



## HYBRIDITY OF SABINE KUEGLER'S IDENTITY IN HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY, JUNGLE CHILD

Andina Meutia Hawa<sup>1</sup>, Dyani Prades Pratiwi<sup>2</sup>, Fakhria Nesa<sup>3</sup>  
*Universitas Andalas<sup>1,2,3</sup>*

andinameutiahwa@hum.unand.ac.id<sup>1</sup>, dyanipradespratiwi@hum.unand.ac.id<sup>2</sup>, fakhrianesa@hum.unand.ac.id<sup>3</sup>

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### Abstract

Sabine Kuegler is a German author who was born in Nepal. In her autobiography, *Jungle Child*, she shared her life experience living in a Papuan jungle as a child. She was accustomed to living a simple life that was untouched by modernization, among the Fayu people, a newly discovered tribe in Foida, West Papua. At the age of 17 she moved back to Germany by herself and found it difficult adjusting to her new environment. This was mainly caused of her deep-rooted connection to Papua culture and her lack of knowledge about European culture. This study aims to reveal the form of the appearance of hybridity, liminality, and ambivalence in Sabine's identity. This paper uses a qualitative method which is in line with postcolonialism discourse. Bhabha (1994) suggest that hybridity is a cross between cultures in society, which appears in various forms, such as language and manner. The result shows that the process of reforming her subjectivity is shown through symbolizations such as place and time setting which at first creates dichotomies such as East vs West, and childhood vs adulthood. However, Sabine managed to find the connection between those dichotomies, which led to acceptance of her hybrid identity as a German who will always be a part of the jungle. The ambivalence of her identity is shown through her interaction as a German kid with Fayu People and her constant attempt to integrate into Western culture which always brings her back to her life in the jungle.

**Keywords:** ambivalence, autobiography, hybridity, identity, postcolonialism

### INTRODUCTION

The term postcolonialism refers to the resistance of the colonized against colonialism. The relationship between the colonizers and the colonized is often described as a binary opposition, where the colonialists are placed in a superior position, and the colonized are inferior. In addition, the relationship between colonizers and colonized is also represented as being in power relations, which gives rise to discourses of domination and subordination. This pattern of relations gave rise to representations of the colonized as stupid, mystical, uncivilized, and irrational. From this kind of representation there are attempts to criticize this representation (Gandhi, 1998). Postcolonialism often interfere with the discourse of feminism, which is marked by the emergence of women's movements against gender injustice and patriarchy.

Postcolonialism studies discuss the period after the colonial period (Loomba, 2003) and the impacts of colonialism practices (Lubis, 2015). Colonialism resulted in the uprooting of the cultural identity of the colonized due to being forced to follow the colonizers' culture. Colonial practices also resulted in contact between the cultures of the colonizers and the colonized. The meeting of these two cultures produces a kind of 'space between,' which makes the inequality and differences of the two cultures seem to be blurry. This concept is called liminality, which can be interpreted as a place where cultural change occurs, and personal and group self-esteem strategies can continue to be developed (Novtarianggi et al., 2020). Liminality can also be seen as a form of movement and exchange of an area that occurs continuously and varies. (Aini in Novtarianggi et al., 2020). As for all forms of cultural expressions and systems built in the third space, it gave rise to hybridity or crossing between colonial and colonized cultures. According to (Bhabha, 1994), hybridity refers to the relationship of dependence and reciprocity between the colonizers' culture and the colonized, which is also formed due to imitation or mimicry. In his theory, Bhabha says that mimicry is a form of reproduction in a colonial environment in an impure European subjectivity environment, built from its place of origin and reconfigured from the point of view of sensibility and colonialism anxiety (Novtarianggi et al., 2020). Mimicry produces ambiguous and contradictory effects between the subject it imitates and the one it creates. Therefore, acts of mimicry can also be seen as a form of mockery (ridicule) of the

colonized against colonialists who do not entirely imitate the West like the West (Faruk in Novtarianggi et al., 2020). Mimicry is a form of resistance against the colonized, which has subversive potential between mimicry and mockery due to colonialism (Child and William in Novtarianggi et al., 2020).

