

Colonialism and Identity Construction of Contemporary German Society in the Novel *Der Schrei der Hyänen* by Andrea Paluch and Robert Habeck

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Abstract. The End of World War I marked the end of German colonialism. This paper aims to describe the perspective of the German youth towards German colonialism and the reconstructed identity of the German nation as a nation that can not be separated from its colonial past. Both can be extracted from the novel *Der Schrei der Hyänen* by Andrea Paluch and Robert Habeck. The Method used is descriptive qualitative using a postcolonial approach. From the result of the analysis, it is known that through the characters' journey, colonialism is no longer seen as the success of the Germans in managing the colonies but rather as a dark period that snatched the future of the German nation. Mixed identities become an offer in the face of globalization as an effort to eliminate the stigma of chauvinism that is still attached to the German nation. abstract needs to summarize the content of the paper.

Keywords: German colonialism, identity construction, German society

1 Introduction

The history of the German colonial period received various responses in the life of the German nation today. The end of German colonialism was the beginning of a long-lived and relatively dynamic culture of memory. After all, Germany's post-colonial era was shaped by widespread upheavals such as World War II, the Holocaust, and the Cold War [1]. The dominant memory is precisely about the reign of Hitler and World War II. However, the memory of the colonial period remains because historical evidence of the legacy of the German colonial era is still visible in the lives of the German people. At least until the 1970s, there were still many statues of figures considered heroes of the German colonial era. Meanwhile, at the beginning of the 21st century, the debate about street names identical to the German colonial period began to warm up again.

The long journey of the German people's memory of Colonialism in the 20th century and the transition to the 21st century shows how the Germans tried to determine their national identity amid their association with other nations. They went through various phases starting from the

period of Colonialism, World War I, and the Versailles Treaty, which followed their defeat in World War I, the post-World War I reign, which was followed by the reign of the Weimar Republic, the Nazi government, their defeat in World War II, and the separation of the two German states made all these memories twisted and bound to each other and made it a field of memory contestation and negotiation of the identity of the German nation.

The 100th anniversary of the massacre of the Herero and Nama tribes by the German colonial army that occurred in 1904 opened the memory of most Germans about the past of the German colonial era. The apology and acknowledgment issued by the German government became an important point for the German people in managing their collective memory and being part of the construction of their identity. According to Göttsche [2], the warning sparked an unprecedented public interest in German Colonialism. The same thing is also emphasized by Zimmerer (in Albrecht [3]) who states that public warnings against Colonialism refer to specific events in colonial history and tend to occur on commemorations such as the centenary of the colonial war in 2004.

While Conrad [4] mentions that newspaper and journal articles, radio and television features, exhibitions, and new historical research use the centenary to remind Germany of forgotten Colonialism in an attempt to rewrite Colonialism in German cultural memory and to reflect its legacy in post-colonial Germany in the early twenty-first century. This historical discourse about Colonialism now resonates with a new wave of literary interest in Africa, which began in the 1990s and peaked in the early 2000s; it also resonates with debates about German multiculturalism since the 1980s.

Novels that appeared at the beginning of the 21st century had a different character in describing German Colonialism than in previous periods. Globalization and the demands of a multicultural society that accompanied the human movement at the beginning of the 21st century gave a new color to German literature around Colonialism. It also becomes an afterthought in the construction of the identity of the German nation in responding to the changing times.

The novel *Der Schrei der Hyanen* by Andrea Paluch and Robert Habeck [5], published in 2004, is the fruit of the spirit of change in viewing German Colonialism and the identity of the German nation. It is important to study this novel to see how contemporary authors interpret Colonialism and the cultural identity of the German nation. This novel tells the family's journey in search of identity through the story of four women in four generations over one hundred years. The story is also not told linearly but simultaneously. The events are narrated sequentially independently of the generational chronology according to the principle of motive parallelization. Through this independent sequence of stories, the conception of Colonialism and the construction of identity can be seen intergenerationally.

