

THE REFLECTION OF JACK LONDON'S LIFE AS SEEN IN HIS
NOVEL *THE CALL OF THE WILD*: A BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

A Thesis

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ABSTRAK

Skripsi ini membahas tentang gambaran kehidupan pribadi Jack London di dalam salah satu novelnya *The Call of the Wild* yang direfleksikan melalui karakter atau tokoh utama dalam novel tersebut. Dimana, cerminan kondisi kehidupan Jack London sebagai penulis novel ini, digambarkan oleh tokoh Buck di dalam novel.

Dalam memaparkan dan menganalisa refleksi kehidupan Jack London dalam novel ini, penulis menggunakan pendekatan biografi pengarang sebagai teori utama dalam analisisnya. Dari itu, penyajian data analisa bersifat ekspresif. Adapun metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif.

Berdasarkan analisa dan hasil yang diperoleh dari penelitian ini, ditemukan bahwa novel karya Jack London yang berjudul *The Call of the Wild* merupakan sebuah refleksi kehidupan pribadi Jack London yang tergambar melalui karakter utama yang ada dalam novel tersebut.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Research

There are some approaches applied by the literary critics to analyze various kinds of literary works. One of them is biographical approach. This approach is one of the traditional approaches. It is expressed in the following quotation:

“This approach sees a literary work chiefly, as the reflection of its author life in the work. It has a function in literature. It is as a way to view literature by the author’s life.” (Guerin, 1999: 22)

Literature is a manifestation of what happened, or some times what will happen in human life, and then it is expressed by using language. Hudson writes that-

“Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language.” (Hudson, 1963:10)

Here, the writer chooses Jack London's novel *The Call of the Wild* as the one literary work which is viewed from a biographical approach. By considering those aspects, it seems to be interested to apply a biographical approach to understand the reflection of the author's life in his work. Because of this consideration, the writer decides to analyze the novel of Jack London entitled *The Call of the Wild* by applying a biographical approach.

Another reason that makes the writer analyze this novel is that Jack London's work *The Call of the Wild* indicates that this is a great literary work among the others because he was able to survive in complicated problems in his life when he wrote this novel. It was written when his second daughter was born, and it was published in 1903, the same year when he separated from his wife. Since he was born, Jack London has suffered from various problems of life. His mother, Flora, got typhoid fever, Jack had a hard work of farming when he was five. Moreover, he had to live with his step father and two step sisters.

In his novel *The Call of the Wild*, the character which is associated with a dog named Buck struggles to survive in his life. Buck is the protagonist in this novel. He is a loyal friend to his owner, Judge Miller. The journey of Buck's life in the novel indicates that he is able to survive and assimilate with foreign surroundings. There is a similarity between the struggles of Buck in the novel with the biography of Jack London. It can be seen that Buck's life in the story has a close similarity with Jack London's life which is full of challenges and sufferings.

Buck's character is a reflection of Jack London's biography as well as explained by Jonathan Auerbach, mentions that:

"But far more telling is the fact that London should imagine himself as a dog, an autobiography projection, as I shall argue, in many ways more profound and revealing than the explicit versions of himself he would offer subsequently in *The Road*, *Martin Eden*, or *John Barleycorn*." (Auerbach .1996:84)

This quotation briefly makes that the novel becomes more interesting for the writer to apply biographical approach in analyzing the novel.

Jack London uses animal representation for a person. It implies the parallels between human life and animal life, because in the novel, both human and animal have to struggle for survival and mastery. Buck, like other human beings around him, also wonders and concerns about justice.

1.3 The Statement of the Research

Here, the writer intends to analyze Jack London's life as depicted through his novel *The Call of the Wild*. The analysis is focused on reflection of Jack London's life in the main character.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The Call of the Wild is one of famous novels at the time which is created by extraordinary person named Jack London. In writing his works, he is inspired by own experiences and his journey at sea, Alaska and so on. He loves to create something which far away from uncommon perspectives, such as the portrait of hard life, animals, adventures and many men characters.

After analyzing novel *The Call of the Wild* which is written by Jack London, it is applicable to use biographical approach since the novel reflects his real life. *The Call of the Wild* is Jack London's novel that reflects his own life which is represented in main character of Buck Character in the novel. Regarding to the reflection, the writer finds there are some conditions and experiences which are depicted in the novel that refers to his real life. The experiences are seen through his spirit to be an adventurer in his life; it is reflected in the condition of his life in Arctic and joining the Klondike gold rush. His condition in Arctic cannot be separated from the adventurous spirit that plays an important role in his life. In addition, the novel also reflects the bravery of Jack London in facing all challenges and threatens along his adventure. Jack London's suffering is also portrayed in the novel as represented by the sufferings of Buck as the main character in his novel. The sufferings cover physical and mental aspects that are complicated. The last one is the reflection of Jack London's life as the author who

describes his life by using the other aspect outside of the main character. It can be seen through his relationship with a French-Canadian friend in his life time. This correlation is strengthened by a French-Canadian man who is mentioned in the novel.

In accordance with the biographical reflections above, it can be concluded that Jack London's novel *The Call of the Wild* is a reflection of his life as the author of this novel by representing it through the life of main character in the novel.

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