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# Roehana Koeddoes's Resistance to Dutch Colonialism in "Belunggu Emas" by Iksaka Banu<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Despite being positioned as inferior by the colonial and patriarchal systems of the time, Indonesian women were involved in the resistance against Dutch colonization. Now recognized as national heroes, these women took part in the struggle by directly participating in fighting, or indirectly through social initiatives. Among them was Roehana Koeddoes, whose resistance is depicted in the short story, "Belunggu Emas", by Iksaka Banu, wherein an indigenous woman from West Sumatra establishes a school dedicated to teaching women and a newspaper, *Soenting Melajoe*, published by and for women. This study aimed to represent Roehana Koeddoes's resistance to Dutch colonialism in Banu's story, using a qualitative method with a post-colonial theory approach. The results showed that Roehana Koeddoes's resistance to Dutch colonialism was in the form of mimicry, hybridity, and ambivalence. The mimicry shown is the imitation of the colonial discourse regarding superiority of knowledge, education, ethics, and habits, as demonstrated by Roehana Koeddoes' intellectual abilities in expressing her courage and opinion, through both her writings in the newspapers she owned and her activism as an educationalist and journalist, which inspired women across the Dutch East Indies, including Dutch women. Resistance in the form of hybridity occurs through spatial planning, which is indicated by the adoption of houses with European-style windows and the arrangement of living room corners that combine Eastern and Western cultures. Lastly, resistance in the form of ambivalence is shown by the attitude of the character, Roehana Koeddoes, who at equal times shows her eastern and western sides.

**Keywords:** *ambivalence; hybridity; mimicry; resistance; the story of "Belunggu Emas"*

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## INTRODUCTION

Women in developing countries have a different experience from women in developed countries because most of the developing countries have experienced colonization by countries from Europe such as Britain and Netherlands, and from Asia such as Japan. Indonesia, as one of the countries that was colonized by the Dutch for three and a half centuries, has positioned Indonesian women at that time as victims of the colonial system and the patriarchal system.

In essence, during the colonial period there was a hierarchy of four categories found in the colonies. These categories are 1) European men 2) European women 3) Indigenous men 4) Indigenous women. Based on this

hierarchy, indigenous women held an inferior position. They are dominated, exploited, and treated as inferiors along with indigenous men in the colonial system and but also positioned as inferior because of the patriarchal system (Oyewumi in Ilma, 2016).

Women in colonized societies have even been described as the real targets of colonialist and nationalist discourses. Therefore, although there were frequent differences and competition in fighting over indigenous women, colonial and indigenous patriarchy continued to work together to keep women in an inferior position (Loomba, 2016). Gandhi (2019) emphasizes that post-colonialism postulates "the third-world woman" as

victim *par excellence* – the forgotten casualty of both imperial ideology, and native and foreign patriarchies. This condition is the background of the emergence of resistance by women in third world countries, including Indonesia. In pre-colonial times, history records that Indonesian women played significant roles in society. Many kingdoms in Indonesia before Dutch colonization had queens as the heads of their government. Many of these queens had achievements equal to those of kings. Ratu (Queen) Kalinyamat of Jepara, for example, together with Raja (King) Johor expelled the Portuguese army. There were also the Queens of Majapahit (Ratu Tribuana Tungga Dewi), Aceh (Sultanah Seri Ratu Alam Safiatuddin), Ternate (Ratu Siti Aisyah We Tenriolle), Kutai (Ratu Aji Sitti) among others (Poesponegoro in Herawati, et al, 2019).

History also records the actions of women in resisting Western colonization. In the oral history of Aceh, the exploits of the famous figure of Laksamana Keumalahayati (1600s) are narrated. She was the leader of Inong Balee Army, which expelled Holland's De Houtman (1599) and Van Caerden (1601). However, this was over one hundred years before the Dutch began to colonize Indonesia. Colonization brought changes to social systems, cultural norms and values, and economic status. Indonesian women's status also shifted from an equal, collaborative position to what Kartini observed as being constrained and shackled (Robinson in Herawati, 2019).

During the Dutch colonial period, Indonesian women fighters were involved in resistance against the Dutch, either by taking part in fighting directly or indirectly. There are a number of female heroes who rebelled against the Dutch, such as Cut Nya Dien and Cut Meutia from Aceh, Martha Christiana Tiahahu from Maluku, and Nyai Ageng Serang from Central Java (Darwin, 2004). Until the end of the 19th century, the role of Indonesian women in the creation of an independent nation can be seen clearly. There are many women who defended Indonesia based on their own decisions and methods (Triana, 2017).

In addition to the contribution of these women, there are also R.A. Kartini, R. Dewi Sartika, Ruhana Kudus (old spelling: Roehana Koeddoes), and others who played a significant role in building women's movements to struggle for women's education, empowerment, and emancipation. R.A. Kartini and R. Dewi Sartika are pioneers of women's organizations, which occurred prior to Boedi Oetomo<sup>2</sup>. R.A. Kartini started a relief movement for women by creating an association. At the inception of this association in July 1903 at the Pendopo of Jepara

Regency, Kartini invited seven girls and young women to be the first members (Triana, 2017). The position of women in the colonial era, before the rise of the women's struggle, epitomized by Kartini's work, meant women were left behind because of the colonial policy which severely restricted women's access to education (Vickers, 2005).