The novel begins with the arrival of Arabella to the German colony in South West Africa to marry a man. Frank, a farmer, was her first husband. Frank is killed when the Africans revolt and the Africans kidnap Arabella. In that phase, she was in a relationship with an African man. When she returned to the German side, she tried to cover up the relationship by accepting a marriage offer from Paul von Kavea. From that marriage, Nele was born. The end of World War I, which was followed by the defeat of Germany, made them decide to return to Germany. Nele grew up in a conservative environment, making her a Hamburg senator. The conflict occurred when Nele's son, Kriemhild, gave birth to a black baby, Cosima. Nele

decided to throw the baby into an orphanage to avoid embarrassment to the family. After 30 years, Nele met her granddaughter and said they had blood ties and bequeathed a piece of African land.

The four characters in this novel can be said to represent four different periods of the German people viewing Colonialism. In addition, in the course of the lives of these four figures, there is a depiction of German identity concerning relations with other nations. The long history of German Colonialism that continues to live until the early 21st century is summarized in the story of a family of 4 generations who were brought together in one main event, namely the mixing of blood that was not realized by all the characters until one day the severed thread was found and opened the old memories of their extended family. This awareness opens new questions for readers, namely, how four different generations view Colonialism and how the identity of the German nation is reconstructed through the story of the meeting of 4 generations who have blood ties.

Prinsloo [6] has analyzed this novel using the perspective of cultural memory with special emphasis on the reader's perception, with the help of identity and Generationenroman theory in analyzing the novels *Ein unsichtbares Land* by Stephan Wackwitz (2003) and *Der Schrei der Hyänen* by Andrea Paluch and Robert Habeck (2004). By understanding cultural memory, individual characters in fictional or semi-fictional primary texts can distinguish between those who belong to the group and those who do not. In this study, cultural memory from Assman becomes an important reference in analyzing the identity and memory of the German nation.

In contrast to Prinsloo, this study uses its analytical knife differently. In this study, transculturality becomes the main point of view of colonial memory and intergenerational cultural identity in Germany. Transculturality in this study is defined as the formation of diverse, fluid identities resulting from the encounter of diverse cultures due to a re-examination of traditional analyses such as migration, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, postcolonialism, and cultural memory.

Nordin et al. [7] mention that in a society where change is quiet and foreign influences are rare, the illusion of culture as homogeneous and static may be easy to enforce. However, in today's increasing cultural change, the transcultural perspective is more touching in understanding the construction of human identity. Compared to concepts such as interculturality, multiculturalism, or hybridity, all of which may have relevance for expressing cultural encounters but which often presuppose the concept of cultural essentialism, the concept of transculturality has the edge of determining change and diversity rather than focusing on change: limit or difference. The idea of transculturation has been embraced and expanded in various studies in several disciplines, concentrating on colonial encounters and imperial cultural dialogues to understand the complex process of identity formation from/between colonies and colonies.

However, as Welsch admits, the process of transculturality as the basis for the formation of culture and identity is by no means a new phenomenon in history [8]. On the other hand, societies throughout history have always experienced cultural encounters between different populations, placing hybridization and transculturation as fundamental processes for their formation since ancient times. Likewise, in exploring German colonial memory, transculturality becomes a way to see how this memory reacts across space and time and twists with other memories belonging to the German people. Memory and identity in the novel

Der Schrei der Hyänen are seen as something that is no longer homogeneous and dichotomous, but rather heterogeneous and interrelated.

2 Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design. In addition, the text analysis technique engaged in this research was close reading. Lapp et al. [9] stated that close reading is a reading approach to express, involve, and understand information and ideas in a text. While Love [10] mentions that the term close reading tries to capture the reduction of scale, persistence, and attention that is extended temporarily to the very small, it is a hallmark of literary studies. By reading the texts several times, readers have time to deepen their understanding through some steps, such as omission of text message ambiguity, context hint analysis to discover unfamiliar language, relations between ideas in detail, and visualization of organization patterns applied by the author to share information. The data source in this research is the novel *Der Schrei der Hyänen*. The instrument in this study is a data-sheet in the form of notes and data collection tables.

