Tak Berjubah

Taklukkan kota Paris
mimpiku dulu
angan-angan muda:
menggegerkan langit!
Tapi langit bisu saja.

Paris pun jadi tua

Di kesunyiannya
aku dewasa
pasrah seperti biksu tua
berkemas
masuk biara matiraga
tanpa jubah –
dituntun tangan
meraba-raba
di gerbang cinta
alam semesta
nusantara.

November 1976

A Monk with No Robe

To conquer Paris
was once my dream,
a young man's fancy:
to storm the heavens!
but heaven was silent.

and even Paris grew old

In its loneliness
I matured ,
grew submissive
like an old monk with no robe,
preparing to enter
the monastery for meditation –
led by the hand
I grasp
at the gate of love
the universe
in an archipelago.

November 1976

Translated by John McGlyn

Dialog dengan Salibku

Berdiri di joljutaku
kau bertanya
Kamu ingin teman?
lalu bertanya lagi:
Kamu yakin apa?

Keduanya aku tak mampu
menjawab sepantasnya.
Aku hanya termangu
di bawah sorotan pandanganmu.

Aku bukan minta
sesuatu yang dapat dijelaskan
dengan kata-kata manusia

Hanya –
biarkan aku bercakap-cakap
seorang diri
di dunia yang kau perbaharui
dalam tubuhku ini
hingga menjadi teman
sekalian keyakinan

dalam darah kasihku
dan roti dagingku
dan berani berkata padamu:
Lihatlah anak manusia!

Minta penyelamatan
tapi menolak
pengampunan!

Desember 1976

Dialogue with My Cross

Standing on my Golgotha
you ask
Do you want a companion?
then ask as well
Of what can you be certain?

To neither I can give
an adequate answer.
and stand befuddled
beneath your steady gaze.

I'm not asking for something
that can be explained
in human words

But...
permit me to speak
alone, to myself
in the world that you renewed
within this body of mine
until it becomes my companion
and something of which I am certain

in the blood of my love
and the bread of my flesh
with the courage to say to you:
Look at this child of man!

Begging for rescue
but refusing to accept
forgiveness!

Desember 1976

Translated by John McGlyn

Tembok Pura Gautama

Tembok ini mengelilingi ruang
tak lebih seluas satu hektar tanah.
Di dalamnya 2000 lebih manusia,
dari ratusan ribu tahanan,
tersebar di ribuan penjara,
berbagai negeri, berbagai benua.

Pada hari tertentu di sana antri
isteri atau anak,
Mengantar sesuatu bagi sanak,
seperti sajen bagi arwah
orang tersayang tak kunjung pulang
dari pura, kuburan jenazah bernyawa.

Sebagian telah lama di belantara buangan,
Menyendiri di pulau di ujung langit,
di negeri jauh sukar dicapai,
di suatu planit di luar bumi,
menanti pengadilan
pembebasan mutlak di dalam mati.

Dari Siberia sampai di hutan Afrika,
terdengar rintihan Gautama Sidarta,
yang menyiksa dan tersiksa
dalam jiwa.

1977

The Walls of Gautama Temple

This wall encircles a space
no more than one hectare in size
inside which are two thousand people or more
of the hundreds of thousands of detainees
scattered in thousands of prisons
in various lands, on various continents.

On given days wives and children queue
bringing parcels for their kin
like offerings for the spirits
of beloved ones who shall never return
from the temple, the graveyard of the living dead.

Some were sent away long ago,
exiled to an island at the end of the sky,
sent to a distant land, difficult to reach,
a planet in outer space
to await their trial:
absolute acquittal in death

From Siberia to the African jungles
one can hear the moans of Gautama Sidharta,
the torturers and the tortured of the soul.

1977

Translated by John McGlyn

Gerbang

40 orang tahanan turun tertib
dari 2 truk,
di depan gerbang penjara.
Gerbang besar lalu menganga.

Segala lancar menurut komando
(derum truk yang pulang kembali
meningkah suara barisan berhitung)

Komandan menatap tahanan satu per satu,
melangkah dalam iringan dua-dua,
barisan abadi orang kalah.

Aku di antara mereka,
melangkahi ambang hati sendiri,
gerbang pemisah antara kini dan kini,

Detik tunggal eksistensi
manusia memenjara manusia.

1977

Gateway

Forty detainees step down from two trucks
in ordered fashion
before the prison door.
The massive gateway gapes.

All goes smoothly, according to command
(the roar of the trucks now leaving
overpower the sound of the rows counting off)

The commander stares at the detainees, one by one,
as they walk by in twos
the eternal formation of the vanquished.

I am one of them
stepping over the threshold of my own heart
through the gateway between past and present

The single moment of existence
Man imprisoning man.

