

LIFE STRUGGLE AS REFLECTED IN JOHN STEINBECK'S THE GRAPES OF WRATH

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Abstract: In this study, the writer analyzed the novel written by John Steinbeck, entitled *The Grapes of Wrath*. This novel tells about the struggle of the Joad family in fulfilling their needs in life. Therefore, the writer gave the title of this skripsi with "Life struggle as Reflected in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*." In this research, the writer used objective approach by Abrams. The writer of this study used Abrams' objective methodology. Because the data in this study are quotes from the novel *The Grapes of Wrath* and because there is no statistical analysis or consideration of numbers, it is categorized as descriptive qualitative approach. Firstly the result of this study shows the struggle for a place to live refer about Joad family migrates from their native land to another place to live better. Second, struggle to find work refers the Joad family hard struggle to survive and struggle to find work in their new place. Their expectation about California is really different in reality. The third, struggle to security, it is about how Joad family protects their member of family, Tom Joad, from the police because he has killed one of the police.

Keywords: *Life Struggle, The Grapes Of Wrath, John Steinbeck, Literature*

INTRODUCTION

Humanly, all people want a good life. They want to have a home to live with their family. They have food and drink. They also want a good job and money. They want everything good in their life without any problem. However, in this novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, there is one family called The Joad family that has to move from their home to another place because they cannot farm in their land. They had to struggle to find a place to live. They also have to find a work to earn money to buy their food and drink. They move to California for their survival, but they face

various troubles in settled place. The writer wants to reveal the life struggle experience by Joad family to live their lives.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

Every study needs a specific kind of method to analyze the issue at hand. Likewise, this study. This study falls under the qualitative research category. This indicates that the information in this study takes the form of words or quotations rather than figures, graphs, or formulas. According to Bogdan and Biklen, "Descriptive research is qualitative. Instead of being presented as numbers, the data are presented as words or images. The written product of the research includes data quotations to support and explain the presentation. (1992: 30).

Data Collection

The writer employs several sources from various categories to do this research. The primary source and secondary sources are those. Evidence from primary and secondary sources, which includes facts and opinions that aren't found in the work itself, is relevant for essays on literature. *The Grapes of Wrath* is the primary source, and other books and internet references that can be useful for this research were used as secondary sources.

Data Analysis

Analysis is the process of dissecting something into its constituent parts and identifying the connections between them that give the whole its coherence and unity (Griffith, 1986: 30). Therefore, analysis is a particularly useful tool for fully comprehending literary works.

The writer took an impartial approach when assessing the data. The objective orientation, which in principle views the works of art in isolation for all external point of references, analyzes it as a self-sufficient entity formed by its part

in the internal relation, and sets out to judge its society by criteria intrinsic to its own mode of being, according to Abrams' description in his *book Glossary of Literature Terms* (1999). According to the quotation, the writer focused only on the work itself without taking a point of external references.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Struggle for a Place to live

As we know that people always have problem and obstacles in their own life. In this case, the Joad family also has many problem and obstacles in their own life. Due to the storm that slammed Oklahoma, the family of farmers they belong to was unable to harvest. The demands of life and the growth of farm yields became increasingly challenging. They made the decision to relocate to a new location.

They've all been chomping cotton, even your grandfather and the children. accumulating funds so they can advance west. I'm going to purchase a car and head west, where life is simple. Nothing is present here. People begging for the chance to chop cotton at 50 cents per clean acre. What's the plan for ejecting the people, Joad asked? "Oh! They spoke eloquently about it. You are aware of the kind of years we have had. A man didn't have enough crop to plug an ant's ass due to dust building up and ruining everything. (1975, p.42)

From the quotation above, we can see there is a decision that Joad family made to move from their place to another place. They cannot live in their land because of the dust spoiling their farm. They need a better place or house or environment. It is included a psychological needs because humans need oxygen or fresh air to live with.

The migrant folks followed the migrant route to the West in their cars as they wriggled off of the side lanes and onto the vast interstate. They moved westward in the daylight like bugs, and when night fell, they gathered together like bugs close to water and shelter. Because they were all coming to a strange new location and were feeling lonely and disoriented as well as

having come from a place of misery, concern, and defeat, they snuggled around, talked, shared their lives, their meals, and the things they hoped for in the new country. (1975, p.155).

From the quotation above, we can see the struggle of the migrant families to find a new place. They struggle through the long journey for hour and days. Even though they never know what kind of place they visited but they persisted.

Why would they push a fella like that about, Tom questioned? To gaze at Tom, the young man paused his work. "Chris' knows," he replied. "You just arrived. Perhaps you can identify her. Some guys say one thing, and others say something another. But after a brief period of camping, you observe how quickly a deputy sheriff moves you. He spread compound on the seat of a valve after lifting it. (1975, p.196)

From the quotation above, we can see that the Joad family has arrived in California. They stopped at the Hooverville camp. It is not a place where they can settle down because the police will kick immigrants out of the camp. They cannot find a place to live easily.

