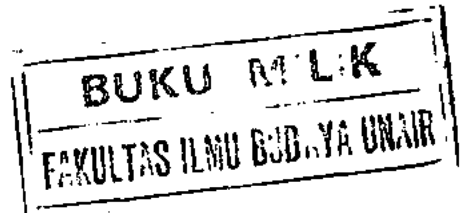


CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS



The analysis of this thesis will be divided into three subjects, namely Australian governments' policy of assimilation, the Aborigines' reaction toward the assimilation policy, and the impact of assimilation policy toward the Aborigines' life, as all represented throughout the play. In the first part of the analysis, the writer will explore the purpose and the implementation of assimilation policy. The second part contains the description of the Aborigines' different reactions that lead to the rejection of assimilation policy. Lastly, there will be some discussion on how the unhomeliness feeling as the impact of assimilation policy affects the Aborigines' life.

A. AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF ASSIMILATION AS REPRESENTED IN THE PLAY

1. The Purposes of Assimilation Policy toward the Aborigines

At the beginning of the play, after the dance of the MIMI SPIRIT¹ as the opening of *Murras*, Eva Johnson has introduced to the audience that the assimilation policy is a subject matter of the play. First action emerges as the reaction toward the information of assimilation policy that is caught by Ruby from

¹ Mimi is an Aboriginal mythical being that inhabits certain parts of the country. It can be the spirit of a dead ancestor, sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile, and the Mimi dance was very much a part of traditional dances performed in the years when the play was performed. In *Murras*, MIMI SPIRIT is represented by a dancer who dances in order to symbolize the Aboriginal sickness and dead.

the ABC² News. The voice of ABC News read by Charles Dury states implicitly that the assimilation policy has an important role for the Aborigines' life, for whom its purpose is aimed. According to the news, it appears in compliance with the increasing consciousness toward the Aborigines' rights in Australian society.

Here is the news:

ANNOUNCER: (voice over) There has been evidence in recent years of increasing consciousness of the rights of the Aboriginal Australian. Commonwealth and state ministers stated that: "The policy of assimilation seeks that persons of Aboriginal descent will chose to attain a similar manner and standard of living to that of other Australians and live as members of single Australian community, and we believe that if Aboriginal Australians can be helped and encouraged to help themselves, then they will be readily attracted to and welcomed to the assimilation we aim for. (85)

From that statement, it can be assumed that the Aborigines have not had an equal condition to White Australians. The government here is considered as the representatives of the Whites because in 1967, which is the setting of act one, there had not been the Aborigines represented in the parliament. The Aborigines did not have any authority to manage their own lives since the Whites, who were the British, came and started the colonization in their land.

In Australian government's point of view, the Aborigines are still viewed as 'other' people who do not live in the same way like the Whites'. The Aborigines' way of life that is influenced by their culture and values seems to be uncivilized, which is less modern than the Whites' way of life. As a consequence, the Aborigines' social status is considered lower than the Whites since they do not

² Australian Broadcasting Corporation

live in a good standard of living. Therefore, the government uses its authority to change the Aborigines' condition. It is the government's duty to help the Aborigines improve their standard of living, so the gap between the Aborigines and the Whites in Australian society can be reduced.

According to the postcolonial perspective, the Aborigines become inferior people who face biased judgment from the Whites. As the colonizer, the Whites look at themselves as the center of the world and look at the Aborigines at the margins. Being the center of the world, the Whites look at the Aborigines as different, 'other' people who do not live in the same manner with the Whites, and therefore become inferior. Having opinion that they are the embodiment of what a human should be or the proper "self", the Whites judge the Aborigines to be inferior just because they do not live in a proper way, as it is demanded by the Whites' point of view. As the superior, the Whites have a power to force their interest to the Aborigines, the inferior, that have no authority to defend themselves.

Through the implementation of assimilation policy, the government also hopes for the integration of all the groups in Australian society. Considering the social fact in 1960s, the Australian government had not held the multiculturalism ideology yet in arranging their immigration problems. "The assimilation was the dominant philosophy of migrant settlement." (Whitlock 109). Billy Snedden, Minister for Immigration in the conservative Coalition government even commented:

We must have a single culture. If immigration implied multi-cultural activities within Australian society, then it was not the type Australia

wanted. I am quite determined we should have a monoculture with everyone living in the same way, understanding each other, and sharing the same aspirations. We don't want pluralism. (Whitlock 109-110)

Therefore, the Aborigines who were recognized as citizens and included in the census through an Australia-wide referendum in 1967 (Bourke 30) is also demanded to live in an Australian monoculture. Of course, in order to be integrated as the member of a single Australian community through the assimilation, the Aborigines have to change their lives so that they can be proper enough to be called as the member of Australians. How far can the Aborigines follow the Whites' standard of living will be the measurement of their properness to enter the community. Here, the government views that the Aborigines have to be helped to encourage themselves in improving their standard of living based on the Whites' perspective.

Russel Mitchell, an Aboriginal liaison officer, in the dialogue with Ruby and Granny in scene one act one, emphasizes the purpose of assimilation policy, which is to improve the Aborigines' life:

RUBY: Why does the Government want to give us a house in city ?

RUSSEL: To improve your housing conditions. To enable you to live a normal life. To better yourselves.

Granny: But we like it just the way it is out here, how it always is. (91)

It is clear enough from Russel's answer that the government, which represents the Whites, sees the Aborigines' lives as abnormal. There is a different perception between the Aborigines and the Whites in looking at their lives. The Whites think that they should help the Aborigines to improve their standard of living. On the other hand, the Aborigines think that there is no good to change their way of lives because they want to live just in the way they are taught by their

ancestors. No matter how much the Aborigines love their way of lives that have been held for generations, through the assimilation policy they are forced to leave it in order to survive in the White's community. In this case, the Aborigines' prosperity and their lack of modernity are perceived as subject matters that differentiate their lives from the Whites'. It is shown in the following quotation:

RUSSEL: Jesus, just look at this place. How can you live here? No running water, ceiling must leak in the wet, and probably bloody cold in the winter. Just look at this dirt floor, it's a breeding ground for rats and diseases; a real health hazard.
(93)

Considering those Aborigines' improper conditions, the government implies that moving to the new place will bring new life for them. In that new place the Aborigines are promised to live better in modernity, as a demand for being Australians. They are forced to adapt and follow the modern way of life, by using electricity in daily life for instance:

RUSSEL: [*interrupting*] What I'd like to talk to you about is your new home. It's very modern, you'll notice the difference. It has electricity. Yes, you can't see it, but it's there. It's like magic; it provides power for lights, heaters, washing machines, refrigerators, almost anything. You won't hardly have to use your hands. (91)

With the knowledge and the application of technology as the way of modern life, the government assumes that the Aborigines' self-determination can be reached. It is another goal of assimilation policy, in which the Aborigines can respect themselves more as Australians. Changing their lives to be same as other Australians is supposed to be seen as an honorable thing for the Aborigines. The following sentences reflect it implicitly:

RUSSEL: Well, I hope the referendum improves things for you. Just think, it's nineteen sixty-seven now, and in twenty years' time these place will no longer exist. They will have been

abolished and we can look back on this very day. That's what the referendum means: self-determination for Aboriginal people, and a better way of life. (93)

It is also interesting to know from the play that the assimilation policy is not only applied for improving the Aborigines' standard of living, but it also has another advantage for the government. From the following dialogue, it can be interpreted that the moving of the Aborigines to the prepared place makes the development of the Aborigines' previous area for the government's interest becomes easier.