3 Finding and Discussion

German Colonialism in this novel is viewed differently by four generations of Germans represented by four characters: Arabella, Nele, Kriemhild, and Cosima. By depicting these four figures, Colonialism has changed the views of each generation of the German nation. It is in line with what was mentioned by Erll [11] about transcultural memory that moves across space and time and is intertwined with other memories. Relationships with other memories make the German people's view of Colonialism colorful but have the same common thread. Meanwhile, the identity of the German nation is also revealed in this novel through a mixture that cannot be denied. The fact that blood mingling binds the four characters in the novel becomes the center of identity studies in this study.

3.1 Changing views of Colonialism by four generations

Colonialist discourse is a discourse about the colony and discourse generated within the colony. It promotes and justifies colonization, creates and enforces meaning, and establishes power relations within the colonial sphere. When viewed as a form of power exercised through discursive practice rather than purely coercive power, 'colonial discourse highlights the roles of domination, exploitation, and disenfranchisement involved in constructing any cultural artifact, including knowledge, language, morality, or attitudes. [12]

The view of Colonialism in the novel *Der Schrei der Hyänen* experiences a shift in meaning. Although not explicitly expressed by the four characters in this novel, it is known that the changes are visible from some data. The memory of the lost Colonialism still lingers in Arabella's mind even though she has returned to Germany. The image of the colony in Arabella's mind was

No plants. The inhospitable wind destroyed all green life before it could form. The mist stuck impenetrably into the sky, blocking the ground from direct light. It is not what she imagined in Africa. [5]

The image of Africa in Arabella's shadow can be said to be a general view of Africa for the German people. A barren area that is different from the shadows when they were in Germany.

However, memories of Colonialism are constructed through Arabella's character who tends to be neutral in interacting with Africans. Several times in the novel, Arabella's empathy is shown, for example, when Eva's character dies and Steffens' character is shot.

Arabella knelt beside the bloody Steffens, who had risked her life for a love she did not feel. She tore off the tip and pressed it against the wound. The man groaned... "She needs a doctor," he whispered.[5]

In Arabella's mind, Colonialism is a construction built by the author to show that not all Germans are involved in dark history and that not all Germans do not understand Africans. It can be seen from the following quote:

Even though she did not understand the foreign language's individual words, Arabella could follow the palaver of the chiefs that night. [5]

Arabella is portrayed as a woman in the middle trying to understand Africans best. In Arabella's view, Africa and Germany are human beings who both need a life.

Meanwhile, Nele is described as having unpleasant memories of Africa. Even though she has lived in Germany since childhood, she can imagine how her mother felt in Africa. "Her earliest childhood memory was the horror in her mother's eyes." The image implied that the memory of Africa was bad for Nele. Especially when the birth of his black granddaughter

Yes, yes, that is okay. So Cosima,' said Nele. When she said it out loud, she even liked the name. She walked towards her granddaughter. A white towel framed a black face. Nevertheless, Nele only slowly turned to her dumbfounded daughter. "With a Negro," she said disdainfully. [5]

Hatred against the birth of his black grandson is also caused because it is considered to embarrass his family. It also shows that at that time, blood relations with Africans were still taboo and considered degrading to the family. It can be seen from the telephone's statement that Nele is still very proud that his grandfather is Ludwig von Kavea, governor of South West Germany.

Memories of Africa's bad past are still a colonial discourse that developed after World War II. The character Kriemhild is said to have a negative relationship with his mother, Nele. It made her decide to return to his mother's homeland in Africa to occupy the family's farmland. Kriemhild's departure to Africa signifies a different view of Africa. For Kriemhild, Africa has become a second homeland that is a place to leave all the problems in Germany. It happened to some German immigrants in Africa. Kriemhild's pain was conveyed by Ketelsen that

»When you are born, Germany is stuffy down to the crumpled sofa cushions. Kriemhild suffers from this airless country, from all conservative scum, Neles Prussianism, and a lack of motherly love.« [5]

A contrasting view is shown by Kriemhild, who no longer holds a conservative view of the nation and its relations with other nations, as Nele does. She is more open to accepting the circumstances of living and settling in Africa. The information that his son had died could be said to be a disconnect from the memory of the German nation to its colonial memory. It shows that the Germans were not aware of the strong relationship between Germany and Africa for a long time.

