

# WOMEN IN Y.B. MANGUNWIJAYA'S *BURUNG-BURUNG RANTAU*: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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***Abstract:** According Kundera, a novel is not convention but is a writer's investigation of experience in the pitfalls of life. A novel can be used to discuss the issues of women and gender. One novel that explores the issue of women is *Burung-burung Rantau* by YB Mangunwijaya. There are three social processes in the formation of women's realities, namely: construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. *Burung-burung Rantau* successfully portrays the practice of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of the reality of women. Yuniati reflects the female construction of a mature woman, while Anggraini and Marineti undergo the process of deconstruction and reconstruction. Anggraini is hesitant in making decisions, while Marineti tends to be confident in her choices. The practice of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of speech acts can be seen in the dialogues of the characters in the novel. They are also evident in the choice of words, figure of speech, and sentence structures used in the frame of discourse, power, inequality, and gender perspectives.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Many topics can be raised from the issue of women. Women are not just men's opposite sex. Women have a plurality of dimensions, namely physical-biological, socio-cultural, psychological, political, and religious dimensions. The complexity of these dimensions will inevitably shape the behavior of women in everyday life, both in relation to the Creator, others, nature, and themselves.

Fakih distinguishes the concept of *sex* (gender) and *gender*. According Fakih (1997: 8) sex is the division based on biological differences between man and woman. For example, men have a penis and produce sperm, while women have a reproductive organ (uterus) and produce eggs. Biologically these tools cannot be exchanged and are natural and permanent.

On the contrary, gender is the inherent nature of men and women and is socially and culturally constructed. For example, women are gentle and nurturing; men are considered strong, rational, and powerful. These traits can be exchanged because they are formed through the process of socialization and culturalization. It may be that in a given day, a woman can be rational while a man can be emotional. Traits that can be exchanged between women and men, change from time to time, and vary from one place to another, is a gender concept. Fakih (1997) furthermore states that gender differences between women and men are formed, socialized, reinforced, even socially and culturally constructed, through religious and civics education.

According to Abdullah (1997:8), there are three social processes in the formation of women's realities, namely:

construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. A novel, as one type of literary work, raises the issue of life and human life, or at least, presents as a vehicle to discuss gender issues through the characters and the conflicts. A novel can present the reality of women's issues, including construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction. Kundera (2002) asserts that a novel is an investigation of human life in facing the pitfalls of life in this world. One novel that explores the issue of women is the Y.B. Mangunwijaya's *Burung-burung Rantau*.

*Burung-burung Rantau* explores the cultural problems in a family of Colonel Lieutenant Wiranto and Serafin Yuniati. The couple has five children who are swept away by globalization. Anggraini or Anggi is a business-oriented widow. Her mind is filled with only loss and profits. Laksono Wibowo or Bowo, a researcher at the European Laboratory for Particle Physics Nuclear CERN (Switzerland), marries Agatha, Greek girl. He has a global life style and mindset. The third child is Sucipto alias Candra. Candra is a pilot and even a trainer of pilots. The aircraft is his very close friend, then his wife and children. Meanwhile, the fourth child is Marineti Dianwidhi or Neti.

Neti who holds a bachelor's degree is willing to be a teacher of less privileged children because she feels guilty of his brother Eddie who died because of drug overdose. She wants to repent his brother's sins by dedicating herself for children who are in need. Amid the swift current of globalization, the issue of women, whether it is related to value, position, personality, and role, is inseparable from the life, thoughts, and behavior of the seven characters in the novel.

It is evident through the characters' dialogues. The diction, style, and sentence structure reflect the characters' views on women's issues.