Mimicry produces ambivalence continuously as a form of awareness of the colonized towards the new culture brought by the colonialists. According to Bhabha, as quoted by (Loomba, 2003) ambivalence not only refers to the trauma that occurs due to colonial practices but also results in resistance to the colonialists. Ambivalence is characterized as acceptance and rejection by the colonized against the colonizers. In this case, the emergence of ambivalence can be seen from the form of awareness by the colonized to make self-improvement, for example, by following the learning method of Western educational institutions, to get used to the lifestyle of the colonized, but still have an awareness of the culture of the colonized (Aini quoted by Novtarianggi et al., 2020).

In (Loomba, 2003), Bhabha stated that the presence of the colonials was always ambivalent, namely a condition when one party builds identity or similarities, but the other party also maintains differences. This identity ambivalence illustrates the relationship between the colonialists and the colonized, who are no longer seen as hierarchical and contradictory. Thus, colonial and colonized cultures cannot stand alone but are interdependent. Therefore, the cultural identity of the colonizers and the colonized is described as something unstable, constantly changing, and happening continuously. The ambivalence formed from the cultural exchange between the colonialists and the colonialists made it possible to acknowledge cultural hybridity and accept the cultural differences between the colonialists and the colonized, as well as dialogical cultural exchanges.

## **POSTCOLONIALISM IN LITERATURE**

Bill Ashcroft introduced the discourse of postcolonialism as an approach to literary studies in the book *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literatures* in 1989. (Ashcroft et al., (2003) suggests four models for studying literature using a postcolonial approach, including national and regional models, black writing models, comparative models, and broader comparative models. The national and regional models focus on the differences in linguistic and cultural elements between postcolonial countries and their colonial countries. This model is considered a form of "optimistic progress" that describes the nation's feelings, as shown in the work of the author of the United States, a former British colony.

The black writing model arises from racial discrimination in the economic and political fields. African diaspora writers initially showed the black writing model as a critique of European views of black people. In its development, literary works with this model were also written by Polynesian, Melanesian, Aboriginal, and white African writers. The comparative model describes linguistic, historical, and cultural aspects between two or more postcolonial literary works. This model compares postcolonial results between white diaspora countries, black diaspora areas, or another transcontinental diaspora. The broader comparative model refers to hybridity and syncretistic as the main elements of postcolonial literature. Hybridity shows the relationship between two different cultural identities, while the emergence of new cultural elements shows synchronicity. In literary studies, postcolonial discourse analysis is used to dismantle hidden or hidden aspects to find out how power works and to dismantle the discipline, ideology, and institutions that underlie it (Ratna, 2007).

## **LITERATURE REVIEWS**

A *literature review* is a method that is often used in research. According to Leedy (1997) literature review is an explanation of a summary of previous research that has similarities with the current research. The method aims to clarify this research's position to prior studies. In this study, several previous studies were used as references, including entitled *The Culture Surprise of Sabine Figures in Dschunglekind* by Sabine Kuegler (Tanjung, 2011), (Lumbantobing, 2013) entitled *Forms of the Emergence of Ruf des Jungles* by Sabine Kuegler (Lumbantobing, 2013), and *Formation of a New Identity of Immigrant Figures in Four Short Short Stories by Two Immigrant Authors Vladimir Kaminer and Dilek Güngör* (Hawa et al., 2017).

Tanjung's research describes the culture shock experienced by Sabine in adjusting to German culture after spending her childhood in Papua. Sabine's form of culture shock is shown when she comes into contact with Germans for the first time. She instinctively reacted surprisingly, as if she thought that people were dangerous because she was thought to be always careful everywhere. She thought one must have weapons such as arrows, knives, to protect herself (Tanjung, 2011). One of the reasons for Sabine's culture shock was a lack of knowledge about the German culture from which she was born. Sabine eventually overcame her culture shock and accepted her identity as a white German woman, but did not forget her childhood experience in the forest.

Lumbantobing (2013) discusses the emergence of Orientalism in another Sabine book entitled *Rufs des Jungles (Call of the Jungle)*. According to Said, Orientalism originates from the efforts of Western nations to know the ins and outs of the Eastern region from a cultural, social, political, and economic perspective. Furthermore, the efforts made by Westerners to study the Eastern part aim to educate Easterners to become civilized nations Foucault, in (Lubis, 2015). The content of Orientalism is shown through little Sabine's observations of the cultural elements of the Fayu tribe, such as customs, habits, livelihoods, and so on (Lumbantobing, 2013). In her autobiography, Sabine writes about her childhood experiences living in Papua in her second book. She wrote her two autobiographies when she was entering adulthood, years later after she left Papua and returned to Germany.