RUBY: What's gonna happen to this land? It still belongs to our people?

RUSSEL: No, there's to be a new highway put in there and a swimming pool close by for the townspeople.

GRANNY: They just move us around like cattle. Why don't you tell them we want to stay here, we not...

RUSSEL: I have to make my report and I'll tell them for you, but I'm sure that when you see your new home you will probably change your mind. (93)

The Aborigines seem to be the victim of condemnation for the development of public service area, which ironically does not belong to them. The improvement of the Aborigines' lives has been used as an excuse for removing them from their previous places. The Aborigines are promised to have better lives and be Australians, but on the other hand, the government takes the advantages for their own interest.

2. The Implementation of Assimilation Policy toward the Aborigines

In the government's point of view, assimilation policy can be applied as a solution for the Aborigines to improve their apprehensive social condition so that

they can be proper enough to be Australians. Without improvement of standard of living, the Aborigines will not be accepted to live together in a single Australian community, which is the goal of the assimilation policy. In this case, as the implementation of assimilation policy, the Aborigines will be moved from their previous reservation in countries to the towns and cities so that they can start their new lives.

ANNOUNCER: [voice over] Therefore, new housing will be allocated for them in different towns and cities. (85)

The Aborigines catch it as the forcing to leave their land in order to be same with the Whites, as it is seen in the following part of the play:

RUBY: Well, that fulla reading the news just said something about Aborigines being Australians. Minister from Government saying that we should all move to the city so we can be same as white fullas. ... (88)

In order to socialize the implementation of assimilation policy toward the Aborigines, the government uses Aboriginal half-caste as its Aboriginal liaison officer. It is done to make the process of socialization easier because it is assumed that the Aborigines will accept the information given from their brothers. It is also done to reach self-determination for the Aborigines, as said by Russel Mitchell. He is a half-caste child who was taken away from his aboriginal mother and adopted by a white family when he was two years old. This man takes his duty to inform the assimilation policy to Ruby's family in the play. The following quotation shows Russel's intention clearly:

RUSSEL: ... Well you see, the Department thought that it would be easier for you people to talk to an Aborigine rather than a European. They call it self-determination. We are helping our own people, and seen as positive role models for you. (92)

By looking at the liaison officer as the model of a successful Aborigine who lives in European ways, the government hopes that the Aborigines will follow that model. Here, moving to the new places in towns and cities is the first action requested.

Beside giving the socialization individually to the Aborigines' families, the government also socializes the assimilation policy in the Aborigines' reservation. It is told in the first scene in act one that there is Mr. Morton from the Government informing the assimilation policy toward the Aborigines. It can be found from the dialogue between Ruby and Granny who listen to the information about the removal of the Aborigines given by Mr. Morton:

RUBY: [interrupting] You mean that Mr Morton from Welfare? Granny, he right, you know. I heard them on the wireless talkin', just *wudjellas*³ telling us what's good for us.

GRANNY: He was tellin' all of them mob at the Kimberly reserve. (87)

Although all of the characters in the play reject to be moved to the city, it is told in act three scene one that finally they are successfully moved to the city. Three years after they got the first information about the assimilation policy, in 1970 they have been living in the town.

³ Aboriginal word for White people or non-Aboriginal people

B. THE ABORIGINES' REACTION TOWARD ASSIMILATION POLICY AS REPRESENTED IN THE PLAY

In analyzing the Aborigines reaction toward assimilation policy, the writer will try to explore the reaction of the Aborigines' characters in the play. There are four main Aboriginal characters that can be seen as the representation of the Aborigines' different generations. Granny is the oldest person in the family; Ruby, her daughter in law, is the younger generation; while her grandchildren Jayda and Wilba are the youngest generation. All of those characters perceive the information of assimilation policy in their own ways. The life experience that they have ever had as the Aborigines influences their thought in looking at the assimilation policy, as it is described in the following description.

1. Granny's Reaction

As the oldest woman in the family, Granny has got the longest experience of being an Aborigine. Her life does not run statically because she has experienced many changes in her life. It does not seem to be good for her, as it is described in this following quotation:

GRANNY: I seen to many changing. Too many people dyin' from wrong ways. Moving about too much, disturbin' the land. My Charlie, they move him from his land, to station, to creek bed. He finish there, in creek bed. No good, I tell you. No, something happening our people. Soon we all gone. Something happening, I tell you, no good. (88)

The quotation above shows that there have been many changes in the Aborigines' lives seen by Granny as the oldest person in the family. As she is getting older, she finds that there are many Aborigines who suffer more in their

lives. They do not die naturally (because of aging or diseases, for examples) but they die because of depression that is considered as a wrong way in Granny's point of view. The Aborigines' depression here results from treatments faced in the society. As indigenous people of Australia, the Aborigines have to face the discrimination from the Whites since they came and subjugated the places where the Aborigines had lived before. They are forced to move to other places and live in reservations built by the government. It is shown in the play that since she was young, Granny has been moving to several places. Living with her daughter's family, they have been moving from one reservation to other reservations (90).

Granny also feels the dying of the Aborigines' spirit when Charlie, his son died. He is forced to move to the reservation where he can not make an optimal effort for his work as a carver. Although one of his totems is demanded by a museum in town, the Whites do not give a good appreciation to him. He has to find a job that is not appropriate with his capability in carving. Once he loses his job, he gets more depressed. He feels that he has already lost everything: his land, his freedom to do many Aboriginal habitual inheritances like carving, hunting, or dancing, and also his spirit for life consequently. Finally he dies for too much grog (90), a way that is wrong in Granny's point of view. It is an irony for the Aborigines to die because of drinking alcohol, a culture that is not theirs.

Considering all of the changing and suffering that have already been experienced, Granny predicts that her family and the Aborigines can not survive anymore. She has not found any happiness for her people as long as she lives. She does not believe anymore that her life will be better in the new place. Although it

is said by the government that the moving as the implementation of assimilation policy will help the Aborigines to be Australian, Granny insists to reject it:

GRANNY: I'm not leavin, I tell you. I born here, I die here. No one gonna move me from this place, true as God, no one. (94)

In her opinion, it is no use to move them again. It will not decrease their suffering, but instead it will make their suffering longer. Therefore, she chooses to die in the place considered as her land, die in her land as an Aborigine who becomes the one like it is supposed to be by her ancestors.

