

The Influence of Environment Toward Jean La'Barge Characteristics in Louis L'Amour's *Sitka*

Laeli Nurwakhidah / 1611403114

Fakultas Sastra / Sastra Inggris

ABSTRACT : This study is about the influence of the environments toward Jean LaBarge's in *Sitka*. The novel analyzed with qualitative descriptive research method and sociological approach. This topic chosen because the the writer need to have knowledge about environment influence using sociological approach. The analysis show that character of Jean LaBarge gets influences from the nature and other characters in his development. Jean gets influenced from the great swamp and Alaska, which makes him a brave, independent, ambitious person that has a lot knowledge. There are some social environment influencing him. His father, Captain Hutchins, Peter Hovey, Rob J. Walker and Princess Helena Gagarin. Jean's characteristics was formed by both nature and social environment.

Keywords : environmental influence, independent, ambitious.

Pengaruh Lingkungan Terhadap Karakter Jean La'Barge Dalam Novel *Sitka* oleh Louis L'Amour

Laeli Nurwakhidah / 1611403114

Fakultas Sastra / Sastra Inggris

ABSTRAK: Penelitian ini mendiskusikan tentang pengaruh lingkungan terhadap karakter Jean LaBarge dalam novel *Sitka*. Novel ini dianalisis secara deskriptif menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi. Topik ini dipilih karena sebelumnya belum ditemukan penelitian pada novel *Sitka* menggunakan pendekatan secara sosiologi. Dalam penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa beberapa dari karakteristik LaBarge didapatkan dari lingkungan sekitar. Terdapat dua kelompok lingkungan yang terdapat pada dalam novel, yaitu alam dan lingkungan sosial. Pemberani, mandiri dan memiliki banyak pengetahuan adalah pengaruh dari alam, sedangkan dari lingkungan sosial Jean mendapatkan motivasi dan juga belajar cara untuk bertahan untuk hidup. Disimpulkan bahwa karakteristik Jean LaBarge terbentuk karena dua pengaruh lingkungan, yaitu lingkungan alam dan lingkungan sosial.

Keywords : Pengaruh lingkungan, mandiri, ambisius.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of human personality is influenced by some factors. The most influences factor is environment. Environment is everything that surrounds every

individual during his or her life. Environment can be divided into two. First is personal environment that refers to parents, brother, friend etc. Second is non-personal environment that refers to house, school, nature etc. The influence of environment to every individual can be divide into three : family influence, school influence and society or social environment. Human social environments encompass the immediate phsycal surroundings, social relationships, and cultural milieus within which defined groups of people function and interact. National Institute of Health (2000).

Environment has an important role in human's character. This study will be analyzes through sociological studies, start from conversations and behaviors of each character towards the main character in *SITKA* to the development of theories in order to understand how the environment works. Meanwhile, environment will cause the psychological effect in someone's life. Environment consists of nature, including air, water, trees and each of them has a role in human's life. Beside that, environment also includes family, friends, society, and all things that are in human's surrounding. Human's character depends on environment whether it is good or bad. Especially if he or she is still a child. Children are easy to be influences, especially by their environment where they live in. They do not know how to choose or avoid the bad environment. The social environment is often influenced by both the natural and built environments. In every each environment has different stimulus and how the human can be adapted with his/her environment to survive, especially the circumstances of life of people or society in their life conditions. Social environment is all other pieces of our community which are not built or natural.

There are some previous study about the influence of environment. However, the previous methods/results suffer from a limitation in using psychological approach. The statement indicates that the next research for more investigation is a good effect for the main character through other studies. The remaining issue is to find a better way to explain this study through sociological approach. Sociological approach will be applied on this research because sociology is the study of society. Human social interaction, the rules and processes that bind and separate people, not only as individuals, but as members of associations, groups, and institutions. Sociology uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to study both face-to-face human social interactions and large scale social trends.

First method applied is quantitative research, which is a measurement based on some quantity or number rather than on some quality. Second method is qualitative research. It uses descriptions or distinctions based on some quality rather than on some quantity. In this research, however, qualitative research will be applied.

Sitka is a story about Jean LaBarge's life as the main character in the novel. In this novel Louis L'Amour tells the reader about Jean's condition since his childhood until he becomes a good role for people around him. when he was a child Jean lived in the middle of swamp as an orphan, but luckily he had a friend –Rob J. Walker- that support him. They grew up, supported and helped each other. While Rob, become a successful fur trader on his era. Jean found himself swept up in an epic battle in the wildsof Alaska, where a tyrannical Russian seized control of the fur trade and the land. Jean never backed down from a fight, even one as bold and dangerous as a battle that will shape the future of America.