After Kartini's association had been operating for one semester in Central Java, a second women's education movement was established in West Java. This education movement was based in Bandung and led by a woman named Raden Dewi (RD) Sartika and was inaugurated on 16 January 1904. Sartika formed a women's association in a limited scope as had been done by Kartini in Jepara. Shortly after its inauguration, Sartika developed her association into a school in 1905. At the beginning of the 20th century there were two women's movements, one led by R.A. Kartini and the other Raden Dewi Sartika (Triana, 2017). Both acting to resist colonial policy on women's education.

Roehana Koeddoes regarded as an activist for women's organizations after Boedi Oetomo. There are two different arguments about the precise date she established her women's organization. One body of opinion is that Roehana Koeddoes together with sixty women including the wives of traditional and religious leaders of Koto Gadang (Gadang City) formed Vereeniging "Karadjinan Amai Satia" on 11 February 1911 and Roehana Koeddoes was elected as its president. On the other hand, Ohorella, et.al (in Triana, 2017) while agreeing on the details of the place and name of this new women's organization, argue the date was February 11, 1914. Regardless of this, together with her members, Roehana Koeddoes made KAS a means for raising the status of women by teaching read and write Arabic and Latin letters, household management, making handicrafts, and even marketing.

The Karadjinan Amai Satia Association (KAS) aimed to "Advance women in Koto Gadang in various aspects of life in order to achieve the glory of the entire nation". To achieve this goal, Vereeniging Karadjinan Amai Satia opened a school called the Amai Satia Karadjinan School (Fitriyanti, 2013).

The Karadjinan Amai Satia developed various educational institutions for women, as well as businesses for women. The establishing of Amai Satia Crafts was a significant achievement, creating a base and a center for household crafts in Koto Gadang (Deliani, 2019).

Roehana was one of the few women at the time who believed that discrimination against women, including access to education, was an arbitrary act and had to be resisted. With her intelligence, courage, sacrifice

and struggle, Roehana fought against injustice to change the status of women (Agustiniingsih, 2019).

In addition, on July 10, 1912, Roehana Koeddoes founded a women's newspaper called *Soenting Melajoe*. Its editorial staff, starting from the editor in chief, editors, and writers, were all women. Apart from *Soenting Melajoe*, Roehana Koeddoes's journalistic works are also found in many newspapers, such as *Saudara Hindia*, *Perempuan Bergerak*, *Radio*, *Cahaya Sumatera*, *Suara Koto Gadang*, *Mojopahit*, *Guntur Bergerak*, and *Fajar Asia*. On August 25, 1974, Roehana Koeddoes was awarded the title of pioneer female journalist from West Sumatra and pioneer of the press by the national government for her services in fighting for the nation through journalism (IDN Times News, 2018).

The newspaper *Soenting Melajoe* was published three times a week and Roehana Koeddoes was its editor-in-chief until 1920. *Roehana Soenting Melajoe*, which became the center of activities for young women and married women, contained articles on politics, and strategies for the rise of Indonesian women as well its expression in the form of prose and poetry (Baha'Uddin et.al., 2010).

*Soenting Melajoe* which was published between 1911 and 1921 and was pioneered by women focusing on women and their movement. Besides, this newspaper was managed, and the content was written mostly by women. The existence of the newspaper became an indicator of an intellectual advance in Minangkabau. The newspaper, at least, shows the women's struggle at that time to achieve an equality with men in thinking, acting, and treatment (Hanani, 2018).

R.A. Kartini and R. Dewi Sartika are names that are familiar to Indonesian society because of their pioneering work to advance the status of women through access to education moreover, R.A. Kartini and R. Dewi Sartika have been awarded the title of national hero for some time, while Roehana Koeddoes was only awarded the title of national hero on November 7, 2019 (Presidential Decree of the Republic of Indonesia Number 120/TK/2019 concerning the Awarding of the National Hero Title), even though her work and contribution to women's education and journalism began not long after Kartini and Dewi; however, Roehana Koeddoes distinction is to be the pioneer of female journalism in Indonesia.

This resistance, by one of the Indonesia's female figures, namely Roehana Koeddoes, is represented in the short story entitled "Belunggu Emas" by Iksaka Banu. Its main character has the same name, namely Roehana Koeddoes. The short story tells about the resistance carried out by Roehana Koeddoes, an indigenous woman from

West Sumatra, through her intellectual knowledge and abilities and her female activism with the establishment Amai Satia School and the newspaper *Soenting Melajoe*. This form of resistance gained the attention and admiration of the Dutch women Cornelia (Nellie) and Mrs. Joanna Adriana Westenenk. Nellie's admiration of Roehana Koeddoes is because for Nellie, Roehana, not only has extraordinary intellectual knowledge and abilities, but also has the courage to express her opinion despite colonial and patriarchal pressure. In fact, the character of Roehana in the short story, has inspired women in the Dutch East Indies. Including Dutch women (Cornelia/Nellie and Mrs. Joanna Adriana Westenenk) because of her success as a driving force for West Sumatra women and her efforts in providing skills and education to them through the Amai Setia School and the newspaper *Soenting Melajoe* that she pioneered and founded.