Although Africa also took his life through a snake. Death caused by snakes is a middle way to describe the relationship between Germany and Africa in Kriemhild's life. Africa, on the one hand, is no longer a boundary for Kriemhild, but on the other hand, his mother's conservative past has indirectly killed her.

"Did Nele tell you what caused your mother's death?"

"A snakebite."

"That snake is Nele. She tortured Kriemhild his whole life". [5]

The process of negotiating the memory of the German nation against its colonial period is shown by the figure of Cosima. Cosima is described as a black character who does not know his origins. At first, she thought that she did not have white family roots. Even in the orphanage, she did not feel part of the orphanage because she was black. She showed this by rejecting the fact that Nele was her grandmother.

"Maybe we can talk for ourselves?" asked Nele, looking at Hera.

"About what?" Cosima answered.

"About us. About family." Nele's voice trailed off, not because she wasn't sure, but because she needed to figure out where to start to earn Cosima's trust.

"This is my family," Cosima replied gruffly. She used to think that the word orphanage meant that all the children there were white. So he wasn't even one of those who didn't have anyone.[5]

Although initially refused, in the end, Cosima can accept that she has blood from Nele. She could understand that she did not want to be a part of the family. Acceptance of the inheritance land also represented part of the negotiation of accepting that reality.

The above explanation shows how the colonial memory intertwined with the memory faced by the German people. Arabella made Africa a land of hope and a second homeland. Meanwhile, Nele, who is conservative, tries to deny it and echoes the spirit of his descendants (Prussianism). Kriemhild is the party that rebelled against German conservatism by choosing to live in Africa. In Germany, on the other hand, it can sometimes be narrow-minded towards people like your mother.<

We can see with a 'transcultural lens' first many blurry sides of national cultural memory, many sites of shared memory that emerge through travel, trade, Colonialism, and forms of cultural exchange. Second, the internal heterogeneity of different national cultures, classes, generations, ethnicities, religious communities, and subcultures will produce different but interacting memory frames. We can thus see that transcultural memory research will shift attention away from static 'sites' and toward dynamic memory 'movements' across space and time. [12]

3.2 Transcultural Identity

The term 'identity' can be understood as a set of characteristics by which a person or group of people can be identified [13]. It can also refer directly to the name of an individual or group. Group self-identity is based on similarities, and group members' relationships with people outside the group are based on differences or 'oddities.' If identity is, put, 'who and what you are, either individually or as a group, it is also necessary to recognize these 'who' and 'what' as dependent on context, opportunity, and purpose and to see the act of identification as dependent on semiosis.

The identity of a nation's society cannot be separated from Anderson's conception of imagined society. Anderson [14] mentions that society is a solid and stable sociological entity, so they assume they have passed without knowing each other. This fact is also supported by the belief that they carry out various activities together. They have a common bond even though they do not know each other. This imagined community appears in this novel which also shows that identity is ultimately not homogeneous but heterogeneous, consisting of various roots. Arabella's character shows how the construction of German identity is reconstructed through a polite person who accepts differences from African people. Arabella's desire not to return to Germany or to a German environment when she was kidnapped shows her openness to accepting differences.

"I don't want to go back," Arabella said. Assa didn't seem to hear it. He unbuttoned his saliva. "I'm not going to Germany." [4]

What is also interesting is how Arabella sees the alienation in herself and the fetishes in other cultures, as the following quote shows.

» *Maybe I am no longer German, but you are becoming more and more German.*«[4]

The view of alienation in oneself is also a part of transcultural identity. Welsch mentions that as a result of increasing cultural penetration, nothing is truly alien. Therefore, there is no longer anything that belongs exclusively to oneself. Authenticity has become folklore, a 'sense of belonging' that is simulated by others - to whom the indigenous people belong. 11 In the internal design of culture today, there is an alienation almost as foreign as in external relations with other cultures. The restrictions on one's own culture and foreign cultures are invalidated. Meanwhile, Nelle shows a very strong German identity by holding the principles of conservatism. The dream of Prussian glory still lingers in her. Policies that became the legacy of the ancestors of the German people are also still a guide for his life. However, in the end, she could not deny that she was a mixed identity that she had not imagined before. Pride for her family roots vanished as soon as she believed she had mixed blood.

