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# Contemporary Indonesian Poetry



edited and translated by Harry Aveling

# Contemporary Indonesian Poetry

Harry Aveling has written, taught, translated and edited in the field of Indonesian and Malaysian studies for many years. He was Dean of the School of Human Communication at Murdoch University between 1977 and 1979, and was the first chairman of the university's Southeast Asian Studies programme. From 1982 to 1984 he was with the Department of Indonesian and Malaysian Studies at the University of Melbourne, and is presently Acting Dean of the Melbourne College of Divinity. Aveling was a Series Editor of UQP's Asian and Pacific Writing Series, which included his translation of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *A Heap of Ashes*. His *The Development of Indonesian Society* is also available through UQP.

# Contemporary Indonesian Poetry

*poems in Bahasa Indonesia and English*

*by*

W. S. Rendra

Ajip Rosidi

Subagio Sastrowardjo

Toeti Heraty

Taufiq Ismail

Goenawan Mohamad

Sapardi Djoko Damono

edited and translated by  
**Harry Aveling**

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Toeti Heraty, Taufiq Ismail, Goenawan Mohamad, Saparti Djoko Damono, 1975

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For Keith

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Contemporary Indonesian Poetry *by Harry Aveling* xv

**W. S. Rendra** 1

Khotbah 2

Rick dari Corona 16

Bersatulah pelacur-pelacur kota Jakarta 26

Pesan pencopet kepada pacarnya 34

Nyanyian duniawi 42

Pemandangan senjakala 44

Nyanyian angsa 46

Kupanggili namamu 66

Kepada M. G. 70

Nyanyian Suto untuk Fatima 74

**Ajip Rosidi** 77

Antara kita 78

Bayangan 80

Tretes malamhari 82

Hanya dalam puisi 84

Terkenang topeng Cirebon 88

Panmunjon 90

Di sini segalanya tak mengenal dimensi waktu 92

Doa 94

**Subagio Sastrowardojo** 97

Lahir sajak 98

Petunjuk sutradara 100

Hari Natal 102

L'éducation sentimentale 104

Contemporary Indonesian Poetry *by Harry Aveling* xv

**W. S. Rendra** 1

Sermon 3

Rick from Corona 17

Prostitutes of Jakarta – Unite! 27

A pick-pocket's advice to his mistress 35

A worldly song 43

Twilight view 45

Swan song 47

I call your name 67

For M. G. 71

Suto's song for Fatima 75

**Ajip Rosidi** 77

Between us 79

Image 81

Tretes at night 83

Only in poetry 85

Memory of a masked dance from Cirebon 89

Panmunjon 91

Here time's dimensions are unknown 93

Prayer 95

**Subagio Sastrowardojo** 97

The birth of a poem 99

The producer's directions 101

Christmas Day 103

L'éducation sentimentale 105



Nawang Wulan	106
Manusia pertama di angkasa luar	108
Daerah perbatasan	112
Pidato di kubur orang	114
New York	116
Di ujung ranjang	118
Kata	120
Di antara gedung pencakar	122

### **Toeti Heraty 125**

Panta rei	126
Pria	128
Pesta Tahun Baru	130
Pretensi	132
Saat-saat gelap	134
Cintaku tiga	136
Kini baru kumengerti	138
Selesai	140
Nelayan tunggal	142
Suatu departemen	144
Cyclus	148
Penundaan	148
Sekali-sekali	152
Cocktail party	156
Cyclus	160

### **Taufiq Ismail 165**

Bukit biru, bukit kelu	166
Kita adalah pemilik syah republik ini	168
Adalah bel kecil di jendela	170
Menunggu itu	172
Formulir ini	176
Suara	178
Bagaimana kalau	180
Beberapa orang dan satu lanskap	182

Nawang Wulan	107
The first man in outer space	109
The border	113
Speech at a graveside	115
New York	117
At the end of the bed	119
The word	121
Among sky-scrappers	123
<b>Toeti Heraty</b>	<b>125</b>
Panta rei	127
Man	129
New Year's celebrations	131
Pretension	133
Dark moments of meeting	135
I have three loves	137
Now I understand	139
Finished	141
Lone fisherman	143
Government department	145
Cyclus	149
Postponement	149
Repetition	153
Cocktail party	157
Cyclus	161
<b>Taufiq Ismail</b>	<b>165</b>
The silent hills	167
The republic is ours	169
A small bell in a window	171
Waiting is	173
Formula	177
The voice	179
What if	181
Some people and a landscape	183

Kembalikan Indonesia padaku	184
Aku ingin menulis puisi, yang	188
<b>Goenawan Mohamad</b>	197
Dingin tak tercatat	198
Dongeng sebelum tidur	200
Nina-bobok	202
Riwayat	204
Senja pun jadi kecil, kota pun jadi putih	206
Z	208
Kwatin musim gugur	210
Ranjang pengantin, Kopenhagen	212
Tentang seorang yang terbunuh di sekitar hari pemilihan umum	214
Di kota itu, kata orang, gerimis telah jadi logam	216
Asmaradana	218

**Sapardi Djoko Damono** 221

Prologue	222
Siapakah engkau	224
Sajak putih	226
Saat sebelum berangkat	228
Dalam sakit	230
Tiba-tiba malam pun risik	232
Gerimis jatuh	234
Sebuah taman sore hari	236
Ziarah	238
Pada suatu hari nanti	242
Dalam doa: II	244
Ketika jari-jari bunga terbuka	246
Sajak perkawinan	248
Gerimis kecil di Jalan Jakarta, Malang	250
Dua sajak di bawah satu kata	252
Kupandang kelam yang merapat ke sisi kita	254
Sonnet X	256
Jarak	258
Variasi pada suatu pagi	260

Give Indonesia back to me 185  
I want to write poetry 189

**Goenawan Mohamed 197**

Cold unregistered 199  
A tale before sleep 201  
Lullaby 203  
Story 205  
Twilight fades the city white 207  
Z 209

Autumn quatrains 211

Bridal bed, Copenhagen 213

A man murdered near the day of the Indonesian general  
elections 215

It is a town, so they say, in which the rain has become lead 217  
Asmaradana 219

**Sapardi Djoko Damono 221**

Prologue 223

Who are you 225

White poem 227

Moment before leaving 229

In sickness 231

Suddenly night rustles 233

The rain falls 235

A park in the afternoon 237

Pilgrimage 239

One day 243

In prayer: II 245

As the petals of the flower open 247

Marriage poem 249

A light drizzle in Jakarta Street, Malang 251

Two poems with the one title 253

I see darkness gathering around us 255

Sonnet X 257

Space 259

Morning variations 261

## Contemporary Indonesian Poetry

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by Harry Aveling

“About 1967 or 1968,” Goenawan Mohamad has written, “there was in Indonesia a sudden sensation of freedom. There were new experiments in prose, poetry and drama; it was as though we were witnessing the beginnings of a new avant-garde movement such as had happened after 1945. Writers came as individuals, bowing to no common artistic credo, clearly aware (and many of them were new writers) of a rediscovery of creative elan.”<sup>1</sup> The Sukarno era of Guided Democracy and a poetry based on “the people”, heroism, social dignity, and the inevitability of history, was over.

This collection of contemporary Indonesian poetry is based on anthologies, magazines and collections of poetry published between 1967 and 1973. Almost all of the poems were written in the last five to ten years.

During the years of Guided Democracy (1957–65), many promising poets had turned to other activities. Ajip Rosidi and Rendra, the most promising young writers, were involved with drama and regional culture, respectively. Others had gone abroad: Subagio Sastrowardjo was studying at Yale, Goenawan Mohamad was at the College of Europe in Belgium. Those who had stayed in Indonesia had been often severely criticized for their association with the right-wing “Cultural Manifesto” of 1963 (banned by Sukarno in May 1964). All lived under the shadow of the writers of the so-called “Generation of 1945”, their achievement and their political commitment to left-wing literary politics.<sup>2</sup>

1967 gave them the chance, for the first time, to assert themselves as the leaders of Indonesian literature. The first to take the public eye was Rendra, newly returned from four years studying acting in New York. During the

1950's, Rendra (born in Solo, central Java, 1935) had been seen mainly as a nature poet, a master of strikingly original imagery and balladic narrative, and a devout Catholic.<sup>3</sup> His poetry of 1960, in which he develops attitudes of boredom, self-disgust and religious doubt, was not widely known.<sup>4</sup> The poetry he wrote in America came, therefore, as a complete shock to those who flocked to his poetry readings. Its language was based on the directness of newspaper Indonesian. The religious poems seemed blasphemous. In one, "Swan Song", a prostitute entered heaven after intercourse with the most beautiful man she had ever known, Christ. (This was St. Theresa with a vengeance.) In another, "Sermon", a congregation turned to jackals and devoured their priest in cannibalistic mass to a steady cha-cha-cha beat. The personal poems revealed a man lost and confused, haunted by a nightmare imagery of jackals, accusing fingers and frozen pools of blood. The attitude was one of profound irony, towards the world, God and Rendra himself, with only a faint bow to the healing sanctity of traditional Javanese society. The political comment, like much of that of 1966, was crude, direct and grotesquely amusing. The sexuality was blatantly aggressive, sometimes overstated, sometimes clearly indicative of failure. Much of Rendra's poetry is characterized by an excessive masculinity.

Rendra struck the public like a bombshell: "the Tom Jones of Indonesian poetry", according to one paper.<sup>5</sup> By comparison, Ajip Rosidi (born Jatiwangi, west Java, 1938) was almost ignored. The most prolific of all Indonesian writers, Ajip Rosidi had four volumes of verse in print by 1960, as well as collections of short-stories, traditional legends and literary criticism.<sup>6</sup> His next collection, *Jeram* ("Rapids", Gunung Agung, Jakarta), did not appear until 1970. Another, *Ular dan Kabut* ("Snake and Fog", Budaja Djaja, Jakarta), appeared in 1973. As he notes in the poem "Only in Poetry":

In poetry  
Everything is clear and definite

It is difficult, in translation, to keep this from appearing too obvious, especially as his technique is "most adept indeed" (7) Ajip, with his quiet faith and assurance, forms his own outgroup in contemporary Indonesian poetry.

Subagio Sastrowardjo is older than Rendra and Rosidi. He was born in Madiun, east Java, in 1924. (He now teaches Indonesian language and literature at Salisbury, South Australia.) He, too, published his first volume of verse in the mid-1950's, *Simphoni* ("Symphony", Yogyakarta, 1957: reprinted Pustaka Jaya, Jakarta 1971). This was an aggressively cynical and intellectual volume, written from the subconscious: the title-poem bore the quotation from Beethoven "I don't play for pigs!". *Daerah Perbatasan* ("Border Region", Budaja Djaja, Jakarta 1970) is a more personal, gentler collection. According to Burton Raffel, "Subagio becomes here an extraordinarily accomplished poet of personal existence", and it is "personal experience and the realities of love which release his imagination, previously blocked by abstractions" which the reader cannot feel (8). The subject matter of this collection ranges widely, from the Indonesian Revolution (1945-49), to New York, "The First Man in Outer Space", and the traditional Javanese ritual of rice ("Nawang Wulan") and the heroic drama ("The Producer's Directions"). In these poems (and "L'Education Sentimentale" from the as yet unpublished collection, *Matahari Sudah Tua*, "The Sun is Old"), Subagio gains strength through focus on the implications arising from a few images. His verse is taut, personal, and sometimes rather melancholy. The earlier cynicism is now controlled and mixed with compassion.

For sheer intellect and irony, Toeti Heraty (born Bandung, 1935) is closest to Subagio's verse. Although author of only a small collection of verse, *Sadjak-sadjak*

("Poems", Dewan Kesenian, Jakarta 1970), she is undoubtedly Indonesia's leading woman poet and her verse has an honesty, range of emotional expression and directness, few other poets can match. The apparent looseness of form allows her emotion to work itself out fully and precisely. In her verse, she seeks an openness of relationships between man and woman in which she can participate as an equal. Many of her poems deal with masks, the hypocritical rituals of erotic love. Her writing is always colloquial, sometimes joyful, but most often sadly and intensely aware.

Taufiq Ismail (born Bukittinggi, Sumatra, 1937) began publishing verse in 1953, but was unrecognized until his committedly anti-Sukarnoist poetry of 1966. This poetry (*Tirani*, "Tyranny", first edition stencilled by the Psychology Students' Union, University of Indonesia, includes "The Republic is Ours"; *Benteng*, "Fortress", same publisher and date) is now of only historical interest. It is simple, meant for public recitation (to the student groups involved at the time), and is concerned with various traditional justifications for a sudden change in leadership: each age has its own characteristics and needs its appropriate ruler, an unjust king has no mandate, history is cyclical – 1966 was a re-enactment of 1945. A selection of these poems can be found in *Tenggara*, volume 1, number 1, 1967 (published by the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur).

The ready success of his committed verse with the public led to a too-easy dismissal of Taufiq's abilities by literary critics, and it is only recently, after the publication of a wide range of his verse, that this ability is receiving full recognition. His shorter poems ("The Silent Hills", *Buku Tamu Musium Perjuangan*, "War Museum Guest Book", Dewan Kesenian, Jakarta 1969; "Waiting Is", "Formula", and "The Voice", in *Puisi-puisi Sepi*, "Poems of Silence", Literia, Jakarta 1970), reveal a consistent awareness of the alternate beauty and harshness of the Javanese country-



side, and of the isolation of man from his fellows and himself. The longer poems (from *Sajak Ladang Jagung*, "Poems from a Cornfield", Budaja Djaja, Jakarta 1973) depend on a combination of humour and subtle, extensive human sympathy.

Goenawan Mohamad (born Pekalongan, Java, 1942) and Sapardi Djoko Damono (born Solo, central Java, 1940) represent a distinct, and highly influential strand in contemporary Indonesian poetry, neo-Romanticism. Goenawan's earliest poems, represented here by "Lullaby" and "Story" (from H. B. Jassin's anthology, *Angkatan '66*, "The Generation of 1966", Gunung Agung, Jakarta 1968) have, as Burton Raffel suggests, a special rhythm and swift-moving, passionate phrasing, but also too many words saying too little. ("Lullaby" finishes with the name of the lullaby, "*Di timur matahari*", a prewar nationalist song correctly but misleadingly translatable as "The east is red".) But in the next group of poems, "Twilight Fades the City White" to "Bridal Bed, Copenhagen" (all from *l'ariksit*, the name of a prince, Literia, Jakarta 1971), he refines his early interest in nature into a gentle melancholy based on non-being and human alienation.

This melancholy is taken over and systematized in Sapardi's fine collection *dukaMu abadi* ("The Eternal Sorrow of God", privately published, Bandung 1969). This is a disciplined, intellectual, yet at the same time, beautifully lyrical collection. The subject matter moves on two parallel levels. There is firstly the poet's own life: his marriage, the death of his father-in-law, his struggle for religious faith, and awareness of seasonal change. And underlying this, is the mythical world of Genesis and of the *Koran*: Adam and Eve, their love for each other and their sin, their expulsion from Paradise, and the murder of Abel by Cain. The volume is united by the continual movement of the imagery from light to darkness: day into night, sunlight into evening rain, colour into whiteness.

The poems in the volume are divided into two chronological sections, each of which moves from myth to myth through the bitterness and pain of everyday reality. "Prologue" to "One Day" date from 1967 (I have added "Who Are You", *Basis*, January 1966, as it makes the sense of some of the other poems more obvious); "In Prayer: II" to "Space" date from 1968. "Morning Variations", written in Hawaii in 1970 (Budaja Djaja, June 1970) suggests a hesitant new direction in his poetry, the development of a further interest in the small, personally significant aspects of nature.

Sapardi's melancholy and imagery owes much to Goenawan's poetry of 1964 to 1968. By 1970, Goenawan had turned away from this direction to experimentation with the prose-poem as a means of dealing with current reality ("A Man Murdered near the Day of the Indonesian General Elections", *Horison*, September 1971; "It is a Town, So They Say . . .", in *Pariksit*) and Javanese mythology ("Asmaradana", in *Pariksit*: "A Tale before Sleep", *Horison*, September 1971).

These seven are only some of the poets working in Indonesia today, although I believe they are the most important. Throughout the provinces there are new and interesting poets working, developing their talents and pushing Indonesian poetry in yet other directions. Abdul Hadi W. M., for example, after beginning in a style very similar to Sapardi's is now moving towards a more complex and varied association of images, including a number from Chinese culture; Sutardji Calzoum Bachri and Darmanto Jt are, quite separately, developing semi-concrete, semi-surrealistic styles, anarchistic and impatient with conventional poetic emotion and morality. The revival of 1967 is, in one sense, very nearly over; in another way it is just beginning. The young poets are still coming.

Melbourne/Penang,  
1971-73.

Harry Aveling

1. "Njanji Sunji jang kedua", *Horison*, February 1969, p. 42. The development of Indonesian poetry is described in Harry Aveling: *A Thematic History of Indonesian Poetry: 1920 to 1974* (Special Report No. 9: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Northern Illinois University 1974) and Burton Raffel: *The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry* (State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y. 1967). See also A. Teeuw: *Modern Indonesian Literature* (M. Nijhoff, The Hague 1967).
2. On Indonesian literary politics in the mid-sixties, see Keith Foulcher: "Manifes Kebudayaan: The Struggle for Intellectual Freedom in Indonesian Poetry", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Vol. 125, No.4, 1969.
3. Rendra's poetry is available in *Rendra: Ballads and Blues* (Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur 1974), translated by Burton Raffel, Harry Aveling and Derwent May. Burton Raffel has also edited and translated *The Complete Prose and Poetry of Chairil Anwar* (State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y. 1970), the work of the leading poet of the "Generation of 1945"; and *An Anthology of Modern Indonesian Poetry* (State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y. 1970).
4. It was published in 1972 as *Sadjak-sadjak Sepatu Tua* ("Poems of Old Shoes", Pustaka Jaya, Jakarta 1972).
5. *Kompas*, 16 August 1971. On Rendra's poetry, see the introductions to *Rendra: Ballads and Blues*; Raffel: *The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry*, pages 169-90; Teeuw: *Modern Indonesian Literature*, pages 232-35; and my *Thematic History of Indonesian Poetry*, pages 57 to 68.
6. *Ketemu Didjalan* ("Met on the Way", Balai Pustaka, Jakarta, 1956, with S. M. Ardan and Sobron Aidit); *Pesta* ("Festival", Pembangunan, Jakarta 1956); *Tjari Muatan* ("Looking for Cargo", Balai Pustaka, Jakarta 1959); and *Surat Tjinta Endaj Rasidin* ("A Loveletter for Endaj Rasidin", Pembangunan, Jakarta 1960). A list of Ajip Rosidi's other works can be found in his *Ichtsar Sedjarah Sastra Indonesia* ("Outline History of Indonesian Literature", Binatjipta, Bandung 1969).
7. Burton Raffel: *Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry*, p. 164.
8. *ibid.*, p. 159.

W. S. Rendra

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Fantastis.

Di satu Minggu siang yang panas digereja yang penuh orangnya seorang padri muda berdiri di mimbar. Wajahnya molek dan suci matanya manis seaperti mata kelinci dan ia mengangkat kedua tangannya yang bersih halus bagai leli lalu berkata:  
„Sekarang kita bubaran.  
Hari ini khotbah tak ada.”

Orang-orang tidak beranjak.  
Mereka tetap duduk rapat berdesak.  
Ada juga banyak yang berdiri.  
Mereka kaku. Tak mau bergerak.  
Mata mereka menatap bertanya-tanya.  
Mulut mereka menganga  
berhenti berdoa  
tapi ingin benar mendengar.  
Kemudian dengan serentak mereka mengesah  
dan berbaring dengan suara aneh dari mulut mereka  
tersebarlah bau keras  
yang perlu dicegah dengan segera.

„ Lihatlah aku masih muda.  
Biarkan aku menjaga sukma.  
Silakan bubar.  
Izinkan aku memuliakan kesucian.  
Aku akan kembali ke biara  
merenungkan keindahan Ilahi.”

Fantastic  
One hot Sunday  
in a church full of people  
a young priest stood at the pulpit.  
His face was beautiful and holy  
his eyes sweet like a rabbit's  
and he lifted up both his hands  
which were lovely like a lily  
and said:  
"Now let us disperse.  
There is no sermon today."

No-one budged.  
They sat tight in their rows.  
There were many standing.  
They were stiff. Refused to move.  
Their eyes stared.  
Their mouths hung open  
they stopped praying  
but they all wanted to hear.  
Then all at once they complained  
and together with the strange voice from their mouths  
came a foul stench  
which had to be quickly stifled.

"You can see I am still young.  
Allow me to care for my own soul.  
Please go away.  
Allow me to praise holiness  
I want to go back to the monastery  
to meditate on the glory of God."

Orang-orang kembali mengesah.  
Tidak beranjak.  
Wajah mereka nampak sengsara.  
Mata mereka bertanya-tanya.  
Mulut mereka menganga  
sangat butuh mendengar.

„Orang-orang ini minta pedoman. Astaga.  
Tuhanku, kenapa di saat ini kau tinggalkan daku.  
Sebagai sekelompok serigala yang malas dan lapar  
mereka mengangakan mulut mereka.  
Udara panas. Dan aku terkencing di celana.  
Bapak. Bapak. Kenapa kau tinggalkan daku.”

Orang-orang tetap tidak beranjak.  
Wajah mereka basah.  
Rambut mereka basah.  
Seluruh tubuh mereka basah.  
Keringat berkucuran di lantai  
kerna udara yang panas  
dan kesengsaraan mereka yang tegang.  
Baunya busuk luar biasa.  
Dan pertanyaan-pertanyaan mereka pun berbau busuk juga.

„Saudara-saudaraku, para anak Bapak di sorga.  
Inilah khotbahku.  
Yalah khotbahku yang pertama.  
Hidup memang berat.  
Gelap dan berat.  
Kesengsaraan banyak jumlahnya.  
Maka dalam hal ini  
kebijaksanaan hidup adalah ra-ra-ra.  
Ra-ra-ra, hum-pa-pa, ra-ra-ra.  
Tengoklah kebijaksanaan kadal  
makhluk Tuhan yang juga dicintaiNya.  
Meniaraplah ke bumi.

Again they complained.  
No-one moved.  
Their faces looked sad.  
Their eyes questioned.  
Their mouths gaped  
wanting very much to hear.

“This people ask for guidance. Lord  
God, why have you left me at this moment?  
Like a flock of hungry lazy jackals  
they hang their mouths.  
It is hot. I piss in my pants.  
Father. Father. Why hast Thou forsaken me?”

Still no-one moved.  
Their faces were wet.  
Their hair was wet.  
Their whole bodies were wet.  
Sweat poured onto the floor  
because it was so hot  
and of the misery they bore.  
The stench was extraordinarily foul  
And their questions too stank foully.

“My brothers, children of the heavenly father.  
This is my sermon.  
My very first sermon.  
Life is very difficult  
Dark and difficult  
There are many torments.  
So in this regard  
the wise way to live is ra-ra-ra  
Ra-ra-ra, hum-pa-pa, ra-ra-ra.  
Look at the wisdom of the lizard  
the creature God loves most  
Go close to the ground



Kerna, lihatlah:  
Sukmamu terjepit di antara batu-batu.  
Hijau.  
Lumutan.  
Sebagai kadal ra-ra-ra.  
Sebagai ketonggeng hum -pa -pa.”

Orang-orang serentak bersuara:  
Ra-ra-ra, Hum-pa-pa.  
Dengan gemuruh bersuara seluruh isi gereja:  
Ra-ra-ra. Hum-pa-pa.