## **CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND NOVEL SYSTEMS**

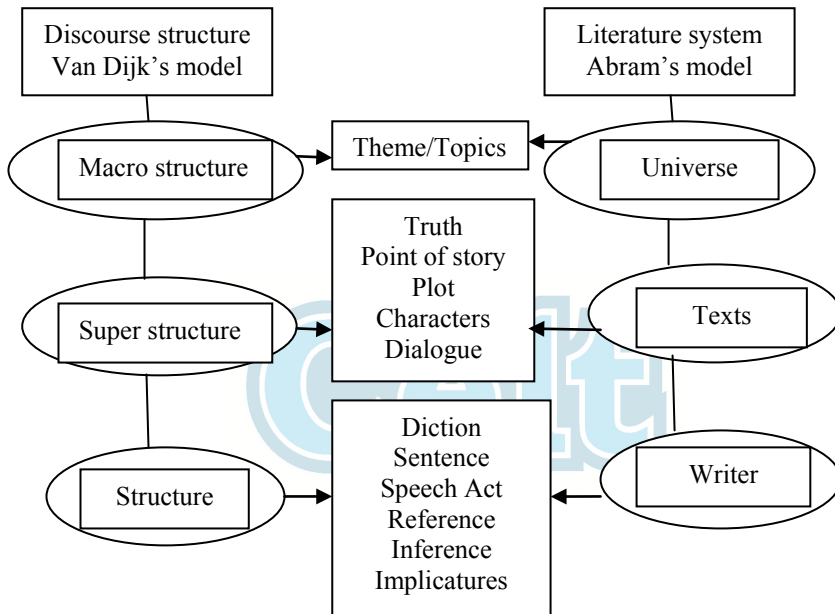
Critical discourse analysis should not be seen simply as a linguistic issue but as a contextual issue. Therefore, Fairclough (1989) considers that a discourse, whether speech or verbal, is a form of social practice. Van Dijk (in Wetherel et al. 2001) further explains that critical discourse analysis examines the relationship between discourse, power, dominance, and social inequality in every social relationship. In addition, he asserts that texts consist of three tiers / important structures, namely: the macro-structure, superstructure, and microstructure (Van Dijk in Eriyanto 2001).

The macro structure is the meaning of a text that can be seen from the advanced theme. Superstructure is related the systemic framework of a text whereas the microstructure is the meaning of a text that can be seen from the choice of words, sentence structure, figure of speech, style, even the pictures that accompany the text. The novel as a text also has a system that is relatively similar to Van Dijk's discourse structure models.

According to Abrams (1976:6) there are four essential elements in copyrighted arts. A novel as copyright art also has four important elements. The four key elements are the works of art, the artist, the universe, and connoisseurs of art. Texts in a novel, then, are works of art. They have certain characteristics that distinguish them from those of short stories, poems, and dramas. In other words, a novel has a certain system. According to Boulton (1975), a novel at least has to possess verisimilitude, the point of view, plot, character, conversation, and background scene, and dominant themes. The novel is the superstructure level, whereas the elements of authors, readers, writers, and language used are micro-level structure. Diction, sentence structure, and the authors used a figure of speech, presuppositions, reference, inference and implicature are also micro-level structure. The macro structure of a novel is the

universe, a place where an author obtains the sources of his/her writing.

The relationship of discourse structures in a literary work can be described through the following diagram:



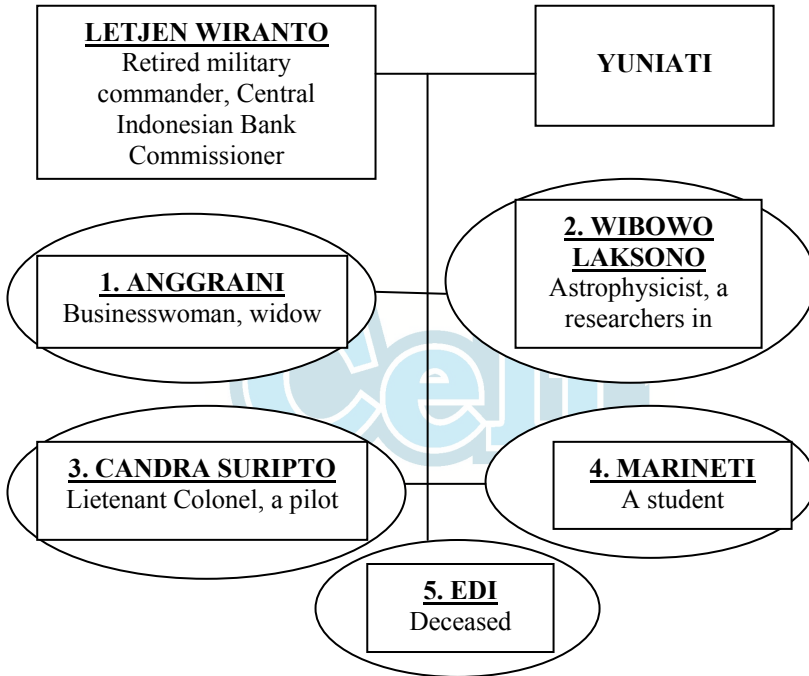
**Diagram 1:**  
Van Dijk's Discourse Structure Relations and Abram's Literature Systems

### CHARACTERS' KINSHIP STRUCTURE

*Burung-burung Rantau* is about Wiranto's family. Therefore, before analyzing the novel, we need to understand the kinship structure of the figures contained in the novel. The structure of kinship will inform us the position and the condition of each

character. Understanding each character's position and condition is important because they determine each character's view and attitude towards women.

The structure of kinship in the novel can be summarized in the following chart.



**Diagram 2:**  
Wiranto's kinship structure

As previously mentioned, *Burung-burung Rantau* tells about the problems faced by Wiranto's families. Wiranto marries Yuniati and they have five children, namely: Anggi, Bowo, Candra, Neti, and Edi. Wiranto is a retired lieutenant general who now serves as Commissioner of Central Bank of the Republic of Indonesia. He once was a military commander, an ambassador, and a chairperson

of *yuyitsu* associations. Raising 5 children, Wiranto realizes that being a military commander is a less challenging task compared to being a father. He says:

*Ah, ternyata toh lebih mudah menjadi komandan teritorial melawan pemberontak yang setiap malam membakar desa-desa daripada menangani anak-anaknya sendiri...Tetapi coba jawab: apakah lebih baik punya Neti yang badung binal itu, ataukah punya anak semut yang taat berbaris dan berjalan terbalik dengan kaki di atas pun tidak jatuh? (Mangunwijaya, 1992:13-14)*

[Translation: Ah, it is easier to become the territorial commander and fights against rebel groups who burn villages rather than dealing with her own children... But answer this: is it better to raise a naughty and wild Neti, or obedient ants marching and walking upside down with his feet on top but do not fall?]

His wife Yuniati is a modest figure who embraces life with gratitude. Therefore, Yuniati still looks beautiful in his old age.

*Maklumlah, begitu mendalam penghayatan **garwo sigaran nyowo** Yuniati dengan suaminya itu. Boleh jadi kuno, bolehlah, tetapi Yuniati bahagia dan damai dalam hati, dan karenanya ia awet cantik.... Rahasiannya yang paling dalam ialah, ia bahagia punya Wiranto sebagai suami, dan bahagia dengan anak-anaknya (Mangunwijaya 1992:344-345).*

[Translation: Yuniati is so profound in her appreciation of **garwo sigaran nyowo**. The concept is old-fashioned, but Yuniati is happy and feel peaceful, that is why she still looks beautiful. Her secret is that she is thankful to have Wiranto as a husband and to bear his children]

In such a condition, Wiranto and Yuniati raise their children. They grow and absorb the values not only from their own family but also from the social world including the social life and the books. Their five children have their own personalities, attitudes, outlooks, and the purpose of life different from each other. Therefore, they interpret women's issues differently. There are three women in Wiranto's family. They are Yuniati, Anggraeni, and Marineti. In the following section, I will analyze these women from gender point of view.