2. Ruby's Reaction

Compared with Granny's reaction, Ruby's reaction toward the information about assimilation policy is calmer. Actually Ruby refuses to be moved to the town, but she can not run from a conflict in her mind that leads to the submission of accepting assimilation policy. This conflict can be seen in the following quotation:

RUBY: [*to the radio*] Don't talk like that. We don't wanna go, what for?
 No good, I tell you.
 [*She returns to her washing.*]
 Better live here outside. We got no doors to lock out family. Look, look my *murras*⁴.
 [*She raises her hands out of the water.*]
 All time work hard, dig for yams, make fire, make basket, dilly bag, pandana mat...and carving.
 [*She looks at Charlie's totem, centresatage.*]
 Charlie, you was the best carver. Your *murras* was strong, you was the best. What I'm gonna do, Charlie? I can't leave my country. What I'm gonna do...? (85-86)

⁴ Aboriginal word for hand

Ruby rejects spontaneously when she hears from the radio news that the Aborigines will be moved to the town. In her opinion, there is no benefit for the Aborigines to start a new life again in another new place. Nevertheless, she gets confused when she has to decide for her family whether to move or to stay, in particular since she has to decide alone without her husband. Knowing that she and other Aborigines can not do anything to defend their land against the government, Ruby decides to go. Actually she does not want to go but she knows that nothing can be done to oppose the government. Besides, the Aborigines do not have any authority to defend their land or even their own lives. Finally she is determined to leave, as it is seen in her submission:

RUBY : Well, it probably don't matter now: we leavin' this place anyway.

(86)

Although Ruby has already been surrendered to move to the town, she still keeps her protest to the government. It can be seen from the following dialogue between Ruby, Granny, and Russel:

GRANNY: They just move us around like cattle. Why don't you tell them we want to stay here, we not...

RUSSEL: I have to make my report and I'll tell them for you, but I'm sure that when you see your new home you will probably change your mind.

RUBY: We don't understand about this report business, but we do what they tell us. You want cuppa tea, Mr Rus? (93)

Receiving Russel answer to Granny's request, Ruby thinks that Russel do not take it seriously. There is no difference to convey their complaint toward the government through a liaison officer, who ironically has Aboriginal blood in his body. She feels angrier because she and other Aborigines have already done what

is commanded by the government, but they have not got any appreciation at all. The government, which is represented by Russel, does not even pay attention to the Aborigines' complaints. What is thought by him is just how to move the Aborigines to the towns and cities, no matter what they feel and complain. That reality convinces Ruby more that obviously nothing can be done to defend her land. Therefore, she gives up to be moved by the government.

3. Jayda's Reaction

As an Aboriginal teenage girl, Jayda has experienced difficulties in living with the Whites. She has worked for a white woman in town and it is very hard for her because she has to face both of the work and burden treatment from her employer. This experience builds her awareness to reject the assimilation policy. She does not agree with her mother's submission in following what is commanded by the government. In a dialogue with Ruby and Grany, Jayda expresses her disagreement with her mother who told Grany that there will not be any changing when they move to the city. Although it is said to calm Grany down, Jayda thinks that her mother's prediction is not right, as it is shown in the following part of the play:

JAYDA: It's gonna be different Mum, I know. I work for that *wudjella* woman in town and I know. Sometimes she follows me around while I clean up. And she just sits and stares at me, make me eat my lunch outside. She belts her children if they talk to me. I'm not gonna work for no *wudjellas* in city, that's for sure. (88)

Considering her experience in working for the Whites, Jayda predicts that the Aborigines' condition will not be better if they move to the town. As it is

described in Jayda's employer attitude, that white woman does not appreciate Jayda's work and does not treat Jayda equally. It is done by Jayde's employer just because Jayda is an Aborigine who has not been accepted in the way they are by the Whites. She predicts that they will suffer more discrimination when they live in towns or cities, which are dominated by the Whites' population. It will be worse for the Aborigines because they have to move to the place which the majority considers them as lower, so that they are considered not to be honored. In order to convince her prediction, in Act I Scene I it is told that Jayda asks a question to Russel:

JAYDA: Will the Department give me a job?

RUSSEL: Maybe, in a hospital or working for a family.

JAYDA: See, I told you mum, working for *wudjellas* again. (92)

Hearing Russel's answer, Jayda is sure that moving to the town will not change the Aborigines' condition. It has proved that the Aborigines will not get more appreciation in their new places. From the kind of works offered, it can be assumed that there will not be any social status improvement for the Aborigines.

In this play, Jayda's reaction toward the assimilation policy can be seen as the representation of Aboriginal young generation's thought. As a *teenage* who has ever worked for the Whites, Jayda thinks that submission is not enough to solve the problem. Although they do not have any authority to defend themselves against the government, the Aborigines can do more than just obeying what is commanded by the government. As it is described in Jayda's thought, she promised not to work for the Whites if she moves to the town. The Aboriginal

young generation does not fully surrendered to be moved, but they get their own compromises in order not to be subjugated more by the Whites. They may not have any authority against the government, but at least they can still fight in their own ways. Refusing to work for the Whites can be viewed as a kind of protest toward the Whites. Finding no respect from the Whites when they work for them, the Aboriginal young generation feels that it is not necessary to work for the Whites again. In spite of gaining the humiliation from the Whites, the young generation has to learn respect themselves by refusing to work for the Whites.

4. Wilba's Reaction

When Wilba hears from his mother that they will be moved to the town, he rejects that plan spontaneously. He does not want to go anywhere because he loves the place where he spends the last several years with his family. This quotation describes it clearly:

WILBA: No way, not me. I'm not going nowhere, I ain't; just stay here and be good stockman like my father and do carving and go hunting with Jumbo. (86)

The quotation above assumes that Wilba loves his way of life as the Aborigines. He loves carving and hunting, activities that are taught by his father as the Aborigines' cultural inheritance. Living together with his father who is a carver, Wilba learns how to carve and dreams to be a good carver like him. As an Aboriginal boy, he is proud of his culture and enjoys those habitual activities. Finding no badness in his culture, Wilba thinks that the Aborigines do not need to

move to another place just for changing their lives, in order to be same to the Whites.

Since he is still thirteen years old, Wilba has not experienced many changes in his life. However, as an Aborigine, he has experienced the discrimination from the Whites. He has to face the humiliation from the Whites in his school. In his school they call him by the dirty names (86) just because he is an Aborigine. Because of this, Sister also looks at him as a filthy boy. Although he is sure that he does not get any illness, Sister still orders him to take certain medicine for throwing the germs from his body (87).

The experience of facing the discrimination and being proud of Aboriginal culture make Wilba reject the assimilation policy. He predicts that when he accepts to be moved, probably he will lose the chance to maintain his cultural inheritance. He has to live in modern ways like it is demanded by the Whites, so there will not be any opportunity left to celebrate the Aborigines' habitual inheritance like hunting or carving. There is nothing to do to maintain it, because he must adapt with the Whites' way of life if he want to survive in the new place.

5. The Aborigines' General Reaction

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that generally the Aborigines reject to be moved to the towns or cities as the implementation of assimilation policy. Although each generation in the play has their own reaction toward the assimilation policy, basically they do not want to be moved to the new places that have already prepared by the government. This rejection exists from

some reasons, which are the accumulation of many changes faced by the Aborigines since the Whites came and subjugated their land.

