

**HYBRIDITY IN TARZAN'S CHARACTER AS FOUND IN EDGAR RICE
BURROUGHS' TARZAN OF THE APES:
A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY**



A Thesis

*Submitted in Partial Fulfillment to the Requirement
For the Degree of Sarjana Sastra*

ANDRIANI MUTIA

07 185 030

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LETTERS
UNIVERSITAS ANDALAS
PADANG
2011**

ABSTRAK

Skripsi ini membahas tentang hibriditas yang terjadi pada Tarzan; karakter utama dalam novel Tarzan of the Apes karya Edgar Rice Burroughs. Dalam penelitian ini, penulis memaparkan proses dari hibriditas yang terjadi pada Tarzan yang dilahirkan dari bangsawan Inggris, namun hidup dan dibesarkan di hutan Afrika oleh bangsa kera. Kemudian, penulis membahas dampak hibriditas tersebut terhadap karakter Tarzan.

Dalam menganalisis novel ini, penulis menggunakan teori hibriditi yang berada dalam ruang lingkup dari kajian pasca-kolonial. Penulis mengumpulkan data berupa buku-buku ataupun referensi yang berkaitan dengan topik analisisnya dengan menggunakan metode kajian pustaka. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif, penulis menganalisis datanya yang kemudian dipaparkan secara deskriptif dalam penelitian ini.

Dari hasil analisis tersebut, penulis menemukan bahwa Tarzan tidak bisa mengidentifikasi siapa dirinya sendiri sebagai seekor kera atau seorang manusia. Hal ini terjadi akibat dari budaya bangsa kera, budaya orang kulit hitam dan budaya orang kulit putih yang bertemu di dalam hutan tempat Tarzan tinggal yang mempengaruhi karakter Tarzan sehingga membentuknya menjadi sosok hybrid; seorang manusia berkulit putih yang berbudaya kera dan manusia. Sebagai akibat dari hibriditas ini, Tarzan mengalami kebingungan akan identitasnya sendiri. Walaupun pada akhirnya Tarzan terbukti sebagai anak dari bangsawan Inggris, Tarzan lebih memilih untuk menyembunyikan identitas aslinya dari bangsa kulit putih karena ia sendiri tidak yakin akan mampu hidup dalam lingkungan kulit putih.

Key words : postcolonialism, hybridity, identity, colonized, colonizer, jungle, cultures, apes, human, white people, black people, influences

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Research

The presence of postcolonialism has enriched the literary studies. It becomes more complete and does not only discuss in the formal and intrinsic parts. It basically discusses the issues of colonial texts that do not merely describe the relationship between colonizer and colonized as master and slave. However, the resistance to the colonizer can be included by postcolonial studies. It has a role as a critical discourse that can dismantle text, vaguely advocates against the colonized. It deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies.

Postcolonial literature tries to criticize the contemporary post-colonial discourses that have been shaped over recent times. As Abrams, M.H states in his book A Glossary of Literary Terms that,

Postcolonial studies have focused especially on the Third World countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean islands, and South America. It sometimes encompasses also aspects of British literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, viewed through a perspective that reveals the extent to which the social and economic life represented in the literature was tacitly underwritten by colonial exploitation. (1999: 236)

It means that postcolonial study relates to literature written by authors whose country once become the European colonized country. The literatures of African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean, India, Malaysia, etc, can be included in postcolonial literature. (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2002:2)

Postcolonialism strongly opposes universality in literature. One of the interesting characteristics in postcolonial criticism is about double identity issue. There would be a person with two identities; colonizers as well as the colonized. Then, it is known as hybridity. The term hybridity has been crucial in Homi Bhabha's view of the ambivalence of colonial discourse. It commonly discusses about cultural mixing or mingling between the colonized and colonizer. Then, there would be seen the old cultural identity and the new cultural identity from this cultural mixing.

In hybridity, the old identity usually will not disappear easily although the new cultural identity will strongly influence it. Here, what is called by Homi Bhabha, hybridity concept, which occurs as the ambiguity of identity that bring a person in a position of 'in-between' or in the middle. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin states that, "it is the 'in-between space that carries the burden and meaning of culture, this is what makes the notion of hybridity so important. Hybridity has frequently been used in post-colonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural 'exchange". (2002:119) It means that hybridity indicates the position of 'in-between' that happens to the person as he stands between two cultures.

Related to the discussion above, the writer is interested to analyze the novel Tarzan of the Apes for some reasons. First, Tarzan of the Apes, the first of the 22 Tarzan novels written by an American writer, Edgar Rice Burroughs (1875 – 1950), in 1914, describes mostly about the image of Africa from his perspective. In this novel, the writer gets some issues related to post colonialism. The author sets the story in Africa and he shows the reader about how superior the English man in Africa among the apes and the black people as the indigenous people. The writer sees that those apes and those black people are considered as the colonized while some white people who are superior to these natives that can be called as the colonizer.

Second, the main character in this novel, Tarzan, is an English son who lives and grows up with his adoptive ape parent in the wilds of African jungle. He does not know his

true origins and another life outside his jungle. Later he realizes that he is physically different from his fellow apes and it makes him feel slightly strange. He is identified as neither a human (white people) nor an ape. He stands between the civilized and uncivilized world. This thing also relates to the postcolonial issues. Besides that, this novel has not been analyzed by English Department students. So, the writer is challenged to analyze this novel by using postcolonial theory.

The writer believes that this novel is appropriate to be analyzed by hybridity theory and entitles her research: Hybridity in Tarzan's character as found in Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan of the Apes: A Postcolonial Study.