### **YUNIATI: A WOMAN OF POST CONSTRUCTION**

Yuniati is a woman of post construction, which means that she will not change, both culturally and socially. Such construction is not deemed as a sign of stagnation, but rather of stability. Yuniati's construction as a woman emerges due to the forging of culture, social, and life history that she truly embraces. To see a female figure Yuniati we consider the following quotation.

*...Elegan lincah berkat darah jingga Kawanua yang rupa-rupanya toh mendominasi darah biru Surakarta dalam raga maupun jiwanya, Bu Yun, begitu panggilan akrabnya, tanpa melalaikan hormat Jawa kepada suaminya namun juga tanpa mengekang gaya bebas Manado, mendudukan diri pada sandaran kursi di muka suaminya; kaki selonjor...*

*“Maaf, Mas, Neti sekarang harus kauolah secara lain, tidak bisa begini terus; bisa jadi puing segala-gala nanti. Yang mampu hanya ayahnya, aku sudah tidak punya wibawa. Aku tahu, Mas, angka-angka yang kauhadapi itu sangat penting dan memiliki arti nasional, tetapi apa guna karier gemilang, Mas, bila anak kita kacau berantakan?” (Mangunwijaya 1992:14-15).*



[Translation: ...Elegant and vivacious, thanks to the orange blood of Kawanua which apparently dominates her Surakarta royal blood both mentally and spiritually, Bu Yun, her nickname, without neglecting Javanese's sign of respect to her husband but also without restraining her Manado carefree attitude, seats herself in front of her husband; her legs straightened...

"Sorry, Mas, you should deal with Neti in a different way. It can't go on like this forever, she will be in ruins. You are her father and you are the only one who can deal with her. I have no authority over her. I know that those numbers you are working on now are important, but what is the use of successful career, Mas, if our daughter is in a mess? "]

These quotations reveal Yuniati's aristocratic background. Yuniati is a mix of Javanese and Kawanua aristocrat. Yuniati is 'obedient to her husband' and 'respect her husband', but at the same time she shows her independence by sitting in her husband with her legs stretched, a body posture that might be considered impolite in Javanese culture. Understanding of the background is very useful to see Yuniati's unique feminine characteristic.

The dichotomy of Javanese-Kawanua within Yuniati is also manifest in her choice of pronouns. She uses *mas* (a Javanese pronouns for older people and implies respect) and *kau* (an Indonesian pronoun that implies familiarity). The pronouns she uses seem very contradictory. *Mas* connotes respect, while *you* have the egalitarian connotation. The use of pronouns implies an egalitarian attitude and gender equality.

Yuniati uses a declarative sentence: "*You are her father and you are the only one who can deal with her. I have no authority over her.*" as a directive speech. Yuniati is expressing her inability to influence Neti but she is actually trying to share her disappointment and asking her husband Wiranto to take a greater

role in guiding her daughter. Gender equality between Wiranto-Yuniati in certain contexts could produce power in Yuniati. As a housemaker, she has legitimate and referent powers (see Carli 1999). The directive speech emerges because of the power.

In another part Yuniati also uses a rhetorical phrase, "... *I know that those numbers you are working on now are important, but what is the use of successful career, Mas, if our daughter is in a mess?*" This sentence is actually not a rhetorical question, but rather a representation of speech. It contains truths that have been tested in everyday human life; truth is born out of Yuniati's accumulated experience. Such indirect expression can only be produced by speakers who are in the position of power, or at least by those who are in an equal position to their partners. From the quotation, it is apparent that Yuniati's feminism in certain contexts does not preclude the presence of power, even when a man presents.