Since the Whites subjugated their land, the Aborigines as the indigenous people of Australia have been experiencing bad treatment from the Whites. The Whites' stereotypes about the Aborigines lead to that bad treatment as the representation of otherness. Here, the discrimination faced by the Aborigines has close relationship with the stereotypes in the Whites' thought. The stereotypes in looking at the Aborigines as 'other' because of their race support the Whites' following action in the process of discriminating the Aborigines as the 'subject' of colonial discourse. As it is described by the characters in the play, they have to face discrimination in social life just because they are Aborigines. The fact that Wilba is humiliated by being addressed with dirty names in his school, Jayda is treated discriminatively by her employer and White men who try to rape her, Granny and Ruby are moved several times by the government, and the difficulties of being ostracized in the society build an awareness to reject the assimilation policy.

The experience of facing that discrimination makes them predict that there will not be any changing in their lives if they move to the new place. The Aborigines' social condition will not be different because they will not get any chance to actualize themselves more. As long as the Whites still consider the Aborigines as 'other', which is lower than them, the Aborigines will not get any appreciation of their works or even of themselves. They will not be able to improve their lives as it is purposed by the assimilation policy. In their new place,

they are still not accepted by the society because they are Aborigines. In addition, they can not follow the Whites' way of life instantly. The modernization and the standard of living improvement as the demands to be accepted in Australian society become more difficult for the Aborigines to achieve. Based on this prediction, they prefer staying to leaving their land.

Beside the experience of facing the discrimination in the society, the fear of loosing their land also influences the Aborigines to reject the assimilation policy. As an Aborigine, Granny experienced being moved from one reservation to other reservations. Their sufferings become worse when they see their environment changed as the impact of town and city's development. It leads to a great suffering for many Aborigines because they have to leave and loose their land. Loosing their land means loosing their lives too and many of them, like it is represented by Charlie, can not survive. They can not adapt well in the new place because they do not want to be the same as the Whites. Living in the new place means starting a new life, in which they probably will loose their cultural inheritance in order to survive in the Whites community. Finding many differences and incompatibility between their culture and the Whites', they do not want to throw their Aboriginal identity away and be the same as the Whites in a single Australian community. Therefore, they think that it would be better for them not to leave their homeland, so that they can still be the Aborigines, as just they way they are.

Even though the Aborigines reject to be moved to other towns or cities, they can not do anything to keep staying at the country. They have no choice but

to obey the government's command and move to the town. As the colonized, the Aborigines do not have any power to defend themselves. Experiencing the practice of 'othering' and the discrimination, they do not have any authority to fight against the Whites as the colonizer.

C. THE IMPACT OF ASSIMILATION POLICY TOWARD THE ABORIGINES AS REPRESENTED IN THE PLAY

1. The Emergence of Unhomeliness Feeling

Moving to other places in order to obey the government's command as the implementation of assimilation policy, the Aborigines inevitably has to encounter some effects of assimilation policy upon their lives. Psychologically, the depression of being colonized under the Whites' repression and the factual social condition lead to the Aborigines' desperation, that is described by the emergence of unhomeliness feeling in characters' mind. Facing many changes and discrimination under the Whites' repression, all of the Aboriginal characters come to an awareness that they no longer become the owner of their land despite their belief that they can not be separated from their land. Their ancestor had already lived there long before the Whites arrived and the Aborigines maintain their own belief about the sacred of land as part of their lives. However, the subjugation of the Whites in their land and its following colonization make the Aborigines loose their rights. They have no authority to manage themselves in their own land. Living under the Whites' colonization, the Aborigines as the subordinate people in Australian society face some difficulties. They have to live in extra territorial

and cross-cultural initiations, in asserting their indigenous cultural traditions and retrieving their repressed history. In this case, the Aborigines have to survive in *betweenness*, asserting their cultural traditions that are represented in the play by maintaining The Dreaming and their habitual heritage under the repression of modernization as the demand to be accepted in Australian community.

The Dreaming itself is an Aboriginal creative epoch (Bourke 67) that is conceived in many languages according to each Aboriginal tribe. It is believed through The Dreaming that the concept of time for the Aborigines is cyclic rather than linear, so that everything happened in the past is still enacting in the present through the Spirit Beings' activities. The Spirit Beings emerged from the formless earth and formed features of things that inhabit the cosmos. In the process from the formless substance, the Spirit Beings of The Dreaming, that are believed as the ancestor of the Aborigines and the species associated with them, moved over the world performing daily activities as they represent human's activities (such as hunting, eating, fishing, dancing, dying, etc.) or any other species (such as munching grass or hopping over a sand hill). When the Spirit Beings were traveling, their tracks, artifact, and activities were also transformed into many phenomena of the environment, like rocks, mountains, or caves. The activities performed by the Spirit Beings are followed by the Aborigines and become the model for life then, as the Dreaming becomes a pattern for life. As a pattern of life, The Dreaming is not dealing with daily activities recommended only, but it also contains rituals, like dances, songs, and other rites that are performed to seek contact and get the spiritual powers from the Spirit Beings (Bourke 67-74).

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The Aboriginal characters in *Murras* also believe in The Dreaming as it is illustrated by Granny:

GRANNY: You can't leave Charlie. You know that, Ruby.

[GRANNY *stands and moves forward.*]

[*Softly*]

You know who we are;
Yeah, you, Ruby, you are dugong,
Charlie, he moon,
Wilba, he parrotfish,
Jayda, she seagrass,
Me, I'm from water

Dreaming say, dugong was bitten by leech.
Moon watch her.
Dugong leave her land and go into sea.
Moon follow, but he can't get wet,
So he call parrotfish, make him son.
Parrotfish look after dugong.
Both live from seagrass from bottom of the sea.
Moon always there, watch all time.
And he here, still he look for you, dugong.
Water, dugong, parrotfish, seagrass,
All same spirit, so we gotta stay together, right here. (89)

The quotation above shows that Granny's family has its own story about who they are through The Dreaming. They are associated with things that inhabit the cosmos: the *dugong*, moon, parrotfish, sea grass, and water. All of them are connected to each other in the plot of a story as it is illustrated above. It can be assumed from the story that there is a natural balance in the Aborigines' life. The animals (represented by *dugong* and parrotfish) have close relationship with the plants (represented by sea grass) and other nonliving things in the cosmos (represented by moon and water). They live together, care, help, and complete each other peacefully. It is believed that as creatures that have the same spirit wrapped in a story, they always have to live together as a unity. From that

hereditary story, Granny's family has an awareness about the significance of the environment toward their lives. They live as a part of the environment, where they live in a balance with other substances in the cosmos as an inseparable unity.

As the Aborigines, Granny's family believes that the land is very important in their lives. Since the Spirit Beings form everything that exists in the whole of the landscape where they live in and it enacts all of its activities in that land, the land becomes a sacred site for the Aborigines. Just like the Spirit Beings do its activities in their land, the Aborigines follow those activities in their daily lives. In *Murras* it is described that Granny's family does the heredity activities that are believed as the activities done by the Spirit Beings. Carving, painting, hunting, making baskets, or making spears have been done for generations through the belief of The Dreaming. Believing that the land is "the arena in which the dramatic events of The Dreaming were and are enacted" (Bourke 68), the Aborigines treat the land as an inseparable part of their lives. Particularly, the land where they live in becomes more valuable for Granny's family since Charlie was buried in that land. As The Dreaming said that dugong, moon, parrotfish, sea grass, and water live together, Granny is convinced that her family should not move to other place since that means leaving Charlie alone in their previous land.

