THE JOURNEY OF DESMOND DOSS IN *HACKSAW RIDGE*

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THE JOURNEY OF DESMOND DOSS IN HACKSAW RIDGE

Saya menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqosyah untuk memenuhi sebagian syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

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The Journey of Desmond Doss in *Hacksaw Ridge*

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Abstract

The tittle of this graduating paper is *The Journey of Desmond Doss in Hacksaw Ridge.* The writer choses to discuss the hero's journey of Desmond Doss in the film because the character is portrayed in different depiction since he is presented as a conscientious objector who joins the army, a little army medic who doesn't want to kill and refuse to carry any kind of weapons in the battlefield to protect himself. He is also an unsophisticated, uneducated, and unskilled one. The writer choses Hacksaw Ridge film because this film tries to reconstruct the meaning of hero and war through the story and character of Desmond Doss. Besides, Hacksaw Ridge film can be considered as one of the successful war films for its achievement in some awards and positive critical responses from the film critics, and film magazines. They are called this film as a masterpiece, brilliant, fantastic and also considered as the best war film since *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) The method of this research is qualitative method which is conducted with descriptive analysis. The objective of this research is to analyze and explain the stages passed by Desmond Doss character in his journey to be a hero in Hacksaw Ridge film. The theory used in this research is hero's journey theory proposed by Joseph Campbell and supported by film theory since the subject is a film. According to Campbell there are three stages of the hero's journey they are Departure, Initiation, and Return. From the analysis, it can be found that in his journey, Desmond Doss only passed the stage of departure and initiation while the stage of return cannot be found. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that the journey of Desmond Doss fit the pattern of hero's journey by Joseph Campbell and finally Desmond can be declared as the hero of this film. This research also proves that hero's journey is still relevant and can be applied in any kind of stories or films.

Keyword: hero's journey, *Hacksaw Ridge,* hero, stages, Desmond Doss.

The Journey of Desmond Doss in *Hacksaw Ridge*

By Moch. Burhanudin

Abstrak

Judul skripsi ini adalah *The Journey of Desmond Doss in Hacksaw Ridge*. Penulis memilih untuk membahas perjalanan menjadi seorang pahlawan yang dilakukan oleh karakter Desmond Doss dalam film Hacksaw Ridge karena penggambaran yang berbeda dari karakter Desmond Doss yaitu dia digambarkan sebagai seorang penentang perang yang memutuskan menjadi seorang tantara, seorang tantara medis yang kurus, tidak mau membunuh, dan menolak membawa segala macam senjata untuk melindungi dirinya di medan perang. Dia juga seorang yang sederhana, tidak berpendidikan, dan tidak terlatih. Penulis memeilih film Hacksaw Ridge karena film ini mencoba untuk merekonstruksi makna pahlawan dan perang melalui cerita dan karater Desmond Doss. Selain itu, Film Hacksaw Ridge bisa dianggap sebagai salah satu film perang yang sukses atas pencapainnya dalam beberapa pengahargaan dan respon positif dari kritikus dan majalah film. Mereka menyebut bahwa Hacksaw Ridge adalah sebuah maha karya brilian, luar biasa dan juga dianggap sebagai salah satu film perang terbaik sejak *Saving Private Ryan* (1998). Metode penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif dengan menerapkan analisis deskriptif. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisa dan menjelaskan tahap-tahap yang dilalui oleh Desmond Doss dalam perjalanannya menjadi seorang pahlwan dalam film Hacksaw Ridge. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah teori hero's journey yang dikemukakan oleh Joseph Campbell dan didukung oleh teori film karena subjeknya adalah film. Menurut Campbell, ada tiga tahap dalam perjalanan seorang pahlawan yaitu Departure, Initiation, dan Return. Dari analisis ini, bisa ditemukan bahwa dalam perjalananya Desmond Doss hanya melewati tahap departure dan initiation sedangkan tahap return tidak bisa ditemukan. Meski demikian, bisa disimpulkan bahwa perjalanan Desmond Doss sesuai dengan pola perjalanan hero oleh Joseph Campbell dan akhirnya Desmond Doss bisa dikatakan sebagai hero dalam film ini. Penlitian ini juga membuktikan bahwa teori hero's journey masih relevan dan bisa diaplikasikan di berbagai macam cerita atau film.