This short story is in Iksaka Banu's collection of short stories *Teh dan Pengkhianat*, published in April 2019. Abrams (in Nurgiyantoro, 2009: 4) categorizes the short story as historical and biographical fiction because the basis for writing is drawn from historical information and biographical facts, a work of fiction known as non-fiction fiction. This short story, which presents facts about the existence of the character Roehana Koeddoes, is consistent with other works by the author, Iksaka Banu, which are mostly categorized as historical fiction. Among them are the collection of short stories *Semua untuk Hindia* which was published in 2014, the novel *Sang Raja* published in 2017, and the author's most recent novel, published in 2020, *Pangeran dari Timur*.

Iksaka Banu is one of Indonesia's most productive authors in Indonesia whose work has been publicly lauded. His collection of short stories, *Semua untuk Hindia*, won the Kusala Sastra Khatulistiwa award for the prose category in 2014, and in 2019 his collection of short stories, *Teh dan Pengkhianat* also received this award in the prose category (Pradana, 2019). Iksaka Banu was born in Yogyakarta, October 7, 1964. Currently, apart from being a prose writer, he also works as a freelance copywriter. Previously, he worked in advertising in Jakarta until 2006.

The reason for choosing the short story "Belunggu Emas" in Iksaka Banu's collection of *Teh dan Pengkhianat* in this research is the collection of short stories are only recently published with a research gap on the resistance of the character Roehana Koeddoes using a postcolonial perspective.

The research problem addressed in this article is: how does Roehana Koeddoes resist Dutch colonialism as represented in the short story "Belunggu Emas"? To

answer this question postcolonial theory has been applied. This is because the short story “Belenggu Emas” represents the resistance of the character Roehana Koeddoes against Dutch colonialism in the form of mimicry, hybridity, and ambivalence. These three forms are developed by Homi K. Bhabha in postcolonial theory.

The term post-colonialism began to be used in academic writing in the late 1970s (Taufiqurrahman, 2: 2018). Postcolonial theory and criticism, that emerged in the 1980s in the United States, Britain, and Australia, was initially pioneered by Leopold Senghor, Dominique-Octave Mannoni, Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, and Albert Memmi, who highlight various aspects and dimensions of the colonial experience. Later thinkers however, for example Edward Said and Homi Bhabha, were heavily influenced by post-structuralist thinking, especially Derrida and Foucault (Budianta, 2006).

If Fanon is seen as resolutely carrying out a counterattack on the atrocities of the colonizing nation so that the colonized nation can reclaim what the colonial nation has taken, then on the other hand, Edward W. Said sees a repressive force working against the colonized nation involving the power of discourse. Said saw an imagined image of binary social relations between European/Western (colonial) nations and non-European/Western nations, between *Us* and *Them*, which ultimately created a clinical and cynical view between the West and the East (Setiawan, 2018).

Said accused the discourse on the East as a science production that had ideological grounds and colonial interests. Supported by traditions, powers, institutions, and various modes of dissemination of knowledge, the discourse creates myths and stereotypes about the East which are contrasted with the West. This is a negative mirror to raise the image of Europe as a pioneer of civilization. Furthermore, these myths and stereotypes were used as Europe’s justification for colonialism, dominating, taming, and controlling the existence of this “other” (Said, 1978).

Said, who is oriented towards discourse as a process of power, differs with Homi K. Bhabha, Professor of English and American Literature and Language and Director of the Mahindra Center for Humanity at Harvard University. Bhabha appears to be focused on studying identity as a means of postcolonial resistance. Bhabha developed a number of practical neologisms such as hybridity, mimicry and ambivalence (Setiawan, 2018).

Apart from Edward Said and Homi K. Bhabha, an important figure who contributed to the development of postcolonial theory is Gayatri C. Spivak who is famous for her book, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* If Bhabha sees

identity and its space of resistance as the main postulation to embed the area of identity in post-colonialism studies, then another figure who becomes a holy trinity that must be considered in post-colonialism studies, besides Said and Bhabha, is Gayatri C. Spivak. Spivak focuses on the problem of post-colonialism on subalternity. This term was first used by Antonia Gramsci which Spivak recalibrates Gramsci’s usage which is related to the position of the subordinate class in its relationship with ruling class hegemony. For Spivak, in post-colonial terms, the term refers to everything related to access restrictions (Setiawan, 2018)

The colonial discourse developed by Edward W. Said through his orientalism concept is the discourse of Western power discrediting the East. This then became the basis for further development of postcolonial theory by Homi K. Bhabha with the concepts of mimicry, hybridity, ambivalence. Gayatri C. Spivak further developed the theory with the concept of subalternity along with Sara Upstone with her post-space theory.