Hawa et al., (2017) describes the formation of new identities of immigrant characters in four short stories written by two German immigrant authors, namely Dilek Güngör, who has a Turkish cultural background, and Vladimir Kaminer, who comes from Russia. The results of the study show that the formation of new identities for the two authors who are the characters in the four short stories is carried out by imitation (mimicry) of German culture, presenting memories as a reference in carrying out life in the present as immigrants and building self-subjectivity that liberates the two main figures in both short story collections. The two characters accepted their hybrid selves while simultaneously proving that identity is fluid, conditional, and situational.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative method, which is descriptive analysis. According to (Sugiyono, 2013) a qualitative method functions to describe or provide an overview of an object under study through data or samples that have been collected. There are three steps in the use of this method, namely data collection, data analysis, and presentation of data analysis result (Sudaryanto, 1993). In doing the first step, data is collected by searching for relevant sources. There two kinds of data used in this research, namely primary sources and secondary sources. The primary data source in this study is an autobiographical book entitled *Jungle Child* written by Sabine Kuegler. The secondary data is supporting data or complementary to primary data, such as books, scientific journal articles, and other data that can support this research.

After the required data is collected, the next step is reading and taking notes about the aspect Sabine's hybrid identity. Reading the secondary data such theory books and journal articles is required to find connection between research problem and the theory used, namely postcolonial. The aim is to strengthen the analysis technique to determine findings from research results. Then, the third stage is carried out, which is presenting the findings from the result of the research and making conclusion. The findings of this research related to Sabine's hybridity are: first, building an identity as a white girl living in a jungle. Second, the feeling of unhomeliness as the root of lacking the knowledge towards German culture. Third, attempt to integrate to German culture and acceptance in her hybridity.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the results of the discussion in the form of hybridity Sabine's character in her autobiography, *Jungle Child*. The discussion on hybridity is related to postcolonial discourse. In her book, the aspect of her hybrid of her identity are represented by symbols such as 1) her interactions as white Germans with the Fayu people; 2) find a connection between her childhood in Papua and her living in German as she entered adulthood; 3) her attempt to build self-subjectivity and acceptance that can free her from culture shock and feelings of having no identity.

The *Jungle Child* book has three parts. The first part explains how Sabine and her family migrated to West Papua in order to follow her parents' work as linguists and missionaries. Her father was in a mission, to build connection and to live in harmony with Fayu tribe, a tribe whose existence at that time was still a myth and had never been exposed to modernity. The second part talks about Sabine's childhood in Papua, her family's interactions with the Fayu tribe, and the Fayu people's acceptance of the Sabine family. The third part talks about Sabine's life after returning to Germany and the difficulties Sabine faced in adapting to Western culture after spending many years as a child in Papua.

### **The Early Stage of Identity Building as Part of Fayu Community**

All the stories in Sabine Kuegler's autobiography are filled with hybridity. The chapter entitled 'The First Meeting,' in the first part of this book, talks about the arrival of Sabine and her family to the village where Fayu is. The Fayu region is divided into several groups: Kirikiri, Dou, Iyarike, Tearü, Tigre, Doa, and Sefoidi. Three months earlier, Sabine's father, Klaus Kuegler, had attempted to contact the Fayu people. Nakire accompanies him

from the Dani tribe, who has frequently interacted with people outside Papua. Klaus' first encounter with the Fayu people is described as "the scariest figure Papa has ever seen" (Kuegler, 2006: 39).

Each resident of each Fayu region fought against each other. Killing each other is common. Klaus' intention to establish contact with the Fayu people reaps pros and cons for each Fayu area. The circumstances were caused by crocodile hunters from Indonesia who came to Iyarike's group and killed two members of the tribe. Iarike's people think that Klaus has an association with the crocodile hunter. However, Nakire and Teau succeeded in persuading the Fayu people that Klaus and his family had no intention other than wanting to live side by side with the Fayu people. "I am here because I am thinking about moving here with my family. I want to live among you and learn your language because I have an important message for you. A message of love and peace" (Kuegler, 2006: 54)

Three months later, Sabine and her two sisters, Judith and Christian, and their mother, Doris, landed in a field in the village of Foida, where the people of Fayu welcomed Sabine and her family. Sabine's first encounter with the Fayu people is described in the following quote,