Granny's family does not follow the Spirit Beings activities only, but the family also performs some rituals as an effort to contact the Spirit Beings and get some spiritual powers within. It is elaborated in the play that the children have been taught special dances since they were young. Granny taught Jayda Inma dance and Charlie taught Wilba moon dance, a dance that shows the moon story

from *The Dreaming*. Both of them can perform it well and they can also spontaneously dance together naturally without any preparation before (94). There is also the Mimi Spirit inside the play that dances to perform the Aboriginal sickness and death based on what the Dreaming said. In Act II Scene II for example, the Mimi Spirit reveals the Aborigines' spirit of death when it dances in the ritual that shows Granny's dying scene. The characters in *Murras* honor the dance as the sacred rituals where they can get close to the Spirit Beings and their ancestors, as represented in their dance. By getting close with their ancestor, the Aborigines will not feel alone in the world since they feel that they are supported and get spiritual strength through their rituals.

The Aborigines' life that is celebrated through the belief of *The Dreaming* is difficult to be practiced under the White's repression. As it has been known previously, Australia had been claimed as *terra nullius* then subjugated by the British settlement. Under the colonization, the Whites treated the Aborigines as uncivilized people since their way of life is considered lower than the Whites'. The Aborigines' conceptualization that does not separate the spiritual existence from the material world seems not to be accepted by the Whites whose Western concept divorces reality and religion based on the dichotomies between "natural and cultural, material and spiritual, past and present, secular and sacred, subject and object" (Bourke 69). The Aborigines also have an understanding that they think differently from the Whites, as it is found in the play:

GRANNY: *Wudjella* woman got different way to *gadjeri*⁵ woman. They don't have woman's dreaming, special dance, *Inma*. Jayda,

⁵ Aboriginal word for Aboriginal woman

you not forget your stories now. You keep them sacred, for your children, not *wudjellas*. (88)

What Granny said describes that the Aborigines are aware toward the different concept between the Whites and theirs. In their opinion, the different point of view appears since the Whites do not have the same spirit like the Aborigines believe in the Spirit Beings through The Dreaming and the rituals dealing with it. More specifically, Granny criticizes the White women who do not have their own spirit and keep it sacred for their next generations. Unlike the White women, Granny maintains her hereditary spiritual spirit by teaching it to her daughter and her grandchildren. It has been succeeded by considering Jayda's statement:

JAYDA: Mum, come here. Remember when Granny said *wudjella* woman got different way to *gadjeri* woman? They don't have woman's dreaming, special dance, *Inma*. Then she said, 'Jayda, you not forget your stories now, you keep them sacred for your children, not *wudjella*.' Granny call them nothing people, got no spirit. (102)

It can be seen clearly that Jayda keeps in her mind what was said by her grandmother about their spirit of life. She also keeps Granny's thought that the White women are worthless since they do not have any spirit like the Aborigines have. Considering different concepts about the spirit of life, it is very hard for the Aborigines to assert their indigenous cultural traditions under the colonization since the Whites do not accept and appreciate their conceptualization differences. The Aborigines get more depressed when they have to encounter many changes that can not be accepted through The Dreaming as their pattern of life.

It is described in the play that Charlie lost his spirit of life since he had been moved from his homeland. In Granny's point of view, the Whites had

already stolen his land so that his son can not perform his best work as a carver anymore. By forcing the Aborigines to leave their land into the reservation or other prepared place, the Whites, from the Aborigines' point of view, do not seem to pay attention on the importance of land for the Aborigines. The following dialogue shows it clearly:

WILBA: I've had a gutful of this place. They got bulldozers going up, bloody bulldozers, Mum, on our land. No way no fuckin' mining company's gonna dig up my father's bones, our burial grounds.

RUBY: They can't do that, that's sacred place. They can't do that. Charlie, and granny they...

WILBA: You better believe it, they are. (104)

In the dialogue above, the Whites plan to do the development in the land that is considered as a sacred site for the Aborigines. It can be seen that Wilba can not accept the Whites' treatment toward the land where his father and his ancestors were buried. As the colonizer, the Whites do not need to ask the Aborigines' permission to use their land. Besides, the different concept held by the Whites and the Aborigines makes the broader becomes wider. Through their superior point of view, the Whites do not want to accept the fact that land is considered as the important sacred sites for the Aborigines. For them, there is a clear distinction between the material and spiritual world. The lack of understanding in looking at their different concept also provokes the Aborigines to claim the development of the town as the cause of environment disaster. The environment has been changed in compliance with the government's development, as it is shown in the following quotation:

WILBA: We get water in bucket from pipeline half mile down the track, that's if they don't turn it off first. But when we have good rain, plenty water in creek and yabbies too, aye.

GRANNY: Long time, before the pipeline, river all time had water. Then cattle come, big dam come, dry 'em up all creek, water hole. Mess 'em up country real proper way. (93)

From the quotation above, the Aborigines seem to be the 'sacrificed' group in the development arranged by the government. There is no appropriate supply for the Aborigines' basic needs. They even have to depend on the rain to get the water. Ironically, they can not get the water from the river anymore because it has already been used for watering the livestock and supplying the Whites' needs. The lack of water in the river is a kind of phenomenon for the Aborigines, which can be considered as an environment disaster. Believing in the balance of all parts of the cosmos, the Aborigines' point of view can not accept the development of the town that brings environmental damage. As a part of the environment, the Aborigines think that the damage of the environment means the damage for their lives too.

As the time goes by, the changes and treatments got as the sub ordinate people have been accumulated into a repressed history for the Aborigines. It is not easy for the Aborigines to retrieve their repressed history. As it is described in the play, there is no opportunity left for the Aborigines to maintain their hereditary activities. After moving to the town to obey the government's assimilation policy command, it is harder for the Aborigines to express themselves in their own way. What happened with Jayda can represent it:

JAYDA: I have changed, Mum, I'm older, I'm different now.

RUBY: You don't make baskets no more.

JAYDA: [*grabbing the basket hanging on the wall*] There's no place for baskets here. It doesn't mean anything to them...

RUBY: It doesn't have to! [*She grabs the basket from JAYDA.*] This belongs to you! *This* you gotta teach your children one day. (101)

Jayda who has worked in the town thinks that she has to do some efforts in order to be accepted in her new community. Although she works with other ethnics like Russians, Italians, and Greeks, as the only Aboriginal worker Jayda gets all the dirty jobs (100). This discrimination provokes her to be changed, so that the Whites will not ignore her anymore. She tries to be different, being a person as it is demanded by the Whites. In that way, she hopes that she will not lose her job and she will be respected more by the Whites. One of the changes is, Jayda does not make baskets anymore. As an Aboriginal girl, Jayda has been taught to make baskets just like it has been done for generations. After moving to the town, she finds that there is no use for making baskets anymore. Making baskets is not something useful to survive in the community. The Whites as the center of community values do not include baskets, one of Aboriginal cultural product, as their needs. According to Jayda, she has to fulfill the society's demand if she wants to survive. From her experience in working as a domestic worker in a hospital, Jayda finds that she is still considered lower than the Whites so that she has to face the discrimination. Being respected by the Whites as a person is still impossible for her, let alone being respected for her culture. In the play, Jayda's opinion is being strongly opposed by Ruby. In her opinion, it is important to be what they have been just taught by their belief. For survival, the Aborigines do not have to lose their identity, which is told by *The Dreaming* and maintained by their ancestor.