Keyword: hero's journey, *Hacksaw Ridge,* pahlawan, tahap, Desmond Doss.

MOTTO

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

"In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful"

DEDICATION

This Graduating Paper is dedicated with love, honour, and affection to:

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Yogyakarta, 23 June 2017

The Writer

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YOGYAKARTA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Background of Study

Film or movie as one of the popular cultures and the modern art works gives a new direction to literary studies, because popular culture examining literature as a particular cultural practice (Culler 1997, 43). As a modern work which has similar narrative to literature, film can be seen as an analogous and a medium of literature (Turner 1999:2). If written literatures such as novel or poem are conveying the meaning, values, and messages through the words, films are conveying the meaning, values, and messages through the images. According to Christian Metz (1972:69) a film conveys a rich message with the poor code, a rich text with poor system. He also explained that an image is a *short-circuit,* it means that an image is closer than a word. Because an image as a giver meaning has a direct relation to something that given meaning. For instance, the image of a book is closer to the meaning of book than the word of book. So that, he said that "film is difficult to explain, because it's easy to understand".

Beside as an analogous and a medium of literature, a film was also understood as a representation of culture, according to turner (1999: 48) society's way of life and system of values can be seen through such apparently ephemeral forms and practices as television, radio, sports, comics, film, music, and fashion. With various genre or kind of film such as action, drama, war, epic-historical, and horror, it can be said that watching certain film is watching histories, cultures,

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human nature, dreams, hatreds, and fears of certain society. Beside its genres, the density of the themes that contained in a film such as heroism, friendship, struggle, or love make it as something multi-dimensional. So that, film can be analyzed using different theories or discourses. In the word of Sam Fuller (an American veteran and a director) "film is like a battleground: there's love, hate, action, violence, death (as cited in Gordon, 2017: 3).

In this research, the writer tries to analyze American's myth in seeing hero, especially hero's journey in American war film. As one of the countries with the largest film industry and the long history of war in the world, American war films were tried to portray about the heroes in some American war and their inspirational action trough film. According to Tim Dirk a film critic and the founder of AMC Filmsite.org, war film is a film acknowledge the horror and heartbreak of war, letting the actual combat fighting (against nations or humankind) on land, sea, or in the air provide the primary plot or background for the action of the film (http://www.filmsite.org/genres.html). Steve Neale (as cited in Eberwein 2010: 43) explained more specifically that war film is film about the waging of war, scenes of combat are a requisite ingredient and these scenes are dramatically central. The category thus includes films set in the First World War, the Second World War, Japan, Korea and Vietnam. And it excludes home front dramas and comedies and other films lacking scenes of military combat.

One of the successful American war films is *Hacksaw Ridge*, this film was released widely to public on 4 November, 2016, directed by Mel Gibson (a producer, an actor, and a director), the twice Oscar winner, and starred by Andrew

Garfield (former actor of The Amazing Spider-Man) as a leading role actor. As march 8, 2017 this film has grossed a worldwide total $175.3 million, against a production budget of $40 million, making it as one of the highest-grossing war film (http://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=hacksawridge.htm).

Beside its grossing profit, this film was also received some awards, such as win two awards in 89th Academy award for Best Sound Mixing and Best Film Editing, another 38 wins and 89 nominations (http://www.imdb.com/title/ tt2119532/awards), and some and positive critical responses from film critics or film magazines, they are called this film a masterpiece, brilliant, fantastic and also considered as the best war film since *Saving Private Ryan (1998)*.

Hacksaw Ridge is an American war film based on true story of Desmond Doss, a World War II American combat medic during the Battle of Okinawa. As a film that tells a hero of war, heroism of Desmond Doss becomes the one of important themes of this film. In a story, hero defined as the protagonist, the chief character in a plot, on whom our interest centers (Abrams 2009:265) and heroism as the qualities or attributes of hero (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/heroism). It can be understood that heroism is the actions that considered as the actions of hero, such as bravery, courage, exploits or as *Webster's New World* Dictionary defines that hero is any person admired for courage, nobility, or exploits, especially in war or in Joseph Campbell's word "hero is someone who has given his life to something bigger than himself".