The possessive pronouns *our* in the phrase *our children* in her rhetorical sentence implies that raising children is not only the duty of a woman or the mother but also of a man or fathers. In other words Yuniati wants to show that both mothers and fathers are responsible for any problems in the family. What she does is against the ideology of familialism. Abdullah (1997) points out that traditionally a good woman is a woman who can produce good offsprings, and raise good children. Thus, a woman is the one who is fully responsible if their children are not well-behaved. Such ideology is entrenched in society. Consider the following quotation:

*"Maumu apa sih, berpakaian provokatif saru begitu, ikut mode sok internasional ya, merendahkan diri itu namanya heh, jengkel aku."* (Mangunwijaya 1992:10)

[Translation: "What do you want by dressing up provocatively? Are you trying to follow the international fashion, you are humiliating yourself, I am upset."]

The quotation above is a piece of Yuniati's conversation with her daughter Neti. Socioculturally, Yuniati is more dominant than her daughter because a child is essentially her parents' subordinate. Therefore, parents may use their power legitimacy over their children. However, in the relationship between Yuniati and Neti, the mother-child position has greatly shifted. Young teenagers, like Neti, have deconstructed the sociocultural barriers. Therefore, the relationship evolves into a friendship. The conversation becomes the discourse of two close friends. The deconstruction was able only to establish a form of social relationships that are no longer top-bottom, but was unable to convert Yuniati's feminism post-construction.

There are interesting points to discuss in Yuniati's sentences "What do you want by dressing up provocatively? Are you trying to follow the international fashion, you are humiliating yourself, I am upset." In this sentence, there is an interrogative and declarative sentences. The interrogatifnya structure is "*What do you want by dressing up provocatively? Are you trying to follow the international fashion, huh*", While the declarative structure is: "*You are humiliating yourself, I am upset.*" Both structures reveal Yuniati's politeness values and accumulated experiences about appropriate dressing codes in Indonesia.

Another interesting point is Yuniati's idea of nationalism. Phrases such as "*follow the international fashion*" and "*you are humiliating yourself*" are expressions of a person who upholds national moral values. It is evident that the construction of nationality Yuniati is unwavering and thus, it forms a fixed and

finished entity. A good Indonesian woman is a woman who wears decent outfits and behaves politely.

*“Sudah, jangan banyak bela diri, aku sudah kenal kamu, setiap kata, satu saja, dariku kaubalas dengan kuliah seribu kalimat. Yang aku minta sekarang hanya satu, **one thing only**, pakailah beha, jangan seperti itu; pakai itu pun kamu sudah kelihatan membusung, kok masih ditambah-tambah mengundang bahaya. Katanya bercita-cita jadi sosiawati, lha kok memberi contoh yang buruk. Silakan kalau di Swedia atau Los Angeles, tetapi di sini tidak, malu ibumu.”* (Mangunwijaya 1992: 10)

[Translation: "That's it. Don't be defensive. I know you well. I say one word and you reply back with a thousand words. What I want you to do is just one thing. Wear a bra. Don't be like that; You have big breasts, there's no need to invite dangers. You said you want to be a social worker, so why do you give bad examples. You can do it when you are in Sweden or Los Angeles but not here. I am ashamed."]

The quotation, in addition, portrays Yuniati's insights about anything foreign. This is evident through her use of borrowed words: provocative, one thing only, Swedish or Los Angeles. Her familiarity with those borrowed words and cities in the world shows merely Yuniati's social status but do not represent Yuniati's behavior and moral attitudes a post-construction Indonesian woman construction.

## **ANGGRAINI AND MARINETI: RECONSTRUCTION OF WOMEN IN TWO OPPOSITE POLES OF A CONTINUUM**

Yuniati or Mrs. Wiranto is a woman of post-construction. She has two daughters: Anggraini and Neti. These two adolescents are,

because of the context of generation and culture, deconstructing the reality of woman. The deconstruction process is evident through this quotation:

*"Ah, cinta, ya saya sudah mendengar beberapa kali. Cinta, yang tidak bisa dikalkulasi, yang spontan, yang tidak dapat dikerjakan dengan taktik-taktik. Aah, Pap, itu kan rumusan sederhana untuk kaum sederhana dunia agraris. ...Dunia kita sudah canggih, cinta pun ada sistemnya, **mosok** hanya membabi buta. Saya tidak percaya kepada cinta yang buta. Itu kan kata lain dari kebodohan atau nafsu, bukan cinta dalam arti yang sejati. Cinta itu menyertakan unsur perhitungan juga, misalnya usaha mengolah mata pencarian yang tepat dan pantas untuk menghidupi keluarga, ikhtiar untuk mengatasi kecemburuan yang tidak rasional, contohnya lagi. Jadi, Pap, apakah Papi masih percaya bahwa cinta itu buta?"* (Mangunwijaya 1992:106).

[Translation: "Ah, love, yes I've heard it many times. Love, which cannot be calculated, spontaneous, and which cannot be done with tactics. Aah, Pap, it's a simple formula for the simple agrarian world. Our world has advanced, love has its own system, and not just random. I do not believe love is blind. That's another word for ignorance or lust, not love in the true sense. Love also includes elements of the calculation, such as efforts to find proper livelihoods to support the family, endeavors to overcome an irrational jealousy, for example. So, Pap, do Papi still believe that love is blind?"]

Culturally a woman's love is constructed to satisfy a man's need. Humm (2002) points out that in the feminism consider love is socially constructed. In reality women were constructed in such a way that they are emotional, romantic, and affectionate. Humm

argues that such construction is actually not inherent in women but is a product of social and cultural construction. Anggraini tried to dismantle the myth. She deconstructed. According to Anggraini, love is '*a simple formula for the simple agrarian world.*' She thinks that modern women should not consider love a mystery and should not be viewed as calculated trade-offs. Why does Anggraini use the agrarian world to refer to love? Because the farmers live in a natural cycle: the season. For farmers, love is based on a myth which says that it is a natural thing. Thus people should follow the natural rhythm; people should not avoid love or rebel against love. Such love grows without a purpose, without a strategy, without system, and without planning.

According Anggraini '*Our world has advanced.*' The diction '*our world*' can bear different interpretations. First, '*our world*' can refer to '*our universe*'. Secondly, '*our world*' can refer to '*Wiranto's family*'. Third, '*our world*' can also refer to the '*universe of women*'. It is somewhat challenging to determine which diction. It is somewhat challenging to really determine what Anggraini actually means without knowing the context of the whole text. But apart from the question of whether or not our interpretation of the diction is correct, literary texts are always multi-interpretable. If we take, for instance, the third interpretation, we know that for Anggraini, modern women view love differently. The deconstruction of women's perception of love results in the reconstruction of the meaning of love: *Love also includes elements of the calculation, such as efforts to find proper livelihoods to support the family, endeavors to overcome an irrational jealousy.*'

Awareness is also apparent in Neti's self-deconstruction. Consider the following quotation.

*"Tetapi Mami itu sudah dari dulu benci T-shirt, padahal seluruh dunia sudah mengenakannya. Kan saya sudah bilang, Marineti bukan biarawati, bukan*

*biksu, saya kan tidak memilih jadi perempuan ketika lahir. Siapa yang salah sampai perempuan ditumbuhi sepasang pepaya seperti ini, kan saya tidak pernah minta. Apa Tuhan ya yang salah. Mami itu sering tidak logis.*" (Mangunwijaya 1992: 25-26).

[Translation: "But Mami hates T-shirt in the first place, even though people in the whole world are wearing it. I've told you, Marineti is not a nun, not a monk, I did not choose to be born as a female. Whose fault is this that women have papayas (she means breast) like these, I never ask for them. Is this God's fault? Mami is often irrational."]

The phrase '*hates T-shirt*' also contains a deep meaning. Indeed, according to his mother Neti does not hate T-shirt as an inanimate object but hate people who choose and wear T-shirts. It means that Yuniati does not like her daughter wearing her favorite T-shirt as T-shirts are too tight and will show women's breasts.