„Kepada kaum lelaki yang suka senapan  
yang memasang panji-panji kebenaran di mata bayonetnya  
aku minta dicamkan  
bahwa lu-lu-lu, la-li-lo-lu.  
Angkatlah hidungmu tinggi-tinggi  
agar tak kau lihat siapa yang kau pijak.  
Kerna begitulah li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.  
Bersihkan darah dari tanganmu  
agar aku tak gemetar  
lalu kita bisa duduk minum teh  
sambil ngomong tentang derita masyarakat  
atau hakikat hidup dan mati.  
Hidup penuh sengsara dan dosa.  
Hidup adalah tipu muslihat.  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.  
Jadi marilah kita tembak matahari  
Kita bidik setepat-tepatnya.”

Dengan gembira orang-orang menyambut bersama:  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.  
Mereka berdiri. Menghentakkan kaki ke lantai.  
Berderap serentak dan seirama.  
Suara mereka bersatu:  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.

For:  
Your souls are squeezed between rocks  
Green  
Mossy  
Like a lizard ra-ra-ra  
like a centiped hum-pa-pa.”

All spoke together:  
Ra-ra-ra. Hum-pa-pa.  
With a roar everyone in the church:  
Ra-ra-ra. Hum-pa-pa.

“To the men who like guns  
who fix the flags of truth to their bayonet-points  
I want you to listen carefully  
to lu-lu-lu, la-li-lo-lu.  
Lift your noses high  
so you don't see those you walk on.  
For in this way li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.  
Cleanse the blood from your hands  
so as not to frighten me  
then we can sit and drink tea  
and talk of the sufferings of society  
and the nature of life and death.  
Life is full of misery and sin.  
Life is a big cheat.  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.  
So let us shoot the sun  
Taking aim as carefully as can be.”

Joyfully the people answered with:  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.  
They stood. They stamped their feet on the floor  
Stamping in one rhythm and together  
Uniting their voices in:  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.

Hanyut dalam persatuan yang kuat  
mereka berteriak bersama  
persis dan seirama:  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.

„Maka kini kita telah hidup kembali.  
Darah terasa mengalir dengan derasny.  
Di kepala. Di leher. Di dada.  
Di perut. Dan di bagian tubuh lainnya.  
Lihatlah, oleh hidup jari-jariku gemetar.  
Darah itu bong-bong-bong  
Darah hidup bang-bing-bong.  
Darah hidup bersama bang-bing-bong-bong.  
Hidup harus beramai-ramai.  
Darah bergaul dengan darah.  
Bong-bong-bong. Bang-bing-bong.”

Orang-orang meledakkan gairah hidupnya.  
Mereka berdiri di atas bangku-bangku gereja.  
Berderap-derap dengan kaki mereka.  
Genta-genta, orgel, daun-daun pintu, kaca-kaca jendela,  
semua dipalu dan dibunyikan.  
Dalam satu irama.  
Diiringi sorak gembira:  
Bong-bong-bong, Bang-bing-bong.

„Cinta harus kita muliakan.  
Cinta di belukar.  
Cinta di toko Arab.  
Cinta di belakang halaman gereja.  
Cinta itu persatuan dan tra-la-la  
Tra-la-la. La-la-la. Tra-la-la.  
Sebagai rumputan  
kita harus berkembang biak  
dalam persatuan dan cinta.  
Marilah kita melumatkan diri.

Carried along in the strength of their unity  
they shouted together  
precisely and rhythmically:  
La-la-la, li-li-li, la-li-lo-lu.

“Now we live again.  
Feel the force of the flow of the blood.  
In your heads. In your necks. In your breasts.  
In your stomachs. Throughout the rest of your bodies.  
See my fingers shaking with life.  
The blood is bong-bong-bong.  
The blood of life is bang-bing-bong.  
The blood of the common life is bang-bing-bong-bong.  
Life must be lived in a noisy group.  
Blood must mix with blood.  
Bong-bong-bong. Bang-bing-bong.”

The people exploded with the passion of their lives.  
They stood on the pews.  
Banged with their feet.  
Bells, gongs, door-pailings, window panes  
If it made a noise they pounded on it.  
With the one rhythm  
In accompaniment to their joyous shouts of:  
Bong-bong-bong. Bang-bing-bong.

“We must exalt love.  
Love in the long grass.  
Love in the shops of jews.  
Love in the backyard of the church.  
Love is unity and tra-la-la.  
Tra-la-la. La-la-la. Tra-la-la.  
Like the grass  
we must flourish  
in unity and love.  
Let us pulverize ourselves.

Marilah kita bernaung di bawah rumputan.  
Sebagaimana pedoman kita:  
Tra-la-la. La-la-la. Tra-la-la.”

Seluruh isi gereja gemuruh.  
Mereka mulai menari. Mengikuti satu irama.  
Mereka saling menggosok-gosokkan tubuh mereka.  
Lelaki dengan wanita. Lelaki dengan lelaki.  
Wanita dengan wanita. Saling menggosok-gosokkan  
tubuhnya.

Dan ada juga yang menggosok-gosokkan tubuhnya ke tembok  
gereja.

Dan dengan suara menggigil yang ganjil  
mereka melengking dengan serempak:  
Tra-la-la. La-la-la. Tra-la-la.

„Melewati Nabi Musa yang keramat  
Tuhan telah berkata:  
Jangan engkau mencuri.  
Pegawai kecil jangan mencuri kertas karbon.  
Babu-babu jangan mencuri tulang-tulang ayam goreng.  
Para pembesar jangan mencuri bensin.  
Dan gadis jangan mencuri perawannya sendiri.  
Tentu, bahwa mencuri dan mencuri ada bedanya.  
Artinya: Ca-ca-ca, ca-ca-ca.  
Semua barang dari Tuhan.  
Harus dibagi bersama.  
Semua milik semua.  
Semua untuk semua.  
Kita harus bersatu. Kita untuk kita.  
Ca-ca-ca, ca-ca-ca.  
Inilah pedomannya.”

Let us shelter beneath the grass.  
Let us love beneath the grass.  
Taking as our guide:  
Tra-la-la. La-la-la. Tra-la-la.”

The whole congregation roared.  
They began to dance. Following the one rhythm  
They rubbed their bodies against each other  
Men against women. Men against men.  
Women with women. Everyone rubbed.  
And some rubbed their bodies against the walls of the  
church.

And shouted in a queer mad voice  
shrilly and together:  
Tra-la-la. La-la-la. Tra-la-la.

“Through the holy prophet Moses  
God has said:  
Thou must not steal.  
Junior civil servants stop stealing carbon.  
Serving-girls stop stealing fried chicken bones.  
Leaders stop stealing petrol.  
And girls, stop stealing your own virtue.  
Of course, there is stealing and stealing.  
The difference is: cha-cha-cha, cha-cha-cha.  
All things come from God  
which means  
everything belongs to everyone.  
Everything is for everyone.  
We must be one. Us for us.  
Cha-cha-cha, cha-cha-cha.  
This is the guiding principle.”

Sebagai binatang orang-orang bersorak:

Grrr-grrr-hura. Hura.

Ca-ca-ca. Ca-ca-ca.

Mereka copoti daun-daun jendela.

Mereka ambil semua isi gereja.

Kandelabra-kandelabra, Tirai-tirai. Permadani-permadani.

Barang-barang perak. Dan patung-patung berhiaskan  
permata.

Ca-ca-ca, begitu janji mereka.

Ca-ca-ca, berulang-ulang diserukan.

Seluruh gereja rontok.

Ca-ca-ca.

Binatang-binatang yang basah berkeringat dan deras  
napasnya

berlarian kian kemari.

Ca-ca-ca. Ca-ca-ca.

Lalu tiba-tiba-tiba terdengar lengking jerit perempuan tua

„Aku lapar. Lapaaaar. Lapaaaar.”

Tiba-tiba semua juga merasa lapar.

Mata mereka menyala.

Dan mereka tetap bersuara ca-ca-ca.

„Sebab sudah mulai lapar

marilah kita bubar.

Ayo, bubar. Semua berhenti.”

Ca-ca-ca, kata mereka

dan mata mereka menyala.

„Kita bubar.

Upacara dan khotbah telah selesai.”

Ca-ca-ca. kata mereka.

Mereka tidak berhenti.

Mereka mendesak maju.

Gereja rusak. Dan mata mereka menyala.

They roared like animals:  
Grrr-grrr-grrr. Hura.  
Cha-cha-cha, cha-cha-cha.  
They stole the window panes.  
They took everything in the church.  
The candelabra. The curtains. The carpets.  
The silverware. And the statues covered with jewels.  
Cha-cha-cha, they sang:  
Cha-cha-cha over and over again  
They smashed the whole church  
Cha-cha-cha  
Like wet panting animals  
running to-and-fro.  
Cha-cha-cha, cha-cha-cha.  
Then suddenly the shrill voice of an old woman was heard:  
“I am hungry. Hungrry. Hu-u-unggrrrryyy.”  
And suddenly everyone felt hungry.  
Their eyes burned.  
And they kept shouting cha-cha-cha.

“Because we are hungry  
let us disperse.  
Go home. Everyone stop.”

Cha-cha-cha, they said  
and their eyes burned.

“Go home.  
The mass and the sermon are over.”

Cha-cha-cha, they said.  
They didn't stop.  
They pressed forward.  
The church was smashed. And their eyes flashed.



„Astaga. Ingatlah penderitaan Kristus.  
Kita semua putra-putranya yang mulia.  
Lapar harus diatasi dengan kebijaksanaan.”

Ca-ca-ca.

Mereka maju menggasak mimbar.

Ca-ca-ca.

Mereka seret padri itu dari mimbar.

Ca-ca-ca.

Mereka robek-robek jubahnya.

Ca-ca-ca.

Seorang perempuan gemuk mencium mulutnya yang bagus.

Seorang perempuan tua menjilati dadanya yang bersih.

Dan gadis-gadis menarik kedua kakinya.

Ca-ca-ca.

Begitulah perempuan-perempuan itu memperkosanya  
beramai-ramai.

Ca-ca-ca.

Lalu tubuhnya dicincang.

Semua orang makan dagingnya. Ca-ca-ca.

Dengan persatuan yang kuat mereka berpesta.

Mereka minum darahnya.

Mereka hisap sungsum tulangnya.

Sempurna habis ia dimakan.

Tak ada lagi yang sisa.

Fantastis.

“Lord. Remember the sufferings of Christ.  
We are all his honoured sons.  
Hunger must be overcome by wisdom.”

Cha-cha-cha.  
They advanced and beat against the pulpit.  
Cha-cha-cha.  
They dragged the priest from the pulpit.  
Cha-cha-cha.  
They tore his robes.  
Cha-cha-cha.  
A fat woman kissed his fine mouth.  
An old woman licked his pure breast.  
And girls pulled at both his legs.  
Cha-cha-cha.  
And thus they raped him in a noisy throng.

Cha-cha-cha.  
Then they chopped his body to bits.  
Everyone ate his flesh. Cha-cha-cha.  
They feasted in the strength of their unity.  
They drank his blood.  
They sucked the marrow from his bones.  
Until they had eaten everything  
and there was nothing left.  
Fantastic.

(Di Queens Plaza  
di stasion trem bawah tanah  
ada tulisan di satu temboknya:  
„Rick dari Corona telah di sini.  
Dimana engkau, Betsy?“)

Ya.  
Rick dari Corona telah di sini.  
Dimana engkau, Betsy?

– Akulah Betsy.  
Ini aku di sini.  
Betsy Wong dari Jamaica.  
Kakek buyutku dari Hongkong.  
Suamiku penjaga elevator  
Pedro Gonzales dari Puertorico  
suka mabuk dan suka berdusta.  
Kalau ingin bertemu, talipon saja aku.  
Pagi hari aku bekerja di pabrik roti  
Selasa dan Kamis sore  
aku miliknya Mickey Ragolsky  
si kakek Polandia  
yang membayar sewa kamarku.  
Cobalah telpon hari Rabu.  
Jangan kuatirkan suamiku.  
Ia akan pura-pura tak tahu.  
O, ya, sebelum lupa:  
dua-puluh dolar ongkosnya.

Betsyku bersih dan putih sekali  
lunak dan halus bagaikan karet busa.  
Rambutnya mewah tergerai

(In Queens Plaza  
in the subway  
is written on the wall:  
“Rick from Corona was here  
Where were you Betsy?”)

Yep.  
Rick from Corona was here  
Where were you Betsy?

– I’m Betsy.  
Here I am.  
Betsy Wong from Jamaica.  
My great-grandfather came from Hong Kong  
My husband drives an elevator  
Pedro Gonzales from Puerto Rico.  
Likes to get drunk and tell me lies.  
If you want to meet me just telephone.  
In the mornings I work in a bakery.  
Tuesdays and Thursday afternoons  
I belong to Mickey Ragolsky  
my Polish grandfather  
who pays for my room.  
Ring me on Wednesdays  
Don’t worry about my husband  
He’ll pretend not to notice  
Oh, before I forget:  
it’ll cost twenty bucks.

My Betsy is white and pure  
soft and smooth like sponge rubber  
Her long red hair

bagai berkas benang-benang rayon warna emas.  
Dan kakinya sempurna.  
Singsat dan licin  
bagaikan ikan salmon.

(Rick dari Corona  
di perut kota New York  
memandang kanan kiri  
sambil minum jeruk soda)

Betsy.  
Dimana engkau, Betsy?

— Ini, Betsy Hudson di sini  
Aku merindukan alam hijau  
tapi benci agraria.  
Aku percaya pada dongeng aneka ragam.  
Aku percaya pada benua Atlantis.  
Dan juga percaya bahawa hidup di bulan  
lebih baik dari hidup di bumi.  
Pada politik aku tak percaya  
Namaku Betsy.  
Memang.  
Tapi kita tak mungkin ketemu.  
Siang hari aku kerja jadi akuntan.  
Malam hari aku suka tulis buku harian.  
Untuk merias diri  
memelihara rambut dan kuku  
telah pula memakan waktu.  
Namaku Betsy.  
Cantik.  
Aku suka telanjang di depan kaca.  
Aku benci lelaki.

is like gathered threads of golden rayon.  
And her feet are beautiful  
Light and fast  
like the salmon.

(Rick from Corona  
in the belly of New York  
looking right and left  
and drinking lemon soda)

Betsy.  
Where are you Betsy?

– This is Betsy Hudson here.  
I love nature  
but hate agriculture.  
I believe in fairytales of all sorts  
I believe in Atlantis  
And believe that life on the moon  
might be better than life here on earth,  
I do not believe in politics.  
My name is Betsy.  
Sure.  
But we can never meet.  
I work days as a book-keeper  
At night I write my diary  
Beauty care  
hair and nails  
takes time too.  
My name is Betsy.  
I'm beautiful  
I like to strip in front of the mirror  
I hate men

(Dengan mobil sport dari Inggris  
Rick dari Corona  
mengitari kota New York  
berkaca mata hitam sekali.  
Melanggar aturan lalu lintas  
ia disetop polisi  
sambil masih mimpi siang hari).

Betsy gemerlapan bagai lampu-lampu Broadway.  
Betsy terbang dengan indah.  
Bau minyak wanginya menidurkan New York  
Dan selalu sesudah itu  
aku diselimutnya  
dengan selimut katun  
yang ditenunnya sendiri  
Betsy, dimana engkau, Betsy.

— Di sini, bodoh!  
Kau selalu tak mendengarkan aku, Ricky!  
Kau selalu menciptakan kekusutan  
Sepatu tak pernah kau letakkan pada raknya.  
Selalu kau pakai dasi yang kaca warnanya.  
Berapa kali pula kau kuperingatkan  
kalau tidur jangan mendengkur.  
Itu barbar.  
Dan, Ricky!  
Kau harus belajar makan sup yang lebih sopan!

(New York menganggang.  
Keras dan angkuh.  
Semen dan baja.  
Dingin dan teguh,  
Adapun di tengah-tengah cahaya lampu gemerlapan  
terdengar musik gelisah  
yang tentu saja  
tak berarti apa-apa).

(In his English sports car  
Rick from Corona  
drives around New York  
wrapped in black sun-glasses  
For breaking a traffic law  
he is stopped by the police  
still daydreaming)

Betsy shines like the lights of Broadway  
And, Ricky!  
Betsy flies beautifully  
Her perfume drugs New York  
And always after  
she wraps me  
in a cotton blanket  
she spun herself  
Betsy. Where are you?

– Here I am stupid!  
You never listen to me Ricky!  
You're always making a mess.  
You never put your shoes back on the rack  
You're always wearing those loud ties.  
How many times do I have to tell you  
Not to snore when you sleep  
It's barbaric  
And learn to eat your soup properly!

(New York stands legs apart  
Hard and arrogant  
Cement and steel  
In the middle of the bright lights  
you can hear restless music  
which for sure  
means nothing.)



Rick dari Corona telah di sini.

Ya. Ya.

Betsy, engkau dimana?

– Ricky, sayang, aku di sini

Ya. Ya.

+ Engkau hitam.

Engkau bukan Betsy.

Engkau macan negro dari Harlem.

– Pegang pinggulku.

Rasakan betapa lunak dan penuhnya.

Namaku Betsy. Ya. Ya.

+ Gadisku selalu menjawab dengan sabar

segala pertanyaan ku yang bodoh dan sangsi.

– Aku Betsy kerna aku negro.

Kerna aku negro

aku adalah tanggungjawabmu.

Ya, namaku Betsy.

Telah kuputuskan namaku Betsy.

+ Apyun. Apyun.

Aku hasratkan pengalaman mistis.

Aku ingin melukis tubuhmu telanjang

sambil kuhisap mariyuana.

– Ricky, sayang, engkau akan kuninabobokan.

Dan bagai bayi akan kau puja tetekku.

+ Dari Queens. Dari Brooklyn. Dan dari Manhattan ---

– Ricky, sayang, garudaku sayang.

Rick from Corona was here.  
Yeh. Yeh.  
Betsy where are you?

– Ricky, honey, here I am.  
Yeh. Yeh.

+ You're black  
You're not Betsy  
You're a negress from Harlem.

– Touch my arse.  
Feel how soft and round it is.  
My name's Betsy. Yeh. Yeh.

+ My girl always patiently answered  
all my stupid doubting questions.

– I'm Betsy because I'm black.  
Because I'm black  
I'm your responsibility.  
I'm Betsy.  
I've just decided so.

+ Opium. Opium.  
I want mystical experience  
I want to paint your naked body  
as I smoke marijuana.

– Ricky, honey, I'll sing you a lullaby  
And like a baby you can adore my tits.

+ From Queens. From Brooklyn. Manhattan too.

– Ricky, honey, my thunderbird.

+ Sebab irama combo, sebab buaian saxophone ----  
- Pejamkan matamu.  
Dan bagaikan banjo  
mainkanlah aku.

(Di Harlem, Manhattan, New York  
dimana orang tinggal penuh sesak  
dimana udara bau air kencing dan sampah  
di musim panas dengan udara sembilan puluh lima drajat  
para negro menari watusi di tepi jalan  
dan pada drajat keseratus dua  
terjadi perkelahian antara mereka).

Hallo. Hallo.  
Di sini Rick dari Corona.  
Dan Betsy juga di sini.----  
Hallo, Dokter.  
Kami harus disuntik sekarang juga.  
Kami kena raja singa.

- + Because of the combo rhythm, because of the saxophone swing.
- Shut your eyes and play me  
Like a banjo.

(In Harlem, Manhattan, New York  
where people live crowded together  
where the air smells of rubbish and piss  
in summer when its ninety-five degrees  
the negroes watusi at the edge of the street  
when its a hundred and two  
they fight)

Hello. Hello.  
This is Rick from Corona.  
And Betsy too.  
Hello, doctor.  
We've got to get some shots  
We've got the pox.

Pelacur-pelacur kota Jakarta  
dari kelas tinggi dan kelas rendah  
telah diganyang  
telah diharu-biru.  
Mereka kecut  
keder  
terhina dan tersipu-sipu.

Sesalkan mana yang mesti kau sesalkan.  
Tapi jangan kau klewat putus asa.  
Dan kau relakan dirimu dibikin korban

Wahai, pelacur-pelacur kota Jakarta.  
Sekarang bangkitlah.  
Sanggul kembali rambutmu.  
Kerna setelah menyesal  
datanglah kini giliranmu  
bukan untuk membela diri melulu  
tapi untuk lancarkan serangan.  
Kerna:  
Sesalkan mana yang mesti kau sesalkan  
tapi jangan kau rela dibikin korban.

Sarinah.  
Katakan kepada mereka  
bagaimana kau dipanggil ke kantor mentri  
bagaimana ia bicara panjanglebar kepadamu  
tentang perjuangan nusa bangsa  
dan tiba-tiba tanpa ujung pangkal  
ia sebut kau inspirasi revolusi  
sambil ia buka kutangmu.

The prostitutes of Jakarta  
the greatest and the least  
have been crushed  
hunted  
They are frightened  
lost  
offended and embarrassed

Regret as you may  
But don't despair  
Or allow yourselves to be sacrificed.

Prostitutes of Jakarta  
Arise now  
Comb your hair  
Having sorrowed  
it is now your turn  
– not just to defend yourselves –  
but to attack  
So  
Regret as you may  
but do not allow yourselves to be sacrificed.

Sarinah!  
Tell them  
how you were called to the ministerial suite  
and how he spoke long and deeply to you  
about the national struggle  
then suddenly – without even finishing what he was saying  
calling you the inspiration of the revolution  
undid your bra.

Dan kau, Dasima.  
Kabarkan kepada rakyat  
bagaimana para pemimpin revolusi  
secara bergiliran memelukmu  
bicara tentang kemakmuran rakyat dan api revolusi  
sambil celananya basah  
dan tubuhnya lemes  
terkapai disampingmu.  
Ototnya keburu tak berdaya.

Politisi dan pegawai tinggi  
adalah caluk yang rapi.  
Konggres-konggres dan konperensi  
tak pernah berjalan tanpa kalian.  
Kalian tak pernah bisa bilang „tidak”  
lantaran kelaparan yang menakutkan  
kemiskinan yang mengekang  
dan telah lama sia-sia cari kerja.  
Ijazah sekolah tanpa guna.  
Para kepala jawatan  
akan membuka kesempatan  
kalau kau membuka paha.  
Sedang di luar pemerintahan  
perusahaan-perusahaan macet  
lapangan kerja tak ada. ---  
Revolusi para pemimpin  
adalah revolusi dewa-dewa.  
Mereka berjuang untuk surga  
dan tidak untuk bumi.  
Revolusi dewa-dewa  
tak pernah menghasilkan  
lebih banyak lapangan kerja  
bagi rakyatnya.  
Kalian adalah sebahagian kaum penganggur  
yang mereka ciptakan.

And you, Dasima  
Tell the people  
how all the leaders of the revolution  
embraced you in turn  
speaking of the prosperity of the masses and the flame of  
revolution  
while their trousers were wet  
and their bodies  
sprawled beside you  
Their bolts too rapidly shot.

The politicians and senior civil-servants  
are a tight bunch of rogues  
Their congresses and conferences  
wouldn't go without you  
You who must never say no  
because of the terror of hunger  
and the yoke of poverty  
and your long futile search for work  
School diplomas were useless  
The section heads  
could only open the door of opportunity  
if you would open your legs

And outside government  
were only run down businesses  
with no vacancies –

The leader's revolution  
was a revolution of gods  
They fought for heaven  
and not for this earth  
A revolution by gods  
has never produced  
more jobs  
for the ordinary people –  
You are a part of the proletariat  
they have created



Namun  
sesalkan mana yang mesti kau sesalkan  
tapi jangan kau klewat putus asa  
dan kau rela dibikin korban.