On this research the writer is interested to show about how environment gives effect to the character/s in a novel. Here the writer analyzes one of Louis L'Amour's novel entitled *Sitka*, because it exposes about the environment starting from the childhood moment of the character until he become a great role in his life. In *Sitka* the writer found a character of Jean Labarge: smart, strong and independent. Even grew up as an orphan he gave out all his ability to survive in his environment. Without anyone noticed that he helps the country. Beside that, this novel is chosen based on those reasons above. Therefore, the writer tries to do the research of the sociological reason which is shown the influence of environment toward the main character in *Sitka* because this character created by their environment.

1.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter discusses the theories and perspective that support the writer with information about how the environment affects the character. The writer tries to analyzes how different environment in *Sitka* influences Jean L'abarge's characteristics. The study basically deals with the main's character. It analyzes the contribution of society toward the main character. Therefore, the researcher considers sociological approach is required to

help the analysis. Wellek and Waren divide the study of literature and society into three parts; “the sociology of the writer, the social contents of the work themselves, and the influences of literature on society” (Wellek and Waren, 1956: 96). Due to subject matters above, the researcher focuses on the social contents of the literature. There will be two important elements in this research, those are character and environment.

a. The Definition of Character

Character is an important element in literary work. There are some meanings of character the first is a figure in a literary work, the other is a ‘personality’ that created by the author. Every individual who is presented by the author is character “Character is an author’s representation of human beings, especially of those inner qualities that determine individual’s reaction to various condition or attempts to shape his or her environment” (Edgar V. Robert, 1977:54) it means the characters are created depend on the author point of view, and author expresses it through actions, attitudes or behaviors of the character. These character should be treat like human being because author create it through imagination.

b. The Definition of Characteristics

A quality or feature that belongs to someone or something, which is often seen in them and seem typical of them. For a character characteristics can be seen in their behaviour or trait make them recognizable. Characteristics helps distinguish between one and another character.

c. The Definition of Settings

Another important element in novel is setting because character reflected by their settings. Setting contains of place, time, or situation in a novel in order to makes the reader be able creates imagination. “Setting is the element of fiction which reveals to us the where and when of event, or everything that happens sometime” Kenney (1966:38) From Kenney’s theory it is tells that setting explain about time, place. Through setting, the readers are able to imagine when the dialogues happen, where the conversation take places,

or what kind of situation in a place that happens to the characters. It means the readers enjoy the novel through their own perspective.

According to Hawthorn (1985:59) “The function of setting is to give the information about condition or events and action. It is important to be aware of the context within which the action of a novel takes place and this does not just mean its geographical setting; social and historical factors are also important.” From this theory we know that there are three major components to setting: social environment, place and time.

d. The Definition of Environment

Environment is everything around us. It can be living or nonliving things. It includes physical, chemical and other natural forces. In psychology and medicine a person's environment is the people, there are some kinds of environment, physical environment, biological environment and social environment. The environment affects the growth and development of the person. It affects the person's behavior, body, mind and heart and those things are makes a person's character.

In sociological perspective range from the analysis of conversations and behaviors to the development of theories in order to understand how the world works. It uses empirical and critical analysis methods to study human social interaction. The sociological approach goes beyond everyday common sense by using systematic methods of empirical observation and theorization.

“Sociology is more rigorous than common sense because sociologists test and modify their understanding of how the world works through scientific analysis.”

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-sociology>

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD DESIGN

In this research the writer uses qualitative and descriptive research method to reach the purpose of this research. Based on Tracy (2013: 16) “Qualitative research is provide a detailed step-by-step explanation of qualitative data, gathering, writing, and analysis. This

type of research is chosen because the data is written text (novel)". In this case, the writer analyzes the speech acts and the result will be presented this research in descriptions of words not numbers. The writer collects the data from books by reading and making note and then to selects data. In this research the writer applied Sociological approach because it takes an environmental sociology which is part of Sociology theory. A sociological concept by Elgar (1997:55) "The environment has been considered as a social construction". Environmental sociology is the study of interactions between societies and their natural environments.

A. Research Instrument

The instrument of this researcher is the writer herself for gathering information. The writer collects data from read the novel, took notes for the data that contains environment influencer for the main character in *Sitka* novel.

B. Data Source

In this research the data are from written text 'Sitka Novel' by Louis L'Amour produced in New York Printing History. Published in April 1957 consist of 245 pages.

C. Data Collection and Procedure

1. Reading The novel Sitka
2. analyzing the environment of Jean as a child, teenager and adult.
3. Marking the environment that have been seen as a influence for the main character.
4. Grouping in written results. Give code to the sentences. The data coding indicates the pages and lines where the sentences are located in novel.
5. In collecting the data, the writer reads the novel, identifies and selects the materials that are relevant to the topic of research.

D. Data Analysis Procedure

In order to analyze the data, writer does answer the question on the relationship of character that built by the environment which is contain of time, place and situation of the main character. Especially in the way author represents them.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter the writer wants to analyze the influence of environment to Jean LaBarge's life. This chapter are divided into two parts in order to make the readers easy to understand the discussion. There are two different types of environment that influences toward Jean's character change in Louis L'Amour's *SITKA*. First is nature and second is social environment.

1. Nature Influence

Nature refers to all of the genes and hereditary factors that influence who we are from our physical appearance to someone personality characteristics. Nature factors could possibly have a strong influence on characteristics. Once this cause and effect relationship is established, it should be much more convenient to accurately examine what causes people's personality to develop as it does.

a. The Swamp Influence

Jean is an orphan who lives alone in the middle of swamp it is his home since his childhood. He lives with his mother in the swamp because his father gone first and has been issued passed away and then Jean completely become an orphan because his mother has passed away when Jean is just ten years old. Since his parents passed away Jean has learned about many things to survive alone in the swamp. The swamp is his first home and a place that teaches him about a lot of things. Jean tries to survive alone without any help from others. He sells the herbs to the villagers, and everything he knows is the knowledge he has gained from his mother, so he continues it.

b. Alaska Influence

It is an exotic name, but strong, strange. It is wild, untamed, and lonely, and it is sounded to young Jean LaBarge. He puts a big dream in this place, because this place is the exact place that he wants to visit someday with his best friend, Rob to visit a west country together. Even though many people say that it is a wasteland, Jean thinks the opposite. He knows this place provides many things that people are still not aware of. He knows Alaska means money if only people know. There are a lot of fur, soil, and gold in it. After seeing the beauty of the land by his own eyes, the advice he got from his captain makes Jean start to make Russia-America land (Alaska) as his Aim and dream. It build a big desire inside Jean's heart, and Alaska is that makes Jean an ambitious sailor as in quotation "Other despised and feared it, yet Jean had lived there, made his way there, known its richness and its beauty. The experience made him wary of the term wasteland." (L'Amour. 1957:35). Unlike other people who think that Alaska is a wasteland, Jean sees Alaska as a source of money with so much fur, golden and other natural sources that produced there. Jean still thinks a way to come to Alaska. He learns from whatever source he gets and takes every chance that is possible to help his dream and his best friend.

2. Social Environment Influence

Environmental factors are more important in determining of child's development. Nurture refers to the day to day interactions children encounter in their environment. Characteristics remaining stable through the years and if environment is considered at all, it is thought that early experiences establish future patterns of behavior. "families of different cultures adopt unique methods for playing with, carrying, feeding, comforting, educating, and socializing their children" (Smith, 2003:449). Interactions between children and their parents and/or caregivers differ across cultures. Socializing them to become more independent at an early age. Interactions between parent and child are largely influenced by cultural beliefs, values and personal experiences of one's own family and family beliefs. Factors in the social environment that are influence toward someone characteristic are those related to safety, violence, and social disorder in general, and more specific factors related to the type, quality, and stability of social

connections, including social participation, social cohesion, social capital, and the collective efficacy of the neighborhood (or work) environment.

a. Jean LaBarge's Father's Influence

From his father Jean has a dream to be a trapper and becomes a fabulous man. Jean keeps acting like his father, how he handles every problem and how he acts between people. He has the same dream to continue his father story as he quotation "Once he had a riffle he would go west and become a mountain man like his father, and perhaps in some trappers' rendezvous in the mountains he might meet him". (L'Amour. 1957:4). Even though Jean does not know how his father's figure outside there, his memory about his father and words that spreads among people is enough to convince him to get his future as a fabulous man.

b. Captain Hutchins' Influence

Captain Hutchins is a great person and Jean has respected him since his childhood. He is a great teacher for Jean LaBarge. The first time Jean meets with Captain Hutchins is when there are some strangers people who have recognized them as Carter a serial killer, and Hutchins jumps to help the little Jean after he hears the news that Jean is being locked in the cabin from Rob Walker, Jean Labarge's best friend. Hutchins character and words are always affected and practically Jean will because those words can change Jean mindset. Captain Hutchins has a lot of knowledge, not only about fur or sailor but also the political issue and how is condition outside there. Jean ever once met Hutchins and some words of Hutchins's makes Jean dream to be sailor as a fur trader. He believes every words of Hutchin's said, it makes him has a big expectation. Another thing about Captain hutchins is that he is a distinct but being respected because of his power. He owns the most of the horses, and has been free about providing powder and ball and others know they need a while finding a man to replace him. It can be seen by how people listen to his favor when he was asked for it. At Jean's first travel it is not as easy as his dream. Many people refuse to accept him as a worker because he is too little and unexperiences in the sea. However, Captain Hutchins stands behind him and help him to get out of those hard situation, ensures people that Jean will be really helpful as a trapper.