Her family tree roots wriggled like branches in the wind; she, Nele von Kavea, was black, a negress. It was evening. The sun had started to set. His father is not his father, and Nele is not Nele. Only Kriemhild thought he was. Moreover, next to her, Cosima was the only living person related to her by blood.[4]

Kriemhild and Cosima also realized the acceptance of diverse identities. Cosima finally had to realize that she had mixed blood, not as she previously imagined that she was of pure African descent. The rejection of the fact that he has white ancestry is shown by his resistance when Nele regards her as family.

"This is my family," Cosima replied gruffly. She used to think that the word orphanage meant that all the children there were white. So she wasn't even one of those who didn't have anyone.[4]

The isolation from the environment made Cosima feel that she was not part of the existing society. Likewise, the unpleasant past at the orphanage formed his identity, and she let go by choosing to be herself by looking to the future.

If you want to read how the whole story begins," said Paul. Cosima looked at the notebook but didn't pick it up. She looked him in the eye and now saw a resemblance to the man in the old photo.

"I don't want to know. I want it to continue." [4]

The negotiation process that she carried out succeeded in reconstructing her identity. She believes that it is no longer possible to resist the hybridity experienced by his family. From that, we see that the author wants to show a transcultural identity that is intertwined and pervasive between Germany and Africa. Edward Said may be right in saying: "all cultures are involved in one another; nothing is singular and pure. All are hybrids, heterogeneous, very different, and not monolithic.

That is also what Welsch [7] used as the basis when he underlined the identity of the diverse German nation.

There was a Roman Captain, a dark-skinned man, brown as a ripe olive; he had succeeded in teaching Latin to a blonde girl on the banks of the Rhine; then a Jewish spice trader came to the family, a serious man who converted to Christianity before the wedding and established a Catholic tradition in the house. Then a Greek doctor, a Celtic Legionnaire, a Grisonian land guard, a Swedish Knight, one of Napoleon's soldiers, a lonely Cossack, a Black Forest raftsmen, a wandering grinding agent from Alsace, a fat boatman from Holland, a Magyar, a Pandour, an officer from Vienna, a French actor, a Bohemian musician; and all the mixed crowds that live, fight, drink and sing and give birth to children along the Rhine! That Goethe character came out of the same pot. Also, a guy named Beethoven, and Gutenberg, and - ah, whatever, look in the encyclopedia! They are the best, my friend! The best in the world! And why? The nations mix there like water from springs, rivers, and streams in one great stream of life.

From the analysis above, we can see that alienation is likely to occur in intercultural and intergenerational relations. Cultures and perspectives between generations permeate and influence each other and are always hybrid. However, in transculturalism, it is believed that differences do not disappear, but the modes change. Welsch [7] argues that differences, as traditionally provided by a single culture, are diminishing. Instead, differences between transcultural networks emerge. This network, however, also has some elements in common while differing in others. So there is always some overlap between them - "family resemblance," as Wittgenstein puts it.

4. Conclusion

German Colonialism experienced a journey across the boundaries of space and time and generations and got different meanings. Likewise, the identity of the German nation is shown to be full of variety originating from various cultures from various times that follow it. Like woven fabrics, the intertwined networks of identities form colorful threads that strengthen the fabric. It shows that what has changed is the type of cultural diversity. Distinctions no longer

arise between different types of monolithic identities but between configurations of identities that share some elements in common while differing in other areas, in their overall arrangement, and often in their complexity.

The negotiation and reconstruction of German identity in this novel are shown by the movement and change of identity and perspective on self and others. On the one hand, contemporary society represented by the Cosima generation shows a disconnect with history. However, on the other hand, it also sees history and the past as parts bound to each other. Besides that, they also see that German identity is an open identity and is always dynamic in accepting culture from outside. This tug-of-war between Germanism and openness is an issue that continues to develop in Germany. Negotiation will always be there to bridge these two understandings.

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