As the hero or the main protagonist character of the film in modern era, Desmond doss was portrayed in different image and character than other heroes in other war films. when John Miller (Saving Private Ryan) is a great leader or captain, William James (The Hurt Locker) is the sergeant who a highly trained in bomb disposal, or Chris Kyle (American Sniper) is also the leader and the most lethal sniper in the history of U.S military with his 160 kills, Desmond Doss is just a little army medic man in the back line who tries to save the others humans lives weather he is friend or foe, an army who unskilled in any kind of weapons, even he refused to carries any kind of weapons, an army who did not kills hundreds of enemies to achieve his glorious win. Besides, He is also an unsophisticated and uneducated one.

This film seems to shows the minor figure of war as the real hero, this film portrayed the hero and his heroism in a different way, because all aspects that support him as an ideal hero such as big man with great courage and leadership who fight his enemies in the front line or well skilled and trained in combat and weapons did not pinned on him. *Hacksaw Ridge* seems to offer a new type of war hero, which is very distinct from the previous type of popular war hero as in Rambo, Saving Private Ryan, The Hurt Locker or American Sniper. Through the story and the character of Desmond Doss, this film tries to reconstruct the meaning of hero and war.

The different depiction and character of Desmond Doss as a modern hero that explained above, then attracted the writer to analyze the stages of the adventure of Desmond doss to be a hero by using the hero's journey theory of Joseph

Campbell as one of the relevant theories that traced the changes of heroes since ancient until modern age, because according to Campbell the modern man emerged from ancient ignorance, like a butterfly from its cocoon, or like the sun at dawn from the womb of mother night (2004: 358). Vogler (2007:28) also said that all stories consist of common structural elements of stages found universally in myths, fairy tales, dreams and movies. In other hand, Susan Mackey-Kallis (2001: 1) explained that many of the top-grossing films in the American cinema have been based, however loosely, on the hero quest.

By putting the stages of the hero's journey in the discussion, the readers are able to get additional perspective and as a result, the readers are able to know more about what makes someone to be a hero, how it builds, and how it is applied in the story especially in *Hacksaw Ridge* film. Since the subject of this research is a film, the theory of film is necessary to be applied. The writer uses concept in film theory by Amy Villarejo. This theory is necessary element in analyzing picture from the film because every picture of the film needs to be read in order to give more understanding of the meaning in the film.

Based on the reasons that mentioned before, this analysis will be focused on the discussion of the character of Desmond Doss as the protagonist, what he does, what he said, what he thinks and what the stages or events that passed by him that showed in the film before he declared as the hero of this film.

1.2.   Research Question

Based on the description of the background of research above, there are some questions that should be discussed and answered.

1. How could the journey of Desmond Doss in *Hacksaw Ridge* film fit the hero's journey of Joseph Campbell? and how can it be explained?

1.3.   Objective of study

According to the background and question of the research above, this research was purposed to analyze the stages of Hero's Journey in *Hacksaw Ridge* film based on Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey theory and how to explain it.

1.4.   Significance of Study

The theory of Hero's Journey is still relevant to find the stage of heroes, in a row with the changes of depiction and character of heroes in modern age. This research also enriches the discussion about War films especially *Hacksaw Ridge* film. This research proves the pattern of hero's journey that proposed by can be applied in any kind of stories or films.

1.5.   Literature review

After searching some researches that related to this research, the writer has found some research that related to the subject and object of this research.

The first is the research entitled *"Joseph Campbell's Monomyth as Presented in Spider-Man Film"* that was written by Rahmat Khanafi the student of State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

The second is the research that written by Totok Zunianto, also the student State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta entitled *"The Stages to Be Hero: The Analysis of Hercules Journey in Hercules (2014) film"*.

The third is the research that written by Gavin S. Davie the student of University of South Florida entitled *"The Hero Soldier: Portrayals of Soldiers in War Films"*.