"Never before have we seen people look so savage. They were taller than the Dani and Bauzi tribes, dark-skinned with curly black hair, and completely naked. Emus feathers partially cover their heads, and a long, thin bone above each eyebrow is held in place by a thin headband made of tree bark. Each man carried a bow and arrow in one hand and a stone ax in the other. The strangers surrounded us and stared expressionlessly. Their faces looked cynical and fierce. Judith holds my hand tightly while Christian hides behind us. My brother started to panic. His breaths became fast and short. With her long blonde hair, Judith attracted the attention of the warriors of this primitive tribe..." (Kuegler, 2006: 32-33).

The quotation above shows the act of looking at each other and being seen between Sabine and her two brothers, represented as "West" and the Fayu people as "East." The two representations of "West" and "East" are aware of each other's striking differences in race and skin color that cause both to be looked at, and to see means a desire to know each other between the two. Differences in race and skin color between the two cannot be eliminated, but the interaction between the two indicates acceptance of one another.

Sabine's father explained that he and his two brothers did not need to be afraid of the Fayu people because they only wanted to satisfy their curiosity about white people. Curiosity, of course, is also experienced by Sabine and her two brothers. The following is a quote that describes the feeling of acceptance between Sabine, her two siblings, and the Fayu community,

"Chief Baou suddenly bent down to my level, took my face in both hands, and pulled it close to his face. I was shocked because I thought he was going to kiss me. Turns out he pressed his forehead to mine and rubbed it. Papa laughed to see me surprised" (Kuegler, 2006: 33)

The quote above illustrates the custom of the Fayu people to rub their foreheads together as a greeting, like how Western people shake hands. This is the first thing that Sabine learns about the Fayu people, and at the same time, she and her two siblings are individuals who are open to cultural differences. In postcolonial discourse, the act of rubbing each other's foreheads is called by Bhabha (1994) a liminality or threshold space, which is a marker for the place where a symbolic interaction occurs that connects the difference between black and white.

Another hybridity content is seen in Sabine and Christian's interactions with the Fayu children. A few days after Sabine arrives in Foida, she notices a child of Fayu watching their activities. Unlike the majority of Fayu's other children, who still feel foreign to the arrival of a white person, Tuare, this child shows interest. They immediately learned the customs of the Fayu people, namely bartering goods with each other. In this case, the toy becomes a medium of exchange. Tuare with her little bow and arrows, Sabine and Christian with their little mirrors. When he saw himself in the mirror, he screamed and dropped it. We laughed, and Christian picked it up off the ground and showed his own reflection to the boy. Then he offered the mirror back to him. Meanwhile, several Fayu had gathered to see what was happening" (Kuegler, 2006: 33)

The above quotation shows the existence of a dichotomy between East and West. The East is represented by an image of the interior of the Fayu people, who have not been exposed to modernization, shown through Tuare, who is surprised to see his own reflection in the mirror for the first time, and the West with Christian, who teaches Tuare how to work a mirror. In this case, the mirror becomes a tool that dissolves the dichotomy. Sabine and Tuare's interactions allow the two to know and learn about each other, thus disguising their racial and cultural differences. Bhabha (1994) explains that the interaction of two cultures opens the possibility of forming a new cultural identity that recognizes differences and ensures the absence of forced hierarchies.

Sabine and Tuare are getting closer: "To this day, he calls me his sister" (Kuegler, 2006: 29). She was accepted into Fayu's children's play group. The mutual learning process between Sabine and Fayu's children continues. Sabine and her sister taught Fayu's son games such as hide and seek and playing ball. In return, Tuare taught Sabine how to make fire without matches and knives from bamboo. Living in a forest full of dangers teaches Sabine to learn how to survive in the forest. As time passed, she became increasingly distant from modern Western

life, and it did not take long for her to feel like she was part of the Fayu forest children. "In the weeks and months after our arrival, I became like Tuare – a child of the jungle" (Kuegler, 2006: 30)

Living in the forest made Sabine and her family must follow the eating habits of the Fayu people due to the limited availability of food in the forest. She has no qualms about trying to eat the meat of beasts such as that of snakes or crocodiles. Sabine's father even had to barter with the Fayu people to eat it. Another form of Sabine's hybridity related to food was when she and her brother stopped by Jakarta and tasted ice cream for the first time. Previously, she had only seen ice cream through a poster and could only guess what it tasted like, "One of our biggest dreams was being fulfilled, and it tasted as good as we had imagined it would" (Kuegler, 2006: 139).