The clause '*even though people in the whole world are wearing it*' contains totem pro parte figure of speech which means a whole is used to refer to a part. In fact the clause is indeed hyperbolic. '*The whole world*' could mean '*the whole world of women*', and '*the whole world of women*' could simply mean '*some women*' not '*most*'. Neti uses that utterance because Nat wanted to show that he was not alone (in not wearing bras). Women have deconstructed the fashion culture.

Culturally, women are supposed to be gentle, polite, and refined, but Neti's personal traits are contrary to this cultural notion of a good woman. In her personality, the reality of women is deconstructed. Therefore, she asks rhetorically. "*I've told you, Marineti is not a nun, not a monk, I did not choose to be born as a female. Whose fault is this that women have papayas (she means breast) like these, I never ask for them. Is this God's fault?*" The speech she uses is called representative speech because it exposes

the truth in an argumentative manner. In addition, it contains expressive speech to express disappointment, dissatisfaction and disapproval. What Neti does is parallel to the idea of Simone de Beauvoir that a person is not born as a woman, but to become a woman "(Humm, 2002:426). The word 'to become' means that the women are born to have a particular mission, and not as a subordinate to men.

The phrase: "*Mami is often irrational.*" implies "*in fact Mami could have been rational*". The implicature of the speech act is that "*Women could use a reason to act or take decisions*". These phrases show Neti's deconstruction of women's reality. She thinks that women should use not only their emotion but also their brain.

Although Anggraini and Neti deconstruct the reality of women, they are on two opposite poles in the continuum. This is evident through this quotation:

*Untuk Anggi mencari uang dan menumpuk kekayaan sama sekali bukanlah pelampiasan hawa nafsu pada taraf simbok kampung yang menabung atau berutang untuk membeli baju baru idul fitri, melainkan suatu penghayatan asasi, sejenis kenikmatan yang tiada terperi, boleh dikatakan hobi apabila istilah hobi ditafsir benar sebagai ekspresi kesenangan, bukan keharusan, bukan kebutuhan mencari nafkah, atau dengan istilah kasar, mata pencaharian. Menjadi kaya untuk Anggraini sama dengan menjadi sempurna seperti yang dicita-citakan oleh sekian juta rahib dan biarawan dan biksu dan kiai dan ulama dan pencandu zikir; ya, semacam religi, sebetuk agama yang masuk tulang sungsum, sulit dimengerti oleh orang yang belum merasakan **the mystical joy of being rich** (1992: 124).*

[Translation: For Anggi making money and accumulating wealth is by no means similar to how



villagers save or borrow money to buy new clothes for Ied, but rather a right, a kind of immense pleasure, or can be called a hobby when it refers to pure enjoyment, and not a necessity or a need to make a living. For her, being rich is similar to being perfect as aspired by many millions of monks and friars and scholars and clerics and addicts; yes, a sort of religion, so inherent in one's body that it is difficult to understand, especially for those who do not feel the **mystical joy of being rich.**]

Contrary to Anggi, Neti is someone who aspires to help others who suffer.

*Neti bukan maniak yang harus karier, bukan pula pemberontak fanatik antilelaki yang memberi perlakuan terlalu tidak adil dan kejam terlalu sering....selama ini Neti belum berniat "diganggu" oleh suatu tali pengikat yang dapat menghambat daya juangnya untuk berbuat sesuatu yang berarti dan pribadi (1992: 93).*

[Translation: Neti is neither a career maniac nor an anti-men rebel who often gives unfair treatment or behaves cruelly...although Neti has not intended to be committed to any kind of bond that might prevent her efforts from achieving something meaningful and personal.

Reading these two quotes, we clearly see Anggraini and Neti's contrasting personalities. Anggraini is obsessed to accumulate wealth and she views this as her right, immense pleasure, and self-perfection. On the contrary, Neti positions herself as a person struggling to achieve something meaningful for others and for herself.