1.2 The Identification of the Problem

This research analyzes Tarzan of the Apes and focuses on postcolonial study which deals with cultural identity in colonized societies. The main character in this novel is born from the English nobility's family while he grows up in the wilds of African jungle with his ape parents. He does not know his English-blood running in his body. He is such a white man who lives in the jungle and he has to learn what the Apes taught him to survive there. Later he meets the black and the white people, his own race. In short, he is influenced by the apes and human and these make him confused with his true identity. Therefore, the writer tries to explore about how the apes and the human influence Tarzan's character to become a hybrid creature.

1.3 The Scope of the Research

In this research, the writer focuses on the character of Tarzan, concentrating on the following issues:

1. Analyzing the jungle as the meeting point of more than one cultures (the culture of white people as the colonizer and the culture of black people and apes as the colonized)
2. Analyzing Tarzan's hybridity as the impact of living in those cultures and the impact of Hybridity on Tarzan's character

1.4 The Objective of the Research

The objectives of this research are to describe how the novel presents the cultures of the apes and the cultures of human beings (white and black) and to show the process of hybridity in the character of Tarzan as the result of living in those cultures and the impact of the hybridity on Tarzan's character.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the novel Tarzan of the Apes by Edgar Rice Burroughs, the writer concludes some important points related to the analysis of hybridity in Tarzan's character which occurs as the impact of living in the jungle.

Related to postcolonial study, the jungle where Tarzan grows up is taken as the representation of colonized place and as the meeting point of some cultures. There are some cultures that can be seen in this jungle and they help the information of Tarzan's hybrid character. Those cultures consist of the cultures of the Apes and the black people as the colonized (Africa) and the culture of white people as the colonizer. (Britain)

Because he has been living in the jungle since he was baby, Tarzan thinks that he is an ape because he never met people like himself before. He adopts the cultures of the apes since he was young. It can be seen from the way he survives, the way he searches and eat food, swing through the trees, etc. Until one day, he realizes that he feels different in physical appearances with the Apes. He feels humiliated to be a hairless ape.

Then, Tarzan meet the black people and the white people in his wild jungle. The existence of those people make him more confused with his identity. He can not identify himself as a human or an ape. He commences to realize that he is different from his fellow apes. He is similar to those people in physical appearance. Furthermore, the existences of the white and the black people help Tarzan to identify himself as human race. Tarzan learns about the ornaments and the clothing from the black people. He also learns how to use bow and arrow from them. Meanwhile Tarzan learns about civilization from the white people. He is able to read and write by teaching himself with the books and the tools that are left in the cabin by his true parents. He fell in love with the girl of those white people. He also learns how to behave as white people.

The cultures of Apes and human beings that Tarzan has been living with, result in confusion. Tarzan doubts himself as an ape as well as human. When one of the white people helps him to find his true identity by taking his fingerprints in a high official of the police department, he hardly accepts the result that he is the son of the Lord Greystoke. Finally, even though he knows now that he is not an ape but a white man, he hides that fact from other people, especially from Jane, the woman whom he loves, because he does not know the ethics of society which the white people governed and he is not ready to live in this civilization.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrams, M. H. A Glossary of Literary Terms. 7th ed. USA: Cornell University, Heinle & Heinle, 1999.
- Aschroft, Bill, Garreth Griffiths, and Hellen Tiffin. Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts. London & New York: Routledge, 2000.
- . The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures. 2nd Ed. London & New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Burroughs, Edgar Rice. Tarzan of the Apes. *With an Introduction & Notes by Maura Spiegel*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2006.
- Britton, Erin. "Tarzan of the Apes by Edgar Rice Burroughs". Bookgeeks. 31 May. 2010. 8 Oct. 2010 <<http://www.bookgeeks.co.uk/2010/05/31/tarzan-of-the-apes-by-edgar-rice-burroughs/>>
- Bruce B., David. "TARZAN OF THE APES: Child's Tale or Adult Fantasy, A review which parents of young children may wish to read". Tangor Responds. Oct 1997. 8 Nov. 2010 <<http://www.erblast.com/erbmania/tangor/tarzan1.html>>
- Kenney, William. How to Analyze Fiction. New York: Monarch Press, 1996.
- Loomba, Ania. Colonialism/Postcolonialism. London & New York: Routledge, 1998. 1 Mar. 2011 <http://www.4shared.com/document/x9XfwyAb/Ania_Loomba_-_Colonialism-Post.htm>
- Mitchell, Veronica. "Tarzan of the Apes by Edgar Rice Burroughs". Veronica's Book Blog 14 Sept. 2006. 8 Nov 2010 <<http://veronicasbook.blogspot.com/2006/09/tarzan-of-apes-by-edgar-rice-burroughs.html>>
- Murfin. Ross and Supryia M. Ray. The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms 2nd Ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003.

Sibarani, Eva Renta. "Hybridity Phenomenon as Reflected in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* – Post colonial study". Under Graduate Thesis. English Department, Andalas University, 2010.

Susanti, Yulina. "The Crisis of Identity as the Impact of Hybridity of Indian Immigrants in England As Reflected in Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*." Under Graduate Thesis. English Department, Andalas University, 2010.

Tyson, Lois. Critical Theory Today. A User-Friendly Guide. 2ed. London. 1997.

Welshman, Sarah. "Tarzan of the Apes". Colonial and Postcolonial Dialogues. April. 2001. 8 Oct. 2010 <<http://www.wmich.edu/dialogues/texts/tarzanoftheapes.html>>