Another difficulty faced by the Aborigines in retrieving their repressed history is dealing with the demands for being accepted as the member of Australian community. The improvement of the standard of living can not be avoided to meet the demands. Here, access to modernization becomes a measurement for the fulfillment of that improvement. When the family has been moved to the town, it is told that they have used electricity in doing their daily activities. Jayda has used a Hoover to vacuum the living room floor (99). Even though the Aborigines have already used electricity in their lives, they do not easily get the access to be accepted as Australian. Not only facing the problems dealing with their status as the colonized at present, but the Aborigines are also keeping the depression of being colonized in their past.

Having been in the condition of 'in-between' reality, asserting their indigenous cultural traditions and retrieving their repressed history under the Whites' repression, the Aborigines come to the psychological condition defined as *unhomeliness* feeling by Homi K. Bhabha. The depression of fulfilling the Whites' demand for being accepted as Australians makes them not feel at home anymore, although they still live in their homeland. The cultural identity crisis that emerges as a result of the Whites' repression toward their lives gives rise to the Aborigines to be the "psychological refugee". Physically they are at home, but psychologically they are being 'unhomed' since they do not have freedom to celebrate their hereditary way of life in their own land. When they have already been moved to the town through the assimilation policy, the Aborigines' feeling to be 'unhomed' becomes worse. They have to loose their previous land at first, then

they have to face adaptation problems in the new place. They have to face harder pressure because there is less opportunity to assert their indigenous cultural traditions in the new society at the town, in which most of the population are the Whites. The improvement of standard of living is being the requirement to be accepted in that society. It is not easy for the Aborigines to fulfill that requirement by leaving their cultural traditions that have been held for generations.

2. Unhomeliness' Effect toward the Aborigines

Unhomeliness feeling experienced brings some effects to the Aborigines' lives. Facing the displacement of being torn between their own culture and the colonizer's culture, the Aborigines experience the identity crisis. The Whites' humiliation and discriminative treatment faced by the Aborigines make them loose their pride and do some efforts in order to be accepted equally to the Whites. A problem dealing with the pride as the result of the identity crisis can be seen from the conversation between Jayda and Ruby:

JAYDA: It's not that, Mum. I have to dress the same as my friends. I've got to be the same, Mum, or they'll laugh at me.

RUBY: Laugh, aye? You should be the one laughing, Jayda. You listen here, I'm not too shame. Let them think we different. I'll take them for everything they gotta offer. Jayda, it's *them* they want to treat us like this. I'll take them for every hand-out, ration, free pass, for every penny. As long as they *don't* think we like them, we sittin' pretty.

JAYDA: But you deserve brand-new clothes, not hand-me-downs. You always be nobody if you let them treat you like that. Don't you see, Mum?

RUBY: When you got no money for brand-new clothes, you have to feel proud in any clothes. I'm not too shame, Jessie not too shame, I know lot of *nungars*⁶ not too shame.

⁶ Aboriginal word for Aboriginal people

JAYDA: They don't like it if you act like blackfulla, either. Sometimes I gotta be better, dress better, everything better than them. I can't be different, Mum.

RUBY: I'm same person in old dress like I am in brand-new dress. I don't change. But, you, Jayda, you changin', getting' new ways. You didn't want to come to city, remember? You want to go back now, Jayda? They all gone Jayda, our people all gone.

JAYDA: I have changed, Mum, I'm older, I'm different now. (101)

The quotation above illustrates the different opinion between Jayda and Ruby about the secondhand clothes got from the Mission. Jayda thinks that the Aborigines deserve to get brand-new clothes rather than the secondhand ones from the Whites. In Jayda's opinion, it needs to be done in order to get better admission from the Whites. Taking the Whites' ex-clothes means that the Aborigines can not live without the Whites' help. They are still far from the improvement of standard of living demanded by the Whites because they can not fulfill their basic needs by themselves. Facing the discrimination in her work (100), Jayda concludes that she has to be the same as her friends for getting their admission. In doing so, she hopes that they will look at her as the Aborigines who deserve to get better treatment by the society. She will not be treated better if she still depends on the Whites' help. For Jayda, she has to change if she wants to survive in the new society at the town. She must try to fulfill the Whites' demand although it means that she has to behave differently from what she is used to, being different from what she has been taught for generations as the Aborigines. Actually, it is not easy to fulfill the Whites' demand. Jayda's statements point out that to be the same as the Whites and be respected more by the Whites are very hard to achieve. The Whites keep considering the Aborigines lower than them no matter how far the Aborigines have changed themselves to be the same as the

Whites. The Aborigines get depressed more when they can not maintain their Aboriginal identity while at the same time they are not accepted by the Whites either. Therefore, Jayda proposes that the Aborigines should not take the Whites' giving. In her opinion, the Aborigines will loose their pride more when they take it, and it improves the Whites' opportunity to insult them.

Being different from Jayda, Ruby thinks that the pride does not depend on what they take from other people, but it deals with their pride as the Aborigines. For survival, the Aborigines should not loose their identity just to be the same to the Whites. They should not change because they are different from the Whites indeed. Therefore, in Ruby's opinion, there is nothing to loose if the Aborigines take whatever are given by the Whites. They are still Aborigines although they wear the Whites' secondhand clothes. It does not matter for Ruby to accept the humiliation from the Whites as long as she is not being the same as the Whites. The Aborigines have already enforced the government's command to leave their homeland and move to the city, so there is no reason for them to change themselves in order to fulfill the Whites' demands. They should be proud of themselves because they can maintain their identity no matter how the Whites humiliate and treat them. Based on this thought, Ruby questions the change of Jayda's way of thinking. She can not accept that Jayda, who used to be proud of herself as the Aborigines, looses her pride and wants to be different just to be accepted by the Whites.

Eventually, the depression of being 'unhomed' and treated discriminatively as the colonized people has been accumulated into a huge anger

for the Aborigines. In the play, this anger is described by the anger of Wilba, who finally becomes an activist for the Aboriginal land rights struggle (104):

WILBA: We gonna march, Mum. Hundreds of us, not just me. We all going up there to sit on that land when the trucks and bulldozers come in. Those politicians, mob of ignorant *wudjellas*. I'm sick to the gut of their false promises of self-determination. Sick of their shit lies, their corrupt laws, their diseases, their goals... yeah, their chains, their chains. They handcuffed me, my *murras*, to a *wudjella* cop. The bastards... a *wudjella* pig.

RUBY: I never hear you talk like this, with so much anger. You grow like man now. You father be real proud if he see you now. But you don't use your *murras* for the things you were thought. You do carving still, Wilba? Make boomerang, spear, emu eggs? What your father think of that if - ?