From some researches that mentioned above, although all of them use the same subject and object, but there is little difference. The first is to examine *Hercules* as a symbol of the ancient hero, the second is *Spider-Man* as a symbol of past-modern hero, and the third may be somewhat similar to this research since it also discussed about war movies, but the third was focused on depictions and hero changes in war movies, not on the stages to becoming a hero, and after all, this study use a different film.

In addition, some differences above also prove that the ever-changing descriptions of heroes from the ancient to modern or even post-modern era are interesting topics to be analyzed and hero's journey is one of the theories that still relevant to analyzed that topic, as the writer mentioned earlier.

1.6.   Theoretical Approach

In order to answer the questions of the research, the writer uses the theory of hero's journey that introduced by Joseph Campbell in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and also theory of film by Villarejo since the subject of this research is a film. According to Silverman (2000:77) theory is a set of concepts used to define and/or explain some phenomenon. In other hand, Culler (1997:14)

explained that theory is an analytical and speculative attempt to find out what is involved in language, writing, meaning, or the subject.

1.6.1. Theory of Hero's Journey by Joseph Campbell

The hero's journey is a theory that introduced by Joseph Campbell from his reading, comparison, and analysis of myths and legends of many cultures, such as Buddha, Christ, and Moses. From his reading, comparison, and analysis, he formulated the standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *Departure* or *separation – initiation – return*: which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth (Campbell, 2004:28). In every phase of Departure, Initiation, and return contains some derived phases that commonly passed by hero during his adventure.

The first phase is the phase of *Departure*, it contains five derived phases, they are the call to adventure, refusal of the call, supernatural aid, the crossing of the threshold, and belly of the whale. The second phase is the phase of *Initiation*, which is contains six phases, they are the road to trials, the meeting with the goddess, woman as the temptress, atonement with the father, apotheosis, and the ultimate boon. The last phase is the *Return*. it contains six phases, and they are refusal of the return, the magic flight, rescue from without, the crossing of the return threshold, master of the two worlds, and freedom to live (Campbell, 2004: 45-179).

1.6.2. Film Theory

In this research, film theory is used as the supporting theory of the analysis. Since the story in a film is constructed through the images, film theory will be applied to understand the meaning of captured images. According to Villarejo there are four basic elements in film analysis they are *mise-en-scène*, cinematography, editing and sound (2007: 28-53). Because the film theory used to describe the meaning of image, furthermore, the writer only uses the element of *mise-en-scène*, and cinematography that considered as two important elements to understand the meaning of image in a frame of film, because *mise-en-scène* and cinematography contribute to construct the sense of a film's world (Villarejo, 2007: 44).

Mise-en-scène refers to all that encompassed by a frame. It is the "world of the film," its feel, its attitude toward detail, its sense of its own reality against which we can measure its representations. It is a useful starting point for describing what you're seeing (Villarejo, 2007: 28). There are six elements that should be considered in *Mise-en-scène* they are setting, lighting, costume, hair, make-up, and figure behavior.

Since everything that encompassed in a frame is recorded by a camera. The elements of cinematography as a technique of framing should also be considered. There are four elements of cinematography they are camera distance or types of shot, camera angle, depth of field or focus, and the movement of the camera (Villarejo, 2007:36).

1.7. Method of Research

In a research, According to Neuman (2014;2) the term *method* refers to the collection of specific techniques we use in a study to select cases, measure and observe social life, gather and refine data, analyze data, and report on results.

1.7.1. Type of Research

This research uses qualitative research. According to Walcott in Creswell, Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive. This means that the writer makes an interpretation of the data. This includes developing a description of an individual or setting, analyzing data for themes or categories, and finally making an interpretation or drawing conclusions about its meaning personally and theoretically, stating the lessons learned, and offering further questions to be asked. (2009: 182). In other hand, Silverman (2014: 3) and Neuman (2014: 167-169) explained that qualitative research describes phenomena in context, interprets processes or meanings, uses theoretically based concept, and seeks understanding.

Qualitative research has two ways for completion. The first, this research uses books and other writings to get some information to support the subject in this research. Second, this research is also appropriate to be called as a library research which means the writer can do the research by observing books which are necessary.