Even though she is used to the eating habits of the Fayu people, there is another desire she wants to fulfill, namely eating ice cream, which is identified as Western food. This kind of action is a form of mimicry, her imitation of Western eating habits. However, the act of mimicry will always be different from what it imitates, as stated by Bhabha (1984) "a subject of a difference that is almost the same but quite." In the context of *Jungle Child*, this can be seen in the narrative: "Our stomachs simply were not used to the cold, much less the excessive amounts of sugar and dairy products. This was such an extreme contrast to our usual jungle diet" (Kuegler, 2006: 136). The experience of "trying Western food" for the first time made an impression on Sabine's memory. After returning to Europe, she also found it challenging to get used to the taste of Western food. It took her years to enjoy the meat: "It tasted old and bitter" (Kuegler, 2006: 138), in contrast to the taste of snake meat, which she described as "delicious, tender, and sweet" (Kuegler, 2006: 136). Judith, Sabine's sister, could never even taste the pleasures of meat. Both decided to become vegetarians.

Accustomed to moving around following their parents, Sabine and her two siblings learned various languages, such as Nepali, German, English, and Indonesian. Sabine's schoolbooks use an international curriculum, so she is more fluent in English than German, her primary language. Therefore, Sabine's parents continue encouraging their children to speak German at home to maintain their German skills. After settling in Papua, Sabine also learned the Fayu language. Christian, fluent in Indonesian, finds it challenging to communicate with the Fayu people, who need help to speak Indonesian. Even though the Papua region is in Indonesia, the Fayu people have their language. The Fayu people use a tonal language, and one word can have a different meaning. The vocabulary of the Fayu people could be more extensive. It happens because the daily life of the Fayu people is centered in the forest, so their speech is more related to things like plants, animals, and other activities in the woods.

"Along with the language, we also absorbed the Fayu culture. Papa taught us to respect their culture and adapt ourselves to it. We did this to a greater extent than our parents expected. To this day, much of my Fayu's thinking and behavior remains intact. I still react differently to certain situations than other Europeans" (Kuegler, 2006: 148).

The quote above illustrates the significant influence of the Fayu community in shaping Sabine's identity. Sabine's acceptance of the Fayu culture was even more significant than her parents hoped for. This is because Sabine has no filter in accepting things outside of her original culture, unlike his parents, who migrated to Nepal and Papua when they entered adulthood and have strengthening their identity.

## **THE FEELING OF UNHOMELINESS**

This section describes Sabine's identity problems. According to Wahyuni et al., (2022), identity is essential in defining a person. A person's identity marker can be attached to name, gender, and age. Citizenship identity relates to feelings of attachment to a particular country. However, this becomes a problem when someone feels uncomfortable and unhomey in the environment where they live, even though the surrounding community has accepted the person.

Problems of identity and discomfort are discussed in postcolonial studies. Uncomfortability (unhomeliness), as cited by Wahyuni et al., (2022), is when a person feels trapped in two cultures. The practice of colonialism produces a society with a hybrid culture. In the case of *Jungle Child*, Sabine's mixed character is shown when she fully absorbs the culture of the Fayu people, but at the same time, she desires to be part of European culture.

Sabine's feelings of unhomelessness began when she and her family returned to Germany for a time. While visiting her grandmother's house, Sabine and her two siblings are amazed to see snowfall for the first time. Sabine decided to go outside to feel the snow and stuck out her tongue. "Don't eat it," Christian called out worriedly. "It might be poisonous" (Kuegler, 2006: 196). The quote shows that Sabine and Christian have a solid attachment to the culture of the Fayu people. Years of living in the forest have made Sabine aware of the importance of being reflective about the unknown, such as the appearance of wild animals. In this case, the snow in Europe represents something that is not yet known, giving rise to a feeling of introspection. She and Christian continue playing after learning that snow is formed from frozen water. She felt pain in his bare feet in the middle of his game. In the

middle of the forest, she doesn't need shoes. This shows another form of Sabine's strong attachment to Fayu culture and her ignorance of the weather in Europe, which is very different from Papua.