WILBA: [interrupting] He's dead! Mum, you not listening to me. They are going to dig up his bones to build a mining town. That's what this is all about. I can't do those things here, not in the city. We have to fight so that our traditional people can still do these things and keep their land. (104-105)

It can be found in the play that Wilba takes the extreme way to fight and defend the Aboriginal right by being an activist. He is often arrested in the protests that result in the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. Being set up on the lawns of Parliament House in Canberra (104), he has joined with hundreds of the Aborigines who will do the long march to defend their rights. Living under the Whites' repression with less opportunity to maintain their hereditary culture makes the Aborigines get depressed more and more. The depression accumulates into anger when they realize that they have been treated as the object of humiliation and the 'sacrificed' group for the Whites' interest. The Aborigines are tired of being promised to get a better life through the implementation of assimilation policy because they still have to face the discrimination and the humiliation as the group which is considered lower in the new society. Being the colonized, the Aborigines get

depressed for being told what to do, where to live or to go by the Whites. The Whites as the colonizer decide “what the Aborigines’ want, what the Aborigines’ need, or where the money should be spent” (105) but the Aborigines’ lives are not improved as it is demanded by the Whites. They even have to live harder in the new society for facing the problems of adaptation, trying to be accepted by the Whites with the difficulties of maintaining their identity.

They get angry when they find that the government is going to build a mining town in their sacred land. Although the Aborigines have accepted to leave their homeland and move to the town, the government does not appreciate the significance of their sacred land. It is clear for the Aborigines now that their lands are sacrificed in the implementation of assimilation policy, which are promised to improve the Aborigines’ lives. On top of that, the Aborigines have lost their lives as well because there has been less opportunity to carry out their indigenous culture in the new society. Living without celebrating their cultural traditions means losing their Aboriginal identity. They do not want to be the same as the Whites. On the other hand, they can not express themselves in their own way because they have to fulfill the Whites’ demand that does not accept their cultural inheritance. It makes Wilba think that although they have already been the victims under the Whites’ repression, there is still a hope for them if they want to make it. They are motivated to fight the Aborigines’ land rights so they will not lose their identity and their indigenous cultural traditions. It is also preserved for their next generations, so they will be proud of being the Aborigines.

Moreover, the Aborigines' struggle motivation is also seen from the narration of the text itself. It is very clear in Eva Johnson's *Murras*, that Aboriginal struggle spirit can be found all over the play. The author elaborates it by portraying the Aborigines' domination from the beginning until the end of the play. It can be found that there is no White character in the play. All of the main characters are the Aborigines because there are only Granny, Ruby, Jayda, and Wilba, a family that represents different generation in the Aborigines. Apparently, another character in the play, Russel Mitchell, is a half-caste Aboriginal liaison officer who represents the Aborigines' lost generation.⁷ Looking from its story, this play also depicts the Aborigines' domination. The whole story is all about the Aborigines, which portrays their feeling, desperation, and anger as the oppressed under the Whites' repression through the implementation of assimilation policy. Certainly, the author uses the Aborigines' point of view in describing that implementation as the subject matter of her play. There is no direct interaction between the Aborigines and the Whites that makes the Whites' thoughts are caught from the Aborigines' perspective. What are done by the Whites toward the Aborigines is elaborated through the Aborigines' perspective. The absence of direct conversation with the Whites gives a big opportunity for the Aborigines to express their anger freely. Johnson does not give any chance to the Whites for expressing themselves throughout her play. All of the Whites' attitudes are told by the Aboriginal characters based on their acceptance toward the treatment

⁷ Lost generation is another term of stolen generation, a term used for Aboriginal children who was taken away from their Aboriginal mother by the Australian government. The government takes half-caste children to be raised and educated by the Whites. When they have been adults, many of them are looking for their Aboriginal family.

experienced. Johnson also celebrates the Aboriginal traditional values as the Aborigines' basic thought in estimating their differences from the Whites.

The conflicts that appear as the Aborigines' reaction toward their depression strengthen the Aborigines' domination in *Murras*. Most of them are dealing with personal conflicts, where the Aborigines have to face psychological impact of the implementation of assimilation policy. The author emphasizes on the Aborigines' own difficulties in surviving and fighting under the Whites' repression rather than explores the direct conflicts between the Aborigines and the Whites. Since there is no verbal conflict from the conversation between the Aborigines and the Whites throughout the play, the internal conflicts in characters' mind and the conflicts between them are strongly explored. It is written in a straightforward language. The characters express their thoughts explicitly so that their depression, disappointment, or anger can be noticed clearly. In this play, Johnson does not use certain symbols to point out the Aborigines' feeling toward the Whites. She describes it clearly through the characters' speech. The stage directions are also written explicitly so the description of the Aborigines' condition can be caught fairly. There is a Mimi Spirit indeed, but it is used as a symbol of the close relationship between the Aborigines and their ancestors. Another symbol is the use of Aboriginal word *murras* as the title of the play. Considering its meaning as the hand, it is probably used by Johnson to strengthen the survival theme. There is less chance for the Aborigines to use their hands for making any cultural products. Instead, the policy has scarred their hands

in the demonstration. In this case, aesthetical element is presented to describe the Aborigines' life deeper, thus the Aborigines' domination is being more visible.

The Aborigines' domination that is seen from the characters, story, conflicts, and language of the play seems to be an effort for expressing the Aborigines' survival. Here, *Murras* can be considered as a medium of the Aborigines success in breaking the Whites' domination through their lives. The Aborigines' feelings are explored freely by the author, something that is very difficult to happen in their real life. Although the Aborigines are being the oppressed in the implementation of assimilation policy, Johnson accommodates the Aborigines to express their anger toward the Whites. Setting of time used makes the survival atmosphere of the play more apparent. The actions that take place between 1967 until 1970s strengthen the description of the Aborigines' feeling toward the assimilation policy, as it was caught by the author from the Aborigines' real condition in Australia at that time. The 1967 referendum that provided the new housing to assimilate the Aborigines was a fact that is used for the background setting of assimilation policy portrayed in the play. Wilba's participation in the Aboriginal land rights struggle can also be seen as a representation of the Aborigines' real struggle in defending their lands in 1970s.

The Whites' domination both in real life and in Australian literature has been turned over by Eva Johnson in her work. In *Murras*, the Aborigines are being the main subject that is not described in pieces like how the White playwrights generally do it. The problems dealing with the implementation of Australian government's policy of assimilation are viewed from the Aborigines'

point of view, where this point of view can be perceived as the practice of *Occidentalism*. In the play, the oppressed Aborigines are being the center of their world, using their own perspective in looking at the Whites as 'other' people who are extremely different from them. Therefore, based on their cultural belief that is convinced through *The Dreaming*, the Aborigines have their own prejudices toward the Whites. Mostly, the play performs this prejudice and the accumulation of depression that lead to the Aborigines' rejection toward the Whites. It is very obvious that the author takes side on the Aborigines' point of view. The Whites' point of view is captured from the Aborigines' perspective, from how the Aborigines feel about it. In this case, the Aborigines' domination and the author's intention to take on the Aborigines' side can not be avoided to appear in *Murras* as an Aboriginal struggling play.