Thus, the writer uses library research since the writer only uses literary books and electronic books to get supporting elements and necessary needs in analyzing the issue.

1.7.2. Data Sources

In a research, according to Richards (2015: 36) data are the 'stuff' you work with, the records of what you are studying. The writer identifies events or accounts as the data unit by selecting and using them as evidence in an analysis. From that, in this research, the writer uses two data resources; the primary data and secondary data. The primary data is the main or principal data used in the research, while the secondary data is supporting data used this research.

Since the discussion in this research is hero's journey in a film, the primary data of this research is *Hacksaw Ridge* film itself, especially the action in every scene in the film, and also the book of hero's journey theory by Joseph Campbell entitle *Hero with a thousand face*, and then supported by the secondary data are from books, articles, journals, website for reference and information about *Hacksaw Ridge* film and about the theory.

1.7.3. Data Collecting Technique

In collecting the data, the writer does close reading to understand the film. It means that the writer watches the film repeatedly to understand the elements of the film, such as its intrinsic elements, (character and characterization, theme, plot, setting, and etc.) and also cinematography aspects to support the understanding of the film. After the close reading to the film, the writer collects the all data by sorting the events of the film that related to the stages of hero's journey, and sorting the images of the film that considered as the representative images of events of the stages of hero's journey using theory of film.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

After the all data collected from the sources that mentioned above, the writer explains how they are related to each other. The writer classifies the data based on the theory include the event, object, and the character's action. After that, the writer analyzes the data and narrates the data. Then, the writer will be describing about the data, and the last is conclusion for this research.

1.8. Paper Organization

This paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter describes the general information of the research including the background of choosing the subject, research question, objectives of study, significances of study, literary review, theoretical approach, research methodology, and paper organization. The second chapter consists of the intrinsic elements of the film: *Hacksaw Ridge*. The next chapter is the analysis that contain the data analysis. The last chapter is conclusion.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

4.1. Conclusion

After finishing analysis of *Hacksaw Ridge* film in Chapter III, the writer concludes that, basically, *Hacksaw Ridge* film follows the pattern of Hero's Journey devised by Joseph Campbell. It can be seen through from the phase "Departure "until "initiation". In Departure and Initiation phase, all stages occur explicitly and symbolically. Only, the writer has to move the order devised by Campbell at the fifth order of departure a little bit, where "The Belly of The Whale" that actually the fifth stage of departure is moved into initiation and it is added before "Woman as the Temptress". It can be done since the pattern of hero's journey is flexible. Moreover, it is based on the plot of the story. While the other stages are still in the same orders.

The second or middle phase "Initiation" along with the stages inside, are very much similar to the orders of Campbell. All stages occur in this phase, and they also follow the orders. Based on that, this research proves that Desmond not only a hero of Hacksaw Ridge but also proves that even though the character of hero in a story or film is depicted differently, but it is still follows the pattern formulated by Joseph Campbell. This research also proves that Hero's journey is still relevant and can be applied in any kind of stories or films.

4.2. Suggestion for Future Writer

This research is analyzing *Hacksaw Ridge* as one of war films using the theory of monomyth or hero's journey. The writer suggests for future writers to analyze another war films, it is important since the war is an important event in the history of human civilization.

After talking about hero's journey in this research, the writer completely knows that hero's journey is a journey of every human in this world. Because every human being has a purpose in his life and when that goal is achieved he will be a hero, at least he is a hero for himself. It means that everyone can be a hero. Beside that, we can also learn that a hero is someone who did something in his life for the good of himself and other people or at least he is beneficial to other people. Like our prophet Muhammad Saw said that:

خَيْرُ   أَنْفَعُهُمْ

"The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people" (Ath Thabrani: 84).

In Islam, the theme of heroism also can be found in all stories of *Nabi* and *Rasul* (Messenger) since Adam AS until the last prophet Muhammad SAW as the messengers of God in the world. The journey of someone becomes a prophet and then the struggle and sacrifice of a prophet spread the teachings of Allah SWT to give the guidance to the mankind and peace on earth can be regarded as a long journey and struggle of someone to become a hero.

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