



**THE INFLUENCE OF REALISM
IN JOHN STEINBECK'S *CANNERY ROW***

THESIS

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DEDICATION PAGE

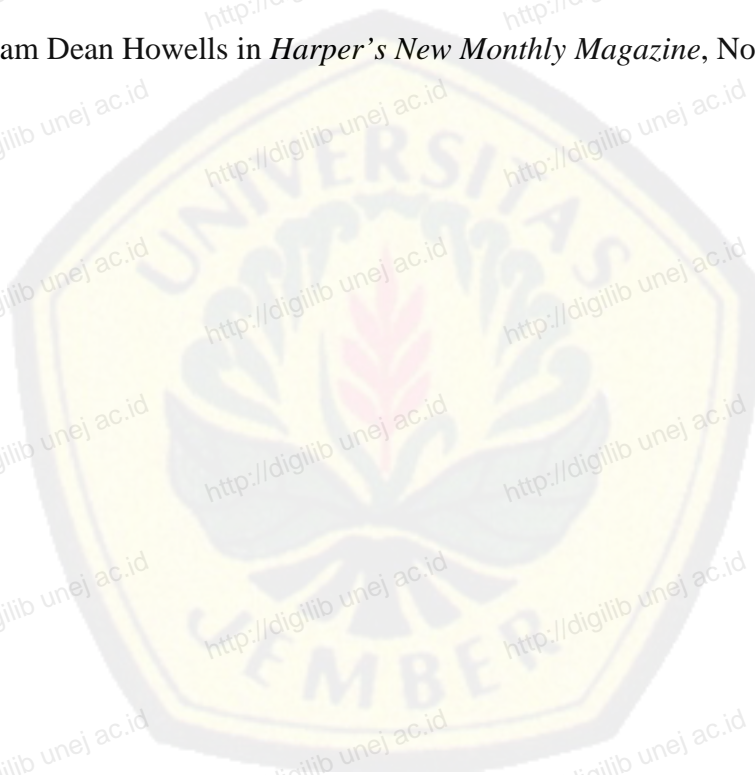
This thesis is dedicated to:

- 1. My alma mater.**
- 2. My beloved parents (Ma'shum Syafi'i and Ma'shumah), who pray me, give me affection and act wisely.**
- 3. My beloved brothers and sisters, who give attention, help, and kindness.**
- 4. My little nephews and nieces.**
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MOTTO

**“Realism is nothing more and nothing less than
the truthful treatment of material.”**

(William Dean Howells in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, November 1889)



DECLARATION

I hereby state that the thesis entitled **The Influence of Realism in John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*** is an original piece of writing. I certify that the analysis and the research described in this thesis have not already been submitted for any other degree or any publications.

I certify to the best of my knowledge that all sources used and any help received in the preparation of this thesis have been acknowledged.

Jember, February 21, 2006

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ABSTRACT

One of literary characteristic is reciprocal. It means literature and society has strong relation. The both influence each other. Literature is a fiction and society is a social reality. Commonly, the author takes the phenomena happen in society as the material to create literary work.

This thesis tells about the influence of realism in John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*. As literary term, realism is "a theory of writing in which the familiar, ordinary aspects of life are depicted in a matter of fact, straight forward manner designed to reflect life as it actually is (Shaw, 1972: 315-316)." Shaw also says that, "realism means treatment of subject matter in a way that presents careful descriptions of everyday life, often the lives of so-called middle or lower classes." Furthermore, realism insists on accurate documentation, sociological insight, an accumulation of the details of material fact, an avoidance of poetic diction, idealization, exaggeration, melodrama, etc.... (Drabble, 1995: 824).

Meanwhile *Cannery Row* is an example of realistic work. In other word, it is influenced by realism in his technique of writing. John Steinbeck is an author that applies realism as his perspective in treatment of social reality. Almost of his work is realistic. As we know, Steinbeck is an author that works in modernism era. Modernism is a literary period inspired by realism and naturalism. Modernism shares with realism and naturalism the conviction that literary work should describe social reality.

There are some indications of realism influence in *Cannery Row*. They are setting of places, people character, and historical event in Depression 1930s in United States of America (USA). Steinbeck tries to describe setting of places of Monterey City, California, USA, and other places located in there. In giving characters in the novel, he is inspired by people who have relation with him. Beside that, he also tries to reflect people sorrow because of Depression 1930s through some of sub-story in the novel.

From the explanation above, it proves that realism –as literary term- gives quite attention on the portrayal of real fact in literature. Even though a literary work is realistic or it practices realism in its portrayal, it remains a fiction. It is sure that the author also uses his/her imagination and creativity in creating literary work. But, at least, the realistic work quite contains factual phenomena in a certain part. Thus, the reader can search and find out social reality inspires the work.

But, although a literary work is very realistic or naturalistic, it remains a fiction. This dilemma insists the readers to maintain the equilibrium and suspense between social reality inspires the work and reality in the fiction (Teeuw, 1988:236).

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