

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I would like to draw some conclusions based on my analysis. First and foremost, I would like to state that Flags of Our Fathers is a novel that contains naturalism aspects owing to the fact that I can find naturalism elements such as environment, heredity, instinct and chance in the novel. Moreover, I can find that the major characters are being governed by these elements to experience the war and also a tragic ending in their lives. I believe that Flags of Our Fathers belongs to naturalistic tradition, although probably the author of this novel does not intentionally apply naturalism in his work. However, I have shown that this novel contains naturalism aspects through my analysis by using a theory from Donald Pizer.

I would also like to mention a statement from Robert E. Lee in order to make this conclusion more distinct. Robert E. Lee says that, “It’s good that war is so horrible, or we might grow to like it” (Bradley 262). Lee’s statement is reflected in Flags of Our Fathers which can be seen clearly by the readers. It is a notion that the result of war always causes a lot of troubles for human beings.

Robert E. Lee's statement also reflects the theme of this novel which is environment, heredity, instinct and chance may cause one to be involved in a war and face a tragic ending. By applying naturalism approach, it is obvious that the result of war is horrible.

Having analyzed the major characters thoroughly, I conclude that this novel has negative naturalism aspects on the ground that the naturalism elements in this novel do not give positive influences on the major characters; on the contrary, it leads the major characters to experience the war and a tragic ending in their lives.

Furthermore, I would like to describe concisely how naturalism elements have negative influences on the major characters. First of all, the major characters live in the era or in the environment where it is hard to live on. The great Depression in America naturally forces the major characters to experience the effect of war. As the author states, "They were nearly all poor. The Great Depression ran through their lives" (Bradley 26). The author's statement gives evidence that the three major characters confront the hard times in their lives. The major characters seem do not have another choice except to go to the war. Therefore, I can say that the environment around John Bradley, Ira Hayes and Rene Gagnon does not support them to stay in their areas. In other words, the environment around the major characters does not give positive influences because it forces them to experience the effect of war.

The term "heredity" has a negative influence on the major characters because it forces the major characters to experience the effect of the war too. As for heredity, I have to look closely if the major characters have relation to their

society, culture or genetics. It turns out that Rene Gagnon's heredity can be seen by the fact that Rene Gagnon is a part of U.S. society but he is not much influenced by his heredity to experience the war. The next major character, Ira Hayes, apparently has a relation with his culture as a part of Native American. Ira Hayes goes to the war because he wants to protect his culture or heredity. The last major character in Flags of Our Fathers, John Bradley, has a connection to his parents' genetic as his father is one of the veterans of World War I. In naturalism perspective, John Bradley goes to the war because he is controlled by heredity. By going to the war, he experiences a tragic ending in his life.

Another naturalism element, instinct, also has a negative influence on the three major characters because "instinct" forces John Bradley, Ira Hayes and Rene Gagnon to think that the real heroes of Iwo Jima are people who never come back from the war. In my opinion, it is good to be humble in front of public because by being humble, one can more appreciate and honor one's companions. What I have found in this novel is absolutely different; the major characters' humility leads them all to deny their status as heroes. Thus, I can say the term "instinct" that I have found in this novel has a negative influence on the three major characters.

The last naturalism element, chance, which is presented by the United States famous photograph in this novel, turns the major characters into heroes. Unfortunately, this transformation does not give positive effects on their lives. John Bradley, together with Ira Hayes and Rene Gagnon, is not happy with his new status as a hero. It makes things difficult for the major characters. I notice that it is so difficult to be a hero because the major characters have a responsibility

to reflect the meaning of a hero in their daily lives. As the author points out, “Heroes are heroes because they have risked something to help others. Their actions involve courage” (Bradley 396). In this novel, the major characters do not reflect the meaning of hero itself. In naturalism perspective, the major characters cannot fight their fate as they are all destined to be heroes. I consider they are all against their nature as heroes in this novel. As a result, they meet a tragic ending in their lives.

All in all, the naturalism elements in Flags of Our Fathers lead the major characters to experience the war and a tragic ending in their lives. Thus, the theme of my analysis is environment, heredity, instinct and chance may cause one to be involved in a war and face a tragic ending. I realize that naturalism may work negatively in one’s life.