The study of literary works that raise postcolonial issues using postcolonial theory is an attempt to expose the hegemony and injustices committed by the colonizers against the colonized. In addition, it is to find out the perspectives, attitudes and resistance of the colonized in the face of the superiority and hegemony of the colonizers. Thus, literary works that raise postcolonial issues are literary works that reflect not only the awareness of the existence of colonialism or neocolonialism by the colonialists but also the resistance of the colonized.

Postcolonial literary works is, first, in the broad sense is written by post-colonial state authors. Whether we realize it or not, every Indonesian author is influenced by conditions peculiar to the postcolonial state. Consequently, every Indonesian literary work can be read as a post-colonial literary work. Second, in a narrower sense, it is a literary work that reflects post-colonial awareness and a spirit of resistance to global injustices (Bandel, 2013).

This article uses qualitative research with a post-colonial theoretical approach. The first step was to collecting data relevant to the formulation of the problem of resistance to Dutch colonialism. Primary data is drawn from the short story “Belenggu Emas”.

Second, the data was classified. At this stage, all data sources were classified based on the form of resistance. Third, the data was analyzed by applying postcolonial theory in analyzing the primary data (the short story “Belenggu Emas”) across each form of resistance. Fourth, then conclusions were drawn based on data analysis and interpretation.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Resistance of Roehana Koeddoes in the Form of Mimicry

The first aspect of the research problem in this study is the mimicry of the character Roehana Koeddoes in "Belunggu Emas" as a representation of resistance to Dutch colonialism.

Mimicry is an attempt by the colonized to imitate what the colonizers do and how they lived, be it cultural habits, behavior, values, and institutions (Bhabha, 1994: 86). Brown (2016) argues that mimicry is imitation, with the implication of using other tools in the process of building a post-colonial identity. This influence has an impact on the formation of identity related to social status. The concept of mimicry is used to describe the process of imitation or borrowing various elements of culture (Wibisono, 2018). Mimicry occurs as a result of the cultural processes of colonized people who have succeeded in entering the dominant territory (Asri, 2020).

The character Roehana Koeddoes not only imitated what the colonialists had in terms of knowledge, education system, and thought, culture, but also tried to fight against Dutch colonialism by proving that she not only had intellectual abilities, expressed in her writings, but she was able to act as a driving force in empowering women through the schools and newspapers that she had founded.

Mimicry by Roehana Koeddoes as a form of resistance can be proven in the following quotations from this short story.

"Yes," I answered. "There is much news about this person. I should be ashamed. She courageously speaks up in the midst of incredible pressure here. Meanwhile for me, just look, how miserable it is for me in the presence of my husband (Banu, 2019:107).

"I must meet that extraordinary Minang woman. A woman who has become an inspiration for many in the Indies. She who has already established a school, given weaving, sewing and embroidering skills to her kind, so as not to have to depend on money given in sympathy by the husband, or just be a lifeless ornament. And most importantly not fall into an abyss of shame, selling one's body to keeping living when their husband dies" (Banu, 2019: 115).

*("Ya, Nyonya," sahutku. "Banyak berita tentang orang ini. Seharusnya aku malu. Ia*

*berani menyuarakan dirinya sendiri di tengah tekanan hebat lingkungannya. Sementara aku, lihatlah, betapa menyedihkan diriku di hadapan suami." (Banu, 2019:107) "Aku harus bertemu dengan wanita Minang yang luar biasa ini. Wanita yang telah menjadi ilham banyak orang di Hindia. Yang telah mendirikan sekolah, memberi bekal keterampilan menenun, menjahit, serta membordir bagi kaumnya, agar tidak semata menggantungkan nafkah dari belas kasihan suami, atau sekadar menjadi perhiasan tak bernyawa. Serta yang paling penting, agar tidak jatuh ke lembah nista, menyewakan tubuh untuk bertahan hidup saat suami mereka meninggal" (Banu, 2019: 115).*

These quotations explain the admiration of Cornelia (Nellie), as a representation of women from the colonial nation, for Roehana Koeddoes as a representation of an indigenous women. Nellie's character feels ashamed because she does not have the courage of Roehana Koeddoes, who dared to speak up in the midst of the intense pressure of her environment (both patriarchy and colonialism). Cornelia (Nellie) also wants to meet Roehana Koeddoes, whom Nellie describes as extraordinary. This is because Roehana Koeddoes has inspired many women in the Dutch East Indies with her struggle in establishing schools and empowering West Sumatra's women by providing them with various skills. By so doing it redefines their relationship with their husband, becoming independent for life and a person rather than an object.