c. Peter Hovey's Influence

In the beginning of Jean's trip, he still needs to learn about a lot of stuff, about being a sailor and trapper. Even though Jean has already known about furs, he still needs to know more about furs and a trapper in any condition or place different from the swampland, until he meets Peter Hovey, Captain Hutchins' friend. Peter Hovey teaches Jean the most important part in Jean's life. He is the first person who welcome Jean in his first trip and willing to teach Jean how to be a mountain man. After his meeting with Peter Hovey, Jean becomes a good trapper not only in the swamp, but also in mountains. He know a lot about furs, he can sell his own and be a good trapper as other men who has a lot of experience.

d. Rob J. Walker's Influence

Jean has been used to meet new people in village, in a moment he meets Rob Walker, his best buddies. Rob is already fascinated by Jean's figure since the first time they meet. He is friendly toward Rob. Jean recognizes the curiosity and sincerity in Rob's question in the first they meet, and it leads them to be friends and to share the same dreams. As childhood friends, Jean and Rob share a dream to go west. The saddest moment happens to little Jean Labarge when he has to leave the swamp and his best friend, Rob Walker. Jean leaves it for his future and starts his adventure. Everytime Jean gets a chance, he will write a letter for Rob. Until he visits Alaska he remembers his promise with Rob, and they start try to achieve their dream. It is not only Jean who grows up so well but his best friend, Rob Walker also grows well and has already gotten married. Rob gains his career as a senator, and it is kind of a start of their journey to make the history. Rob Walker has an important role in the nation, and Jean knows that Rob has the capability to buy a continent which can help both of them to achieve their dream to make Alaska become a part of the United States. Another reason for his dream about Alaska is because of the feeling of patriotism for his country, and it is an influence from his best friend. As Jean believes that his friend will help him no matter what. As the following sentence "it had been a long, long night but he had never doubted that help would come because his friend Rob Walker had gone for help, and Rob would not fall him."(L'Amour. 1957:239)

e. Princess Helena Gagarin's Influence

When Jean turns as a mature men he start to sail his own ship under his own command, starting to get some crew in San Fransisco. Jean starts his command with Kohl as his mate or dock man. In San Fransisco harbor, he meets a girl who takes attention from Jean, because this girl is so different from the other girls he has ever met before. Start from the way she gets dressed and the way of she speaks. There is an accident that makes the girl falls in the Jean's arm, all of sudden Jean kissed the girl on the lips and it gets a slap for Jean. Even the girl so angry Jean does not regret it at all. Jean becomes a patient man for Helena. Starting from his first met until they end up being together. His second meeting with the girl is when Jean is introduced to Russian prince, Prince Rotcheff. Jean respects the Prince, for being friendly and polite. He is also asked to help Jean. In that moment he just knows that she is a princess from Russian, and wife of Prince Rotcheff. "And after some moment conversations he knew the girl's name, it is princess Helena Gagarin, niece of His Majesty, the Czar of Russia, Grand Duke Constatantin." (L'Amour. 1957:56). The reality that Helena is someone's wife makes Jean sad, but he respects the Prince. Jean will not try to steal the Princess because Jean respects Prince Rotcheff, who is friendly and polite, he will wait patiently to get the princess. Jean turns into someone who able to speak openly in front of Helena. Helena makes Jean realises how lonely he was all this time, untill the moment Helena also confess her feeling, but part of his men pride would not let him to take her from her husband so Jean waits for her patiently. He does not hesitantly to do a dangerous thing to protect her. After a long journey Jean still remembers about Helena, a lot of thought coming to him. He thinks that no man should to walk in earth alone. A man should have mate, to share his luck and his strength, but his sorrows as well. And this thought comes at the same time as Jean remembers about Helena.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bethesda. 2000. *Health Disparities: Linking Biological and Behavioral Mechanisms With Social and Physical Environments*. National Institutes of Health.
- Elgar, Edward. 1997. *The International Handbook of Environmental Sociology*. UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.
- Hawthorn, Jeremy. 1985. *A Concise Glossary of contemporary Literary Theory*. New York: The Holder Headline Group.
- Kenney, William. 1966. *How To Analyze Fiction*. New York: Monarch Press.
- L'Amour, Louis. 1957. *Sitka*. New York Printing History.
- Robert, Edgar V.1977. *Writing Theme About Literature*. Fourth edition. New Jersey: Prentice-hall,Inc.,Englewood.
- Tracy, Sarah J.. 2013. *Qualitative Research Method*. Chichester.UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Wellek, Rene and Austin Warren. 1956. *Theory of Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace&World.
- <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-sociology/chapter/the-sociological-perspective/> (Accessed on July 03rd, 2018)