Pelacur-pelacur kota Jakarta.  
Berhentilah tersipu-sipu.  
Ketika kubaca di koran  
bagaimana badut-badut mengganyang kalian  
menuduh kalian sumber bencana negara  
aku jadi murka.  
Kalian adalah temanku.  
Ini tak bisa dibiarkan.  
Astaga.  
Mulut-mulut badut.  
Mulut-mulut yang latah.  
Bahkan sex mereka perpolitikkan.

Saudara-saudariku.  
Membubarkan kalian  
tidak semudah membubarkan partai politik.  
Mereka harus beri kalian kerja.  
Mereka harus pulihkan darjat kalian.  
Mereka harus ikut memikul kesalahan.

Saudari-saudariku. Bersatulah.  
Ambillah galah.  
Kibarkan kutang-kutangmu di ujungnya.  
Araklah keliling kota  
sebagai panji-panji yang telah mereka nodai.  
Kinilah giliranmu menuntut.  
Katakanlah kepada mereka:  
Menganjurkan mengganyang pelacuran  
tanpa menganjurkan  
mengawini para bekas pelacur  
adalah among kosong.

Still  
Regret as you may  
But don't despair  
or allow yourselves to be sacrificed.

Prostitutes of Jakarta  
Stop being ashamed  
When I read in the papers  
how those clowns persecute you  
accuse you of being the source of all the nation's disasters  
I am enraged.  
You are my friends  
I can't have this  
God  
What clownmouths  
What foulmouths  
They have even politicized sex.

My sisters  
It is harder to put you down  
than a political party  
They must give you work  
They must return your standing  
They too must bear the weight of their mistakes.

My sisters. Unite.  
Take up sticks  
Wave your bras on the ends of them  
Carry them around the town in procession  
waving them like flags they have disgraced.  
Now it is your turn to demand  
Tell them:  
That recommending the persecution of prostitutes  
without also recommending  
marrying them  
is nonsense.

Pelacur-pelacur kota Jakarta.  
Saudari-saudariku.  
Jangan melulu keder pada lelaki.  
Dengan mudah  
kalian bisa telanjangi kaum palsu.  
Naikkan taripmu dua kali  
dan mereka akan klabakan.  
Mogoklah satu bulan  
dan mereka akan puyeng  
lalu mereka akan berjina  
dengan isteri saudaranya.

Prostitutes of Jakarta

My sisters

Do not tremble before men

When quite easily

you can strip the fakes

Double your prices

let them flounder

Strike for a month

soon they will be committing adultery

with their brothers' wives.

Sitti,  
Kini aku makin ngerti keadaanmu  
Takkan lagi aku membujukmu  
untuk nikah padaku  
dan lari dari lelaki yang miaramu.

(Lelawa terbang berkejaran  
tandanya hari jadi sore  
Aku bernyanyi di kamar mandi  
tubuhku yang elok bersih kucuci.  
O, abang, kekasihku  
ku tunggu kau di tikungan  
berbaju renda  
berkain baru).

Nasibmu sudah lumayan.  
Dari babu jadi selir kepala jawatan.  
Nikah padaku merusak kebruntungan.  
Masa depanku terang repot.  
Sebagai copet nasibku untung-untungan.  
Ini bukan ngesah.  
Tapi aku memang bukan bapak yang baik  
untuk bayi yang lagi kau kandung.

(Lelawa terbang berkejaran  
tandanya hari jadi sore.  
mentari nggloyor muntah di laut  
mabuk napas orang Jakarta.  
O, angin.  
O, abang.  
Sarapku sudah gementar  
menanti lidahmu  
njilati tubuhku).

Sitti,  
Now that I understand your position a little better  
I shall deceive you no longer  
with talk of marrying you  
and leaving your man.

(The bats fly chasing each other  
a sign afternoon is drawing on  
I sing in the bathroom  
as I wash my elegant body  
Oh, my sweetheart, my lover  
I shall wait for you on the corner  
wearing my lace-blouse  
and new skirt ).

Your fate is a reasonable one  
From servant to mistress of an office-head  
What more could you want?  
Marrying me would only spoil your chances  
the days to come will obviously be difficult enough  
as a pickpocket my fate is chancy  
Which is not exactly news  
But I am not the right sort of father  
for the baby you bear in your womb.

(The bats fly chasing each other  
a sign afternoon is drawing on  
The sun vomits painfully into the sea  
stifling the people of Djakarta  
Oh, the wind  
Oh, my lover  
My nerves are atremble  
waiting your tongue's  
licking of my body).

Cintamu padaku tak pernah kusangsikan  
Tapi cinta nombor dua.  
Nombor satu carilah keselamatan.  
Hati kita mesti ikhlas  
berjuang untuk masa depan anakmu.  
Janganlah tangguh-tangguh menipu lelakimu.  
Keraslah hartanya.  
Supaya hidupmu nanti sentosa.  
Sebagai kepala jawatan lelakimu normal  
suka disogok dan suka korupsi.  
Bila ia ganti kau tipu  
itu sudah jamaknya.  
Maling menipu maling itu biasa.  
Lagi pula  
di masyarakat maling kehormatan cuma gincu.  
Yang utama kelicinan.  
Nombor dua keberanian.  
Nombor tiga keulitan.  
Nombor empat ketegasan, biarpun dalam berdusta.  
Inilah ilmu Hidup masyarakat maling.  
Jadi janganlah ragu-ragu.  
Rakyat kecil tak bisa ngalah melulu.

(Lelawa terbang berkejaran  
tandanya hari jadi sore  
Hari ini kamu mesti kulewatkan  
kerana lelakiku telah tiba.  
Malam ini  
badut yang tolol bakal main akrobat  
di dalam ranjangku).

Usahakan selalu menanjak kedudukanmu.  
Usahakan kenal satu menteri  
dan usahakan jadi selirnya.  
Sambil jadi selir mentri  
tetaplah jadi selir lelaki yang lama.  
Kalau ia menolak kau rangkap

Now I have never doubted your love for me  
But love is only of secondary importance  
Looking after yourself comes first  
Our hearts must be prepared  
to struggle for your child's future  
Start cheating your man right away  
Siphon off what he owns  
To make your own life easier  
Your man is a normal sort of senior civil-servant  
He enjoys being bribed and corrupting others  
Cheat him in exchange  
That's how it's done  
Thieves cheat thieves, that's usual  
Besides  
Among thieves honour is like lipstick  
Remember cunning above all  
Secondly courage  
and third perseverance  
Fourth resoluteness, even in telling lies  
This is how thieves live  
Don't worry then  
The little people can't stay beaten for ever.

(The bats fly chasing each other  
a sign afternoon is drawing on  
I must pass you by today  
For he has suddenly come  
Tonight  
the foolish clown will play the acrobat  
in my bed)

Always strive to improve your position  
Strive to meet a minister  
and to be his mistress  
even though as the mistress of a minister  
you still retain your former lover  
If he rejects your liaisons



sebagaimana ia telah merangkapmu dengan isterinya  
itu berarti ia tak tahu diri.

Lalu depak saja dia.

Jangan kecil hati lantaran kurang pendidikan  
asal kau bernafsu dan susumu tetap baik bentuknya.

Ini selalu menarik seorang menteri.

Ngomongmu ngawur tak jadi apa  
asal bersemangat, tegas dan penuh keyakinan.

Kerna begitulah cermin seorang menteri.

(Lelawa terbang berkejaran  
tandanya hari jadi sore.

Kenanganku melayang ke saat itu  
di tengah asyik nonton pawai

kau meremas pantatku  
demikianlah kita lalu berkenalan  
yalah setelah kutendang kakimu.

Dan sekarang setiap sore  
bagaikan pisang yang ranum  
aku rindu tanganmu  
untuk mengupasku).

Akhirnya aku berharap untuk anakmu nanti.

Siang malam jagalah ia.

Kemungkinan besar ia lelaki.

Ajarlah berkelahi

dan jangan boleh ragu-ragu memukul dari belakang.

Jangan boleh menilai orang dari wataknya.

Sebab hanya ada dua nilai: kawan atau lawan.

Kawan bisa baik sementara.

Sedang lawan selamanya jahat nilainya.

Ia harus diganyang sampai sirna.

Inilah hakikat ilmu selamat.

Ajarlah anakmu mencapai kedudukan tinggi.

Jangan boleh ia nanti jadi propesor atau guru.

Itu celaka, wangnya tak ada.

As he keeps liaisons with you and his wife  
It means he doesn't understand himself  
Embrace him  
Dont let your lack of education scare you  
as long as you are vigorous and your breasts firm  
This always attracts them  
your idle chatter will be of no account  
as long as you are spirited, assured and quite confident  
The very model of a minister in fact.

(The bats fly chasing each other  
a sign afternoon is drawing on  
My thoughts fly back to that moment  
when, busy watching the parade  
you pinched my behind  
– that's how we met –  
at least, after I kicked your leg  
And now, each afternoon  
like an over-ripe banana  
I wait for your hand  
to unfurl me)

Finally, what I hope for your child  
– Guard him day and night –  
Its very likely he'll be a boy  
Teach him to fight  
to have no qualms about hitting from behind  
Don't let him judge a man by his character  
There's only two possibilities, friend or foe,  
Friends may be useful for a while  
An enemy is evil always  
And must be hit until he's crushed  
This is the essence of the art of self-survival  
Teach him to seek high position  
God forbid he be a teacher or a professor  
That's a miserable thing, no money

Kalau bisa ia nanti jadi polisi atau tentera  
supaya tak usah beli beras  
kerna dapat dari negara.  
Dan dengan pakaian seragam  
dinas atau tak dinas  
haknya selalu utama.  
Bila ia nanti fasih merayu seperti kamu  
dan wataknya licik seperti saya – nah!  
Ini kombinasi sempurna.  
Artinya ia berbakat masuk politik.  
Siapa tahu ia bakal jadi anggota parlemen.  
Atau bahkan jadi menteri.  
Paling tidak hidupnya bakal sukses di Jakarta.

(Lelawa terbang berkejaran  
tandanya hari jadi sore.  
Opelet-opelet memasang lampu.  
Perempuan-perempuan memasang gincu.  
Dan, abang, pesankan padaku  
dimana kita bakal ketemu.)

If he can, let him be a policeman or a soldier  
So that he doesn't have to buy rice  
But gets it from the state  
with a nice uniform  
Legally or not  
his rights must always come first  
When he wheedles as easily as you do  
and his face is as smooth as mine – well  
This is the perfect combination  
meaning he has a talent for politics  
Who knows maybe a member of parliament  
or even a minister  
That is the very least for success in Djakarta.

(The bats fly chasing each other  
a sign afternoon is coming on  
Buses light their lamps  
Women put on lipstick  
Tell me my darling  
where we shall meet next time)

Ketika bulan tidur di kasur tua  
gadis itu kucumbu di kebun mangga.  
Hatinya liar dan berahi  
lapar dahaga ia injak dengan kakinya.  
Di dalam kemelaratan kami berjamahan.  
Di dalam remang-remang dan bayang-bayang  
menderu gairah pemberontakan kami.  
Dan gelaknya yang angkuh  
membuat hatiku gembira.

Di dalam bayangan pohon-pohonan  
tubuhnya bercahaya  
bagaikan kijang kaca.  
Susunya belum selesai tumbuh  
bagai buah setengah matang.  
Bau tubuhnya murni  
bagaikan bau rumputan.  
Kudekap ia  
bagai kudekap hidup dan matiku.  
Dan nafasnya yang cepat  
ia bisikkan ke telingaku.  
Betapa ia kagum  
pada bianglala  
yang muncul dari mata terpejam.

Maka para leluhur yang purba  
muncul dari pusat kegelapan  
datang mendekat  
dengan pakaian compang-camping  
dan mereka berjongkok  
menonton kami.

As the moon sleeps with a rich old lady  
I caress a maiden in the mango grove.  
Her heart is wild and fiery  
trampling hunger and thirst underfoot.  
In our misery we reach out  
In the dark and the shadows  
roars the passion of our rebellion.  
And her fierce laughter  
makes my heart glad.

In the shadows of the trees  
her body shines  
like a golden deer.  
Her unfinished breasts  
are like half ripe fruit.  
The sweet smell of her body  
is like the smell of grass.  
I embrace her  
as I embrace life and death  
And her fast breathing  
whispers in my ears.  
How amazed she is  
at the rainbow  
beneath her hooded lids.

Our ancient ancestors  
appear from the centre of the dark  
coming nearer  
in their ragged clothing  
and squat  
watching us.

Senja yang basah meredakan hutan yang terbakar.  
Kelelawar-kelelawar raksasa datang dari langit kelabu tua.  
Bau mesiu di udara. Bau mayat. Bau kotoran kuda.  
Sekelompok anjing liar  
memakan beratus ribu tubuh manusia  
yang mati dan yang setengah mati.  
Dan di antara kayu-kayu hutan yang hangus  
genangan darah menjadi satu danau.  
Luas dan tenang. Agak jingga merahnya.  
Dua puluh malaikat turun dari sorga  
mensucikan yang sedang sekarat  
tapi di bumi mereka disergap kelelawar-kelelawar raksasa  
yang lalu memperkosa mereka.  
Angin yang sejuk bertiup sepoi-sepoi basa  
menggerakkan rambut mayat-mayat  
membuat lingkaran-lingkaran di permukaan danau darah  
dan menggairahkan shahwat para malaikat dan kelelawar.  
Ya, saudara-saudaraku,  
aku tahu inilah pemandangan yang memuaskan hatimu  
kerana begitu asyik kau telah menciptakannya.

The wet twilight calms the burning forest.  
Vampire bats descend from the dark grey sky.  
Smell of munitions in the air. Smell of corpses. And  
horseshit.

A pack of wild dogs  
eat hundreds and thousands of human bodies  
the dead and the half dead.

And among the scorched trees of the forest  
puddles of blood form into a pool.  
Wide and calm. Ginger in colour.

Twenty angels come down from heaven  
to purify those in their death throes  
but on earth are ambushed by the giant vampires  
and raped.

A vital breeze which travels gently on  
moves away the ringlet curls of the corpses  
makes circles on the lake of blood  
and impassions the lust of angels and bats.

Yes, my brothers,  
I know this is a view which satisfies you  
for you have worked so intently to create it.



Majikan rumah pelacuran berkata kepadanya:  
„Sudah dua minggu kamu berbaring.  
Sakitmu makin menjadi.  
Kamu tak lagi hasilkan wang.  
Malahan padaku kamu berhutang.  
Ini biaya melulu.  
Aku tak kuat lagi.  
Hari ini kamu mesti pergi.”

(Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
wajahnya tegas dan dengki  
dengan pedang yang menyala  
menuding kepadaku.  
Maka darahku terus beku.  
Maria Zaitun namaku.  
Pelacur yang sengsara.  
Kurang cantik dan agak tua).

Jam dua-belas siang hari.  
Matahari terik di tengah langit.  
Tak ada angin. Tak ada mega.  
Maria Zaitun keluar rumah pelacuran  
Tanpa koper.  
Tak ada lagi miliknya.  
Teman-temannya membuang muka.  
Sempoyongan ia berjalan.  
Badannya demam:  
Sipilis membakar tubuhnya.  
Penuh borok di klangkang  
di leher, di ketiak, dan di susunya.  
Matanya merah. Bibirnya kering. Gusinya berdarah.

(  
The owner of the brothel said to her:  
..You have been down for two weeks now  
You are getting sicker  
You are not bringing in any money  
In fact you owe me money  
I do not like losing money  
I can carry you no longer  
Today you must leave”

(The angel who guards paradise  
whose face is bright and malicious  
whose sword burns  
points accusingly at me  
Maria Zaitun is my name  
An unfortunate whore  
Not pretty enough and too old)

Twelve o'clock in the afternoon  
The sun high in the sky  
No wind. No clouds  
Maria Zaitun leaves the brothel  
No suitcase  
No possessions  
Her friends look away  
She walks swaying  
Body fevered  
Syphilis burning her  
Ulcers on her crotch  
neck, armpits breasts  
Her eyes red  
Her lips dry  
Her gums bleeding

Sakit jantungnya kambuh pula.  
Ia pergi kepada dokter.  
Banyak pasien lebih dulu menunggu.  
Ia duduk di antara mereka.  
Tiba-tiba orang-orang menyingkir dan menutup hidung  
mereka.  
Ia meledak marah  
tapi buru-buru jururawat menariknya.  
Ia diberi giliran lebih dulu  
dan tak ada orang memprotesnya.  
„Maria Zaitun,  
utangmu sudah banyak padaku,” kata dokter.  
„Ya,” jawabnya.  
„Sekarang wangmu berapa?”  
„Tak ada.”  
Dokter geleng kepala dan menyuruhnya telanjang.  
Ia kesakitan waktu membuka baju  
sebab bajunya lekat di borok ketiaknya.  
„Cukup,” kata dokter.  
Dan ia tak jadi memeriksa.  
Lalu ia berbisik kepada jururawat:  
„Kasih ia injeksi vitamin C.”  
Dengan kaget jururawat berbisik kembali:  
„Vitamin C?  
Dokter, paling tidak ia perlu Salvarzan.”  
„Untuk apa?  
Ia tak bisa bayar.  
Dan lagi sudah jelas ia hampir mati.  
Kenapa mesti dikasih obat mahal  
yang diimport dari luar negeri?”

(Malaikat penjaga.firdaus  
wajahnya iri dan dengki  
dengan pedang yang menyala  
menuding kepadaku.  
Aku gemetar ketakutan.

Her heart troubles her again  
She goes to the doctor's  
Where many are waiting before her  
And sits among them  
Suddenly they move aside, holding their nostrils  
She swears angrily  
The nurse takes her arm hastily  
She takes her turn before them  
and no-one complains  
"Maria Zaitun  
you owe me quite a bit of money," says the doctor  
"Yes," she replies  
"How much do you have?"  
"None"  
The doctor shakes his head and orders her to undress  
She feels pain as she undoes her blouse  
and it sticks to an ulcer under her armpit  
"That's sufficient," says the doctor  
Not even examining her  
Then he whispers to the nurse:  
"Give her an injection of vitamin C"  
Startled the nurse whispers back:  
"Vitamin C?  
Doctor, wouldn't she be better off with Salversan?"  
"Why?"  
She cannot pay  
And she is nearly dead  
Why give her expensive medicines  
from abroad?"

(The angel who guards paradise  
whose face is spiteful and malicious  
whose sword burns  
points accusingly at me  
I tremble with fear

Hilang rasa. Hilang pikirku.  
Maria Zaitun namaku.  
Pelacur yang takut dan celaka).

Jam satu siang.  
Matahari masih di puncak.  
Maria Zaitun berjalan tanpa sepatu.  
Dan aspal jalan yang jelek mutunya  
lumer di bawah kakinya.  
Ia berjalan menuju gereja.  
Pintu gereja telah dikunci.  
Kerna khawatir akan pencuri.  
Ia menuju pastori dan menekan bel pintu.  
Koster keluar dan berkata:  
„Kamu mau apa?  
Pastor sedang makan siang.  
Dan ini bukan jam bicara.”  
„Maaf. Saya sakit. Ini perlu.”  
Koster meneliti tubuhnya yang kotor dan berbau  
Lalu berkata:  
„Asal tinggal di luar, kamu boleh tunggu.  
Aku lihat apa pastor mau terima kamu.”  
Lalu koster pergi menutup pintu.  
Ia menunggu sambil blingsatan kepanasan.  
Ada satu jam baru pastor datang kepadanya.  
Setelah mengorek sisa makanan dari giginya  
ia nyalakan crutu, lalu bertanya:  
„Kamu perlu apa?”  
Bau anggur dari mulutnya.  
Selopnya dari kulit buaya.  
Maria Zaitun menjawabnya:  
„Mau mengaku dosa.”  
„Tapi ini bukan jam bicara.  
Ini waktu saya untuk berdoa.”  
„Saya mau mati.”  
„Kamu sakit?”

I can feel nothing. Think nothing  
Maria Zaitun is my name  
An unfortunate and frightened whore)

One o'clock in the afternoon  
The sun still at its peak  
Maria Zaitun walks without shoes  
And the cheap asphalt  
melts beneath her feet  
She walks towards the church  
Which is locked  
Because they are afraid of thieves  
She goes to the presbytery and pushes the bell  
The sexton comes out and says:  
"What do you want?  
Father is still having lunch  
And this is not his hour for seeing people"  
"I'm sorry. I'm sick. This is urgent."  
The sexton examines her dirty foul body  
Then says:  
"As long as you stay outside you can wait  
I'll ask if father will see you"  
Then leaves closing the door  
She waits dazed by the sun  
An hour later the priest comes  
Having picked the remains of the meal from his teeth  
he lights a cigar, then asks:  
"What are you after?"  
Smell of wine from his mouth  
Slippers of crocodile skin  
Maria Zaitun answers:  
"I want to confess my sins"  
"But this isn't the confessional hour  
This is my time of prayer"  
"I am going to die"  
"You are sick?"

„Ya. Saya kena rajasinga.”  
Mendengar ini pastor mundur dua tindak.  
Mukanya mungket.  
Akhirnya agak keder ia kembali bersuara:  
„Apa kamu – mm – kuku-kupu malam?”  
„Saya pelacur. Ya.”  
„Santu Petrus! Tapi kamu Katolik!”  
„Ya.”  
„Santu Petrus!”  
Tiga detik tanpa suara.  
Matahari terus menyala  
Lalu pastor kembali bersuara:  
„Kamu telah tergoda dosa.”  
„Tidak tergoda. Tapi melulu berdosa.”  
„Kamu telah terbujuk setan.”  
„Tidak. Saja terdesak kemiskinan.  
Dan gagal mencari kerja.”  
„Santu Petrus!”  
„Santu Petrus! Pater, dengarkan saya.  
Saya tak butuh tahu asal usul dosa saya.  
Yang nyata hidup saya sudah gagal.  
Jiwa saya kalut.  
Dan saya mau mati.  
Sekarang saya takut sekali.  
Saya perlu Tuhan atau apa saja  
untuk menemani saya.”  
Dan muka pastor menjadi merah padam.  
Ia menuding Maria Zaitun.  
„Kamu galak seperti macan betina.  
Barangkali kamu akan gila.  
Tapi tak akan mati.  
Kamu tak perlu pastor.  
Kamu perlu dokter jiwa.”

“Yes. I have VD”

Hearing this the pastor takes two steps back

His face contracts

Finally a little confused he speaks again

“Are you – er – a lady of the night?”

“I’m a prostitute. Yes”

“By St. Peter! But you’re a Catholic!”

“Yes.”

“By St. Peter!”

Three soundless seconds

The sun continues to burn

Then the priest speaks again:

“You were led into sin”

“Not led. But I have sinned greatly”

“You were deceived by the devil”

“No. I was forced by poverty

And my failure to find a job”

“By St. Peter!”

“By St. Peter! Father, listen to me

I don’t need to know why I sinned

I realise my life has been a failure

My soul is confused

And I want to die

But I am terribly afraid

I need God or whatever

to befriend me”

The face of the priest becomes deep red

He points at Maria Zaitun

“You are some sort of wild tigress

Maybe you are mad

But you are not going to die

You do not need a priest

You need a psychiatrist”



(Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
wajahnya sombong dan dengki  
dengan pedang yang menyala  
menuding kepadaku.  
Aku lesu tak berdaya.  
Tak bisa nangis. Tak bisa bersuara.  
Maria Zaitun namaku.  
Pelacur yang lapar dan dahaga.)