Sabine's parents realized that adapting Sabine and her two siblings to European life took work. "But there were still many things that she had difficulty understanding and adapting to" (Kuegler, 2006: 197). For example, Christian's surprise at the large selection of food in the supermarket or when Judith felt she couldn't decide which chocolate variant she would like. Sabine needed help understanding the endless supply of food in a German supermarket, unlike life in Papua, where she only goes to the supermarket twice a year to supply household goods. During her return to her hometown, Sabine went to school in Bad Segeberg. It was the scariest thing for her, so her parents had to take her out of school. She and her family also visited the United States, which was very foreign to her.

"I longed to return to the jungle and began daydreaming a lot. My body was in the West, but my thoughts were far away. It was a time I'd rather not remember. I cried a lot at night, and my siblings didn't have an easy time either. The situation got worse and worse for us kids, which only served to increase my parents' worry. We felt like outsiders in Western culture, whether Germany or America and wanted to return to the jungle" (Kuegler, 2006: 198-199).

The quote above describes Sabine's confused feelings, who feels trapped between the two cultures she is living in. What Sabine experienced made her feel confined due to the constant adjustments she had to make. Bhabha (1994) says that hybridity is not only done in one way; there is no right or wrong thing about the concept of hybridity. There is a process of adjustment that continues to repeat itself. This concept of identity formation, which continues to repeat itself, signifies Sabine's confinement in an ideological community element, which she thinks she has successfully overcome. Sabine is originally from Germany and has lived most of her childhood in the jungles of Papua. When she returns to her hometown, this produces her own hybrid identity, and one result of hybridization is the feeling of being unhomey.

Sabine's following form of unhomeliness was shown when she and her family returned to Papua. Sabine was happy when she could meet her old friends in the forest again. However, this only lasted temporarily. She remembered her grandmother, who was in Germany. She compared the taste of the Papuan coffee she was tasting with those she had tried in Germany. She missed the excellent bread in Germany and the weather and beautiful lakes.

"Then I feel guilty. Here I was, yearning for my parents' homeland when nature had just shared with me an experience, I had years for. No, I had no right to be homesick. No right to long for a strange land. This was my home; this was where I belonged" (Kuegler, 2006: 211).

The above quote also shows that Sabine also had an attachment to Germany. She feels an equally strong attachment to Papuan culture, creating a sense of guilt in Sabine. To get rid of her guilt, a dichotomy emerged between her home (Papua) and her parent's homeland (Germany), as if she wanted to deny that her parents' hometown was her hometown. In this case, Sabine also began to feel alien to the culture of the Fayu people, which she initially thought was her 'home'. When she returned to Papua, she was already in her teens and was starting to think about her future. On the one hand, the forest life Fayu has lived makes her feel like she has found a real home. However, on the other hand, Europe's civilized and modern life offers many other exciting things that are impossible to find in the forest, such as going to college or a potential husband. A man from the Fayu tribe cannot possibly marry a woman outside the Fayu tribe, let alone a white girl like her. She found herself changed, and so did the Fayu people. Sabine said that cases of kidnapping of young women by Fayu's men had decreased considerably, and so had the war. All thoughts about who she was raging in her mind, "

How could I fit into a place that no longer fitted me? After all, wasn't I a German? A white girl with white parents? My skin was white, but what was I on the inside? Who was I really?" (Kuegler, 2006: 212).

The quote describes the form of inner war she experienced. In the context of postcolonialism studies, this phenomenon is referred to as uncanny or alienation. Uncanny is one of the impacts of colonialism practices that can be felt by both colonizers and colonized. Collins and Jervis, in Prawiroatmojo (2017), say uncanny is an experience when a person loses orientation, namely when the world where she lives suddenly becomes strange, strange, and threatening. The uncanny phenomenon experienced by Sabine produces an ambivalent form of Sabine's identity. She considers Papua to be her home, but at the same time, physically, mentally, and emotionally, she is in Europe. Until one day, her best friend, Ohri, died. Ohri's departure made Sabine feel devastated. She is often haunted by nightmares and guilt for being unable to save Ohri from death. Sabine decided to leave the Papuan jungle and attended school in Switzerland.

Occasionally, she remembered the life she spent with the Fayu people. The longing that occasionally spreads was often relieved by letters sent by Sabine's mother, who still lived in the forest. She realized there were so many things she needed to know and learn about life in Europe.