1977

Translated by John McGlyn

Bukan Pura Besakih

Daun kalender 197 –
pembungkus singkong goreng,
bergambar sebuah pura Bali,
pandangan burung terbang.

Sorga terakhir – dalam tatawarna offset.
Kulicinkan, lalu kutempelkan
di dinding sel.

Bagian dalam pura
mengingatkan lapangan dalam penjara,
terlihat dari pesawat terbang,
yang tiap 5 menit lintas
mendarat
di lapangan internasional di sebelah utara.

Pura dan penjara –
Yang satu buat dewa-dewa,
Yang lain buat orang
seperti saya,
terlalu kepingin jelajah dunia.

Translated by John McGlyn

Not Besakih Temple

On a page from a 197_ calendar,
a wrapper for fried cassava'
is a picture of a Balinese temple
taken from a bird's eye view.

The last paradise – in offset colors.
I smooth it out and stick it on
the wall of my cell.

The temple's courtyard
is like the prison field
as seen from one of the planes
that pass by every five minutes to land
at the international airport to the north.

Temples and jails –
One for the gods
The other for people
like myself,
all too interested in exploring the world

1977

Translated by John McGlyn

Belajar Kembali Alifbata

suatu hari dalam hidup Solzhenitsyn

Sastra dunia? Bahasaku bahasa Indonesia,
semoga bicaraku mengandung diam,
diammu semakin jelas berkata.

Ternyata puisi memang
bukan sekadar gatra
tidak pula pasar malam
dan semudah menyeberang lapangan.

Yang mati pun belajar kembali
gagap melafal kata-kata: Arkipelag Gulag,
dan sajak-sajak Pasternak.

Sastra rahasia? Bahasa manusia,
paling sederhana. Sandi gelap
bagi kaum estetika.
(Yang bukan penyair tak ambil bagian
rahasia Rimbaud dan cintanya Chairil Anwar)

Tapi aku pun sedia belajar
alifbata sastra
bahasa sehari-hari
penghuni Nusantara,
bahasa lain aku tak bisa.

Aku harus bersedia
belajar alifbata, walau gagap:
Arkipelag Gulag, Arkipelag Gulag,
kepribumian Pasternak,
Sepanjang lorong-lorong penjara
ibukota-ibukota benua.
Sepanjang jalur-jalur angkasa

kejatuhan dan kebangkitan manusia

di hutan dan padang es
masa depan manusia.

1977

Relearning the ABCs

one day in the life of Solzhenitsyn

World literature? My language is Indonesian,
I hope my speech holds silence,
your silence speaks more clearly.

Poetry is much more
than a collection of phrases
or a night market,
and is as easy as crossing a field.

Even the dead can relearn
and, stuttering, memorize the words:
Gulag Archipelago
and Pasternak's poems.

Hermetic literature? Human language
at its most simplest, a secret code
for aesthetics.
(Those who are not poets find no share
of Rimbaud's secrets or Chairil Anwar's love)

Having mastered no other language
I am ready to study
the ABCs of literature,
the daily tongue
of this archipelago's inhabitants.

I must be ready
to study the alphabet, though I stutter:
Gulag Archipelago, Gulag Archipelago
Pasternak's authenticity,

Along the prison halls
in the capitals of the world
Across the lanes of the universe
man rises and falls

in jungles and icy plains
is the future of man.

1977

Translated by John McGlyn

CERPEN/SHORT STORY

Ibu Pergi ke Surga

Ibu akhirnya meninggal setelah mengidap penyakit dada satu tahun saja. Badannya yang tua dan aus pada usia 65 tahun tak tahan lebih lama menolak rongrongan kuman-kuman yang merajalela di paru-parunya. Obat tak terbeli, makanan tak tercukupi di kampung jauh di pegunungan, apalagi perawatan yang semestinya. Setelah ia meninggal, aku mengucapkan, “Syukurlah!” dalam hati. Terlalu penderitaan si tua itu.

Kebetulan saja aku dapat menghadiri saat matinya. Beberapa bulan sebelumnya, aku dua kali dipanggil dengan telegram, “Ibu sakit keras datang!” Saya datang. Ibu segar kembali. “Lihat, kau akan sehat kembali. Kau hanya rindu melihat anakmu!” kata orang menghibur hatinya, yang sudah tak segan mati. Hal itu kuketahui dari pandangnya. Bersama Bapak yang jauh lebih tua, ia tak punya apa-apa lagi di dunia untuk menjadi alasan hidup terus. Kami (dua anaknya) semua sudah merantau. Rumah besar kosong. Sawah terbengkalai. Cukup sebagian saja yang dikerjakan. Mereka mengembara dalam rumah seperti dalam ruang kubur besar, demikian kata Ibu sendiri. Orang pun tak singgah lagi. Apa hendak dipercakapkan si tua nyinyir serta istrinya yang sudah dekat mati?