Jam tiga siang.  
Matahari terus menyala.  
Dan angin tetap tak ada.  
Maria Zaitun bersijingkat  
di atas jalan yang terbakar.  
Tiba-tiba ketika nyebrang jalan  
ia kepleset kotoran anjing.  
Ia tak jatuh  
tapi darah keluar dari borok di klangklangnya  
dan meleleh ke kakinya.  
Seperti sapi tengah melahirkan  
ia berjalan sambil mengangkang.  
Di dekat pasar ia berhenti.  
Pandangannya berkunang-kunang.  
Napasnya pendek-pendek. Ia merasa lapar.  
Orang-orang pergi menghindar.  
Lalu ia berjalan kebelakang satu restoran.  
Dari tong sampah ia kumpulkan sisa makanan  
Kemudian ia bungkus hati-hati  
dengan daun pisang.  
Lalu berjalan menuju keluar kota.

(Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
wajahnya dingin dan dengki  
dengan pedang yang menyala  
menuding kepadaku.  
Yang Mulia, dengarkanlah aku.)

(The angel who guards heaven  
whose face is arrogant and malicious  
whose sword burns  
points accusingly at me  
I am tired, powerless  
Cannot cry. Cannot speak  
Maria Zaitun is my name  
A hungry and thirsty prostitute)

Three o'clock in the afternoon  
Sun still burning  
And still no wind  
Maria Zaitun walks on tip-toe  
on the burning road  
Suddenly while crossing the street  
she slips on dogshit  
She doesn't fall  
but the blood flows from the ulcer on her crotch  
and trickles to her foot  
Like a cow giving birth  
she walks legs wide apart  
Near the market she stops  
Head spinning  
Brief of breath. She is hungry  
People move to avoid her  
Then she walks behind a restaurant  
Gathers scraps of food from a bin  
Wraps them carefully in a banana leaf  
and walks away out of town

(The angel who guards heaven  
whose face is cold and malicious  
and whose sword burns  
points accusingly at me  
O God, hear me

Maria Zaitun namaku.  
Pelacur lemah, gemetar ketakutan.)

Jam empat siang.  
Seperti siput ia berjalan.  
Bungkusan sisa makanan masih di tangan  
belum lagi dimakan.  
Keringatnya bercucuran.  
Rambutnya jadi tipis.  
Mukanya kurus dan hijau  
seperti jeruk yang kering.  
Lalu jam lima.  
Ia sampai di luar kota.  
Jalan tak lagi beraspal  
tapi debu melulu.  
Ia memandang matahari  
dan pelan berkata: „Bedebah.”  
Sesudah berjalan satu kilo lagi  
ia tinggalkan jalan raya  
dan berbelok masuk sawah  
berjalan di pematang.

(Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
wajahnya tampan dan dengki  
dengan pedang yang menyala  
mengusirku pergi.  
Dan dengan rasa jijik  
ia tusukkan pedangnya perkasa  
di antara kelangkangku.  
Dengarkan, Yang Mulia.  
Maria Zaitun namaku.  
Pelacur yang kalah.  
Pelacur terhina.)

Maria Zaitun is my name  
A weak whore trembling with fear)

Four o'clock in the afternoon  
She walks like a snail  
The bundle of food-scrap still in her hand  
not yet eaten  
Her forehead is damp  
Her hair straggly  
Her face is thin and green  
like a dry lemon  
Then it is five o'clock  
She has left the town  
The road is no longer asphalt  
just dust  
She looks at the sun  
and slowly says "Stinker"  
After walking another kilometer  
she leaves the main road  
and turns into the rice-fields  
walking on the dividing walls

(The angel who guards paradise  
whose face is superior and malicious  
and whose sword burns  
drives me away  
Loathingly  
he thrusts his virile sword  
into my crotch  
Hear O Lord  
Maria Zaitun my name  
A defeated whore  
A humbled whore)

Jam enam sore.  
Maria Zaitun sampai ke kali.  
Angin bertiup.  
Matahari turun.  
Hari pun senja.  
Dengan lega ia rebah di pinggir kali.  
Ia basuh kaki, tangan, dan mukanya.  
Lalu ia makan pelan-pelan.  
Baru sedikit ia berhenti.  
Badannya masih lemes  
tapi nafsu makannya tak ada lagi.  
Lalu ia minum air kali.

(Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
tak kau rasakah bahwa senja telah tiba  
angin turun dari gunung  
dan hari merebahkan badannya?  
Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
dengan tegas mengusirku.  
Bagai patung ia berdiri.  
Dan pedangnya menyala.)

Jam tujuh. Dan malam tiba.  
Serangga bersiuran.  
Air kali terantuk batu-batu.  
Pohon-pohon dan semak-semak di dua tepi kali  
nampak tenang  
dan mengkilat di bawah sinar bulan.  
Maria Zaitun tak takut lagi.  
Ia teringat masa kanak-kanak dan remajanya.  
Mandi di kali dengan ibunya.  
Memanjat pohonan.  
Dan memancing ikan dengan pacarnya.  
Ia tak lagi merasa sepi.  
Dan takutnya pergi.  
Ia merasa bertemu sobat lama.

Six o'clock in the evening  
Maria Zaitun arrives at the river  
The wind blows  
The sun sets  
Day becomes twilight  
Tiredly she lies down at the edge of the river  
She washes her feet, hands and face  
Then slowly eats  
Stopping after a moment  
but with no wish to eat any further  
Then she drinks from the water of the river

(Guarding angel  
Can't you feel that twilight has come  
the wind come down from the mountain  
the day laying down its body?  
The angel who guards paradise  
resolutely drives her away  
Like a statue he stands  
And his sword burns)

Seven o'clock. And night arrives  
Insects buzz  
The river strikes against rocks  
The trees and shrubs on both sides of the river  
are stilled  
and shine in the light of the moon  
Maria Zaitun is no longer afraid  
She remembers her childhood and youth  
Bathing in the river with her mother  
Climbing trees  
And fishing with her sweetheart  
She is no longer lonely  
And her fear has gone  
She feels as if she is with an old friend

Tapi lalu ia pingin lebih jauh cerita  
tentang hidupnya.  
Lantaran itu ia sadar lagi kegagalan hidupnya  
la jadi berduka.  
Dan mengadu pada sobatnya  
sembari menangis tersedu-sedu.  
Ini tak baik buat penyakit jantungnya.

(Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
wajahnya dingin dan dengki.  
la tak mau mendengar jawabku.  
la tak mau melihat mataku.  
Sia-sia mencoba bicara padanya.  
Dengan angkuh ia berdiri.  
Dan pedangnya menyala.)

Waktu.  
Bulan.  
Pohonan.  
Kali.  
Borok.  
Sipilis.  
Perempuan.  
Bagai kaca  
kali memantul cahaya gemilang.  
Rumput ilalang berkilatan.

Seorang lelaki datang di seberang kali.  
la berseru: „Maria Zaitun, engkaukah itu?“  
„Ya,“ jawab Maria Zaitun keheranan.  
Lelaki itu menyeberang kali.  
la tegap dan elok wajahnya.  
Rambutnya ikal dan matanya lebar.  
Maria Zaitun berdebar hatinya.  
la seperti pernah kenal lelaki itu.

But then she becomes aware of the rest of her life's story  
And because she is aware of the failure it has been  
She becomes sad  
And confesses to her friend  
sobbing all the time  
Which is not good for her heart

(The angel who guards paradise  
whose face is cold and malicious  
Refuses to hear my reply  
To see my eyes  
It is pointless to speak to him  
Arrogantly he stands  
And his sword burns)

Time  
Moon  
Trees  
River  
Syphilis  
Ulcers  
Woman  
Like glass  
River reflecting the bright light  
Long grass shining

A man comes across the river  
He calls "Maria Zaitun is that you?"  
"Yes" answers Maria Zaitun surprisedly  
The man crosses the river  
He is firmly built and his face is handsome  
His hair is curly and his eyes are large  
Maria Zaitun's heart beats faster  
She feels she has known this man



Entah dimana.

Yang terang tidak di ranjang

Itu sayang. Sebab ia suka lelaki seperti dia.

„Jadi kita ketemu disini” kata lelaki itu.

Maria Zaitun tak tahu apa jawabnya.

Sedang sementara ia keheranan

lelaki itu membungkuk mencium mulutnya.

Ia merasa seperti minum air kelapa.

Belum pernah ia merasa ciuman seperti itu.

Lalu lelaki itu membuka kutangnya.

Ia tak berdaya dan memang suka.

Ia menyerah.

Dengan mata terpejam

ia merasa berlayar

ke samodra yang belum pernah dikenalnya.

Dan setelah selesai

ia berkata kasmaran:

„Semula kusangka hanya impian

bahwa hal ini bisa kualami.

Semula tak berani kuharapkan

bahwa lelaki tampan seperti kau

bakal lewat dalam hidupku.”

Dengan penuh penghargaan lelaki itu memandang

kepadanya

„Mempelai,” jawabnya.

Lalu tersenyum dengan hormat dan sabar.

„Siapakah namamu?” Maria Zaitun bertanya.

„Mempelai.” jawabnya.

„Lihatlah. Engkau melucu.”

Dan sambil berkata begitu

Maria Zaitun menciumi seluruh tubuh lelaki itu.

Tiba-tiba ia terhenti.

Ia jumpai bekas-bekas luka di tubuh pahlawannya.

Di lambung kiri.

Di dua tapak tangan.

Di dua tapak kaki.

Maria Zaitun pelan berkata:

Though doesn't know where  
Certainly not in bed  
Which is a pity. For she likes men like him  
"So here we meet" says the man  
For a moment she is surprised  
The man bends and kisses her lips  
He tastes like coconut milk  
She has never known a kiss like that  
Then he opens her brassiere  
She is powerless and indeed pleased  
She surrenders  
With her eyes closed  
she feels as if sailing  
on some never before known sea  
And when it is finished  
she says wonderingly  
"Only in a dream had I thought  
that this might happen to me  
I had never dared hope  
that a man as handsome as you  
might pass through my life"  
With great delight he looks at her  
Then smiles, respectfully and patiently  
"What is your name?" Maria Zaitun asks  
"The bride-groom" he replies  
"Show me. You're joking"  
And as she says so  
Maria Zaitun kisses the man's body all over  
Suddenly she stops  
She has found scars in the body of her hero  
In his left side  
In both hands  
In both feet  
Maria Zaitun slowly says

„Aku tahu siapa kamu.”

Lalu menebak lelaki itu dengan pandang matanya.  
Lelaki itu menganggukkan kepala: „Betul. Ya.”

(Malaikat penjaga firdaus  
wajahnya jahat dan dengki  
dengan pedang yang menyala  
tak bisa apa-apa.  
Dengan kaku ia beku.  
Tak berani lagi menuding padaku.  
Aku tak takut lagi.  
Sepi dan duka telah sirna.  
Sambil menari kumasuki taman firdaus  
dan kumakan apel sepuaska.  
Maria Zaitun namaku.  
Pelacur dan pengantin adalah saya.)

“I know who you are”  
Then looks full at the man  
He nods his head. “Indeed. Yes”

(The angel who guards paradise  
Whose face is wicked and malicious  
and whose sword burns  
can do nothing  
Clumsily he freezes  
No longer dares point at me  
I am afraid no longer  
Loneliness and misery are destroyed  
Dancing I enter the gates of paradise  
and eat as many apples as I want  
Maria Zaitun is my name  
whore and bride both)

↳

Sambil menyeberangi sepi  
kupanggili namamu, wanitaku.  
Apakah kau tak mendengarku?

Malam yang berkeluh kesah  
memeluk jiwaku yang payah  
yang resah  
kerana memberontak terhadap rumah  
memberontak terhadap adat yang latah  
dan akhirnya tergoda cakrawala.

Sia-sia kucari pancaran sinar matamu.  
Ingin kuingat lagi bau tubuhmu  
yang kini sudah kulupa.  
Sia-sia.  
Tak ada yang bisa kujangkau.  
Sempurnalah kesepianku.

Angin pemberontakan  
menyerang langit dan bumi.  
Dan dua balas ekor serigala  
muncul dari masa silam  
merobek-robek hatiku yang celaka.

Berulang kali kupanggili namamu.  
Di manakah engkau, wanitaku?  
Apakah engkau juga menjadi masa silamku?  
Kupanggili namamu.  
Kupanggili namamu.  
kerna engkau rumah di lembah.  
Dan Tuhan?  
Tuhan adalah seniman tak terduga

I call your name

---

As I cross the loneliness  
I call your name, my wife.  
Can you not hear me?

The night moaning  
embraces my weary spirit  
troubled  
by rebellion at home  
rebellion at meaningless custom  
and is finally tempted by the heavens.  
Futilely I search for the light of your eyes.  
I want again the fragrance of your body  
which I can no longer recall.  
Futile  
There is nothing I can take.  
How perfect my loneliness is.

The wind of rebellion  
attacks land and sky.  
Twelve jackals  
appear from my past  
and tear at my wretched heart.

Over and over I call your name.  
Where are you, my wife?  
Have you too become part of my past?  
I call your name  
I call your name  
for you are a house in the valley.  
And God?  
God is the inscrutable artist

yang selalu sebagai sediakala  
hanya memperdulikan hal yang besar saja.

Seribu jari dari masa silam  
menuding kepadaku.  
Tidak.  
Aku tak bisa kembali.

Sambil terus memanggil namamu  
amarah pemberontakanku yang suci  
bangkit dengan perkasa malam ini  
dan menghamburkan diri ke cakrawala  
yang sebagai gadis telanjang  
membukakan diri padaku.  
Penuh. Dan perawan.

Keheningan sesudah itu  
sebagai telaga besar yang beku  
dan aku pun beku di tepinya.  
Wajahku. Lihatlah, wajahku.  
Terkaca di keheningan.  
Berdarah dan luka-luka  
dicakar masa silamku.

who always as ever  
only cares about big things.

A thousand fingers from my past  
point down at me.

No.

I cannot go back.

As I continue to call your name  
The pure anger of my rebellion  
rises bravely this night  
and scatters itself into the heavens  
which like a naked girl  
open themselves to me.  
Full. And virginal.

The succeeding silence  
is like a large frozen lake  
and I am frozen at its edge.  
My face, look at it, my face.  
Reflected in the silence  
Wounded and bleeding  
clawed by my past.



Engkau masuk ke dalam hidupku  
di saat yang rawan  
Aku masuk ke dalam hidupmu  
di saat engkau bagai kuda  
beringas  
butuhkan padang.  
(Dan kau lupa siapa nama mertuamu).  
Kenapa bertanya apa makna kita berdekapan?  
Engkau melenguh waktu dadamu kugenggam.

Duka yang tidur dengan berahi  
telah beranak dan berbiak.  
Ranjang basah oleh keringatmu  
dan sungguh aku katakan:  
engkau belut bagiku.  
Adapun maknanya:  
meski kukenal segala liku tubuhmu  
sukmamu luput dari genggaman.

Telah kurenggut engkau  
dari kehampaanmu  
dari alkohol kota New York  
dari fantasi lampu-lampu neon  
dan dari pertanyaan-pertanyaanmu  
yang lesu naik turun elevator.  
Engkau kuseret  
kulekapkan pada kerawananku.  
pada kemuakanku terhadap lapar  
pada falsafat pemberontakanku  
pada sangsiku.  
Astaga, rambutmu yang blonda  
sungguh asing  
dan membawa gairah baru padaku.

You entered my life  
when I was worried  
I came into your life  
when you were like a wild horse  
in need  
of pasture  
(And you didn't even know the name of your in-laws)  
Why ask if our love making will mean anything?  
You moaned when I took your breast in my hand.

Misery slept with lust  
bringing forth children and multiplicity.  
The bed was wet with your sweat  
and I recall having said:  
you're like an eel to me.  
Which meant:  
that even though I might know all the bends of your body  
your soul would still slip away from my grasp.

I snatched you  
out of futility  
out of the alcohol of New York  
out of the neon phantasies  
and out of your sluggish questioning  
as we rode up and down in the lift.  
I dragged you  
and attached you to my anxiety  
my revulsion at hunger  
the philosophy of my rebellion  
to my doubt.  
God, the blondness of your hair  
was so foreign  
and gave me new passion.

Sebagai bajingan  
aku telah kauterima.  
Engkau telah menyerah.  
Sebagai perahu kau bawa aku  
mengarungi udara yang gelisah  
kerana nafasmu yang resah  
dan tubuhmu yang menggelombang.

Hidup telah hidup dan menggeliat.  
Waktu gemetar dalam ruang yang gemetar.  
Ketika bibirmu mengering dan memutih  
dan kuku-kuku jari-jarimu menekan pundakku  
kupejamkan mataku.

Hidupku dan hidupmu  
tidak berubah kernanya  
Masing-masing punya cakrawala berbeda.  
Masing-masing punya teka-teki sendiri  
yang berulang kali mengganyangnya.

Like a thief  
you received me.  
You surrendered.  
Like a ship you carried me  
across the restless atmosphere  
your anxious breath  
your rippling body.

Life lived and stretched  
Time trembled in the trembling interval  
When your lips dried and whitened  
and the nails of your fingers pressed into my shoulders  
I squeezed my eyes tightly shut.

Your life and my life  
was not changed because of it.  
Each had its own sphere  
Each had their own riddles  
Which over and over attacked them again.

Duapuluhtiga matahari  
bangkit dari pundakmu.  
Tubuhmu menguapkan bau tanah  
dan menyalalah sukma.  
Langit bagai kain tetoron yang biru  
terpentang  
berkilat dan berkilauan  
menantang jendela kalbu yang berduka cita.  
Rohku dan rohmu  
bagaikan proton dan elektron  
bergolak  
bergolak  
di bawah duapuluhtiga matahari.  
Duapuluhtiga matahari  
membakar dukacitaku.

Suto's song for Fatima

---

Twenty-three suns  
rise from your shoulders.  
Your body yawns the smell of earth  
and your soul flames.  
The sky is like a blue tetron cloth  
shot forth  
shining and sparkling  
refusing to accept the sad window of my mind.  
My spirit and yours  
are like proton and electron  
seething  
seething  
beneath twenty-three suns  
twenty-three suns  
burning away my sadness.

Ajip Rosidi

---

Pabila jiwa bertelanjang depan jiwa  
Suatu pun tiada guna: basa-basi, upacara . . . .  
Jarak pun tiada lagi, sehingga cukuplah  
Sekulum senyum, sekerling mata. Sudah!



When soul dances naked before soul  
Gesture  
Is sufficient vesture.  
Between is air. A smile – a glance  
Is enough.  
So be it.

Bayanganmu terekam pada permukaan piring, pada dinding  
Pada langit, awan, ah, kemana pun aku berpaling;  
Dan di atas atap rumah angin pun bangkit berdesir  
Menyampaikan bisikmu dalam dunia penuh bisik.

Masihkah dinihari Januari yang renyai  
Suatu tempat bagi tanganku membelai?  
Telah habis segala kata namun tak terucapkan  
Rindu yang berupa suatu kebenaran.

Bayangan, ah, bayanganmu yang menagih selalu  
Tidakkah segalanya sudah kusumpahkan demi Waktu?  
Tahun-tahun pun akan sepi berlalu, kutahu  
Karena dunia resah 'kan diam membisu.

I see your face on my plate, on the wall,  
In the air, on the clouds, wherever I look;  
Over the roof of my house the wind softly rises  
Bringing your voice to me amidst the world's whisper.

Is January's wet dawn  
Time for caressing hands?  
All words used up yet unspoken  
Desire shaping into truth.

Your image, image intoxicating me  
Haven't I committed all to Time?  
The future looms lonely, unavoidably  
The restless world growing dumb.

Di Tretes malam hari  
Semuanya jadi mati:  
Surabaya nun jauh di bawah  
Gunung Wilis terpacak sebelah kiri

(Aku teringat akan leluri  
Tentang Buta Locaya dan Plecing Kuning)

Apakah Waktu di sini berhenti  
Mengendap dalam cahaya lampu pelabuhan  
di tepi kaki langit?

Angin naik dari lembah.  
Bajang-bayang daun bergoyang  
Rumput-rumputpun berdesir.  
Ataukah  
Hanya hatiku bergetar?

Kucari kau.  
Kucari di remang hijau.  
Yang mengambang di muka kolam  
Wajahmu ataukah bayangan bulan?

Lalu kututupkan jendela.

Malam lengang.  
Malamku yang lengang.

## Tretes at night

---

At night in Tretes  
Everything lies in death  
Surabaya below  
Mount Willis impaled to the left

(I remember legends of demons)

Has time stopped  
settled in the harbour lamp light  
beside the horizon?

The wind climbs from the plain  
The shadows of the leaves tremble  
The grass whispers  
or is it  
My heart?

I seek you  
I seek you in the green fog –  
Is that my face or the shadow of the moon  
Floating on the lake?

Then I close the window

The silence of night  
The night of the soul

Dalam karetaapi  
Kubaca puisi: Willy dan Mayakowsky  
Namun kata-katamu yang kudengar  
Mengatasi derak-derik deresi.  
Kulempar pandang ke luar:  
Sawah-sawah dan gunung-gunung  
Lalu sajak-sajak tumbuh  
Dari setiap bulir peluh  
Para petani yang terbungkuk sejak pagi  
Melalui hari-hari keras dan sunyi.

Kutahu kaupun tahu  
Hidup terumbang-ambing antara langit dan bumi  
Adam terlempar dari surga  
Lalu kian kemari mencari Hawa.

Tidakkah telah menjadi takdir penyair  
Mengetuk pintu demi pintu  
Dan tak juga ditemuinya: Ragi hati  
Yang tak mau  
Menyerah pada situasi?

Dalam lembah menataplah wajahmu yang sabar.  
Dari lembah mengulurlah tanganmu yang gemetar.

Dalam karetaapi  
Kubatja puisi: turihan-turihan hati  
Yang dengan jari-jari besi sang Waktu  
Menentukan langkah-langkah Takdir: Menjului  
Ke ruang yang kuatur  
sia-sia.

In the train

I read poetry: Rendra and Mayakovsky

Yet the words I hear are yours

Above the rhythm of the wheels.

I look outside:

Rice-fields and mountains

And a poem rises

From every bead of sweat

On the brow of the farmer

Throughout his long and lonely day.

I know you know

That life drifts between heaven and earth

Adam was expelled from Paradise

Then searched for Eve.

The poet's fate

Is to knock on door after door

And never find: Restlessly

Refusing

To surrender to his situation.

In the valley I see your calm face.

From the valley your hand stretches forth.

In the train

I read poetry: submission to emotion

Which through the iron fingers of Time

Determines the path of Fate: stretching out

Into the realm of dreams which I shape

to no avail.

Aku tahu.  
Kau pun tahu.  
Dalam puisi  
Semuanya jelas dan pasti.



I know.  
You know.  
In poetry  
Everything is clear and definite.

Di atas gunung batu manusia membangun tugu:  
Kota yang gelisah mencari, Seoul yang baru, perkasa  
Dengan etalasi kaca, lampu-lampu berwarna, jiwanya ragu  
Tak acuh tahu, menggapai-gapai dalam udara hampa.

Kulihat bangsa yang terumbang-ambing antara dua dunia:  
Bagaikan tercermin diriku sendiri di sana!  
Mengejar-ngejar gairah bayangan hari-esok  
Memimpikan masasilam yang terasa kian lama kian elok!

Waktu menonton tari topeng di Istana Musim panas  
Aku terkenang betapa indah topeng Cirebon dari Kalianyar!  
Dan waktu kusimakkan musik Tang-ak, tubuhku tersandar  
lemas  
Betapa indah gamelan Bali dan degung Sunda. Bagaikan  
terdengar!

Kian jauh aku pergi, kian banyak yang kulihat  
Kian tinggi kuhargai milik sendiri yang tersia-sia tak dirawat.