Based on the above description, the attitude of the character Roehana Koeddoes can be interpreted as a form of mimicry or imitation by the colonized (Roehana Koeddoes) towards the colonialists (the Netherlands). Mimicry is an attempt by the colonized to imitate what the colonizers do and how they live, be it cultural habits, behavior, values, and institutions. However, the result of the imitation is never really a reproduction of what is imitated. Mimicry always produces a vague imitation and often becomes an attempt to mock what is being imitated (Bhabha, 1994).

This mimicry is manifested in the superiority shown by the character of Roehana Koeddoes in facing Dutch colonialism with her knowledge and thoughts as well as her courage in voicing opinions and work in establishing schools and providing women with skills. Even her superiority has inspired many women in the Dutch East Indies, including women colonizers (Netherlands), namely Cornelia (Nellie). In this way, the character Roehana Koeddoes imitated the superiority

that was usually exercised by the colonialists against the inferior colonized.

However, the superiority shown by the character of Roehana Koeddoes was different to the superiority of the colonialists. This was because Roehana Koeddoes' superiority was part of the struggle to defend her rights and other women's as natives of West Sumatra against Dutch colonialism, whereas the superiority of the colonialists (Dutch) was used to exploit their colony. The Netherlands not only established a hegemony in West Sumatra, but also throughout the Dutch East Indies. Even so, the influence of Roehana Koeddoes in terms of women's thinking and existence in the public sphere, had inspired many women, indigenous and non-indigenous, in the Dutch East Indies.

Mimicry ambivalence is the attitude of the colonized who builds an identity to maintain their differences but also wants to build an identity of equality with the invaders. The attitude of the colonized people, represented by Roehana Koeddoes, in building her identity through her abilities and intellectuality on the one hand is a way to build an identity of equality with the colonizers, but on the other hand to maintain her differences as explained earlier (Bhabha, 1994).

Mimicry, by the character of Roehana Koeddoes, not only imitates what was owned by the colonialists (the Netherlands), but is also an attitude to ridicule or mock the colonialists (the Netherlands) with the resistance of her superiority so as to cause women from the colonial state (represented by the character Cornelia/Nellie) admire her. However, the result of the imitation is never really a reproduction of what is imitated. Mimicry always produces a vague imitation and often becomes an attempt to mock what is being imitated (Bhabha, 1994).

The resistance of the figure Roehana Koeddoes in the form of mimicry can also be seen in the following quotations.

“Three years ago, this woman in fact advanced again by a step, becoming a leader of a newspaper for women. Truly, my determination grew toward this. I wanted to be allowed from time to time to fill the pages of the letters to the editor in her newspaper. To help her unlock the golden handcuffs often put in place by men to demean women” (Banu, 2019: 115).

“Look, it's the person I have been waiting for, she's come. The founder of the Amai Setia school and the owner of the newspaper *Soenting Melajoe*. It's her. It is none other” (Banu, 2019: 116).

“Tiga tahun lalu wanita ini bahkan maju lagi selangkah, menjadi pemimpin sebuah surat kabar khusus wanita. Sungguh, semakin bulat tekadku ke sini. Aku ingin diperbolehkan sesekali mengisi ruang pendapat pembaca di dalam surat kabarnya. Membantunya membuka belunggu emas yang sering dipasang kaum pria untuk mengecoh wanita.” (Banu, 2019:115) “Lihat yang kutunggu sudah datang. Pendiri sekolah Amai Setia dan pemilik surat kabar *Soenting Melajoe*. Beliau sendiri. Tak lain dan tak bukan” (Banu, 2019:116).

The two quotations represent the resistance of Roehana Koeddoes in the form of mimicry, namely superiority shown by her abilities in establishing the *Amai Setia* school and *Soenting Melajoe* newspaper. In fact, the two Dutch women were eager to meet Roehana even though the journey to Roehana's place was very far away and Nellie took risks when going this distance to visit Roehana's place. However, Nellie was absolutely determined to have her writing published in the newspaper that was owned and led by Roehana.

Based on this, the mimicry that Roehana wanted to show was the superiority that she had in establishing schools and newspapers, an advantage which was usually owned by the colonizers. However, in this short story, the superiority of Roehana Koeddoes exceeds the superiority of women from the colonial state (the Netherlands), namely Nellie and Mrs. Westenenk. In fact, Roehana Koeddoes became an inspirational figure for them because of her advances in knowledge, thoughts, and movements as an activist for women in the fields of education and journalism. The mimicry cum imitation shown by Roehana Koeddoes is the imitation of the ability to advance knowledge and thinking that so far, was only owned or was identical to the colonial state (the Netherlands). However, this imitation is not the same in terms of motivation and enthusiasm in making this progress a reality. The motivation of Roehana, as the colonized party, in establishing schools and newspapers was to advance her people, while the motivation of the colonialists, in establishing schools or newspapers, was for the benefit of their country, such as ethical policy<sup>3</sup> that had been implemented by the Dutch. This is in accord with Faruk's view that the problem that occurred in colonized society facing the colonial discourse was the problem of emancipation through imitation or ambivalent mimicry. One party builds an identity or similarity, but on the other hand maintains differences (Faruk, 2001).