Beside those identity crisis and motivation for struggling, another impact of the Aborigines' unhomeliness feeling that appears from the implementation of assimilation policy is the anxiety toward their future. The following Ruby's statement shows it:

RUBY: Charlie, I seen too many changes. Moon, water, seagrass, dugong, parrotfish... all scattered. Granny gone. Wilba's *murras* are scarred by the *wudjellas*'s chains. His *murras* are clenched fists now. Jayda don't make baskets no more. She bleeds from her womb the seeds of death. She carries the scars from the *wudjella*'s medicine. There's no place for baskets here, she says. And my *murras* are too weak. They no longer carve. They are empty now. Moon, water, seagrass, dugong, parrotfish... gone. All gone. (106)

In her statement, Ruby moans about the change of life that she has to face. Everything is different for the Aborigines now, what has happened does not seem

to be appropriate with the Dreaming. Ruby encounters the desperation and the suffering because her life is not the same anymore as what it has been taught by her belief. She has to face the facts that her submission to leave her homeland and her perseverance in keeping her identity as the Aborigines do not bring any better changes for her family. Their social condition is not improved as it is promised in the implementation of assimilation policy. She even has to confess that there is no opportunity left in her new place to maintain her cultural traditions. It is something that has to be worried because when those cultural traditions cannot be maintained anymore, the Aboriginal identity will be gone too.

Furthermore, what happened with her children makes Ruby's anxiety become worse. She has to face the facts that Wilba is facing the risk of death for his protests as an Aboriginal activist. At the same time, the barren Jayda is leaving the Aboriginal culture as her identity change. All of them make Ruby worries about the Aboriginal future. Those facts convince her that the spirit as the Dreaming said has gone, and it can be used as the prediction that their lives will be gone too. Ruby's anxiety toward the future shows how desperate she is, so she thinks that there is nothing can be done to bring back her previous beautiful life.

3. The Aborigines' Condition through the Implementation of Assimilation Policy

Knowing the impact of assimilation policy toward the Aborigines' lives, how far its goal has been reached can be examined. It has been expounded previously that the Australian government's policy of assimilation is implemented

in order to improve the Aborigines' standard of living, so that they can have a better life as the member of a single Australian community. Based on this purpose, it is interesting to know whether the Aborigines have succeeded in being Australian or not. In order to analyze it, the writer will focus on the Aborigines' condition before and after moving to the town.

The first condition that will be analyzed is dealing with the Aborigines' prosperity. Before moving to the town, Ruby and her family are still considered live in improper condition by the Whites, as it is found in Russel's statement:

RUSSEL: Jesus, just look at this place. How can you live here? No running water, ceiling must leak in the wet, and probably bloody cold in the winter. Just look at this dirt floor, it's a breeding ground for rats and diseases; a real health hazard. (93)

It can also be found from the narration in Act I, Scene I:

[GRANNY sits on the car seat. RUBY, sits by the fire to make her a cup of tea in the billy. JAYDA starts hanging out the clothes on a piece of string tied from the door to the window.] (87)

From those quotations, it can be assumed that there is a prosperity gap between the Aborigines and the Whites. The Aborigines are viewed lower than the Whites since they still have to face many problems dealing with poverty, tidiness, and health. Looking from the Whites' standard of living, the Aborigines are still living under the poverty line.

After they have moved to the town, it is described in the play that the Aborigines' prosperity does not change significantly. Although they have used electricity in their daily lives (99), their standard of living does not improve as it is

promised by the government. There is an evident in the play that the Aborigines still get the secondhand clothes from the Whites (100). From the Whites' point of view, it shows that the Aborigines still depend on the Whites' help in fulfilling their basic needs. Besides, the discrimination can also be seen as another sign of the Aborigines' lack of prosperity. It is clearly described that Jayda and Wilba still have to face the discrimination in their new society at the town, as it is shown in the following dialogue:

WILBA: What you talking about, Jayda? I was the only one got the cane. That *wudjella* headmaster make me real mad. He goes... 'You have to learn to behave. We can't have you acting like a nomad down here.'

JAYDA: Now listen Wilba, it's not that different for me, either. I work in the kitchen with Russians, Italians, Greeks, you name it, but I'm the only Aboriginal, and boy do I get it. All the dirty jobs, bossed around, and I got to stop myself from getting mad. I don't want to lose my job so I just walk away. (99-100)

Looking from Jayda's case, it is known that the Aborigines have to face the discrimination in their working place. Since she is an Aborigine, Jayda can not get a high position in her office. Unlike the White workers, she even has to get all the dirty jobs. Ironically, Jayda gets depressed more when she knows that she has become an experiment by a White doctor. He gives her an injection that makes Jayda becomes a barren girl. Similarly, Wilba is the only boy who is considered guilty by his headmaster although other White boys are supposed to be guilty too. He has to face the humiliation from the Whites, just like he had ever experienced in his previous school.

Facing many difficulties in adapting to the new society, psychologically the Aborigines get more depressed. The prejudice they have ever had in the previous place become worse, as it is seen in the part of the play:

RUBY: They all nothing people. Granny and I teach you your own women's business. And that Sister, she take everything away from us. (102)

There is no positive side anymore about the Whites in Ruby's thought. Her anger after knowing that Jyda cannot have children for the rest of her life makes Ruby loses her tolerance. Considering what they have done to her daughter, there is no appreciation left for the Whites. In Scene II Act III, Jayda reminds Ruby that there is no use to be angry because the Whites think differently from the Aborigines (102). Nevertheless, Ruby can not accept the Whites' treatment. In her opinion, the Whites do not deserve to get some respects anymore since they omit the Aboriginal opportunity to continue their lives by losing a chance to give birth to their next offspring.

Wilba's prejudice toward the Whites becomes worse too after he moves to the town:

WILBA: Mum, I'll be okay, there's big mob of us.
[A car horn sounds, off.]
 That's my lift. Mum, I gotta do this – for you, for Dad, for me. We've always been told what to do, where to live, where to go. Manipulated like cattle, just like Granny said, but you know them *wudjellas* from government they decide what we want, what we need, where the money should be spent, but our people are still dying. (105)

It is told in the play that Wilba has a prejudice toward the Whites since he lives in his homeland. When Jayda faced the rape trial, Wilba thought that there is no use

to go to the police because they would not pay attention to the Aborigines' complains (97). Facing the facts that the Aborigines are still discriminated and they are more desperate after moving to the town, this prejudice becomes worse and leads to Wilba's huge anger. He can not stand anymore with the Aborigines' depression, therefore he decides to be an Aboriginal activist and fight for pursuing the Aborigines' rights.

From the description about the Aborigines' condition in the town above, it can be concluded that the Aborigines' standard of living has not changed significantly. It means that the assimilation policy has not reached its goal to improve the Aborigines' prosperity yet, and it has not been successful in making a single Australian community as well. In the new place, the Aborigines have already introduced to the modernization by using electricity in their daily lives as a requirement to be accepted as Australians, but on the other hand, they are forced to leave their culture for survival. It makes the Aborigines get depressed and finally leads them to defend their rights through protests or demonstrations. Consequently, the gap between the Aborigines and the Whites becomes wider, and the assimilation process can not run well.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION