

REALISM IN JACK LONDON'S WORKS

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Abstract. The article deals with the importance of realism which is apparent up to this day when it continues to be used to create literary pieces in all possible genres and forms including novels, short stories. Realism remains the basis of the American literature. Realism in American Literature marks a turning point in the development of story writing because now it has become possible to see how ordinary characters live their ordinary lives. Indeed, such American writers as Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Henry James and Stephen Crane, Jack London are known for their realistic works.

Keywords: naturalism, existence, human, animal, realism, emotional growth.

INTRODUCTION.

Realism has had a long-lasting effect on the American literature. On one hand, it has set off further literary movements including naturalism and modernism, which studied human psychology in even greater detail. On the other hand, the realism movement has encouraged American writers not to escape from reality and to face it.

The importance of realism is apparent up to this day when it continues to be used to create literary pieces in all possible genres and forms including novel and movie productions. Realism remains the basis of the American literature.

Realism in American Literature marks a turning point in the development of story writing because now it has become possible to see how ordinary characters live their ordinary lives. Indeed, such American writers as Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Henry James and Stephen Crane are known for their realistic works.

Though mostly known as an author of adventurous novels in the arctic conditions, Jack London was able to create numerous masterpieces where the plot serves as a means to express the essence of literary realism. In addition to the portrayal of cruel conditions of human existence in nature, London described the aspects of social, psychological, and economical reality at the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, in such novels as "The Call of the Wild", "White Fang", and Martin Eden, London managed to blend entertaining storytelling and realism.

The type of literary criticism used by Jack London in his work belongs to the genre of naturalism which is the branch of realism based on deterministic philosophy and evolutionary theories. In other words, according to naturalists, human beings are not independent of their environment and instincts. This theory was developed under the influence of Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution. In *The Call of the Wild*, the protagonist Buck undergoes a transformation from a domesticated pet to a creature governed by primal instincts. This is not romanticized freedom but a regression driven by environmental pressure. London presents nature not as a peaceful refuge but as a powerful, indifferent force that strips beings down to their essentials. This reflects a core realist principle: human (and animal) behavior is shaped more by external conditions than by idealized moral choices.

Another theme associated with realism that appears in London's works repeatedly refers to the question of survival. Usually, his characters find themselves in difficult conditions when survival relies upon strength, adaptability, and luck and not morality or high social position.

The author's attitude toward nature in his book "White Fang" is very objective because he demonstrates the nature and society both as forces which can show either mercilessness or

compassion to people. Neither society nor nature is romanticized in London's writings since a true writer should be able to see the world without exaggerating and distorting reality.

METHODS.

The concept of randomness is another important point characteristic for realism in Jack London's writings. Efforts and ambitions cannot guarantee success, although in the Klondike Gold Rush stories the characters still make attempts to prove their superiority in the competition with harsh and cruel environment.

While London's most known works represent the genre of wilderness adventure stories, there is also such piece like *Martin Eden* written by the same author in which social realism is developed.

One of the most prominent features that Jack London brought into American literature is the realist principle of determinism. The main character of *The Call of the Wild* transforms due to pressure and not by his own decision. The intellectual and emotional growth of *Martin Eden* does not bring him satisfaction but, on the contrary, only despair.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS.

Determinism, introduced by London, questions the very romantic ideas about human heroes. Strong, determined, and intellectually well-developed London's protagonists nevertheless do not escape from the influence of external forces – economic system, nature, and biological drives.

London stands out among many other writers for one feature, namely combining of the realist philosophy with the adventures. London creates the adventurous stories but in the same time makes realistic description of the behavior, environment, and social circumstances of the people in them. In London's writings, wilderness is represented by realistic description of the ecosystem where survival is possible according to certain rules.

CONCLUSION.

In Jack London's works, one can also see the reflection of the concept of the "American Dream." In his writings, the author emphasizes that through hard work, a person may rise to a higher position in society, but even upon reaching their dreams, they may face contradictory and tragic consequences. In addition, his stories mainly depict the relationships between nature, humans, and animals. In 20th-century literature, short stories primarily addressed human nature and social issues of life. The following theoretical perspectives can be observed in Jack London's literary works:

Conflict between nature and humans – humans are weak beings in the face of nature; no matter how hard a person tries, they cannot ultimately exert power against nature.

Survivalism (struggle for life) – many of Jack London's stories portray the necessity of struggling to survive. For example, in the 1908 story "To Build a Fire," the protagonist's struggle for survival is described.

Influence of Darwinism – Darwinist viewpoints are noticeable in most of Jack London's works. Survival is seen as the most important factor, and only individuals who adapt to natural conditions are able to survive and continue living.

Social inequality – in many of Jack London's works, he highlights the inequality between upper and lower social classes. In particular, the novel "The Iron Heel" embodies the concept of class struggle.

Psychological struggles – London's stories depict changes in the inner world of his protagonists. In the story "The Love of Life," the protagonist's efforts to survive despite being left alone in the wilderness are portrayed.

Self-awareness – in the novel "Martin Eden," the main character strives toward self-idealization. In every character created by London, the author's own personality is reflected. In

particular, the character Martin Eden also expresses aspects of the author's distinctive temperament.

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