That's why Anggraini and Marineti choose different life paths: Anggraini enters the business world, while Neti immerses

herself in the world of social work. Surprisingly, Anggraini is strongly against, and even cynical about Neti's reconstruction of women's reality. She says:

*"Orang miskin itu kantong bolong," begitu selalu sanggah Kak Anggi." Mana mungkin ditolong, tidak mungkin kantong kaum kumuh akan berisi, percuma saja! (Manguwijaya 1992:104).*

[Translation: "Poor people are similar to perforated bags," argues her sister Anggi. "How could we help them, it is not possible to fill out their pockets, it is useless!]

Anggraini's argument is driven by the power of the logical-rational mindset. Many Indonesian women do not have such mindset. Women generally are easily moved and carried away when they witness the suffering of others. Apparently such trait is absent in Anggraini. She even cynically says that "Poor people are similar to a perforated bag." Her utterance is an expressive act, the expression of aggravation and dissatisfaction. An expressive utterance is often non-analytical, and thus more emotional. Anggraini is emotionally logical.

Anggraini is a business woman, and she sees herself as independent. This is evident from the following quotation

*Saya dengar promotornya, kok sialnya si Petruk Baridjo itu; namanya saja sudah nama dusun, dapat diharapkan apa dari orang macam itu? Ah, kan kita tahu dia itu pawiro-bakiak, kalah total di bawah perbudakan istrinya, mana mungkin dapat memberi **input** yang betul pada Neti. Pap, mengapa dulu Papi tidak jadi menyekolahkan dia di Cambridge saja? (Manguwijaya 1992:105).*

[Translation: I heard that her promotor, unfortunately, is Petruk Baridjo; his name is a

village name, what can we expect from him? We all know that he is pawiro-bakiak, a man who is under his wife's slavery, how come he gives input for Neti? Pap, why didn't you send her to study at Cambridge?]

When criticizing Professor Baridjo he said that Baridjo is subordinate to his wife. It is evident that Anggraini position herself equal to men. It implies that Anggraini does not want any kind of subordination. Zillah Eisenstein (in Humm, 2002:181) states that gender gap reflects two opposing realities simultaneously. These two opposing realities are raging inside Anggraini.

Seeing Neti's dedication as a social worker, she considers her life choice a futility. In fact, as the sister who has a legitimate power, she uses an utterance: "*Why not getting married.*" This directive speech act shows that Anggraini applies the expressions of men, the patriarchal culture she opposes. The speech act implies Anggraini's hesitancy in deconstructing women's reality.

Neti does not have such hesitancy. This is clear in the following quotation.

*Seluruh galih kalbu Neti memberontak dan menangis marah bila menghadapi penderitaan para miskin, teristimewa si anak. Bukan karena dia perempuan, ikut kelamin yang konon perasa dan peka hati. Tak ada sangkut pautnya dengan perangai lelaki atau sifat perempuan (Mangunwijaya, 1992: 364-365).*

[Translation: Neti's heart cries for the suffering of the poor, especially the poor children. Not because she was a woman, who is supposed to be emotional and sensitive. Nothing to do with the temperament of a man or a woman.]

Neti's sympathy and empathy are not because of her destiny as a woman. For Neti humanitarian work is not gender specific tasks. The statement " *Neti's heart cries for the suffering of the poor, especially the poor children.*" implies that social work does not involve physical activity only, but also spiritual activity. This means that Neti is aware of poor people's plight and suffering and that she has a strong motivation to dedicate herself as a social worker.

## **CONCLUSION**

The practice of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of the reality of women takes place in *Burung-burung Rantau*. Female post-construction is evident in Yuniati's character whereas Anggraini and Marineti show the process of deconstruction and reconstruction. However, Anggraini seems to be nervous in deconstructing the reality of women. On the contrary, Marineti is more secure in her making up her decisions. The speech acts, dictions, figures of speech, and sentence structures reflects how these three women construct, and deconstruct the reality of women.

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