The imitation of Roehana Koeddoes is a form of ridicule or mockery of the Dutch colonialists. This

is because her superiority could possibly exceed the superiority of the colonialists themselves or even the advantages of the colonialists. This mimicry of Roehana Koeddoes could threaten the hegemonic authority of the colonialists. When colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizer's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of those traits. Rather, the result is a "blurred copy" of the colonizer that can be quite threatening. This is because mimicry is never very far from mockery, since it can appear to parody whatever it mimics. The real identity of the native is destroyed through the process of imitation and leaves the person in an ambivalent state of utter confusion. Thus "the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence (Bhabha, 1994).

The form of Roehana Koeddoes' mimicry as resistance to Dutch colonialism is shown in the following quotation.

"It is rather strange looking at lots of photos of people in this house. Usually, in keeping with the interpretation of the religion they follow, Muslim Minang families are forbidden to transfer the image of their face onto a photo. I heard, according to them it is *haram*<sup>4</sup> to make a copy of Allah's creation. But it seems the family is not only used to taking photos, but they know precisely how to appear elegant in front of the camera. The boys are standing handsomely in a Victorian sailor's suit as is usually worn by Dutch males while the girls wear gowns and white shoes. Of all the figures on display there, I have to acknowledge that the owner of the house has in fact, indeed, has had a really sharp look since childhood" (Banu, 2019: 108).

*"Cukup aneh melihat banyak foto manusia di rumah ini. Biasanya, sesuai tafsir agama yang mereka anut, keluarga Muslim Minang pantang memindahkan wajah ke atas sehelai kertas foto. Aku dengar, menurut mereka haram membuat tiruan ciptaan Allah. Tetapi rupanya keluarga ini bukan hanya terbiasa berfoto, mereka tahu persis bagaimana tampil anggun di depan kamera. Anak-anak lelaki berdiri gagah dalam seragam kelasi Victoria seperti yang biasa dikenakan para sinyo Belanda, sementara anak-anak perempuan mengenakan gaun dan sepatu putih. Dari semua sosok yang terpampang di situ, harus kuakui bahwa pemilik rumah ini ternyata memang telah*

*memiliki tatapan sangat tajam sejak masa kanak-kanak"* (Banu, 2019: 108).

The mimicry represented in the quotation above is an imitation of family photos and the clothes that are usually worn by Dutch people. This mimicry is also seen in style and postures that the family shows in the photos. The resistance shown is through breaking the perception that the colonized are always inferior and marginalized. As in the previous description, this mimicry by the figure of Roehana Koeddoes can also be a mockery of the colonialists.

### Resistance of Roehana Koeddoes in the Form of Hybridity

Hybridity is the sign of productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the pure and original identity of authority). Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination (Bhabha, 1994).

The cross between colonized and colonizer cultures produces what is called hybridity (Aini, 2016). Hybridity is the formation of a new cross-cultural identity within the contact zone created by colonialism (Dewojati, 2017).

In "Belunggu Emas", the hybridity that emerged as a result of the acculturation of the Dutch colonial cultural system and the indigenous people was manifested in spatial form. The house of West Sumatra people, which is usually synonymous with "rumah gadang" (traditional Minangkabau houses), had begun to adopt European building design from Dutch colonial culture. Instance the following quote.

"Not very different to other Indies houses, usually owned by prominent indigenous officials, which we had visited was a large building with four French-style windows, two each on the left and the right sides, flanking the front door. There was another building, stretched out on two sides of the main house, resembling a classroom. It was this part which was in fact the most important of these buildings. I really wanted to have a look inside at its contents, which it is said has caused many Dutch officials through the Indies to be up in arms. But certainly, I have to stay patient till the host appears" (Banu, 2019: 104).

*(“Tak jauh berbeda dengan rumah-rumah Hindia lain yang biasa dimiliki pejabat bumiputra terpadang, yang kami sambangi ini adalah sebuah bangunan besar dengan empat keping jendela gaya Prancis, masing-masing dua buah di sisi kiri dan kanan, mengapit pintu depan. Ada pula bangunan tambahan, memanjang di kedua sisi rumah utama, mirip ruang kelas. Itulah bagian yang sesungguhnya paling penting dari bangunan ini. Ingin sekali aku segera melongok isinya, yang konon telah membuat gempar banyak pejabat Belanda di santero Hindia. Tetapi tentu saja aku harus sabar menunggu hingga tuan rumah muncul” (Banu, 2019:104).*

In this quotation, the indigenous people, represented by the figure of Roehana Koeddoes adopted a new culture from the Dutch colonialists in the form of a large building with four French-style windows, two each on the left and right, flanking the front door. The people of West Sumatra, who usually have a house with “rumah gadang” building layout, had begun to adopt the European building layout combining West Sumatra and Dutch colonial culture. In addition, the quotation tells of an outbuilding that extends on both sides of the main house which resembles a classroom. These two things are a form of hybridity because they represent a mix of cultures but also each of the forms and characteristics of the two cultures cannot be recognized anymore because they have merged into something new and more complex. This is, as Bhabha argues: “Although a hybrid is a mix of different cultures, each component within the hybrid cannot be recognized. Because of the interweaving of history and the hybrid as a result, culture can no longer be identified from the perspective of knowledge and moral reflection; it has become a much more complex feature” (Bhabha, 1994).