"Stop it! I chided myself. I do not want to think about that anymore. I want to forget everything. I am finally where I belong – after all, my skin is white, my hair is blond, and my eyes are blue. This is my new home; Europe is my heritage and my future. I was determined to learn everything I could about this new world. I wanted to become European, think like them, act like them, and look like them. They are my new tribe" (Kuegler, 2006: 230).

The quote above illustrates Sabine's determination to learn about her new world to be accepted by the European environment. In the postcolonial discourse, the European colonialists were positioned higher than their colonizers. The practice of colonialism gave rise to ambivalent identities between the colonizers and the colonized and acts of imitation (mimicry) of the colonized towards the colonialists. In this case, Europe is considered to have a higher culture, so the colonized do mimicry to become equal with the colonizers (Hartono, 2005). In the context of *Jungle Child*, Sabine's mimicry is a form of awareness of how different she is from the people around her regarding her thinking style, lifestyle, and attitude, even though she is part of the European race. Apart from that, Sabine's mimicry can also be marked as her attempt to get out of the shadows of her childhood life in Papua.

"I threw myself into Western life. Having been raised in one of the most primitive parts of the world, I now wanted to experience the sophistication of Switzerland" (Kuegler, 2006: 232). In this quote, Sabine refers to Papua as 'primitive,' unlike Switzerland, which she calls sophisticated. Sabine's mimicry is shown when she walks into the city of Montreux with her friends. While visiting a grocery store, something caught her eye. She saw the item's price listed and rushed to the cashier to bid. Sabine did not expect that her actions would confuse the cashier. Sabine's friend explained that at the grocery store, people pay for items according to the price listed. The concept of paying according to price is something new for him. Bargaining is something ubiquitous. However, in different places, different customs apply.

Sabine also studied European customs. In Europe, people only greet people they know, unlike in Papua, where everyone smiles and greets each other when they pass on the street. Sabine applied what she learned the next day. However, she feels guilty when she does not greet the people she meets. This shows that Sabine still has an attachment to Papuan culture. As (Bhabha, 1994) stated in the previous section, the act of imitation never matches what is imitated. Therefore, it can be said that mimicry produces an ambivalent identity because, on the one hand, it builds identity or similarities. However, on the other hand, it maintains differences Faruk, in (Hartono, 2005).

Sabine's mimicry is also shown by changing her appearance to make it more like modern European women.

"You really need a new haircut," she stated. Yours looks out of style. And your clothes! We'll have to do something about that'. That afternoon, we went out – first to the hairdresser, where I wanted to cry when I saw how short my new style was. But Leslie assured me that this was the fashion. And then onward we went to the clothes shop. Soon I was dressed like my friends. The headmistress of the school was amused by our undertaking, but I finally felt like I had arrived. I even got a new pair of boots, calf-length and pointy-toed, like cowboy boots. I was very proud of my new purchases" (Kuegler, 2006: 232).

The quote above also describes two contrasting phrases: 'out of style' and 'fashion.' Sabine must leave something old or 'out of style' to enter something new or 'fashion' to be 'the same' with her friends. Even so, Sabine still could not give up her old habit in Papua, namely shaking her shoes before putting them on. Living in Papua taught Sabine that poisonous insects hide in shoes, so the shoes must be shaken to get the insects out. Sabine later noticed that in the months following her arrival in Europe, she had never encountered any insects. In the context of colonialism discourse, there is a view that the colonized people must be guided into the modern world and introduced to more advanced Western civilization to create harmony between the West and the East Setiadi, in (Hartono, 2005). In *Jungle Child*, this is realized through Sabine's two friends, who continue to introduce Sabine to European culture, including by inviting Sabine to play billiards and go to the movies. However, she still feels left out from her friends because she needs to learn about Western music and films. Therefore, as he buys various magazines, she reads and memorizes the names that appear one by one, but every day, new names keep appearing.

This also happened when Sabine was exposed to modern technology, such as fax machines and cell phones. Sabine feels that what is referred to as Western culture is endless. She realized that there is always a change of information in the Western world, and it happens quickly. In this case, Sabine again experiences feelings of unhomey, namely doubts about her attempts to integrate with modern European culture fully. "Was I really going to make it a European? I feel lost and overwhelmed by the task" (Kuegler, 2006: 233). While in Europe, Sabine still managed to keep in contact with her parents, who were still in Papua. When reading the letters from her mother, she feels connected to her old home in Papua rather than Europe. As time passed, Sabine found it increasingly difficult to adjust to European life. She felt a longing for Papua.