Kedua kalinya saya dapat telegram. Tapi saya tak datang. Entah berdasar perhitungan apa saya menaksir dalam hati saya bahwa Ibu akan tahan hidup kira-kira enam bulan lagi. Lalu kukirimkan sebuah baju panas. Surat Ibu, yang didiktekan pada orang lain, sebab ia buta huruf, dan ditujukan pada anakku laki-laki yang sulung berkata, “Nenek lakimu cemburu, baik kirim baju laken padanya seperti dulu!” Pernyataan keinginan

tersebut diperkuat dengan cap jempol Bapak. Jas itu kukirimkan.

Lalu datanglah telegram ketiga. Semacam firasat menyuruh aku pulang. Ketika tiba di kampung seorang diri, Bapak berkata dengan kesal, “Hanya kau sendiri?”

Adikku sejak beberapa tahun tak ketahuan lagi di mana tempatnya.

Malamnya ketika makan, Bapak bertanya, “Apa kau cecok dengan istrimu?” Lalu ia memberengut, pergi keluar. “Ongkos mahal, Pak!” kataku, tapi ia menghilang dalam gelap setelah berkata, “Kalau ibumu mati, aku pun tidak lama lagi hidup, sedang cucuku belum pernah kulihat!”

Ibu tersenyum saja.

Esoknya, setelah memperhatikan Ibu, tak terpikir ia lekas akan mati. Lalu aku menyesal sedikit karena datang juga memenuhi panggilan. Hampir aku mau pulang saja lagi ke pekerjaan di Pulau Jawa, tetapi saya tinggal. Kebetulan sudah dekat tahun baru, artinya dekat hari Natal pula. Saya tahu, Ibu hanya suka saya berada di hari Natal di dekatnya. Bapak tidak. Tak pernah ia kukira merasakan arti ia dipermandikan jadi orang Kristen, ketika ia sudah berusia empat puluh tahun dulu. Ia masih mengucapkan mantera kalau ada kejadian istimewa dengan diri atau keluarganya. Kalau kerbaunya diterkam harimau di padang bebas di gunung, ia juga mengucapkan manteranya sambil membakar ranting di malam gelap. Harimau yang rakus itu akan mati! Begitulah keyakinannya.

Tapi Ibu lain. Selain tak percaya pada takhyul, ia pengunjung gereja yang setia dan merupakan pengikut persatuan jemaat di tengah-tengah penduduk yang kebanyakan masih zakil. Ibu memang terkenal peramu obat-obatan, tapi tanpa mantera, resep buaatannya hanya diludahinya.

Bapak kalau di gereja diberi juga tempat istimewa dekat pendeta, di atas kursi besar menghadap jemaat, sebab ia orang dirajakan, pun sebelum zending dan kompeni datang. Itu haknya dan saban kali ia duduk di gereja, ia duduk terkantuk-kantuk di sana sampai habis gereja.

Pada hari kedua saya datang, pendeta berkunjung ke rumah. Karena Ibu tidak dapat ke gereja di malam hari Natal, jemaat akan merayakan hari Natal di rumah kami! Ibu setuju, dan mengangguk seperti menerima hal yang sewajarnya.

Aku merasa keberatan karena sesuatu, tapi tak berkata. Sebelum itu, sudah beberapa kali orang berhari Minggu di rumah kami rupanya. Hal itu terasa bagiku seakan-akan upacara kematian. Aku teringat akan khotbah-khotbah yang dulu di masa kanak. Pandang yang melongo dari jemaat dan Bapak yang terkantuk-kantuk. Nyanyian parau dan sumbang dan bau daki orang tak mandi semestinya. Obrolan sesudah gereja di depan gereja, demikianlah kenanganku. Hal itu dulu tentu tak kurasakan demikian. Sebab buat kanak-kanak, pekarangan gereja penuh hal-hal yang menarik. Pohon kemiri yang rindang, kebun penuh pohon buah-buahan; jambu, nangka, mangga, di pekarangan pendeta banyak tebu. Dan di malam hari Natal, aku selalu dapat lilin yang tersisa. Hal itu keistimewaan yang direlakan oleh anak-anak lain.

Ketika hendak pulang, pendeta mengajak aku ikut ke rumahnya. Karena tak ada yang dapat dilakukan di dusun lembah yang begitu sepi, aku ikut. Lagi aku ingin juga melihat gereja yang dulu yang sudah tak kulihat sejak lepas dari sekolah dasar kira-kira dua puluh tahun yang lalu.

Jalan menuju gereja melalui tegalan dan jalan kampung. Pendeta bertanya, "Mengapa Tuan tak ke gereja ketika kemari beberapa bulan yang lalu? Tuan lebih seminggu di sini ketika itu, bukan?"