On a stone mountain man has built a monument  
A restlessly searching city, a new Seoul, brave  
In its window displays, coloured lights, troubled souls  
Uncaring, searching in an atmosphere of futility.

I see a people adrift between two worlds:  
And I see myself reflected there.  
Chasing with passion the shadow of tomorrow  
Dreaming of a past which grows more beautiful as it grows  
more distant.

As I watch the masked dance in the Summer Palace  
I remember the beauty of the Cirebon masked dance.  
As I listen to Tang-ak, my body gently at rest  
I remember the beauty of the *gamelan* of Bali.

The further I travel, the more I see  
The more I value my own, carelessly wasted.

*gamelan*: the traditional orchestra of Java and Bali, consisting mainly of gongs and xylophones.

Telah enambelas tahun mereka berdiri di situ  
Dengan sangkur terhunus dan hati curiga selalu  
Menjaga garis-khayali yang menjadi saksi  
Tragika kesia-siaan manusia di muka bumi.

Mereka datang dari seluruh penjuru dunia  
Lantas dengan sangkur terhunus di situ berjaga:  
Awan hitam peperangan mengancam dengan geram  
Membikin alam mati. Sawah-sawah terbengkelai. Unggas pun  
diam.

Mereka tak henti-hentinya bersipandang penuh curiga  
Menatap ke seberang garis-khajali yang masing-masing  
hendak jaga  
Telah enambelas tahun, dan masih enambelas tahun lagi  
Tak seorang pun yang tahu kapan akan berhenti.

Mereka telah berdiri di situ untuk selamanya  
Berjaga di dunia fana yang senantiasa sia-sia  
Tak tahu untuk apa, tak tahu mengapa:  
Namun matanya selalu menatap penuh curiga.

For sixteen years they have stood there  
With bayonets in their hands and suspicion in their eyes  
Guarding the imaginary line which is witness  
To man's futile tragedy.

They come from all corners of the earth  
Then stand with bayonets in their hands, on guard:  
The black clouds of war threaten  
Nature dies. The fields lie fallow. The insects are silent.

They look at each other in suspicion, never ceasingly  
Gazing across the imaginary line which each side guards  
Sixteen years and sixteen years more  
No one knows when it will end.

They have been there forever  
On guard in a futile, mortal world  
Without knowing why, without knowing what for:  
Yet their eyes stare, suspiciously.

Di sini segalanya tak mengenal dimensi waktu

---

Di sini segalanya tak mengenal dimensi waktu.  
Tiada lagi mendua-arti: antara kau dengan aku!  
Dalam cahaya yang abadi kasihmu mengalir abadi  
Sedangkan mati tak lagi punya arti.

Here time's dimensions are unknown

---

Here time's dimensions are unknown  
Ambiguity is absent: between me and thee  
Your eternal love flows in eternal light  
And death has no meaning

Tuhan. Beri aku kekuatan  
Menguasai diri sendiri, kesunyian  
dan keserakan. Beri aku petunjuk selalu  
untuk memilih jalanMu, keridoanMu. Amin.



God. Give me the strength  
To master myself, loneliness  
and greed. Guide me  
in your path, to paradise. Amen.

Subagio Sastrowardjo

---

Malam yang hamil oleh benihku  
Mencampakkan anak sembilan bulan  
Ke lantai bumi. Anak haram tanpa ibu  
membawa dosa pertama  
di keningnya. Tangisnya akan memberitakan  
kelaparan dan rinduku, sakit  
dan matiku. Ciumlah tanah  
yang menerbitkan derita. Dia  
adalah nyawamu.

## The birth of a poem

---

Night pregnant with my seed  
thrusts the nine-month child down  
to the ground. Motherless bastard  
bearing the first sin  
on its brow. Its cry declares  
my hunger and melancholy, my suffering  
and my death. Kiss the ground  
source of your suffering. It  
is your soul.

Waktu adalah faktor penting dalam permainan

Waktu menguasai irama pada gerak, pada pertemuan dan percakapan

Waktu menentukan berapa lama pelaku tampil, undur dan hilang dari panggung

Waktu membagi cerita dalam adegan yang seimbang: kapan akan membuka tabir dan menutup pada akhir

Waktu membatasi kelangsungan peranan: mereka yang bunuh diri hendak mengatasi kadar kemungkinan

Nah, di sudut panggung ini Bima akan tertusuk pedang dan mati

di puncak cerita: itu adalah pemecahan yang wajar dari perhitungan waktu

## The producer's directions

---

Time is the important factor in acting  
Time controls the rhythm of the actions, of the meetings and  
of the conversations  
Time determines how long an actor appears, leaves and is  
absent from the stage  
Time divides the story into equal parts: tells when to open  
the curtain  
and when to close it at the end  
Time stops the action going on forever: those who suicide  
must overcome  
the limitations of possibility  
Now in this corner here *Bima* is stabbed with a sword and  
dies  
at the climax of the story: a natural solution  
to the problem of reckoning time.

*Bima* is the largest and most aggressive of the five Pandawa brothers, who are the heroes of the traditional Javanese puppet shadow play. According to legend, *Bima* dies a natural death while on pilgrimage to the Himalayas. Although almost indestructible, he cannot overcome time.

Ketika Keristos lahir

Dunia jadi putih

Juga langit yang semula gelap oleh darah dan zinah  
jadi lembut seperti tangan bayi sepuluh hari.

Manusia berdiri dingin sebagai patung-patung mesir  
dengan mata termangu ke satu arah.

Tak tumpah darah. Kain yang membunuh  
saudaranya belum lagi lahir.

Semua putih. Salju jatuh.

Ssst, diamlah. Keristos lahir.

## Christmas Day

---

When Christ was born  
The world was white  
The sky dark with sin and desire  
became soft like the hand of a ten-day child  
Man stood cold like a statue  
his confused eyes looking elsewhere.  
No blood fell. Cain who murdered  
his brother, as yet was not.  
All was white. The snow fell.  
Hush be silent. Christ is here.



untuk mempelajari warna  
aku kembali kepada bunga  
di musim tumbuh –  
merah, kuning, ungu – dan hijau  
dari rumput  
di sela hitam tanah  
untuk kilau cahaya aku belajar  
dari sinar mata dan perang rambut  
seperti emas, dan putih  
ah, dari langit yang telanjang  
atau dari tubuhmu yang kukasih  
atau dari maut  
semua putih  
aku kumbang yang melayang  
demi gairah menuntut  
dan sanggup hidup sehari

to study colour  
I return to the flowers  
in the spring –  
red, yellow, violet – and the green  
of the grass  
which cracks the black earth  
I learn of light  
from your eyes and hair  
golden, and white  
from the naked sky  
and from your body which I love  
and from death  
whiteness  
I am a flying insect  
driven by passion  
prepared to live for a day

Nawang Wulan  
(yang melindungi bumi dan padi)

---

Jangan bicara denganku dengan bahasa dunia  
Aku dari sorga  
Jangan sentuh tubuhku dengan tubuh berdosa  
Aku dari sorga

Sambut aku dengan bunga  
Itu darah dari duka dan cinta  
Bunga buat bayi yang baru lahir dari rahim ibu  
Bunga buat kekasih yang manis merindu  
Bunga buat maut yang diam menunggu

Tapi jaga anak yang menangis tengah malam minta susu  
Tapi jaga ladang yang baru sehari digaru  
Anak minta ditimang  
Ladang minta digenang  
Lalu panggil aku turun di teratakmu

Dengan bunga. Itu darah yang mengalir  
dari duka dan cinta.

Nawang Wulan  
(the guardian of the earth and of rice)

---

Do not speak to me in a worldly way  
I am of heaven  
Do not brush against my body with your sinful body  
I am of heaven

Receive me with flowers  
The blood of sorrow and love  
Flowers for the baby new-born from its mother's womb  
Flowers for the lover sweetly yearning  
Flowers for death silently waiting

Guard the child who cries in the night for milk  
Guard the field hoed yesterday for the first time  
Care for the child  
Water the field  
And I will come at your call

With flowers. The blood which flows  
from sorrow and love.

According to Javanese legend, *Nawang Wulan*, a nymph, had her wings stolen one day while bathing and was compelled to live on earth with a mortal, Joko Tarub, to whom she eventually bore a child. On finding her wings, she returned to heaven, but promised her husband that she would come whenever the child needed help. In this poem, she has been given the more general protective role of "the guardian of the earth and of rice".

Beritakan kepada dunia  
Bahwa aku telah sampai pada tepi  
Darimana aku tak mungkin lagi kembali.  
Aku kini melayang di tengah ruang  
Di mana tak berpisah malam dan siang.  
Hanya lautan yang hampa di lingkung cemerlang bintang.  
Bumi telah tenggelam dan langit makin jauh mengawang.  
Jagat begitu tenang. Tidak lapar  
Hanya rindu kepada isteri, kepada anak, kepada ibuku di  
rumah.

Apa yang kukenang? Masa kanak waktu tidur dekat ibu  
Dengan membawa dongeng dalam mimpi tentang bota  
Dan raksasa, peri dan bidari. Aku teringat  
Kepada buku cerita yang terlipat dalam lemari.  
Aku teringat kepada bunga mawar dari Elisa  
Yang terselip dalam surat yang membisikkan cintanya  
kepadaku

Yang mesra. Dan kini tentu berada di jendela  
Dengan Alex dan Leo, — itu anak-anak berandal yang  
kucinta —

Memandangi langit dengan sia. Hendak menangkap  
Sekelumit dari pesawatku, seleret dari  
Perlawatanku di langit tak berberita.  
Masihkah langit mendung di bumi seperti waktu  
Kutinggalkan kemaren dulu?

Apa yang kucitacita? Tak ada lagi citacita  
Sebab semua telah terbang bersama kereta-  
ruang ke jagat tak berhuni. Tetapi  
ada barangkali. Berilah aku satu kata puisi  
daripada seribu rumus ilmu yang penuh janji  
yang menyebabkan aku terlontar kini jauh dari bumi  
yang kukasih. Angkasa ini bisu. Angkasa ini sepi.

Tell the world  
I have reached the edge  
And cannot come back.  
I fly in outer space  
Where day and night are one.  
An empty sea circled by shining stars.  
Earth is gone and the sky flies away.  
The universe is silent. I hunger not  
But yearn for my wife, children and mother.  
The further they are the greater my love.  
What do I remember? Sleeping as a child near my mother  
In a dream hearing her stories of monsters  
Giants, fairies and angels. I remember  
story-books closed in a cupboard.  
I remember the rose Elisa  
Sent me in a letter telling of her love.  
And she stands at the window  
With Alex and Leo – our sons –  
Looking hopelessly into the sky. Trying to catch  
Sight of my craft, a piece  
Of my unrecorded journey.  
Is earth still as dark  
As yesterday was?  
What do I want? I want nothing  
All has gone with the rocket  
Into empty space. Yet perhaps  
There is something. Poetry  
Rather than the thousand promising formulae  
Which hurled me from the earth  
I love. The heavens are silent. The heavens are dumb.

Tetapi aku telah sampai pada tepi  
Darimana aku tak mungkin lagi kembali.  
Ciumku kepada isteriku, kepada anak dan ibuku  
Dan salam kepada mereka yang kepadaku mengenang.  
Jagat begitu dalam, jagat begitu diam.  
Aku makin jauh, makin jauh  
Dari bumi yang kukasih. Hati makin sepi  
Makin gemuruh.

Bunda,

Jangan membiarkan aku sendiri.

But I have reached the edge  
And cannot come back.  
A kiss for my wife, my children, my mother  
Regards to those who think of me.  
The universe is deep and still.  
I move further, further  
From the earth I love. My heart grows lonely  
Troubled.

Mother,

↳ Don't leave me alone.



Kita selalu berada di daerah perbatasan antara menang dan mati. Tak boleh lagi ada kebimbangan memilih keputusan: Adakah kita mau merdeka atau dijajah lagi. Kemerdekaan berarti keselamatan dan bahagia, Juga kehormatan bagi manusia dan keturunan. Atau kita menyerah saja kepada kehinaan dan hidup tak berarti. Lebih baik mati. Mati lebih mulia dan kekal daripada seribu tahun terbelenggu dalam penyesalan. Karena itu kita tetap di pos penjagaan atau menyusup di lorong-lorong kota pedalaman dengan pistol di pinggang dan bedil di tangan. (Sepagi tadi sudah jatuh korban.) Hidup menuntut pertaruhan, dan kematian hanya menjamin kita menang. Tetapkan hati. Tak boleh lagi ada kebimbangan di tengah kelaliman terus mengancam. Taruhannya hanya mati.

We are always at the border  
between victory and death. Can no longer hesitate  
but must decide:

Do we want freedom or servitude?  
Freedom means well-being and happiness.

Respect for oneself  
and descendants. Or should we surrender  
to insult and meaninglessness?

Death is better. Death is more glorious  
and more lasting than a thousand years  
chained by regret.

So we must stay on guard  
penetrate the inner lanes of the city  
a pistol in our belt and bullets in our hand.

(A man died this morning.) Life  
is a gamble and death  
is the only guarantee of our victory. Be firm.

Uncertainty must not threaten  
the oppressed.

The stakes are death.

Ia terlalu baik buat dunia ini.  
Ketika gerombalan mendobrak pintu  
Dan menjarah miliknya  
Ia tinggal diam dan tidak mengadakan perlawanan.  
Ketika gerombalan memukul muka  
Dan mendopak dadanya  
Ia tinggal diam dan tidak menanti pembalasan.  
Ketika gerombalan menculik isteri  
Dan memperkosa anak gadisnya  
Ia tinggal diam dan tidak memendam kebencian.  
Ketika gerombalan membakar rumahnya  
Dan menembak kepalanya  
Ia tinggal diam dan tidak mengucap penyesalan.  
Ia terlalu baik buat dunia ini.

He was too good for this world.  
When the bandits beat down his door  
And took all he owned  
He was silent and refused to resist.  
When the bandits hit him in the face  
And struck him across the chest  
He was silent and refused to return their blows.  
When the bandits took his wife  
And raped his daughter  
He was silent and did not hate.  
When they burnt his house  
And shot him in the head  
He was silent and said nothing.  
He was too good for this world.

Kita harus punya polisi sendiri untuk menjaga keselamatan kita waktu melalui lorong gelap kota ini. Sebab nyawa tak berharga dan individu hilang lenyap di bawah arus keserakahan yang membikin tempat ini begitu sempit buat doa dan suara manusia. Di atas himpitan sampah basah cakar-langit menjerit sia-sia ke angkasa. Ini New York. Pusat kesenian dan segala dosa. Dimana subuh hari di muka gedung komedi bisa bertemu tubuh lelaki diam terbaring dengan belati di dada.

We need a police force of our own  
to protect us  
in the streets  
at night. Life is cheap  
and people vanish  
drowned by the greed  
which squeezes out  
prayer and humanity.  
On a wet heap of rubbish  
sky-scrapers howl at the sky.  
This is New York. A center of culture  
and depravity. Where you might find  
in front of the playhouse  
at dawn  
the body of a man  
with a knife  
in his chest.

## Di ujung ranjang

---

waktu tidur  
tak ada yang menjamin  
kau bisa bangun lagi

tidur  
adalah persiapan  
buat tidur lebih lelap

di ujung ranjang  
menjaga bidadari  
menyanyi nina-bobo

At the end of the bed

---

when you sleep  
there is no guarantee  
you will wake up again

sleep  
is a preparation  
for deeper sleep

at the end of the bed  
stands an angel  
singing a lullaby



Asal mula adalah kata  
Jagat tersusun dari kata  
Di balik itu hanya  
ruang kosong dan angin pagi

Kita takut kepada momok karena kata  
Kita cinta kepada bumi karena kata  
Kita percaya kepada Tuhan karena kata  
Nasib terperangkap dalam kata

Karena itu aku  
bersembunyi di belakang kata  
Dan menenggelamkan  
diri tanpa sisa

## The word

---

In the beginning is the word  
The world is made of words  
Behind them  
is emptiness and the morning breeze

Because of words we are afraid of ghosts  
Because of words we love the earth  
Because of words we believe in God  
Our fates are trapped in words

Therefore I  
hide behind words  
and sink  
without trace

Di antara gedung pencakar

---

Di antara gedung pencakar  
tak ada cerita

Hanya jantung berdebar menanti kehangsan

Jerit bayi terlemper

pada dinding-dinding kaca

Mukamu yang letih, ah,

kuburkan dalam semua peristiwa dan lupakan  
hari

Di sini terjadi kelahiran lagi:

Adam terbentuk dari semen dan besi

dan garis-garis kejang

memburu dengus pagi

Tubuh Hawa masih hangat

belum terjamah tangan laki

Kandungan mandul.

Ular naga

yang membujuk dekat puncak menara

termasuk jenis paling liar.

Dan bulan, bulanku, betapa mengerikan

Among sky-scrapers

---

Among sky-scrapers

fantasy is absent

Only the heart's beat awaiting anguish

The scream of a baby thrown  
against glass walls

Your tired face

entombed in all that happens  
obliterating day

Born again here:

Adam shaped from iron and cement  
and convulsed verticals

hunting the anger of morning

The body of Eve still warm  
untouched

Her womb barren.

Tempted

by a dangerous snake

near the top of the tower.

The moon, my moon, how awful.

Toeti Heraty

---

'kan selalu begitu!!  
kita bicara ini dan itu  
sebenarnya kesempatan ditunggu-tunggu  
untuk mulai

sekali mulai, tak ada henti-hentinya lagi  
lubuk-lubuk hati, danau, kolam  
gua dan lautan  
melontarkan isi, mengalir, mengalir  
– panta rei –

coba hentikan, bekukan adegan  
tangkaplah saat itu kembali sebentar saja!  
tapi, bagaimana?!

it's always the same!!  
we talk of this and that  
while waiting for the opportunity  
to begin

once started there's no stopping  
the recesses of the heart, a lake, a pool  
a cave and an ocean  
pouring forth, flowing, flowing  
– *panta rei* –

please stop, freeze the action  
let's just have that moment again  
for a little!  
but, how ?!

*Panta rei*: everything is in flux (Heraclitus)

siapa yang mengatakan:

“bagai kuncup terkulai di tangan”  
(yang menyanjungnya) –

dasar wanita

berterima kasih dalam-dalam  
karena takdir telah menyentuhnya  
takdir? bahwa dunia merekah dan  
dupa keramat melingkari dengan mantera  
mantera abadi?

dengan senyum pada pandang karena  
sendiri tidak berjaya, pada pergelangan tangan  
mesra dihela ke taman hakiki

hati padat-penuh kekaguman akan  
manusia jantan, semacam dewa!  
siapa pula yang mengatakan:

“ikatan restu antara dua  
insan dewata . . . . .”

lazim,

sebagai halnya tanda rahasia timbulkan  
pretensi-pretensi sewajarnya –  
kuncup, berduri, geli dan kesal  
– taman hakiki . . .



who says:  
    “picked flowers quickly fade”  
    (he who holds one)

a woman  
    should be grateful in all things  
    for fate decides all  
fate? the world divided and  
    holy incense surrounding all  
    in ritual, forever?  
a smile in her glance, being

helpless, hauled by the wrist  
    lovingly into the garden of life  
her heart full of wonder at this creature  
a man, almost a god!

who says:  
    “a holy bond between two  
    god-like beings . . . . .”

as usual  
as the deceitful gestures that develop  
natural pretences  
bud, thorn, laughter, mourning  
– the garden of life . . .

siapa bertopeng?

ada petasan dan kembang api  
malam riuh dan tetap ngeri  
meriah-terjang terpekik riang

wajarkah ini?

semua bahagia kecuali saya  
dengan rendah hati menyelinap pergi  
bahagia menyertai

siapa tahu

diam-diam lainnya juga  
berfikir begitu

who is masked?

among fire-crackers, sky-rockets  
the noisy, menacing night  
joyful leaping, ecstatic screaming

is this sane and right?

they being happy, I  
sadly leaving  
happiness, come with me

who knows

if silently the others too  
think the same

ada yang hendak dikata, kalian  
sudah mengangkat muka  
ada memang, sebentar, rupa-rupanya  
aku terlupa, sebentar saja—  
tadi pasti, kuyakin benar!  
jangan pergi dahulu, coba bersabar  
memang ada kuhendaki mengatakan  
suatu dengan terbuka hati  
suatu kebenaran yang telah lama pula kalian cari  
dengar, dengar, kuingat kini  
dengan cermat teliti terimalah ini —  
apa? mengapa kalian? senyum begini  
aku curigai!  
tak pada tempatnya mengejek, menyangsikan  
atau menyesali karena kulebih tahu ini kali?  
ah, rupa-rupanya kalian bosan  
itu dapat dimengerti, atau memang  
tak ada perhatian sama sekali  
maaf saja,  
sudah cukup lama rasanya ditunda-tunda  
maka itu, coba bayangkan kalian  
di tempat daku  
sungguh bukan peran bahagia (dihalau  
ke sudut tidak berdaya)  
tapi jelas bukan salahku, bila akhirnya  
maaf, aku hanya terdiam saja.

there is something I want to say, to you  
who gaze up at me  
there is indeed, a moment, it seems  
I've forgotten what it was, a moment please –  
I knew before, I was really quite certain!  
don't go, please be patient  
really I wanted to say something in all honesty  
the truth you've long been searching for  
listen, listen, yes I remember now  
pay strict attention to what I have to say –  
what? why do you? all smile like that  
    I'm suspicious  
you shouldn't mock, doubt  
or sorrow because I know more  
oh, I think you're bored  
I can understand that, or perhaps  
not at all interested  
I'm sorry  
I've wasted enough time  
so, imagine yourself in my place  
not a happy position (driven powerlessly into a corner)  
but it's really not my fault, if finally  
I'm sorry, I'll shut up.



## Dark moments of meeting

---

dark moments of meeting  
sacredly seeding  
in the lap of silence  
razor's edge to be surpassed  
lonely space to signify  
recurrence of creation day

no, this is  
not a meeting  
but  
pathos trembling, withdrawing from witnesses,

man surrendering to his single arrogance  
secretly enjoying, caressing fingers,  
greedily gulping  
from the well of life

cintaku tiga, secara kanak-kanak  
                  menghitung jari  
kusebut satu per satu kini  
yang pertama serius dan dalam hatinya  
                  tidak terduga  
bertahun-tahun ku jadi idaman  
mesraku membuat pandangnya sayu mungkin  
                  ia merasa iba padaku  
ingin aku membenam diri, melebur  
                  dalam mesra rayu, iba dan sayu  
pandangnya begitu sepi, tapi ia  
paling mudah dikelabui –  
yang lain, berfilsafat ringan dan kesabaran  
tak pernah kulepas ia dari pandangan  
petuah orang, – lidah tidak bertulang –  
                  tak kuperduli karena ia  
kata-katanya tepat untuk setiap peristiwa  
sesudah akhirnya mengecap bibirnya  
                  ia tinggalkan aku dan sesudah itu?  
ah, biasa saja, tak ada sesuatu terjadi  
memang ia tidak begitu perduli  
perlu pula kusebut yang ketiga, bukannya  
                  lebih baik dirahasiakan saja, karena  
ia datang hanya malam hari, engsel pintu pun  
telah diminyaki  
suaranya tegang, berat, menghela  
                  ke sorga tirai-ranjang  
pandang pesona tajam memaksa, akhirnya  
                  menghitung hari setiap bulan  
meskipun itu urusan nanti  
ketiga cinta yang kumiliki  
                  kapan kujumpai pada satu orang?