The resistance, seen in these quotations, is in the form of Roehana Koeddoes’ hybridity evidenced in her house and all of its contents which has a combination of West Sumatra and European-style designs. This hybrid house caused an uproar among Dutch officials throughout the Dutch East Indies. The house is a form of resistance because with its combination of luxurious European and *rumah gadang* building designs, it shows an advantage that equals the Dutch houses with their luxurious European designs. This house threatened the Dutch authority as a colonizer because usually only the colonizers had luxurious houses based on European spatial designs.

Another quotation that shows the form of hybridity

from “Belunggu Emas” is when Nellie describes the various corners of the living room of Roehana Koeddoes’ house, while she arrived at Roehana’s house and waited for the host. She depicts the corner of the first room in front of her is a glassed cupboard with four shelves containing books in Dutch, Arabic and Malay which are neatly lined up. Then the corner of the room to the right is a short shelf filled with piles of newspapers published in Indonesia and abroad. On the left side hung a piece of fine woven cloth that was done in the house. Finally, on the table is the latest issue of a newspaper led and owned by the figure of Roehana. In addition, the character of Nellie argues that the living room that she sees is a living room full of civilization. This is as the following quote.

“I nodded then cast a look over the various corners of the room. In front of me, near the window, there were rows of books in Dutch, Arabic and Malay, neatly stacked in a glass cabinet with four panels. On the right end there was a small rack, piled up with newspapers, domestic and overseas. While on the left side hung an amazing piece of finely woven material. Perhaps that was one of the examples of weaving produced here. And lastly, on top of the table, appeared the latest publication of a newspaper which shortly would be our hot topic of discussion. The newspaper would be our conversation topic with the host this morning. Truly, the guest room was filled with civilization” (Banu, 2019: 105).

*“Aku mengangguk lalu memutar pandangan ke beberapa sudut ruangan. Di hadapanku, dekat jendela, berderet buku berbahasa Belanda, Arab, dan Melayu. Tersimpan rapi di dalam sebuah lemari berkaca dengan empat ambalan. Di ujung kanan ada rak pendek, penuh tumpukan koran terbitan dalam dan luar negeri. Sementara di sisi kiri tergantung sebuah potongan kain yang dikerjakan dengan kehalusan menakjubkan. Mungkin itu salah satu contoh tenunan yang dikerjakan di sini. Dan terakhir, di atas meja, tampak terbitan terbaru sebuah koran yang belum lama ini menjadi perbincangan hangat di antara kami. Koran yang nanti akan menjadi bahan pembicaraan kami dengan tuan rumah pagi ini. Benar-benar ruang tamu yang sarat peradaban” (Banu, 2019: 105)*

Apart from that, another quote that represents a form of hybridity is there is a depiction of the surprise and

oddity of Nellie's character with the existence of a living room in the house of the character Roehana Koeddoes, which was usually only owned by Dutch officials and was not usually owned by indigenous people, especially native women. This is in accordance with the following quotation.

"It wasn't a strange thing to find this type of Scene in a guest room of a Dutch official. But at this moment I was in the middle of a building far from the hustle and bustle of the city, a house owned by a native. To be exact, a native woman" (Banu, 2019: 105).

*"Bukan hal aneh menjumpai pemandangan semacam itu di ruang tamu para pejabat Belanda. Tetapi saat ini aku tengah berada di dalam sebuah bangunan yang jauh dari keramaian kota, milik seorang bumiputra. Tepatnya, seorang wanita bumiputra"* (Banu, 2019: 105).

The two quotations show hybridity, namely the existence of a combination of spatial arrangement and design which is a mixture of indigenous culture and European (Dutch) culture. This combination can be seen in the illustration of various corners of the room in the living room of the house of Roehana Koeddoes. The layout that shows indigenous culture is a piece of finely woven cloth hanging in one corner of the room (left side of the living room). The layout that represents the European (Dutch) cultural spatial design is a glass cabinet containing various Malay and foreign books and a small shelf filled with domestic and foreign newspapers.

The resistance of Roehana Koeddoes in the form of hybridity is when the character Roehana Koeddoes is able to show that she has the same rights as the invaders in designing and arranging the corner of the room in her house according to her wishes (according to Eastern or Western culture or a combination).

## Resistance of Roehana Koeddoes in the Form of Ambivalence

In Homi Bhabha's colonial discourse theory, it describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between the colonizer and colonized. The relationship is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never simply and completely opposed to the colonizer. Rather than assuming that some colonized subjects are 'complicit' and some 'resistant', ambivalence suggests that complicity and resistance exist in a fluctuating relation within the colonial subject.