Pertanyaan itu kuelakkan dengan bertanya ini dan itu tentang keadaan penduduk. Ia bertanya tentang keadaan di Pulau Jawa, di Jakarta, kemungkinan perang di Formosa. Apa kabinet masih akan tahan lama? Semua pertanyaan saya jawab sekadarnya. Akhirnya, kami sampai di pekarangan gereja. Pada kesan pertama, aku heran betapa kecilnya gereja dan rumah pendeta. Pekarangan tidak seluas dulu agaknya. Pohon kemiri ternyata tidak setinggi dulu, seperti menara gereja dengan ayam penunjuk arah mata angin yang digunting dari kaleng tipis di

atasnya. Masih yang dulu! Itulah gereja kayu tua: betapa kumuh! Kami masuk ke dalam gereja yang juga masih dipergunakan sebagai sekolah, hanya sekarang lebih banyak bangku dan di sudut pekarangan telah didirikan bangsal darurat.

Gereja kecil dan bangsal darurat itu memuat tiga ratus orang murid dengan tenaga empat guru. "Satu yang berijazah," kata pendeta.

Kuperhatikan dinding gereja yang penuh ditemplei gambar anak-anak sekolah sendiri. Jauh di atas di sudut dinding melekat gambar: kerbau membela gembalanya terhadap harimau. Gambarku.

Istri pendeta memanggil. Ia sudah menyediakan kopi. "Sebentar!" balas pendeta dan suaranya membahana pada lereng bukit yang mengapit lembah. Setelah pendeta mengunci pintu gereja, anjingnya datang menjilat kaki saya: kesepian yang tetap.

Ketika menghirup kopinya, pendeta berkata dengan hormat, "Tuan hendaknya membaca Injil di malam hari Natal nanti! Ibu tentu gembira sekali kalau Tuan melakukan hal ini."

Sambil memandang gambar kepala Kristus di salib yang sobek-sobek tergantung di dinding di depan saya, saya berkata, "Lebih baik jangan, Tuan Pendeta! Biarlah orang tua-tua yang melakukannya."

"Orang tua-tua mengatur jemaat membakar lilin, membaca nyanyian, mengatur anak-anak sekolah. Kor harus dipimpin. Kami telah melatih lagu kesukaan Ibu: Di Tangan Tuhan!"

Aku tak suka, tapi aku diam. Pendeta rupanya menganggapnya tanda setuju.

"Kue-kue disediakan juga buat anak-anak. Sihotang telah bermurah hati memberi sumbangan besar. Tuan masih ingat dia?"

Aku pulang ke rumah dengan perasaan hampa dalam dada. Terbayang orang berkumpul di rumah. Bagaimana dan di mana Ibu akan ditaruh? Ia tak dapat duduk lama-lama. Berbaring kiranya?

Ketika sampai di rumah, Ibu kujumpai sedang menyediakan minuman susu kental yang kubawa, sendirian jongkok di lantai ruangan tengah.

Tibalah malam hari Natal. Bapak sudah siang-siang mengenakan pakaian yang bersih. Ia duduk sendirian di sudut ruangan dalam yang besar sambil menumbuk sirihnya di lesung kecil dibuat dari perak.

Dua gadis yang tak kukenal sedang membenahi Ibu dan meletakkannya di atas bale-bale, lalu Ibu ditaruh dekat dinding agak jauh dari tempat duduk Bapak. Pohon Natal yang diambil dari hutan telah tersedia di sudut. Lilinnya belum dibakar.

Setelah Ibu berbaring baik, kedua gadis itu pergi. Mereka juga hendak berbenah. Upacara akan dimulai kira-kira satu jam lagi. Aku pergi ke kamarku duduk di kursi termenung. Sekali-kali Ibu terbatuk, menyeling suara lampu petromaks.

Aku termenung. Barangkali setengah jam, tak tahu aku. Ketika sadar kembali, aku tak mendengar batuk Ibu, juga tidak suara lesung sirih Bapak. Tentu ia sudah mengunyah dengan mulutnya yang tak bergigi lagi. Suara lampu petromaks makin keras. Aku keluar dari kamar, memandang Bapak sebentar, lalu Ibu yang terlentang di atas bale-bale ditutupi dengan kain, "Ia tertidur," pikirku, lalu aku mendekatinya. Kuperhatikan wajahnya dengan mata dan pipinya yang cekung-cekung. Lalu dadanya.

"Seperti dada ayam," pikirku. Tiba-tiba kusadari dadanya tak bergerak. Kuraba keningnya, lalu kubuka kelopak matanya. Ibu telah mati! Perasaan syukur yang ganjil tak memberi kesempatan pada haru yang menyumbat kerongkonganku. Kupandang ke arah Bapak, tapi ia tak tahu apa-apa. Bagaimana mengatakan hal itu? Orang akan datang berpesta segera: kututupi wajah Ibu dengan kain dan sebentar lagi kedengaran orang datang. Pendeta dan orang tua-tua: jemaat pun masuk, mengambil tempatnya di lantai, duduk bersila dengan khidmat, mula-mula di sudut-sudut, hingga terisi, kemudian dengan segan-segan menyerak ke tengah ruangan.