Tom moved through the rows of tents as he proceeded down the street. The starlight got accustomed to his sight. He observed that the rows were straight and that the tents were clean. The street's surface had been washed and sprayed. The sounds of sleeping people could be heard coming from the tents. The entire camp snorted and buzzed. Tom moved cautiously. As he got closer to Number Four Sanitary Unit, he took a curious look at the low, unkempt structure. The rows of wash trays are exposed on the sides but are ceiling-covered. He carefully approached the nearby Joad truck after spotting it. (1975, p. 232)

From the quotation above, we can see another struggle of Joad family to find a better place to live. They arrived at Weepatch camp. It is a government camp. It is a clean camp and suitable place to live for the Joad family. There are many facilities they can use. But because they can't find work, it only lasted a few months in the Weepatch camp. It means they had no money to pay the rent for the camp.

Struggle to Find Work

The first purpose for the Joad family to migrate is to find a work. They will work to earn money so they can eat and drink and have a place to live. It is not easy as they imagined go to California and find lots of jobs. When they were on their way to California, they met a ragged man who told them about the place they were going to. It can see from the quotation below.

"Wanna job?" he asks. You will then respond, "I definitely do, mister. I will be grateful for the opportunity to work. He'll then declare, "I can use you." You'll then inquire, "When do I begin?" He will then proceed after giving you instructions on where to go and when. Perhaps he needs two hundred guys, so he contacts five hundred, and they inform others, and when you arrive, there are a thousand men. 'I'm payin' twenty cents an hour,' claims this fellow. And perhaps half of the men leave. However, there are still five hundred people who are so dang hungry that they will work for nothing but biscuits. (1975, p.152).

It is true what the ragged man said to them. They were in California and they saw a lot of growth scattered. There is no work for them even for the people who earlier arrived also they did not have a job.

"I'm not sure. Mus' be. There isn't a crop here right now. Cotton must be picked later, as well as grapes. Moving along, as soon as I get these valves going. me, my wife, and my children. They reportedly have work in the north. We are traveling north toward Salinas. (1975, p.196)

This condition makes the Joad family have to struggle hard to find work elsewhere. They have to achieve their first goal to migrate. They moved to a new camp. Here Tom Joad got a job for himself but it was only for five days. His other family members do not get any work.

"Got to gitgoin'," said the older man. Younger then turned to face Tom. "Lookie," he murmured. If you want to walk over with us, we might be able to get you on as we're laying some pipe. That's really thoughtful of you, Tom said. And I sincerely appreciate your breakfast. Glad to have you, he remarked, an elderly man. If you wish, we'll try to get you a job. (1975, p.235)

The Joad family eventually moved to another camp struggling to find another job. It is because Tom Joad is not working anymore. They also have no money for food and daily necessities. It can see from quotation below.

We need to take action, she said. "We've been here a month. Tom had a five-day workweek. The rest of you scrabbling around every day without doing any work. A scairt to converse. And the cash is gone. You must discuss the matter. Every night, you simply eat and start to wander. (1975, p.284)

The hard struggle they do makes them get jobs. Every member of the family gets work even for kids. They will be paid to get food. Here they are treated badly by the land lords. They are underpaid even though they work hard. We can see the quotation below.

He said, "I want to get you checked down." "How many of you are going to work?" The four males, Tom said. Is this labor-intensive work? "Picking peaches," the clerk replied. "Component work. Give each box five cents. There is no reason why the little guys can't assist. "If they're careful, no, for sure." (1975, p.302)

Struggle to Security

The desire for security is divided into other categories, for example, the need for security, which encompasses the need for safety, dependability, protection, freedom from anxiety, the requirement for boundaries, strong defense, and so forth.

We can observe how the Joad family shields their son Tom Joad from the police in the book *The Grapes of Wrath*. Maslow asserts that people require a sense of security in their lives, particularly a sense of security against threats and hazards.

Tom, how about you? Ma enquired. "Now that you've forgotten me, Ma. I will bring a blanket. As you return, you take a look around. It's a lovely culvert. You are welcome to bring me some bread, potatoes, or mush and leave it at that. I'll come pick it up. "Well!" Pa remarked, "Seems like common sense to me." Tom was adamant, "It makes sense. "When my face feels a little better, why, I'll come out

and start picking," the speaker said. "Well, okay," Ma said. "However, don't take any chances. For a while, keep to yourself. (1975, p.331)

The reason for Tom Joad's hiding was because he had killed a cop. The preacher, his friend, after being released from jail has begun organizing workers. He has made many enemies among the landlords. When the police hunt his friend down and kill him, Tom take revenge and kills a police officer. It can see from the quotation below:

I'm unsure. the same kind of individuals who led us back to the highway that evening. possessed pick handles. He stopped. "They murdered him. broke his skull. I was there just standing. I lost it. took hold of the pick handle. As he spoke, he cast a melancholy glance back at the night, the shadows, and the flashlights. I hit a guy with a club. Ma's throat tightened as she inhaled. Pa tensed up. He murmured, "Kill 'im?" "I'm not sure. I was crazy. I tried to." (1975, p.318)

Conclusion

The writer conclude that some point in this analysis they are, struggle for a place to live, struggle to find work and struggle to security. For the first analysis, struggle for a place to live refer about Joad family migrates from their native land to another place to live better. Second, struggle to find work, the writer found the Joad family hard struggle to survive and struggle to find work in their new place. Their expectation about California is really different in reality. The third, struggle to security, it is tells about how Joad family protect their member of family, Tom Joad, from the police because he has killed one of the police.

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