I have three loves, like a child  
    counting on its fingers  
I'll recite them one by one:  
the first is serious  
    his heart is deep, so as to bury desire  
    his love is wistful – or is it merely pitying  
me because of my playful tenderness?  
I want to dive down and dissolve  
    in his lonesome look  
    his sad love and his sorrowfulness but  
how much more easily he is deceived  
than the other  
    whose clever philosophy and  
    endless patience never  
will I let out of sight  
“mind his easy words”  
    people say, but why  
    should I worry  
“his well aimed phrases”  
    but he'll go away, finally,  
    after the taste of his lips  
and there'll be the usual nothing again  
he doesn't care that much anyway  
Should I mention the third, rather  
    than be secretive now, for  
he comes at night when the door's hinges are oiled?  
his voice is virile, his look is forceful  
hauling me to that secluded heaven  
but then I'll be counting the days again  
    for each month to come, yet  
I know I shouldn't worry, but where  
and when will I meet my three loves  
    in the one man?

kini baru kumengerti segala makna ini

malam itu,

terpejam mata, sandarkan hati  
pada bidang dada, sia-sia selamatkan  
bahagia pucat mengurai karena dunia  
tidak inginkan kita bercinta

makam itu,

terbujur canggung, betapa panjang  
dan megah lainnya, tak tega dalam gelap  
tinggalkan boneka, kini tertunduk sedia  
berat hati penuh bunga, anak tercinta  
telah mendahului kita

bukankah,

hati telah semakin membatu, dendam  
asmara bersumber satu gairah  
tak terpuaskan meski (atau karena?)  
bingkisan-bingkisan berpita merah  
kuning dan jingga dijatuhkan  
oleh hidup ke dalam pangkuan

kini baru kumengerti segala makna –  
bahwa suatu saat namamu  
akan kuucapkan juga

Now I understand

---

now I understand

that night,

your eyes closed, your heart slumped  
in your chest, all hope of life lost  
frail happiness wilted because fate  
would not allow us love

that grave,

stretched insecurely, how large and splendid  
the others seemed, not daring in the dark  
to leave our stringless marionette, at rest forever  
heavy the heart full of flowers, our favourite child  
gone on before

doesn't

the heart grow harder, crueller  
love stem from a passion  
unsatisfied despite (or because of)  
the parcels wrapped in red,  
yellow and orange ribbon  
dropped by life into our laps

now I understand

that in the future

I will speak your name again.

suatu saat toh mesti ditinggalkan  
dunia yang itu-itu juga  
– api petualangan cinta telah pudar –  
bayang-bayang dalam mimpi, senyum  
tanpa penyesalan kini  
beberapa peristiwa tinggalkan  
asap urai ditelan awan

beberapa nama, beberapa ranjang  
berapa tinta mengalir dan terbang  
– mengapa tidak?! –  
menyeka debu dari buku, menemukan  
coretan yang hampir musna  
jadi permainan yang hilang ketegangannya

dunia ini nyata, suatu penemuan!  
dunia ini nyata, suatu keheranan!  
keheranan dan penemuan jelmaan  
benda-benda mesra

bola yang usang dan beruang tercinta  
sepatu merah yang telah lepas-lepas kulitnya

dunia ini nyata  
sebentar lagi anak-anak pulang dari pesta

some time one must leave  
that world  
– the fire of love's adventure faded –  
shadows in a dream, we smile now  
    without regret  
at the several events  
    gone like scattered smoke among the clouds

several names, several beds  
some ink spilt and thrown away  
    – why not –  
brush the dust from a book, discover  
    almost vanished marks  
a game free from tension

that this world is reality is a discovery!  
that it is reality is amazing!  
discovery and amazement incarnate in  
    intimate objects

a worn ball and a favourite teddy-bear  
red shoes with the toes worn off

this world is reality  
in a moment the children will be home from their party

awan-awan yang mengagumkan  
melewati bulan yang sudah biasanya  
demikian: – ditinggalkan sendirian –

sambil menangkap pandang-pandang penuh  
terkumpul dalam jaring malam benderang  
pandang jenuh oleh dahaga hampa

bulan, bila dunia telah sunyi  
tidak ada manusia lagi, untuk siapa  
kilangan tubuh langsung diusap awan

awan pun mulai minggir, kau terjat  
antara ranting, tergelincir, dan tenggelam  
oleh nelayan tertangkap, bersama ikan  
putih-putih dihela ke darat

pantai telah bersih, nelayan hendak pulang  
segera, tak ada yang tertinggal lagi  
o ya bulan, dengan gerak ramah (hampir  
tertinggal menggelepar) dipungut,  
dilempar kembali

the marvellous clouds  
pass by the moon long accustomed  
to this: – loneliness –

capturing the glances  
gathered in the net of the bright night  
glances satiated with empty thirst

moon, when the night is silent  
and man gone, for whom  
is the juice of your yellow sugar body  
crushed in the caress of the clouds

the clouds begin to part, you are caught  
in the branches, trembling, and sink  
taken by a fisherman with the white  
fish in his net

the beach is empty, he is going  
quickly, all is gone  
oh – the moon, with a friendly gesture  
he lifts the still floundering thing  
and throws  
it back.

kau katakan padaku  
pesan terakhir:

bawakan keindahan dan  
kemudaan selalu

ruang menyesak, karena  
keusangan debu membiak  
map-map, berkas dan kertas dengan  
ujung-ujung layu dan harapan-harapan  
telah ditumpuk, diperam  
membisu dalam debu

gairah, semula menggetar  
bangunkan nyala-nyala jingga pada  
hidup yang hijau muda,  
jadi coretan-coretan  
secarik kertas dengan ketikan permohonan  
yang dibiarkan saja

jendela terbuka dan tirai menyisi  
lewatkan matahari menghangati  
jam-jam kerja yang semakin pendek  
disobek sana-sini – karena  
meja-meja lengang, asbak mengkilat  
dan telpon berdering berkali-kali  
suara hilang dalam iseng  
yang berlipat ganda ini

ah, manusia hidup kukuh-tenang  
dengan akar dalam-dalam mencekam bumi  
dan rapat-rapat, seminar, laporan  
serta prasaran, naskah-naskah kerja  
wejangsan oleh bapak-bapak atau wakilnya?



your final words were:

may you always be as lovely  
and as young as you are today

the room crowds in, as the dryness  
of dust  
multiplies

on the files, the bundles and the papers  
with their corners worn and the hopes they bear  
stacked, pressed, dumb in the dust

passion when it first trembles  
gives ginger flame  
to green young life,  
then becomes scribble  
on a piece of paper, a typed request  
carelessly initialled

the open window and curtains  
allow the sun to warm  
the working hours as they grow shorter  
and is shredded here and there  
by the empty desks, shining ash-trays  
and the telephone ringing from time to time  
its sound lost in the ever increasing monotony

proudly and gladly man lives  
his roots pressing the earth  
in meetings, seminars, reports  
conference and working papers,  
on the advice of his bosses and their bosses

hidup manusia terlalu membara  
dan tanpa isyarat akan menganggap sepi  
tumpukan debu yang berkumandang  
          menyentuh anak-anak penjual koran  
          di depan pintu, mobil-mobil dinas  
          berderetan datang dan lalu

memang,  
jauh dari hidup  
dan pesan achirmu

man's life is too intense  
hopelessly he regards the silence  
the sound of dust falling

brushing on the paper-boys  
outside – the official cars  
as they come and go

indeed  
far from life  
and your final words

*Penundaan*

karena usia yang lebih tua, dari dia  
tak lebih dari itu saja  
kesabaran, kuharapkan  
suatu kemustahilan?  
karena lebih menimang-nimang waktu  
jadi malahan lebih terburu-buru  
siapa tahu, perhitungan  
hanya beda satu-dua minggu

suatu saat kota baja dengan dinding  
dinding logika akan menyerah dan arus  
akan deras menyambar,  
membawa ke mata air di mana hidup  
lebih penuh dengan degup yang lebih nyata  
syaraf dan serat  
digenangi oleh getar bianglala

meskipun satu per satu, batu dan nisan  
endapan dari sekian peran dan laku  
ditumpuk-tumpuk –  
untuk menghalangi jalan  
tidak, ini kali akan tenang bijaksana  
mempertimbangkan segala kemungkinan:

bahwa hati kita rapuh, dan kehilangan itu  
terlalu melanda, suatu cengkeram hampa  
sudah kuketahui sejak lama

bahwa angan selalu timbul, menganyam  
pola-pola gemilang, susul-menyusul disulam  
dengan chaya, diwarnai oleh isyarat, ini  
pula tak asing lagi

*Postponement*

being older

I ask no more of him  
than patience

is that impossible?  
because he has considered more  
done more

who knows, perhaps  
a few weeks' difference at most

some time the iron city  
walled in logic  
will fall and the mighty current

swoop down  
bringing emotion to life  
starting nerves and veins

flooded in the vibration of the rainbow  
although one by one, stone and tombstone  
precipitated from numerous roles and actions  
will stack

to stop the path  
no, we must consider calmly  
weigh the possibilities:

that our lives are brittle, the loss  
may be too awful, murder made meaningless  
this have I long known

that hopes continually arise, weaving  
bright patterns, threading desires  
with dreams, colouring with promises,  
this is no longer strange

dinding akan rapuh hancur  
oleh deras arus melingkar karena bendungan  
achirnya kita buka juga

karena itu kau, karena usia dan karena  
memang lebih tahu tentang dunia, tinggalkan  
perhitungan dengan waktu, biar  
kulepas permainan laut dan bulan, kini  
menikmati kota untuk jangka tidak terlalu lama  
untuk segera, toh meninggalkannya

the walls will gently break  
in the force of the encircling flood because  
we will open the dam

because of you, because of age, and because  
of the way the world is, we must leave  
the reckoning with time, allow  
me to commence the sea-moon game, now  
enjoy the city for a brief space  
then quickly  
go

## *Sekali-sekali*

setelah tiga hari bercinta, sudah kuduga  
kata-kata tegas terang  
tak akan menjelaskan  
oasis di tengah padang  
dan bahwa hidup dijelajahi dalam-dalam  
sehingga mereka enggan kembali

dari dunia, dibatasi oleh tirai  
bulu-mata berkedip dan lingkaran cahaya  
yang tak lebih  
hanya boleh menerangi bagian pipi  
kesegaran mata air, kepenuhan  
madu hangat-tungku  
tiada lain adalah kecupanmu

siapa dia, siapa aku bila kulit  
pemisah dengan ruang menghantu  
hanya jadi lembab selubung karena  
belai merah lembayung  
mendekap muka pada dada  
membenam dalam bayang sana sini  
tersingkap rahasia dan gelap

lalu terdiam temukan kata-kata kembali  
terucap, tanpa ujung pangkal  
sebelum lingkungan mengambil wujud lagi  
betapa kejam  
perpisahan setelah sama-sama mendiami  
liang semesta penuh ilham

dan saingan pertanyaan:  
bila bertemu kembali –



## *Repetition*

After three days and nights of love, I realise  
words  
will never explain  
the oasis in the desert  
setting out to explore life  
they are reluctant to return

separated from the world by curtains  
eyelashes and a circle of light  
just strong enough  
to colour part of the cheek  
and the freshness of tears, full  
of heart-warm honey  
your kiss

which is he, which me, when skin alone  
separates ghosted spaces  
a moist cover as  
crimson red caresses  
press face to breast  
merging in the shadow of here and there  
revealing secrets and darkness  
then silently finding words again  
spoken pointlessly  
before the world reforms  
how cruel  
the separation after both living in  
the perfect mandala  
both asking:  
will the next time

akan seperti ini?  
jadi kesenyapan tanya-jawab, saat akrab  
yang telah lenyap hanya didambakan  
samar-samar nanti:

bunga berkelopak hitam  
berkembang mendadak dalam gelap  
untung, tak ada yang menyaksikan

be like this time  
a silence of question and answer, a moment of intimacy  
gone once coveted  
followed by darkness:  
black flowers  
suddenly unfold in the dark  
fortunately no one sees them

## *Cocktail party*

meluruskan kain-baju dahulu  
meletakkan lekat sanggul rapi  
lembut ikal rambut di dahi  
                    pertarungan dapat dimulai  
berlomba dengan waktu  
dengan kebosanan, apa lagi  
                    pertaruhan ilusi  
seutas benang dalam taufan  
amuk badai antara insan

taufan? ah, siapa  
yang masih peduli  
tertawa kecil, mengigit jari adalah  
                    perasaan yang dikebiri  
kedahsyatan hanya untuk dewa-dewa  
tapi deru api ungun atas  
                    tanah tandus kering  
angin liar, cambukan halilintar  
                    mengiringi

perempuan serem yang kuhadapi, dengan  
garis alis dan cemoooh tajam  
                    tertawa lantang –  
aku terjebak, gelas anggur di tangan  
tersenyum sabar pengecut menyamar –  
                    ruang menggema  
dengan guman hormat, sapa-menyapa  
dengan mengibas pelangi perempuan  
itu pergi, hadirin mengagumi

*Cocktail party*

formal-wear straight  
hair immaculate  
a curl on the forehead  
                  let the competition begin  
racing with time  
and boredom,  
                  the stakes illusions  
threads in the hurricane  
storms rage among men

storms? no one  
notices  
laugh gently, bite your finger  
                  castrate feelings  
intensity is for gods  
to be followed by  
the roar of ashen fire  
                  in the dry wasteland  
wild wind, lightning whip

I talk to a woman, with  
eyebrows and sharp ridicule  
                  piercing laughter  
and am trapped, a glass of wine in my hand  
as the hag smiling patiently swoops –  
                  the room echoes  
with mumbled politenesses, greetings  
the rainbow-coloured woman flaps her tail  
as she goes, the guests gape

mengapa tergoncang oleh cemas  
dalam-dalam menghela nafas, lemas  
hadapi saingan dalam arena?  
kata orang hanya maut pisahkan cinta  
tapi hidup merenggut, malahan maut  
harapan semu tempat bertemu  
itupun hanya kalau kau setuju

keasingan yang mempesona, segala  
tersayang yang telah hilang –  
penenggelaman  
dalam akrab dan lelap  
kepanjangan mimpi tanpa derita  
dan amuk badai antara insan?  
gumam, senyum, dan berjabat tangan.

why do I tremble with fear  
breathe deeply, choke  
    as if in a pit?  
they say only death can kill love  
but life too pulls at it, death  
    deceives us with hope of meeting again  
if you like, that is

such sparkling alienation, all  
that we love is gone —  
    torpedoed  
in friendship and sleep  
a long dream in which no one suffers  
and the storm which rages among men?  
mumbles, smiles and handshakes





## *Cyclus*

not for a moment shall I allow  
confusion of thought and bitterness  
    invade  
the uncrossable forest  
now that you have gone

gone – decently – allowing me time  
    to pack  
before I hurl myself into the flames, a  
faithful widow and pure maiden  
    I expected more  
than an honest handshake  
    and a faint smile  
past hopes, present sorrows  
form barriers, breathe deeply  
    in the race with time  
count the months and days, waste  
time, we arrived too soon

lost from my life, free  
from conditional embrace, on an island  
run aground in the final shift of hope  
    balanced tight  
in bitter reckoning  
at the border, wave and  
listen silently for a sound  
    a sign, a proof  
that you are ready for the role  
reluctantly tethered to age  
    among men

karena kaubelai dengan kata, hangati  
dengan berahi, membuahi  
hati dengan nikmat madu dan pelangi  
lembut jari mencari, menjelajahi  
bukankah segala ingin kau ketahui?

segala ingin kau ketahui  
karena asing, mungkin tersayang  
seperti maut tampak demikian, tidur  
membawa mimpi di peraduan  
paduan, dengan yang mesra, dengan kedahsyatan  
yang masih asing, yang baru lampau  
yang telah hilang

because you caressed with words, warmed  
with desire, fructified  
the heart with honeyed pleasure and the rainbow  
softly the fingers sought, pierced  
didn't you want to know it all?

you wanted it all  
being strange, perhaps love and  
death are the same, a sleep  
bringing dreams to the bed  
wed, intimately and cruelly  
still strange, still recent  
gone

Taufiq Ismail

---

## Bukit biru, bukit kelu

---

Adalah hujan dalam kabut yang ungu  
Turun sepanjang gunung dan bukit biru  
Ketika kota cahaya dan di mana bertemu  
Awan putih yang menghinggapi cemaraku

Adalah kemarau dalam sengang berdebu  
Turun sepanjang gunung dan bukit kelu  
Ketika kota tak bicara dan terpaku  
Gunung api dan hama di ladang-ladangku

Lereng-lereng senja  
Pernah menyinar merah kesumba  
Padang hilalang dan bukit membatu  
Tanah airku.

## The silent hills

---

There is rain in the violet mist  
Falling along the mountains and blue hills  
As city, light and voices meet  
White clouds perch on my window

There is drought in the lightning dust  
Falling along the mountains and silent hills  
As the city lies speechless, nailed down  
By volcano and scourge in the field

The valleys of twilight  
Shine like red coral  
The grassy fields and hills of stone  
Are my home

Kita adalah pemilik syah republik ini

---

Tidak ada lagi pilihan lain. Kita harus  
Berjalan terus  
Karena berhenti atau mundur  
Bererti hancur

Apakah akan kita jual keyakinan kita  
Dalam pengabdian tanpa harga  
Akan maukah kita duduk satu meja  
Dengan para pembunuh tahun yang lalu  
Dalam setiap kalimat yang berachiran:  
“Duli Tuanku”?

Tidak ada lagi pilihan lain. Kita harus  
Berjalan terus  
Kita adalah manusia bermata sayu, yang di tepi jalan  
Mengacungkan tangan untuk oplet dan bus yang penuh  
Kita adalah berpuluh juta yang bertahun hidup sengsara  
Dipukul banjir, gunung api, kutuk dan hama  
Dan bertanya-tanya diam inikah yang namanya merdeka  
Kita yang tak punya kepentingan dengan seribu slogan  
Dan seribu pengeras suara yang hampa suara

Tidak ada lagi pilihan lain. Kita harus  
berjalan terus.

## The republic is ours

---

There is no other choice. We must  
Go on  
Because to stop or withdraw  
Would mean destruction

Ought we sell our certitude  
For meaningless slavery  
Or sit at table  
With the murderers  
Who end each sentence  
“As Your Majesty wishes”

There is no other choice. We must  
Go on  
We are the people with sad eyes, at the edge of the road  
Waving at the crowded buses  
We are the tens of millions living in misery  
Beaten about by flood, volcano, curses and pestilence  
Who silently ask in the name of freedom  
But are ignored in the thousand slogans  
And meaningless loud-speaker voices

There is no other choice. We must  
Go on



## Adalah bel kecil di jendela

---

Sebuah bel kecil tergantung di jendela  
Di bulan Juni  
Berkelining sepi

Daun asam dan cericit burung gereja  
Keletak kuda andong-andong Yogya  
Kota tua membentang dalam debu  
Sepanjang gang ditaburnya sepi itu

Sebuah bel kecil tergantung di jendela  
Di bulan Juli  
Berke-  
li-  
ning  
Sepi.

A small bell in a window

---

A small bell hanging in a window  
In the month of June  
Rings out silence

Lemon leaves and the call of church-birds  
Clap of old carriage horses in Yogya  
An old town sprawled in the dust  
Silence scattering down its alleys

A small bell hanging in a window  
In the month of July  
Ring-  
ing  
out  
Silence

Menunggu itu sepi  
Menunggu itu puisi  
Menunggu itu nyeri  
Menunggu itu begini:

Sebuah setasiun kereta api  
Di negeri sunyi  
Malam yang berdiri di sini  
Ada wajahmu dan wajahku  
Benarkah jadi begini?

Rambutnya hitam sepi itu  
Rambutnya putih sepi itu  
Sunyi ialah sebuah bangku kamar tunggu  
Dan jam tua, berdetik di atas itu

Sunyi itu tak pernah tidur  
Sunyi itu tamu yang bisu  
Menawarkan rokok padamu

Sunyi itu mengembara ke mana  
Sunyi kota gemuruh  
Sunyi padang penembakan  
Sunyi tulang-belulang

Sebuah dunia yang ngeri  
Menyuruh orang menanti  
Ada karcis, ada kopor yang tua  
Perjalanan seperti tak habisnya

## Waiting is

---

Waiting is loneliness  
Waiting is poetry  
Waiting is terror  
Waiting is this:

A railway station  
In a strange land  
Night standing there  
Your face and mine  
Is it really happening like this?

Loneliness has black hair  
Loneliness has white hair  
Loneliness is a bench in a waiting room  
And an old clock ticking above it

Loneliness never sleeps  
Loneliness is a silent guest  
Offering cigarettes

Loneliness wanders eternally  
Is the roar of the city  
Is the battle field  
Is death

A world of horror  
Demands that you wait  
Here are the tickets, an old suit-case  
The journey seems never ending

Menunggu itu sepi  
Menunggu itu nyeri  
Menunggu itu teka-teka  
Menunggu itu ini.

Waiting is loneliness  
Waiting is terror  
Waiting is a riddle  
Waiting is this

Siapakah dirimu? Sebuah nomor  
Sederet huruf resmi  
Dalam abjad Latin  
Dari loket di ujung antri yang panjang  
Engkau bergegas ke luar gedung ini . . .  
Di luar telah menanti matahari  
Suara dan undang-undang  
Sebelum di luar, mereka di pintu akan  
Membekalimu dengan kertas-kertas  
Putih. Dan ransel bahu  
Terlampau gegas kau telah ke luar gedung ini . . .  
Di luar telah menanti padang

Garis-garis

Garis angin

Garis badai

Garis suara

Garis lurus khayali di ujungnya sebutir

Logam. Siapakah diriku?

Sebuah anti-proses

Sebilah tangan yang teracung

“Berhenti!”

Capung yang gelisah

Srigunting menukik resah

Gelatik-gelatik lalu bernyanyi

Di pohon-pohon kecil di sawah

Di atas tanggul sejarah

Di luar sungai mengalir

Dalam garis-garis

Garis ilmu-bumi

Garis tegak lurus

Garis granit.

Who are you? A number  
A row of official letters  
In roman script  
From a ticketbox at the end of a long queue  
You hurry outside the building . . .  
Outside the sun awaits  
Voices and regulations  
Before you get past the door they  
Provide you with white  
Paper, and a big bag  
You have left too quickly  
Outside is a field

Lines

Lines of wind

Lines of storm

Lines of voices

Stiff lines: imagine at their tip a drop  
of metal. Who am I?

An anti-process

a sliver of arm thrust upwards

“Stop!”

A restless dragon-fly

A blackbird pecking at anxiety

The paddybirds sing

On the small trees in the rice-field

Above the banks of history

Outside the river flows

In lines

Geographical lines.

Straight firm lines.

Granite lines.



Deretkan awan, pelangi, dengan rambutmu merah-ungu  
Taburkan pelan, pelangi, sepanjang lengkung lenganmu  
Panorama yang kemarau teramat kering  
Daunan berjuta. Angin menjadi hening

Tiada terasa lagi dimana suara memanggil-manggil  
Tiada suara lagi betapa cahaya makin mengecil  
Pohon-pohon redup berbunga di bukit dan pesisir  
Kemarauku siang, dinginku malam yang menggigil

Di sanalah dia bersimpuh, bulan yang tua dan setia  
Ketika langit seolah menutup dan kau amat pucat  
Di hutan selatan cahayamu pelan berlinangan  
Melintas jua ke ambang pasar, pada bayang-bayang jambata

Tiada terasa lagi di mana cahaya berhenti mengalir  
Tiada bintang lagi ketika bintang dalam fajar  
Dan pada pilar-pilar langit  
Awan pun bersandar

Di sanalah kau bersimpuh, bulan yang tua dan setia  
Setiap terasa lagi suara memanggil-manggil  
Pada pilar-pilar langit. Di puncak-puncaknya  
Suara Engkau yang merdu  
Suara sepi yang biru.