"Ibu tidur?" tanya pendeta sambil menyerahkan buku Injil padaku.

"Ya," sahutku.

"Baiklah! Kalau sudah sampai ke lagu kesayangannya, ia kita bangunkan nanti," katanya.

Ia mulai mengatur jemaat. Orang tua-tua menjalankan tugasnya masing-masing. Akhirnya, ruangan dalam penuh sesak, hanya sedikit tempat terluang, yaitu sekitar Bapak. Anak-anak sekolah duduk dekat bale-bale Ibu, membelakanginya, menghadapi pohon Natal di sudut.

Lilin yang berwarna-warni telah menyala dan suara "ah-ah-ah" kekaguman dan kegembiraan anak-anak kedengaran. Aku berdiri terpaku dengan Injil di tangan, dengan sikap janggal, seperti pendeta yang baru menghadapi khotbahnya yang pertama, dekat bale-bale.

Upacara dibuka dengan doa. Bapak masih menumbuk sirihnya. Lalu nyanyian. Lalu pembacaan Injil. Suarakuakah itu? Jemaat bernyanyi. Aku hilang perasaan akan waktu, tapi kudengar mendengung,

"...Setelah lahir Yesus di Baitlahim, di tanah Judea..."

Pendeta datang membongkok-bongkok ke jurusan saya mengatakan supaya membangunkan Ibu, "Lagu kesayangannya akan dinyanyikan!"

Aku mengangguk dan ia pergi mengatur kornya. Sebelum mulai, ia melayangkan pandang bertanya padaku, yang kubalas dengan anggukan. Kor pun mulai, "Di tangan Tuhan!" ... Kata-katanya tak dapat kutangkap. Suatu lagu yang tak pernah kukenal, lagi anak-anak dekat pintu dan dekat bale-bale gelisah dan bercakap-cakap antara sesamanya. Kuperhatikan Bapak yang berhenti menumbuk sirihnya sambil memandang pohon Natal yang menyala-nyala dengan nanap.

Pendeta berdoa, "Ya, Tuhan yang Mahakuasa, Maha Penyayang, kepada-Mu kami serahkan ibu kami ini. Di tangan-Mu hidup dan di tangan-Mu jualah mati, terimalah ia dalam surga!"

Setelah lagu “Malam Kudus” dan doa penutup, upacara hampir selesai. Kue-kue dibagi-bagikan, minuman diedarkan. Pendeta dan orang tua-tua pergi duduk dekat Bapak. Ketika melintas di tengah ruangan melalui orang banyak, pendeta berkata dengan gembira ke jurusan Ibu, “Tidurlah, Bu, tak usah ikut makan kue-kue dulu, tidurlah!” Saya masuk ke kamar dan meletakkan kitab Injil di atas meja lalu keluar lagi, menjenguk, memperhatikan orang.

“Mari, duduk dekat, Bapak!” kata seorang tua-tua. “Mari bercakap-cakap. Apa saja kabar dari Jakarta?”

Saya minta maaf lalu keluar rumah. “Biarlah mereka sendiri mengetahuinya,” pikirku. Setelah beberapa waktu saya menjenguk kembali ke dalam rumah. Tak ada rupanya yang teringat akan mengganggu Ibu dalam tidurnya. Demikianlah sampai orang berpulangan semua.

Sesudah orang semua pergi, pada Bapak kukatakan Ibu tak ada lagi. Ia lalu terhenti sebentar menumbuk sirihnya, berkata, “Panggil pamanmu!”

Sebelum pergi, lilin kupadamkan.

Beberapa hari kemudian, setelah Ibu dikubur dengan upacara adat dan upacara keagamaan, Bapak memanggil saya.

Ia berdiri di pekarangan luas dan memberi isyarat kepadaku untuk mengikutinya ke sudut pekarangan. Tak tahu aku maksudnya. Setelah aku dekat ia berkata, “Kau ada uang?”

Aku terkejut karena tak tahu maksud apa yang terkandung dalam pertanyaannya, tapi akhirnya kubilang, “Berapa Pak perlu?”

“Seribu, dua ribu rupiah sudah cukup,” katanya.

“Buat apa?” tanyaku sambil mengikuti dia, dan pada ketika itu kami sampai di sudut pekarangan. Ia memegang bahuiku dan sambil memandang ke danau di bawah ia berkata, “Di sini aku ingin dikubur. Kau harus membuat kuburan semen yang indah buat aku. Kalau aku sudah mati, Ibumu kau pindahkan kemari.”