Ambivalence also characterizes the way in which colonial discourse relates to the colonized subject, for it may be both exploitative and nurturing, or represent itself as nurturing, at the same time (Ashcroft et al., 2007).

The issue of ambivalence is related to the relations between the colonizers and the colonized, which give birth to forms of discourse on "differences" as an arena for identity struggle (Taum, 2017).

The ambivalence of Roehana Koeddoes is shown through the depiction of Nellie when she met her in person. Roehana is depicted wear traditional/typical West Sumatra clothing, using a tie-colored cloth on her head and a rattan bag draped over her shoulder. In addition, her ability to speak Dutch is very fluent and self-confident when introducing herself with sharp eyes and firm grips. This is based on the following quotation.

"At the entrance I saw the woman whom I had been dreaming of. Standing with a rattan bag hanging from her shoulder. She was shorter than I had imagined. She seemed even more petite with a woven red head band. But I could see clearly a passion in her eyes. Also, from the strength of her grip when she took my hand and saying in a loud voice in fluent Dutch "I am Roehana Koeddoes. Welcome the Amai Setia Craft School. I heard from Mrs. Westenenk you have many interesting documents about the world of women for my newspaper?" (Banu, 2019: 116).

*"Di pintu masuk kulihat wanita yang kuimpikan itu. Berdiri dengan tas rotan tersampir di pundak. Ia lebih pendek dari yang kubayangkan. Bahkan terlihat semakin mungil dengan kain ikat berwarna kesumba di kepalanya. Tetapi aku bisa melihat jelas semangat hidup yang berkobar dari kedua belah matanya. Juga dari kuatnya genggamannya saat ia menyambut uluran tanganku serta berkata dengan suara lantang dalam bahasa Belanda yang sangat fasih, 'Ik ben Roehana Koeddoes. Welkom op de ambachtsschool genaamd Amai Setia. Van mevrouw Westenenk heb ik vernomen dat u een interessant manuscript over vrouwen heeft voor mijn krant?' (Saya Roehana Koeddoes. Selamat datang di Sekalah Kerajinan Amai Setia. Saya dengar dari Nyonya Westenenk Anda punya banyak naskah menarik tentang dunia wanita untuk surat kabar saya?)"* (Banu, 2019: 116).

In this quotation it can be seen that Roehana Koeddoes shows her ambivalence. At the same time she shows both her indigenous or Eastern culture by

the clothes she wears and her Western cultural side by speaking Dutch very fluent and confidently.

The resistance of Roehana Koeddoes in the form of ambivalence appears when she confidently introduces herself by speaking Dutch very fluently and in a loud voice. This can be categorized as a form of resistance because Roehana Koeddoes was able to challenge the Dutch woman with her attitude, strong handshake and her foreign language skills (Dutch) that were usually the preserve of the colonialists.

## CONCLUSION

This study still has limitations in exploring the character of Roehana Koeddoes, which can be researched further in subsequent studies with other theoretical approaches. The findings show that the resistance of the character, Roehana Koeddoes, represented in Iksaka Banu's short story, "Belunggu Emas," includes resistance in the form of mimicry, hybridity, and ambivalence. The mimicry carried out by Roehana Koeddoes is an imitation of the colonial discourse in terms of a superiority of knowledge, education, ethics, and habits. This resistance is demonstrated by Roehana Koeddoes' intellectual abilities in expressing her courage and opinion, both through her writings in the newspapers she owned, and through her activities as an educationalist, journalist, and activist who had inspired women in the Dutch East Indies, including Dutch women. Her ability to establish the Amai Satia School and *Soenting Melajoe* newspaper, along with her confident attitude and sharp gaze breaks the perception that the colonized were always inferior and marginalized.

Resistance in the form of hybridity occurs through the concept of spatial planning, which is indicated by the adoption of houses with European-style windows and the arrangement of living room corners that combine Eastern and Western cultures. The resistance shown reveals Roehana's ability to project that she had the same rights as the colonizers, designing and arranging the corners of the room in her house according to her own wishes. In addition, resistance appears in the form of the ambivalence shown by the attitude of Roehana Koeddoes, who shows both eastern and western cultural attributes. Her eastern side is shown when she wears a typical West Sumatra outfit, while her western side is shown by her fluency in Dutch and an attitude of confidence when she introduces herself. The resistance that she wants to show was that a native like Roehana Koeddoes could have the same, or even exceed, the superiority and ability of those from the colonial nation.

## ENDNOTES

- 1) This paper has been presented at Symposium on Social Science 2020 organized by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Universitas Gajah Mada, but this article has never been published.
- 2) Name of the first indigenous youth organization/association which was founded on May 20, 1908 and is celebrated as the day of national awakening.
- 3) The Ethical Policy or Politics of Balas Budi was the official policy of the Dutch East Indies colonial government for four decades from 1901 to the Japanese occupation in 1942.
- 4) That which is forbidden for Muslims.

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