Graph the clouds, rainbow, with your hair of red and purple  
Scatter, slowly, rainbow, along the arch of your arm  
The searing panorama of the dry season  
Thousands of leaves. The wind growing quiet

Again the voice grows absent  
No voice; how small the light grows  
Muffled trees flower in the hills and on the beach  
My dry season is day, my cold the shivering night

There she kneels, the old and faithful moon  
As the sky seems shut and you so pale  
In the southern forest your light slowly trickles  
Past the threshold of the market, the shadows of the bridge

No longer do we feel the light cease flowing  
No more the stars speckle at day's dawn  
As the clouds rest themselves down  
On the pillars of the sky

There she kneels, the old and faithful moon  
Each moment feeling the voice call over and over again  
To the pillars in the sky. At their peaks  
Your melodious voice  
The blue voice of emptiness

Bagaimana kalau dulu bukan buah khuldi yang dimakan Adam, tapi buah alpukat.

Bagaimana kalau bumi bukan bulat, tapi segi empat.

Bagaimana kalau lagu "Indonesia Raya" kita rubah, dan kepada Kus Plus kita beri mandat.

Bagaimana kalau ibukota Amerika Hanoi dan ibukota Indonesia Monaco.

Bagaimana kalau malam nanti jam sebelas, salju turun di Gunung Sahari.

Bagaimana kalau bisa dibuktikan bahwa Ali Murtopo, Ali Sadikin dan Ali Wardhana ternyata pengarang-pengarang lagu pop.

Bagaimana kalau hutang-hutang Indonesia dibayar dengan pementasan Rendra.

Bagaimana kalau segala yang kita angankan terjadi, dan segala yang terjadi pernah kita rancangkan.

Bagaimana kalau akustik dunia jadi demikian sempurna sehingga di kamar tidur kau sampai deru bom Vietnam, gemerisik sejuta kaki pengungsi, gemuruh banjir dan gempa bumi serta suara-suara percintaan anak muda, juga bunyi industri presisi dan margsatwa Afrika.

Bagaimana kalau pemerintah diizinkan protes dan rakyat kecil mempertimbangkan protes itu.

Bagaimana kalau kesenian dihentikan saja sampai di sini, dan kita pelihara ternak sebagai pengganti.

Bagaimana kalau sampai waktunya kita tidak perlu bertanya bagaimana lagi.

- What if it were not an apple Adam ate but an avocado.
- What if the earth was not round but triangular.
- What if we changed the national anthem and gave the mandate for a new one to the Beatles.
- What if the capital of America was Hanoi and the capital of Indonesia Monaco.
- What if precisely at eleven o'clock tonight snow began to fall in Sahara Row, Jakarta.
- What if it could definitely be proved that the technocrats wrote all the pop-songs.
- What if the national debt could be paid off with Rendra's plays.
- What if all that we planned happened and all that happened had been planned by us.
- What if the world's acoustics were so good that you could hear in your own bedroom the fall of bombs in Vietnam, the rustle of a million refugee feet, the thunder of flood and earthquake and the gentle voices of young people making love, as well as the roar of factories and of the animals in Africa.
- What if the government was allowed to protest and the people had to pass judgement on their case.
- What if art stopped right where it is and we turned to keeping animals instead.
- What if the time came when we no longer needed to ever ask again what if.

## Beberapa orang dan satu lanskap

---

Berdiri depan bingkai besar ini, engkau, aku dan lanskap  
Berdiri depan kaca besar ini, engkau, aku dan lanskap  
Kita lihat jumlah hadir ini, engkau, aku dan lanskap  
Kita hitung jumlah achir ini, engkau, aku lalu lanskap

Adalah orang, satu-setengah jumlahnya, tambah satu lanskap;  
Adalah pemandangan, sepotong alam lalu orang satu dan  
setengah

Kemana pun aku menggeser, aku berangsur, diri kita terbelah  
Ada kaca terbuka: isinya sepotong alam,  
orang satu,  
satunya setengah

Dari arakan setengah meriah dan gelisah, berduyun sosok  
dan mendesah

Masuk lanskap, minta dikira seraya cepat melangkah-langkah  
Ada satu-satu yang satu, tapi yang setengah-setengah tidak  
setengah-setengah

Segalanya terberai, masai, bila hitungan nyaris selesai  
dan apakah  
kita sempat  
menyerah.



Hari depan Indonesia adalah duaratus juta mulut yang menganga.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah bola-bola lampu 15 wat, sebagian berwarna putih dan sebagian hitam, yang menyala bergantian.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah pertandingan pingpong siang-malam, dengan bola yang bentuknya seperti telur angsa.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah pulau Jawa yang tenggelam karena seratus juta penduduknya.

Kembalikan  
Indonesia  
padaku.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah satu juta orang main pingpong siang malam dengan bolatelu angsa di bawah sinar lampu 15 wat.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah pulau Jawa yang pelan-pelan tenggelam lantaran berat bebannya kemudian angsa-angsa berenang-renang di atasnya.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah duaratus juta mulut jang menganga, dan di dalam mulut itu ada bola-bola lampu 15 wat, sebagian putih dan sebagian hitam, yang menyala bergantian.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah angsa-angsa putih jang berenang-renang sambil main pingpong di atas pulau Jawa yang tenggelam dan membawa seratus juta bola lampu 15 wat ke dasar lautan.

Kembalikan  
Indonesia  
padaku.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah pertandingan pingpong siang malam dengan bola yang bentuknya seperti telur angsa.

Indonesia's future is two-hundred million gaping mouths.

Indonesia's future is 15 watt light globes, some white and some black, lighting alternately.

Indonesia's future is a ping-pong game going on all day and all night with a ball shaped like a goose-egg.

Indonesia's future is the island of Java sinking under its population of one-hundred million people.

Give  
Indonesia  
back  
to me.

Indonesia's future is one-million people playing ping-pong night and day with a goose-egg under the light of 15 watt light globes.

Indonesia's future is Java slowly sinking because of the weight of its burden and then the geese swimming on top of it.

Indonesia's future is two-hundred million gaping mouths, with 15 watt light globes in them, some white and some black, lighting alternately.

Indonesia's future is white geese swimming as they play ping-pong on top of the sinking island of Java and taking the hundred million 15 watt light globes to the bottom of the sea.

Give  
Indonesia  
back  
to me.

Indonesia's future is a ping-pong competition going on all day and all night with a ball shaped like a goose-egg.



Hari depan Indonesia adalah pulau Jawa yang tenggelam  
karena seratus juta penduduknya.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah bola-bola lampu 15 wat,  
sebagian berwarna putih dan sebagian hitam, yang  
menyala bergantian.

Hari depan Indonesia adalah dua ratus juta mulut yang  
menganga.

Kembalikan  
Indonesia  
padaku.

Indonesia's future is the island of Java sinking under its  
population of one-hundred million people.

Indonesia's future is 15 watt light globes, some white and  
some black, lighting alternately.

Indonesia's future is two-hundred million gaping mouths.

Give  
Indonesia  
back  
to me.

- Aku ingin menulis puisi, yang tidak semata-mata berurusan dengan cuaca, warna, cahaya, suara dan mega.
- Aku ingin menulis syair untuk kanak-kanak yang melompat lompat di pekarangan sekolah, yang main gundu dan petak-umpet di halaman rumah, yang menangis karena tidak naik kelas tahun ini.
- Aku ingin menulis puisi yang membuat orang berumur 55 merasa 25, yang berumur 24 merasa 54 tahun, di manapun mereka membacanya, bagaimanapun mereka membacanya: duduk atau berbaring.
- Aku ingin menulis puisi untuk penjual rokok kretek, tukang jahit kemeja, penanam lobak dan bawang perai, penambang sampan di sungai, penulis program komputer dan disertasi ilmu bedah, sehingga mereka berhenti sekejap dari kerja mereka dan sempat berkata: hidup ini, lumayan indah.
- Aku ingin menulis syair buat pensiunan-pensiunan guru SD, pelamar-pelamar lowongan kerja, para langganan rumah gadai, plonco-plonci negeri dan swasta, pasien-pasien penyakit asma dan kencing-gula serta penganggur-penganggur sarjana sehingga bila mereka baca beberapa baris sajakku, mereka bicara: hidup di Indonesia, mungkin harapan masih ada.
- Aku ingin menulis sajak yang penuh proteina, sekedar zat kapur, belerang serta vitamina utama, sehingga puisi-puisiku ada sedikit berguna bagi kerja dokter-dokter umum, dokter hewan, insyiner pertanian and pertenakan.

## I want to write poetry

---

- I want to write poetry which is no longer about the sky, colours, light, voices and clouds.
- I want to write poetry for the children running in schoolyards, playing marbles and hopscotch at home, crying because they are not being promoted this year.
- I want to write poetry which will make people who are 55 feel as if they are 25, and those who are 24 feel 54, when they read it, however they read it – lying or sitting down.
- I want to write poetry for cigarette sellers, shirt stitchers, vegetable planters, sampan sailors, computer programmers and research veterinary scientists, so that they might stop work for a moment and say – life's not so bad.
- I want to write poetry for retired school-teachers, job-applicants, pawn-shop regulars, freshers and freshettes, asthmatics and diabetics as well as unemployed graduates, so that when they read a line of my poetry they might say – life in Indonesia, maybe there's hope yet.
- I want to write poetry which is full of protein, calcium, sulphur and all the main vitamins, so that it could be of some use to general practitioners, veterinarians, agricultural engineers and animal-breeders.

Aku ingin menulis puisi bagi para pensiunan yang pensiunnya dipersulit otorisasinya, tahanan politik dan kriminal, siapa juga yang tersiksa, sehingga mereka ingat bahwa keadilan tak putus diperjuangkan.

Aku ingin menulis sajak yang bisa membuat orang ingat pada Tuhan di waktu senang, senang yang sedang-sedang atau berlebihan.

Barangkali aku tidak bisa menulis demikian.

Tapi aku kepingin menuliskannya.

Aku ingin.

Aku ingin menulis puisi yang bisa dibidikkan tepat pada tubuh kehidupan, menembus selaput lendir, jaringan lemak, susunan daging, pembuluh darah arteri dan vena, mengetuk tulang dan membenam sumsum, sehingga perubahan fisika dan kimiawi, terjadi.

Aku ingin menulis puisi di buku-catatan rapat-rapat Bappenas, pada agenda muktamar mahasiswa, surat-surat cinta muda-mudi Indonesia, pada kolom kiri lembaran wesel yang tiap bulan dikirimkan orang tua pada anaknya yang sekolah jauh di kota.

Aku ingin menulis syair pada cetak-biru biro-biro arsitek, pada payung penerjun terkembang di udara, pada iklan-iklan jamu bersalin, pada tajuk-rencana koran ibukota dan pada lagu pop anak-anak muda.

Aku ingin menulis sekali lagi puisi mengenang Jendral Sudirman yang berparu-paru satu, serta tentang sersan dan perajurit yang terjun malam di Irian Barat kemudian tersangkut di pepohonan raksasa atau terbenam di rawa-rawa malaria.

- I want to write poetry for the pensioners who are having trouble getting their pensions because of red-tape, political prisoners and criminals, anyone who is tortured, that they may remember that man must fight never-ceasingly for justice.
- I want to write poetry which will make people remember God when they are happy, very happy or tremendously happy.
- Perhaps I cannot write poetry like that.  
But I want very much to write it.
- I want to.
- I want to write poetry which can be aimed at life's body, will pierce the mucous membrane, the thoracic region, the flesh, the arterial and capillary tubes, strike the bone and enter the marrow, and cause physical and chemical changes.
- I want to write poetry in the diary of the National Planning Body, in student council meetings, in the love-letters of young Indonesians, in the left-hand columns of the money-orders sent every month by parents to their children at school in far-off cities.
- I want to write poetry in the blue-prints of architects, on the spreading parachute falling through the sky, in advertisements for medicinal herbs that make barren women pregnant, in the editorials of the national newspapers and in the pop songs of youth.
- I want to write poetry about General Sudirman with his one lung, and about the sergeants and men who parachuted at night into West Irian then hit large trees or drowned in malarial swamps.

- Aku ingin menulis syair yang mencegah koprak-koprak tak pernah bertempur agar berhenti menempelangi sopir-sopir oplet jang tarikannya payah.
- Aku ingin menulis sajak ambisius yang bisa menghentikan perang-saudara dan perang-tidak-saudara, puisi k01, gencatan senjata, puisi yang bisa membatalkan pemilihan umum, menambal birokrasi, menghibur para pengungsi dan menyembuhkan pasien-pasien psikiatri.
- Aku ingin menulis seratus pantun buat kanak-kanak berumur lima dan sepuluh tahun hingga bila dibacakan buat mereka, maka mereka tertawa-tawa dan gigi mereka yang putih dan rata jelas kelihatan.
- Aku ingin menulis puisi yang menyebabkan nasi campur dimakan serasa hidangan hotel-hotel mahal dan yang menyebabkan petani-petani membatalkan niat naik haji dengan menggadaikan sawah dan perhiasan emas sang isteri.
- Aku ingin menulis puisi tentang merosotnya pendidikan, tentang Nabi Adam, keluarga berencana, sepur Hikari, lembah Anai, Amirmachmud, Piccadilly Circus, taman kanak-kanak, Opsus, Raja Idrus, nasi gudeg, kota Samarkand, Raymond Westerling, Laos, Emil Salim, Roxas Boulevard, Dja'afar Nur Aidit, modal asing, Checkpoint Charlie, Zainal Zakse, utang \$3 milyar, pelabuhan Rotterdam, Champs Elysses dan bayi ajaib, semuanya disusun kembali menurut urutan abjad.
- Aku ingin menulis puisi yang mencegah kemungkinan pedagang-pedagang Jepang merampoki kayu-kayu di rimba Kalimantan, melarang penggali-penggali minyak dan penanam modal mancanegara menyuapi penguasa-penguasa yang lemah iman, dan melarang sogokan uang pada pejabat bea-cukai serta pengadilan.

- I want to write poetry which will stop corporals who have never fought from abusing the trishaw drivers who pull them with such difficulty.
- I want to write ambitious poetry which can stop civil war and uncivil war, poems about cease-fire, poems to stop the general election, improve bureaucracy, soothe the fugitives and cure the mentally ill.
- I want to write a hundred nursery rhymes for children of five and ten, so that when they hear them read they will laugh and their white healthy teeth will shine.
- I want to write poetry that will make fried-rice taste like a banquet in a rich hotel and stop peasants pawning their lands and their wife's jewellery to go to Mecca.
- I want to write poetry about the crisis in education, about the prophet Adam, family planning, the Hikari express, the Anai plains, Minister for the Interior Amir Machmud, Piccadilly Circus, kindergarten, military intelligence, King Idrus, nasi goreng, Samarkand, Raymond Westerling, Laos, Economics genius Emil Salim, Roxas Boulevard, Dja'far Nur Aidit head of the Communist Party of Indonesia, foreign capital, Checkpoint Charley, Zainal Zakse, the foreign debt of \$3 million, Rotterdam Harbour, the Champs Élysées and the baby who could recite the Koran while still in the womb, in alphabetical order.
- I want to write poetry that will stop the possibility of Japanese businessmen pillaging the forests of Borneo, forbid digging for oil and foreign investors bribing officials of little faith, corrupting customs-officers and the system of justice.



Aku ingin menggubah syair yang menghapuskan dendam  
anak-anak yatim piatu yang orang-tua dan  
paman-bibinya terbunuh pada waktu  
pemberontakan komunis yang telah silam.  
Barangkali aku tidak sempat menuliskannya semua.  
Tapi aku ingin menulis puisi-puisi demikian.  
Aku ingin.

I want to write poetry that will wipe out the bitterness of  
orphans whose parents and relatives were killed  
in the communist coup.

Perhaps I cannot write about so many things.  
But I want very much to write poetry like that.  
I want to.

—

Goenawan Mohamad

---

Dingin tak tercatat

---

Dingin tak tercatat  
pada termometer

Kota hanya basah

Angin sepanjang sungai  
mengusir, tapi kita tetap saja

di sana. Seakan-akan

gerimis raib  
dan cahaya berenang

mempermainkan warna.

Tuhan, kenapa kita bisa  
bahagia?

Cold unregistered

---

Cold unregistered  
on the thermometer

City wet

The wind along the river  
driving us away, yet we stay

rain invisible  
and the light swimming

playing with colour

God, how can we ever  
be happy?

“Cicak itu, cintaku, berbicara tentang kita.  
Yaitu nonsens.”

Itulah yang dikatakan baginda kepada permaisurinya, pada malam itu. Nafsu di ranjang telah jadi teduh dan senyap merayap antara sendi dan spreii.

“Mengapa tak percaya? Mimpi akan meyakinkan seperti matahari pagi.”

Perempuan itu terisak, ketika Anglingdarma menutupkan kembali kain ke dadanya dengan nafas yang dingin, meskipun ia mengecup rambutnya. Esokhari permaisuri membunuh diri dalam api.

Dan baginda pun mendapatkan akal bagaimana ia harus melarikan diri – dengan pertolongan dewa-dewa entah dari mana – untuk tidak setia.

“Batik Madrim, Batik Madrim, mengapa harus, patihku? Mengapa harus seorang mencintai kesetiaan lebih dari kehidupan dan sebagainya dan sebagainya?”

(The story: Anglingdarma, who understands the languages of the animal world, refuses to tell his queen what two lizards are talking about. Annoyed, she decides to commit suicide by throwing herself into a fire. He is supposed to do the same, but at the last moment turns himself into a bird and flees. Batik Madrim is his wise and loyal vizier.)

“The lizards, my love, are talking about us.  
Talking nonsense.”

So the king said to his queen that night. Breath in the bed flowed calmly and twilight crawled between the mattress and the sheet.

“Why do you not believe me? Dreams will convince you as surely as tomorrow’s sun.”

The woman wept as Anglingdarma coldly pulled the cover back over her breasts, even though he kissed her long, long hair.

In the morning she died.

Then the king realised that he must flee – with the help of the gods (I forget which ones) – because of his faithlessness.

“Batik Madrim, Batik Madrim, why, my lord? Why must one love faithfulness more than life and such like and so forth?”

Tidurlah, bocah, di atas bumi yang tak jua tidur  
Tidurlah di atas rumput, di atas pasir, di atas ranjang  
Tidurlah bersama rama-rama, ombak laut atau lampu yang  
temaram  
Yang terus menyanyi, terus menyanyi perlahan-lahan

Tidurlah, bocah, sampai ketukan di tengah malam  
Sampai engkau bangkit dan pulau demi pulau mendengarkan  
Bahwa bom yang pecah membagi bumi  
Tak bisa mencegah engkau menyanyi "Di timur Matahari"



## Lullaby

---

Sleep, child, on the earth which never sleeps  
Sleep on the grass, on the sand, on the bed  
Sleep with the butterflies, the waves of the sea and the  
    bright lights,  
Which sing, slowly sing

Sleep child, despite the curse in the night  
Until you wake and all shall know  
That even falling bombs  
Cannot halt your lullaby

Gelitikkan, musim, panasmu usiaku  
Bersama matahari. Dari jauh  
Bumi tertidur oleh nafasmu, dan oleh daun  
Yang amat rimbun dan amat teduh  
Dan seperti mimpi  
Laut kian perlahan  
Kian perlahan.

Pada saat itu seorang tua pun jatuh di makamnya  
Pada saat itu seorang anakpun bangkit dari buaiannya  
Seorang anak, yang tampil padaku, yang bicara padaku:  
– Saudaraku, hembuskan sajak ke rabuku –  
Kemudian kuhembuskan sajak ke rabunya  
Tapi ia tumbuh juga jadi tua  
Hanya di matanya  
Ada puisi  
Dan doa dalam puisi  
Menyanyi hidup abadi.

(Ketika ia mati, musim belum lagi mati  
Ketika ia ditanamkan, bunga tumbuh di pusat makam  
Dan ketika ia dilupakan, matari pun berkata pelan:  
– Ah, ia padaku teramat sayang – )

Stir my years with your warmth, season,  
With the sun. From afar  
The earth sleeps in your breath, wrapped in leaves  
Dense and calm  
And as if in a dream  
The sea slowly  
Slows

As an old man is dropped in his grave  
A young boy rises from his embrace  
A boy, visible to me alone, who says:  
– Brother, breathe a poem into my lungs –  
Then I breathe a poem into his lungs  
But he ages and is old  
Only in his eyes  
Is there poetry  
A poem  
And a prayer in the poem  
Promising eternal life.

(When he died the season had not yet finished  
When he was buried flowers grew from his grave  
And when he was forgotten, the sun slowly said  
– He loved me best of all – )

Senja pun jadi kecil, kota pun jadi putih

---

Senja pun jadi kecil  
Kota pun jadi putih  
Di subway  
Aku tak tahu saat pun sampai

Ketika berayun musim  
Dari sayap langit yang beku  
Ketika burung-burung, di rumput dingin  
Terhenti mempermainkan waktu

Ketika kita berdiri sunyi  
Pada dinding biru ini  
Menghitung ketidak-pastian dan bahagia  
Menunggu seluruh usia

Twilight fades the city white

---

Twilight fades  
The city white  
In the subway  
I have no idea of when we arrive

As the season falls  
From the frozen wings of the sky  
As the birds on the cold grass  
Cease their game with time

As we stand alone  
Against the blue wall  
Balancing uncertainty and pleasure  
Waiting for death

Di bawah bulan Marly  
dan pohon musim panas  
Ada seribu kereta-api  
menjemputmu pada batas

Mengapa mustahil mimpi  
mengapa waktu memintas  
Seketika berachir berahi  
begitu bergegas

Lalu jatuh daun murbei  
dan airmata panas  
Lalu jatuh daun murbei  
dan engkau terlepas

Beneath Marly moon  
and summer trees  
A thousand trains stand ready  
to meet you at the border

Why is it impossible to dream  
Why does time interpose  
In a second desire fails  
suddenly —

Then the mulberry leaves fell  
and tears  
Mulberry leaves fell  
and you were free

Marly-le-Roi is a small village some miles away from Paris, where the poet spent his holidays while studying in Europe. The town is built of old houses and surrounded by a vast, beautiful park and a forest in which the pre-Revolutionary royalty hunted.

I

Di udara dingin proses pun mulai: malam membereskan  
daun-daun  
menyiapkan ranjang mati.  
Hari akan melengkapkan tahun  
sebelum akhirnya pergi.

II

Kini akan habis matahari  
yang membujuk anak ke pantai  
Tinggal renyai  
Warna berganti-ganti. Dan Engkau tak mengerti.

III

Pada kalender musim pun diam  
Pada kalender aku pun bosan.  
Di bawah daun-daun merah, bersembunyi jejak-Mu singgah  
Sunyi dan abadi. Musim panas begitu megah.

IV

Kabar terachir hanya salju  
Suara dari jauh, dihembus waktu  
Kita tak lagi berdoa. Kita tak bisa menerka  
Hanya ada senja, panas penghabisan yang renta.



1

In the purple sky the process begins: twilight arranging the  
leaves  
Preparing death's bed.  
Day will complete the year  
Before the final journey.

2

Now the sun which tempted the children to the beach  
Is vanished  
Only the drizzle remains  
The colours change. And You do not understand.

3

Summer silent on the calendar  
On the calendar my boredom.  
The visiting footprints of God hide beneath red leaves  
Lonely, eternal. So glorious the season.

4

Snow the final word  
A distant voice blown by time  
We no longer pray. We cannot understand  
Only the twilight lingers, the final shabby heat.