Aku hanya bertanya, “Mengapa mesti di sini?”

Bapak melepaskan tangan kirinya dari bahunya. Ia berpaling memandang ke puncak gunung dan berkata, "Dari tempat ini aku dapat memandang lepas ke dataran tinggi dan ke danau."

Aku diam.

Danau di bawah ditimpa sinar tengah hari, berkilau-kilau. Bapak berjalan meninggalkan aku. Kulihat pendeta datang.

Pendeta itu menuju tempatku dan setelah sampai berkata, "Kudengar Tuan besok pergi. Mudah-mudahan selamat saja di perjalanan!"

Kemudian, "Tuan jangan sedih! Tuan melihat betapa besar cinta penduduk dan kerabat Ibu. Tak ada orang tua yang begitu dicintai dan dihormati di daerah ini! Ia sekarang di samping Tuhan!"

"Ya," kataku.

"Ya, saya tahu Tuan juga percaya, walaupun orang terpelajar tidak lagi suka datang ke gereja. Saya selalu yakin Tuan berpegang pada Kristus," kata pendeta seperti pada dirinya sendiri.

"Bukankah begitu, Tuan? Mana bisa manusia tak ber-Tuhan! Mana mungkin tak ada surga!" katanya dengan pandang seakan-akan kambing menghadap batu.

"Ya, benar, Tuan Pendeta," kataku, "sudah barang tentu ada surga." Lalu pendeta meninggalkan aku.

Aku pergi menuju pohon Natal yang sudah kering terbengkalai di pekarangan.

Dengan api sebuah korek api, sebentar saja ia kubakar menjadi unggun api seperti di masa kanak. Abunya terserak di halaman, dan tersebar dihembus angin ke arah danau biru di bawah.

Mother Goes To Heaven

My mother finally died after suffering a chest infection that lasted barely a year. She was 65 and her old, tired body could no longer resist the microbes which gnawed at her lungs. Our village was far away in the mountains, and there was neither adequate food or medicine for her, let alone proper nursing care. After she died I was grateful that her suffering had finished.

By chance, I was there when she died. Some months before then, I received a telegram: "Your mother is very sick. Come at once." I went. She recovered. "See," they tried to comfort her, "you'll soon be better again. You were missing your children." I could tell from the way she looked that she had no further desire to live. We – her two sons – had left home long ago. The large house was empty. The rice-fields were neglected, apart from the small corner that met their needs. They wandered about in the house as though they were already in the grave, mother said so herself. No one ever visited them. What could anyone say to a garrulous old man and his wife, who was almost dead?

I received a second cable but didn't go. I don't know why, but for some reason or other I felt that she would still live another six months. So I sent a warm sweater instead. Being illiterate, my mother dictated a letter to my son. "Your grandfather is jealous. Please send him a jumper like the one that was sent to me." Father added his thumb-print to emphasise his desire for a new sweater. I sent it to him.

Then the third telegram came. Some intuition told me that I must go. When I arrived in the village, alone, my father asked regretfully: "Just you?"

No one knew where my brother lived the past few years.

After dinner, my father asked: "You haven't had a fight with your wife, have you?" Then he grumbled and went outside. "It's too expensive to bring her with me," I told him. But he disappeared into the darkness, saying: "Once your mother dies, I won't have long to live. And I haven't even seen my grandchildren yet."

Mother just smiled.

After studying her carefully the following day, I decided that she didn't look as though she would die soon. I almost felt sorry that I had come and wished that I could go back to Java to my job. By chance, it was almost the New Year, and therefore almost Christmas. I knew my mother liked me near her at Christmas. Father didn't care. I don't think that being baptised at the age of forty meant anything to him. He still recited magical spells when anything happened to him or his family. If a tiger attacked his water-buffalo in a field on the high plains, he recited spells in the middle of the night and burnt twigs. He was sure that the greedy tiger would soon die.

My mother was different. She not only refused to believe in superstitions, but she was a devout church member and a faithful member of the congregation in a region where most people were still heathens. She was also very famous as a maker of traditional medicines. Although she did not recite spells over the mixtures, she still spat into them.

When father did go to church, he was given a special seat near the pastor, facing the congregation, because he was a noble and had been before either the mission or the Dutch administration arrived. So he had a right to sit there and he dozed in his chair until the service was over.

The pastor visited our house on the second day of my stay. Because mother could not go to church on Christmas Eve, the congregation would celebrate Christmas in our house. Mother nodded, as though this was her due.

For some reason I felt uneasy, but I said nothing. The Sunday service had already been held at our house several times, it seemed. The idea reminded me of a funeral service. I

remembered the sermons of my childhood. The foolish looks on the face of the congregation. Father asleep. The hoarse, out of tune, hymns and the smell of the sweat on the bodies of those who had not washed themselves. Gossiping in the yard outside the church after the service was over. I remembered it all. It felt different when I was a child. In those days, the church yard was full of the most wonderful things. The leafy candle-nut tree, the orchard of fruit trees – *jambu*, *nangka* and mango. The pastor's many sugar-cane bushes. I was always given the left over candles on Christmas Eve. That was my privilege, and the other children never objected.

When he was ready to return home, the pastor invited me to accompany him. As there was nothing else to do in the lonely mountain village, I accepted. Anyway, I wanted to see the church. I had last seen it when I finished primary school, over twenty years ago.

The road to the church led past unirrigated rice-fields and through the village. The pastor asked me: "Why didn't you come to church when you were here a few months ago? You stayed more than a week, didn't you?"

I avoided the question by asking this and that about local affairs. He asked how things were in Java, in Jakarta, whether there would be a war over Taiwan, and how long I expected the present cabinet to last. I answered his questions in a rather indifferent manner. Finally we reached the church yard. My first impression was one of surprise at how small the church and the pastor's house were. The yard was not as large as it used to be. The candle-nut tree was not as tall, neither was the steeple of the church, with its tin rooster weather vane. Everything was just as it had always been. That was the old wooden church, and it was filthy. We entered the church building which still served as a school as well. There were more benches inside than before. An emergency shed had been erected in one corner of the yard.

The church and the shed held three hundred pupils, who were taught by four teaches. One of the teachers had a

teaching certificate, the pastor told me.

I looked at the walls of the church. They were covered with children's drawings. Far above us, in one corner, was a picture of a water-buffalo defending its herdsman against a tiger. It was my picture.

The pastor's wife called. She had prepared coffee for us. "In a moment!" the pastor replied. His voice echoed against the sloping hills which enclosed the valley. After he locked the church door, his dog – symbol of the endless silence – came licking at my feet.

As we sipped coffee, the pastor respectfully asked me: "Will you please read the gospel on Christmas Eve, sir? I'm sure your mother would like it if you did."

I looked at the torn picture of the head of the crucified Christ hanging on the wall in front of me. "I'd rather not, pastor. It would be better if one of the older people did it."

"The old people will be seating congregation, lighting the candles, leading the hymns, looking after the school-children. Someone will have to lead the choir. We are practising your mother's favourite hymn: 'In the Hands of God'."

I didn't like it but I said nothing. The pastor apparently accepted this as my agreement with his proposal.

"There will be cakes for the children too Sihotang has very kindly made a large donation. Do you still remember him?"

I went home feeling a sense of despair in my heart. I thought of all the people gathered in our house. Where would we put mother? How could she be best provided for? She couldn't sit for long. I wondered if it would be all right if she lay down.

When I arrived home, my mother was squatting on the kitchen floor preparing a hot drink from the tin of condensed milk which I had brought her.

Christmas Eve arrived. Father had dressed in clean clothes early in the day. He sat alone in the middle of the large inner-room, grinding his betel-nut in a silver pestle.

Two girls whom I didn't recognise dressed mother and

placed her on a bamboo frame, then set the frame near a wall, some distance away from my father. The Christmas tree, which had been taken from the forest, stood ready in a corner, waiting for someone to light the candles.

Once mother had been comfortably settled, the two girls left to get themselves ready. The service would begin in about an hour. I went to my room and sat in a chair, thinking. From time to time mother's coughing cut across the hissing of the kerosene lamp.

I was lost in thought, for perhaps half an hour – I couldn't be sure about that. When I was conscious again, I realised that I could no longer hear my mother coughing, or my father grinding his betel-nut. No doubt he was chewing the pulp in his toothless mouth. The lantern was hissing more loudly. I left my room, looked at my father for a moment, then at my mother. She lay on the frame, covered with a cloth. Assuming that she was asleep, I went over to her and looked at her. Her eyes and cheeks were hollow. Then I looked at her chest.

"Like the breast of a chicken," I thought to myself. Suddenly I realised that her chest was not moving. I felt her forehead, then opened an eyelid. She was dead. A strange feeling of gratitude destroyed the grief which gripped my throat. I looked in my father's direction. He did not know. How could I tell him? People would soon start coming for the celebrations. I covered her face with the cloth and a moment later I heard them arriving. The pastor and the old folk: the congregation entered, took their places on the floor, sat crosslegged with their feet drawn in beneath them, first in the corners, until there was no more space there, then reluctantly spreading into the middle of the room.

"Is Mother asleep?" the pastor asked as he passed me the book of gospels.

"Yes," I replied.

"Good. We can wake her up when we reach her favourite hymn."

He began organising the congregation. The old people performed their various duties. Eventually the room was crowded, except for a small area around my father. The school children sat in front of mother, with their backs to her, facing the Christmas tree in one corner of the room.

There were gasps of surprise and delight from the children when the candles were lit. I stood rigid, with the gospels in my hand, feeling awkward, like a new clergyman about to preach his first sermon, near the bamboo frame.

The service began with prayer. Father continued grinding his betel-nut. Then the hymns. Then the reading of the gospel. Was that my voice? The congregation began singing. I lost all sense of time but could hear a voice droning: "*When Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea ...*"

The pastor came bobbing over towards me, telling me to wake my mother. They were about to sing her favourite hymn.

I nodded and he left to prepare the choir. Before they began, he threw me a glance and I nodded again. The choir began to sing "In the Hands of God ..." I couldn't catch the words. I didn't recognise the hymn at all and anyway the children near the door and the bamboo cot were restless and talking with each other. As I stared at my father, I noticed that he had stopped grinding his betel-nut and was staring in amazement at the Christmas tree.

The pastor prayed: "Oh Almighty God, Most Merciful, we commit this woman to Your care. Life and death are in Your hands, may You receive her in heaven according to Your will."

After the singing of "Silent Night" and the final benediction, the ritual was almost complete. The cakes were cut and drinks passed around. The pastor and the old people came and sat near my father. As he passed through the centre of the room, the pastor called out cheerily: "Sleep, Mother. Don't worry about getting up to have some cake. Just stay asleep." I went to my room and put the book of gospels onto the table,

then came out again and watched them all.

"Come and sit near me, sir," one of the old men said. "Let's talk. How are things in Jakarta?"

I excused myself and left the room. "Let them find out for themselves," I told myself. Some time later, I looked back into the room again. No one had thought of disturbing my mother as she slept. Nor did they when they left.

When they had all gone, I told my father that mother had passed away. He stopped grinding his betel-nut for moment and said: "Call your uncle!"

Before I left, I extinguished the candles.

A few days later, after mother had been buried in accordance with both traditional and Christian rituals, my father called me to him. He stood in the centre of the broad yard and gestured to me to follow him to one corner. I did not know what he wanted. When I was close, he asked me: "Do you have some money?"

I was startled because I wasn't exactly sure what he wanted. Finally I asked him: "How much do you need?"

"One or two thousand rupiah will be enough," he replied.

"For what?" I asked, following him to the corner of the yard. He put his hand on my shoulder and said as he gazed at the lake far below us: "I want to be buried here. I want you to make me a fine cement grave. And when I die, I want you to move your mother here too, beside me."

All I could say was: "Why here?"

He took his hand from my shoulder and turned to face the mountain peaks. "I can see everything from here – the mountain plains as well as the lake."

I was silent.

Down below us, the lake sparkled in the bright mid-day sunlight. Father walked away from me. I saw the pastor approaching.

The pastor headed towards me and when he reached me he said: "I hear that you're going tomorrow. May your

journey be blessed.”

Then he said: “Don’t be sad, sir. You can see how much your family and the people loved your mother. No other person in the whole district was as loved and respected as she was. She is now at the side of God.”

“Yes,” I said.

“Yes, I know you still keep the faith, even though educated people don’t much like to come to church these days. I’m sure that you still believe in Christ,” he said, as though he were talking to himself.

“You do believe, don’t you, sir? How could anyone not believe in God? There must be a heaven!” His face was like that of a goat facing the butcher’s block.

“Yes indeed, pastor,” I said. “Of course there is a heaven.” Then he left me.

I walked towards the Christmas tree which had withered and lay withered neglected in the yard.

With a single match I set it alight and the tree burst into flames, as used to happen when I was a child. The ashes spread across the yard then scattered, blown by the wind towards the blue lake far below me.

8th September 2006

Translated by Harry Aveling.

Dewan Juri Pemilihan Sastrawan Indonesia Penerima Hadiah
Sastra Asia Tenggara 2006
Panel for the Selection of the Indonesian Awardee of The
S.E.A. Write Awards 2006

Penanggung Jawab/Official Charge:

Dendy Sugono

Kepala Pusat Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan Nasional Head
of The National Language Center,
Ministry of National Education

Ketua/Chairman:

Sapardi Djoko Damono

Fakultas Ilmu Pengetahuan Budaya, Universitas Indonesia
Faculty of Cultural and Science, University of Indonesia

Sekretaris/Secretary:

Melani Budianta

Fakultas Ilmu Pengetahuan Budaya, Universitas Indonesia
Faculty of Cultural and Science, University of Indonesia

Anggota/Members:

Boen S. Oemarjati

Fakultas Ilmu Pengetahuan Budaya, Universitas Indonesia
Faculty of Cultural and Science, University of Indonesia

Jakob Sumardjo

Sastrawan/Writer

Abdul Rozak Zaidan

Pusat Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan Nasional
National Language Center, Ministry of National Education