'As I read this poignant letter from my mother, I felt again the odd pain that had been increasing in recent days. More and more, the jungle will come to mind, especially as I lay in bed at night. But I suppressed the thoughts and feelings whose only goal, it seemed, was to make me cry. No! I was here now and would become like those around me. That was my goal. After all, wasn't I a European now? I put the letter away and did not think about it?" (Kuegler, 2006: 247).

The quote above shows the identity problem faced by Sabine when trying to integrate with European culture. This problem arose as a feeling of unhomely after reading a letter from his mother in Papua. In postcolonial studies, subject identity is always described as split and ambiguous. On the one hand, the subject wants to get out of the sense of the Other and mingle with the colonizer's identity. Still, at the same time, she rejects the colonial culture and wants to maintain her original culture.

### ACCEPTANCE OF HER HYBRID IDENTITY

The problems and difficulties that Sabine experienced made her want to give up. "And then I did something I never thought I'd do"(Kuegler, 2006: 253) and she thought, "As my life ended, so would my pain" (Kuegler, 2006: 253). However, after feeling pain all over her body, she immediately prayed, and this brought her to remember the life she had passed in Nepal, Papua, to Europe, where she lives today. She thought of the people in her life, her friends in Papua, her parents, and her children. She was reminded of the Fayu people who used to be at war, slowly turning to love each other thanks to the presence of Sabine and her parents.

"Suddenly I viewed myself with astonishment. Hadn't I managed to bridge the gap between the Stone Age and the modern age in a matter of a few brief years? What happened to my strength? Where were my will to survive and my joy over living? Where was the true me? Surely, I could learn to be happy in the civilized world – after all, it wasn't just a kind of jungle?" (Kuegler, 2006: 255).

The quote above shows a form of self-awareness and Sabine's efforts to achieve self-subjectivity. She realizes that her inner strength is the solution to all the identity problems she faces. She has been able to live as a white woman in the forests of Papua, then lives in Europe, which she also describes as a modern 'jungle.' Sabine realized that she could never escape her past to survive in a modern European world. She is also herself formed from all past experiences that have shaped her into the Sabine she is today.

Sabine's form of acceptance of her hybrid identity is also shown in her awareness to continue living her life. She realized that to be able to live is sometimes not easy. However, one must fight to achieve happiness. "I have built a new life and learned that happiness doesn't come from external things, but places inside my own heart." (Kuegler, 2006: 256). Fragments of words such as external things can be likened to things of modernity, such as technology or recognition from the surrounding environment. Ultimately, she efforts to integrate with modern European culture were successful, as she no longer felt like a foreigner in her home country. "When I moved to Germany this last time, I integrated myself into society without being a foreigner" (Kuegler, 2006: 256). In this case, Sabine interprets identity as not only being attached to where a person comes from. She no longer feels like a stranger in Papua or Germany. But she freed herself from these things and, in the end, achieved happiness. This can be seen from the narrative about accepting her hybrid identity as a German woman who will always be part of the Fayu community.

### CONCLUSION

Jungle Child Autobiography by Sabine Kuegler contains the journey of Sabine's life. She is used to living on the move because she follows her parents' job. The results and discussion of the first part show Sabine confirming her identity as a white child living in the forests of Papua. In this case, Sabine has no difficulty determining who she is because of her young age and has not had exposure to modern life, which contrasts with the isolated forest life of Papua. Problems arose when Sabine entered her teens and began to be exposed to modern European culture. When he lived in Europe for the first time, she found it challenging to adapt to her new culture. This was shown because of her ignorance of the culture from which her parents came. Apart from that, the problem of identity is also offered through the feeling of unhomeliness that she feels, namely being between two worlds and, at the same time, feeling deprived of both. Her mimicry towards European culture often overwhelms Sabine, and she constantly remembers her life in Papua. In the final part, it is shown Sabine's form of acceptance of her hybrid identity, which is marked by an awareness of the power she has. Shee realized Europe was no different from any other 'jungle' he had visited. Thus, to survive in the forest, there was nothing else she could do but continue to survive.



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