Di luar salju terus. Hampir pagi.  
Tubuhmu terbit dari berahi.  
Angin menembus. Hilang lagi.  
Nafasmu membayang dalam dingin. Mencari.

Panas katulistiwa itu  
gamelan perkawinan itu  
tak ada kini padaku.  
Adakah kau tahu?

Hanya angin, hanya senyap, hanya rusuk  
darimana engkau ada.  
Hanya dingin. Lindap. Lalu kantuk  
darimana engkau tiada.

Outside snow falls. Almost day.  
Your body shaped in desire.  
The wind pierces. And departs.  
Your breath a shadow in the cold. Searching.

Fetid dullness  
Marriage rhythm  
Absent in me  
Can you tell?

Only wanting, loneliness, separateness  
Within you.  
Only cold, fog, tiredness  
Without you.

## Tentang seorang yang terbunuh di sekitar hari pemilihan umum

---

“Tuhan, berikanlah suaraMu, kepadaku”

Seperti jadi senyap salak anjing ketika ronda menemukan mayatnya di tepi pematang. Telungkup. Seperti mencari harau dan hangat padi. Tapi bau asing itu dan dingin pipinya jadi aneh, di bawah bulan. Dan kemudian mereka pun berdatang senter, suluh dan kunang-hunang – tapi tak seorang pun mengenalinya. Ia bukan orang sini, hansip itu berkata.

“Berikanlah suaraMu”

Di bawah petromaks kelurahan mereka menemukan liang luka yang lebih. Bayang-bayang bergoyang sibuk dan beranda meninggal bisik. Orang ini tak berkartu. Ia tak bernama. Ia tak berpartai. Ia tak bertandagambar. Ia tak ada yang menangisi, karena kita tak bisa menangisi. Apa gerakan agamanya?

“Juru peta yang Agung, dimana tanahairku?”

Lusa kemudian mereka membacanya di koran kota, di halaman pertama. Ada seorang yang menangis entah mengapa. Ada seorang yang tak menangis entah mengapa. Ada seorang anak yang letih dan membikin topi dari koran pagi itu, yang diterbangkan angin kemudian. Lihatlah. Di udara berpasang layang-layang, semua bertopang pada cuaca. Lalu burung-burung sore hinggap di kawat-kawat, sementara bangau-bangau menuju ujung senja, melintasi lapangan yang gundul dan warna yang panjang, seperti asap yang sirna.

“Tuhan, berikanlah suaraMu, kepadaku.”

“O God, may I be among the elect.”

When the patrol discovered the body at the edge of the rice-field it was like the sudden silencing of a barking dog. Face down. As if searching for the fragrance and warmth of the rice. But the smell was strange and the cold on his cheeks unusual. The moon shone. Then they came – flashlights, torches, fireflies – but none of them knew who he was. He is not from here, said the civil-defence officer.

“May I be among the elect.”

Beneath the hurricane lamps of the local office they found more wounds. The shadows shook and the verandah remained in whispers. The man had no identity card. He had no name. He had no party. He had no one to cry for him because we could not cry. We did not even know what religion he was.

“O great Map-maker, where is my homeland?”

In the morning the city people read about him in the papers. Some cried without knowing why. Others didn't, without knowing why. A pallid child made a hat from a paper and the wind later blew it away. See, there it goes. Into the air with the kites, masking the light. Then the afternoon birds perched on the wires, as the geese flew towards the twilight, past the bare plain and the lengthening colours, like ascending smoke.

“O God, may I be among the elect.”

Di kota itu, kata orang, gerimis telah jadi logam

---

Di kota itu, kata orang, gerimis telah jadi logam. Di bawah cahaya hari pun bercadar, tapi aku tahu kita akan sampai ke sana.

Dan kita bercinta tanpa batuk yang tersimpan, membiarkan gumpal darah di gelas itu menghitam. Dan engkau bertanya mengapa udara berserbuk di antara kita?

Lalu pagi selesai, burung lerai dan sisa bulan tertinggal di luar,  
di atas cakrawala aspal.

Jika samsu pun berdebu, kekasihku, juga pelupukmu.  
Tapi tutupkan matamu, dan bayangkan aku menjemputmu,  
mautmu.

It is a town, so they say, in which the rain has become lead

It is a town, so they say, in which the rain has become lead.  
Beneath the covering light of day, only I know our  
destination.

And we will cough as we love, allowing the globules of blood  
in the glass to turn green. And you will wonder why the air  
pollinates in the space between us.

Then the morning will finish, the birds separate and the  
remains of the moon hang outside, above the asphalt sky.

As the sun gathers dust, my love, so shall your eyelids. But  
close your eyes and imagine me coming to meet you, your  
death.

Ia dengar kepak sayap kelelawar dan gugur sisa hujan dari daun, karena angin pada kemuning. Ia dengar resah kuda serta langkah pedati ketika langit bersih kembali menampakkan bimasakti, yang jauh. Tapi di antara mereka berdua, tidak ada yang berkata-kata.

Lalu ia ucapkan perpisahan itu, kematian itu. Ia melihat peta, nasib, perjalanan dan sebuah peperangan yang tak semuanya disebutkan.

Lalu ia tahu perempuan itu tak akan menangis. Sebab bila, esok pagi pada rumput halaman ada tapak yang menjauh ke utara, ia tak akan mencatat yang telah lewat dan yang akan tiba, karena ia tak berani lagi.

Anjasmara, adikku, tinggallah, seperti dulu.  
Bulan pun lamban dalam angin, abai dalam waktu.  
Lewat remang dan kunang-kunang, kaulupakan wajahku,  
kulupakan wajahmu.



(Damarwulan is here taking leave of Anjasmara, before he goes to battle the invincible Menakjingga in defence of his queen. *Asmaradana* is a Javanese song-form reserved for songs of love. One of the most popular songs has the two beautiful lines: *Karia mukti, wong aju/ Kakangmas pamit palestra* – Stay and be faithful, beautiful one/ I leave to meet death.)

He heard the beat of the wings of the bats and the fall of the rest of the rain, the wind against the teak trees. He heard the restlessness of the horses and the tug of the chariot as the sky cleared of cloud, revealing the pole-star in the distance. Between them words were unnecessary.

Then he spoke of the separation, the death. He saw the map, fate, the journey and a war indistinctly.

He realised she would not cry. In the morning there would be footprints on the grass in the yard, to the north. She would refuse to consider what had passed or what was to come, no longer daring to do so.

Anjasmara, my love, stay, again.

The moon is covered by the wind, time ignores it.

Passing cloud and ember, you forget my face, I forget yours.

Sapardi Djoko Damono

---

masih terdengar sampai di sini  
dukaMu abadi. Malam pun sesaat terhenti  
sewaktu dinginpun terdiam, di luar  
langit yang membayang samar

kueja setia, semua pun yang sempat tiba  
sehabis menempuh ladang Qain dan bukit Golgota  
sehabis menyekap beribu kata, di sini  
di rongga-rongga yang mengecil ini

kusapa dukaMu jua, yang dahulu  
yang meniupkan zarah ruang dan waktu  
yang capai menyusun Huruf. Dan terbaca  
sepi manusia, jelaga

even now we hear  
the eternity of Your sadness. Night stopping a moment  
when cold grows quiet, outside  
the sky shadowing dimness

I faithfully record all that happened  
after the field of Cain and the hill of Golgotha  
after a thousand words ripen, here  
in these narrowing spaces

I address Your sadness too, of old  
which blew particles of space and time  
which finally formed the Word. And I read:  
the loneliness of man, dust

aku adalah Adam  
yang telah memakan buah apel itu;  
Adam yang tiba-tiba sadar kehadirannya sendiri,  
terkejut dan merasa malu.  
aku adalah Adam yang kemudian mengerti  
baik dan buruk, dan mencoba lolos  
dari dosa ke lain dosa;  
Adam yang selalu mengawasi diri sendiri  
dengan rasa curiga,  
dan berusaha menutupi wajahnya.  
akulah tak lain Adam yang menggelepar  
dalam jaring waktu dan tempat,  
tak tertolong lagi dalam kenyataan:  
firdaus yang hilang;  
lantaran kesadaran dan curiga yang berlebih  
atas Kehadirannya sendiri.  
aku adalah Adam  
yang mendengar suara Tuhan:  
selamat berpisah, Adam.

I am Adam  
who ate the apple;  
Adam suddenly aware of himself,  
startled and ashamed.

I am Adam who realized  
good and evil, passing  
from one sin to another;  
Adam continuously suspicious  
of himself,  
hiding his face.

I am Adam floundering  
in the net of space and time,  
with no help from reality:  
paradise lost;  
because of my mistrust  
of the Presence.

I am Adam  
who heard God say:  
farewell, Adam.

beribu saat dalam kenangan  
surut pelahan  
kita mendengarkan bumi menerima tanpa mengaduh  
sewaktu detik pun jatuh

kita dengar bumi yang tua dalam setia  
Kasih tanpa suara  
sewaktu bayang-bayang kita memanjang  
mengabur batas ruang

kita pun bisu tersekat dalam pesona  
sewaktu Ia pun memanggil-manggil  
sewaktu Kata membuat kita begitu terpencil  
di luar cuaca

a thousand remembered seconds  
ebb slowly  
we hear the earth receive without complaint  
the final seconds fall

we hear the earth grown old in faithfulness  
silent Love  
as our shadows lengthen  
blackening the borders of space

we are dumb, stuck fast in enchantment  
as He calls  
as the Word isolates us  
outside its warmth



mengapa kita masih juga bercakap  
hari hampir gelap  
menyekap beribu kata di antara karangan bunga  
di ruang semakin maya, dunia purnama

sampai takada yang sempat bertanya  
mengapa musim tiba-tiba reda  
kita dimana, Waktu seorang bertahan menanti  
di luar para pengiring jenazah menanti

why do we still talk  
day is nearly dark  
thousands of words ripen among the wreaths  
in the increasingly transitory space, full-moon world

until no one is prepared to ask  
why the season suddenly alters  
where are we. As I struggle here  
outside the funeral procession waits

waktu lonceng berbunyi  
percakapan merendah, kita kembali menanti-nanti  
kau berbisik: siapa lagi akan tiba  
siapa lagi menjemputmu berangkat berduka

di ruangan ini kita gaib dalam gema. Di luar malamhari  
mengendap, kekal dalam rahasia  
kita pun setia, memulai percakapan kembali  
seakan abadi, menanti-nanti lonceng berbunyi

when the bell rings  
conversation lowers, we wait again  
you whisper: who else is coming  
who else to meet you on your sad journey

in the room we turn mysteriously into echoes. Outside  
    night  
settles, eternal in its secrecy  
faithfully we too begin our conversation again  
as if forever, waiting for the bell to ring

Tiba-tiba malam pun risik

---

tiba-tiba malam pun risik  
beribu Bisik  
tiba-tiba engkau pun lengkap menerima  
satu-satunya Duka

## Suddenly night rustles

---

suddenly night rustles  
a thousand Whispers  
suddenly you are ready to receive  
the only Sadness

## Gerimis jatuh

---

gerimis jatuh kaudengar suara di pintu  
bayang-bayang angin berdiri di depanmu  
tak usah kauucapkan apa-apa; seribu kata  
menjelma malam, takada yang di sana

takusah; kata membeku, detik  
meruncing di ujung Sepi itu  
menggelincir jatuh  
waktu kaututup pintu. Belum teduh dukamu.

## The rain falls

---

as the rain falls you catch a voice at the door  
the shadows of the wind stand before you  
there is no need to say anything; a thousand words  
incarnate night, nothing is there

no use; the words freeze, seconds  
sharpen at the tip of Silence  
slip and fall  
as you close the door. Uncomforted



dari sayap-sayap burung kecil itu  
berguguran sepi, sepiku  
saat terhenti di sebuah taman kota ini  
daun jatuh di atas bangku, bagai mimpi

di antara datang dan suatu kali pergi  
beribu lonceng berbunyi  
kekal sewaktu bercakap kepada hati  
lalu kepada bumi. Di sini aku menanti

A park in the afternoon

---

from the wings of this small bird  
silence scatters, my silence  
as I sit in a park in this town  
leaves fall on my bench, like dreams

between coming and once going  
a thousand bells ring  
eternity speaks to my heart  
then to the earth. Here I wait



We tiptoe along  
a tiny road  
in our bare feet; we are pilgrims  
to the graves of those who have given us birth.  
Do not wake them up!

We bring nothing. Neither  
incense nor even flowers;  
only a small bundle of plans  
(continually postponed) to  
boast of.

Will we find cruel faces  
or bones, or the remains of their bodies  
there? No. They are only memories.  
Only casuarina stems stabbing the sky  
with their roots in the hard earth.

In fact, we never knew them;  
our parents told us fairy-stories  
about them, our ancestors,  
without mentioning their names.

They are only figures in our dreams  
memories which make us think  
that we might be.

We are pilgrims; tiptoeing to  
the end of this tiny road:  
an open field

casuarina stems  
the wind.

There is no fragrance of incense, there are no flowers;  
they have slept since the first century  
since the First Day.

There are no bones, there are no remains  
of their bodies.

Ibu-bapa kita sungguh bijaksana, terjebak  
kita dalam dongengan nina-bobok.  
Di tangan kita berkas-berkas rencana  
di atas kepala  
sang Surya.



Begini: kita mesti berpisah. Sebab sudah terlampau lama bercinta, sebab anak-anak kita telah mengusir ibu-bapanya, dan sebab takada rumah lagi yang masih terbuka.

Mula-mula airmata, yang cepat mendingin, kita pun pergi seperti apa kata kitab-kitab itu, sehabis makan malam.

Siapa yang menghantarkan kita?

Hati kita sendiri, lebih unggul dari derita, lebih unggul dari putus-asa, lebih unggul dari sepi; ditanamnja pohon jeruk di pekarangan bekas rumah kita, dicoretkannya kapur penolak bala di tiap ambang pintu, lalu kita tusuk sendiri duabelah mata kita agar tak terlihat lagi adegan-adegan cinta, agar tak sakithati mengenangkannya.

Kita tinggalkan kota ini, ketika menyeberang sungai terasa waktu masih mengalir di luar diri kita. Awas, jangan menoleh, takada yang memerlukan kita lagi takada yang memanggil kembali; perkara kita tak hanya sampai di sini. Mari . . .

Look, we've got to go. For  
we have loved too long, for our children  
have driven us out,  
and because there is no house  
which will receive us.  
First the tears, which will quickly cool,  
we are going as the holy books said we would,  
after our final supper.  
Who will escort our going?  
Our own hearts, more proud than suffering,  
more proud than hopeless, more proud  
than desolate; plant the orange tree  
in the yard of what once was our house, scratch  
lime against disaster over each threshold,  
then stab out both our eyes  
so we never again witness the acts of love  
so our hearts do not grow bitter in its remembrance.  
We leave the city. As we cross the river  
we feel time  
flowing around us. Be careful, do not look back  
there is no one who needs us  
no one who will call us again;  
our case does not rest here. Come . . .



saat tiada pun tiada  
aku berjalan (tiada-  
gerakan, serasa  
isarat) Kita pun bertemu

sepasang Tiada  
tersuling (tiada-  
gerakan, serasa  
nikmat): Sepi meninggi

In prayer: II

---

when non-being is not  
I walk (without  
moving, as if there were  
a sign) We meet

a pair of Non-beings  
distilled (without  
moving, as if  
happy): Silence climaxes

## Ketika jari-jari bunga terbuka

---

ketika jari-jari bunga terbuka  
mendadak terasa: betapa sengit  
cinta Kita  
cahaya bagai kabut, kabut cahaya; di langit

menyisih awan hari ini; di bumi  
meriap sepi yang purba;  
ketika kemarau terasa ke bulu-bulu mata, suatu pagi  
di sayap kupu-kupu, di sayap warna

suara burung di ranting-ranting cuaca  
bulu-bulu cahaya: betapa parah  
cinta Kita  
mabuk berjalan, di antara jerit bunga-bunga rekah

As the petals of the flower open

---

as the petals of the flower open  
we suddenly feel the violence  
of Our love  
light gloom, gloom light; in the sky

the clouds part; on the earth  
the ancient loneliness spreads  
as the dry-season is felt on our lashes, and then one day  
on the wings of a butterfly, on the wings of colour

the voices of birds on the branches of air  
feathers of light: how grievous  
is Our love  
as we walk drunkenly among the screams of splitting flowers

cahaya yang ini, Siapakah?  
(kelopak-kelopak malam  
berguguran) kalilangit yang kabur  
dalam kamar, dalam Persetubuhan

butir demi butir  
(Kau dan aku, aku  
dan serbukmalam) tergelincir  
menyatu

Perkawinan takdimanapun, tak-  
kapanpun  
kelopak demi kelopak terbuka  
malam pun sempurna

## Marriage poem

---

Whose is it, this light?  
(the petals of the night  
fall) the horizon glooms  
in the room, in Lovemaking

grain by grain  
(You and i, i  
and the pollen of the night) slide  
unite

Marriage which is placeless, time  
-less  
petal by petal opened  
perfect night

seperti engkau berbicara di ujung jalan  
(waktu dingin, sepi gerimis tiba-tiba  
seperti engkau memanggil-manggil di kelokan itu  
untuk kembali berduka)

untuk kembali kepada rindu  
panjang dan cemas  
seperti engkau yang memberi tanda tanpa lampu-lampu  
supaya menyahutmu, Mu

A light drizzle in Jakarta Street, Malang

---

it is as if you speak at the end of the road  
(in the cold, silence suddenly drizzles  
as if you call in the curve of the road  
that we should again sorrow)

that we should again yearn  
at length and in fear  
as if you give an unlit sign  
that we should greet you, You



1

darah tercecer di ladang itu. Siapa pula  
binatang-korban kali ini, saudara  
lalu senyap pula. Berapa jaman telah menderita  
semenjak Ia pun mengusir kita dari Sana

awan-awan kecil mengenalnya kembali, serunya:  
telah terbantai Abel, darah merintih kepada Bapa  
(aku pada pihakmu, saudara, pandang ke muka  
masih tajam bau darah itu. Kita ke dunia)

2

kalau Kau pun bernama Kesunyian, baiklah  
tengah-hari kita bertemu kembali: sehabis  
kubunuh anak itu. Di tengah ladang aku tinggal sendiri  
bertahan menghadapi Matahari

dan Kau pun di sini. Pandanglah duabelah tanganku  
berlumur darah saudaraku sendiri  
pohon-pohon masih tegak, mereka pasti mengerti  
dendam manusia yang setia tetapi tersisih ke tepi

benar. Telah kubunuh Abel, kepada siapa  
tertumpu sakit-hati alam, dendam pertama kemanusiaan  
awan-awan di langit tetap berarak, angin senantiasa  
menggugurkan daunan; segala atasnamamu: Kesunyian

1

the blood spills in the field. Who  
is the sacrificial-animal this time, brother?  
Then silence. How many ages have suffered  
since He drove us out of There

the small clouds recognise it, they shout:  
Abel has been butchered, his blood cries out to God  
(I am on your side, brother, look ahead  
though sharp the smell of the blood. We go to the world)

2

if You are Non-being, it is well  
that we meet in the middle of the day: after I have killed  
him. In the middle of the plain I remain alone  
enduring beneath the Sun

and You are here too. Look at my two hands  
stained with the blood of my brother  
the trees remain stiff, they understand  
the bitterness of a faithful man swept to one side

true. I killed Abel, the recipient  
of nature's bitterness, of humanity's first hatred  
the clouds in the sky still move, the wind  
still fells the leaves; all in your name: Non-being

kupandang kelam yang merapat ke sisi kita  
siapa itu di sebelah sana, tanyamu tiba-tiba  
(malam berkabut seketika) Barangkali menjemputmu  
barangkali berkabar penghujan itu

kita terdiam saja di pintu. Menunggu  
atau ditunggu, tanpa janji terlebih dahulu  
kenalkah ia padamu, desakmu (Kemudian sepi  
terbata-bata menghardik berulang kali)

bayang-bayangnya pun hampir sampai di sini. Jangan  
ucapkan selamat malam; undurlah perlahan  
(pastilah sudah gugur hujan  
di hulu sungai itu); itulah Saat itu, bisikku

kukecap ujung jarimu; kau pun mentapku:  
bunuhlah ia, suamiku (Kutatap kelam itu  
bayang-bayang yang hampir lengkap mencaipaku  
lalu kukatakan: mengapa Kau tegak di situ)

I see darkness gathering around us

---

I see darkness gathering around us  
who is it, standing over there, you suddenly ask  
(the night grows hazy for a moment) Perhaps he has come  
for me  
perhaps he has come to tell of the rain

we are silent at the door. Waiting  
or waited for, without prior appointment  
does he know you, you ask (Then emptiness  
restlessly scolds over and over again)

his shadows are almost here. Do not  
say good-night; go slowly  
(no doubt the rain falls  
at the head of the river): it is the Moment, I whisper

I kiss your finger-tips: you look at me  
kill him, my husband (I look at the haze  
the shadows almost completely covering me  
then ask why You stand there so stiffly)

## Sonnet X

---

siapa menggores di langit biru  
siapa meretas di awan lalu  
siapa mengkristal di kabut itu  
siapa mengertap di bunga layu  
siapa cerna di warna ungu  
siapa bernafas di detak waktu  
siapa berkelebat setiap kubuka pintu  
siapa mencair di bawah pandangku  
siapa terucap di celah kata-kataku  
siapa mengaduh di bayang-bayang sepiku  
siapa tiba menjemput berburu  
siapa tiba-tiba menyibak cadarku  
siapa meledak dalam diriku  
: siapa Aku

## Sonnet X

---

who scratches at the blue sky  
who tears at the passing clouds  
who crystallizes in the spreading fog  
who fades in the dying flower  
who dissolves in the purple twilight  
who breathes in each second of time  
who rushes past each time I open the door  
who melts beneath my gaze  
who speaks in the space of my words  
who sorrows in the shadows of my silence  
who comes hunting to meet me  
who suddenly tears away my veil  
who explodes within me  
who am I

dan Adam turun di hutan-hutan  
mengabur dalam dongengan  
dan kita tiba-tiba di sini  
tengah ke langit: kosong-sepi . . . .

Adam has gone down into the forest  
confused in legends  
and we are suddenly here  
gazing into the sky: empty-silent . . .



(i)

sebermula adalah kabut; dan dalam kabut  
senandung lonceng, ketika selemba daun luruh,  
setengah bermimpi, menepi ke bumi, luput  
(kaudengarkanah juga seperti Suara mengaduh)

(ii)

dan cahaya (yang membasuhmu pertama-tama)  
bernyanyi bagi capung, kupu-kupu dan bunga; Cahaya  
(yang menawarkan kicau burung) susut tiba-tiba  
pada selemba daun tua, pelan terbakar, tanpa sisa

(iii)

menjelma bayang-bayang. Bayang-bayang yang tiba-tiba  
tersentak  
ketika seekor burung menyambar capung  
(selamat pagi pertama bagi matahari), risau bergerak-gerak  
ketika sepasang kupu-kupu merendah ke bumi basah,  
bertarung

(i)

in the beginning was fog; and in the fog  
echoes of a bell, as a single leaf falls,  
and, half-asleep, edging to the sea, vanishes  
(can you hear it sighing, like a Voice)

(ii)

and the light (which first bathed you)  
singing for a dragonfly, flowers, and two butterflies;  
the Light (laughing at a bird's song) suddenly retreating  
onto an old leaf, slowly burning, leaving no trace

(iii)

turning into shadows, Shadows which suddenly stir  
as the bird swoops on the butterfly  
(good morning sun), shivering restlessly  
as the butterflies fall to the wet earth, fighting

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