DESCRIPTION OF AMERICA
ON THE POEMS OF CLAUDE MC KAY

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of Adab and Humanities in partial accomplishment of requirements for the Degree of Strata I

Written by:

Edi Yanto
NIM. 202026001091

ENGLISH LETTERS DEPARTMENT
LETTERS AND HUMANITIES FACULTY
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY “SYARIF HIDAYATULLAH”
JAKARTA
2009
ABSTRACT


This research is aimed at finding out America description on the poems made by Claude Mc Kay. This research employs descriptive analysis where the obtained data are analyzed qualitatively using relevant theories. The writer firstly analyzes the poem by reading the poems intensely and giving attention for each lines, then he tries to explicate them by examining the basic elements of poems such as: diction, imagery and figurative language that is continued with investigating the description of America on the poem.

From the poems, the writer has found some descriptions of America. On the poem “America”. America is described as a cruel woman that has authority and more dominant, so she (America) freely did what she wish for. Meanwhile, on “The White City” America is depicted as a heaven in the white world’s hell. It means that America by its wonders and uncommon wealth look like a heaven, but the cruel behaviors of white America and their antipathies change it being like a hell. In addition, the title of poem “The White City” indicates a description of America where the word “white” is referred to white America, so the title indirectly indicates the description of city/America that just may be placed by white people or white America. The poems also signal a massage that the greatness of country does not take the enjoyment for its societies. And it is proved by minority group in America where they must live misery into the great country (America)
APPROVAL SHEET

DESCRIPTION OF AMERICA 
ON THE POEMS OF CLAUDE MC KAY

A THESIS
 Submitted to the Faculty of Adab and Humanities in partial accomplishment of 
requirements for the Degree of Strata I

Written by: 

Edi Yanto 
NIM. 202026001091

Approved by advisor: 

Elve Oktafiyani M.Hum 
NIP. 150 317 725

ENGLISH LETTERS DEPARTMENT 
LETTERS AND HUMANITIES FACULTY 
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY “SYARIF HIDAYATULLAH” 
JAKARTA 
2009
LEGALIZATION OF EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

A thesis entitled "Description of America on the poems of Claude Mc Kay" was examined by examined committee of Faculty of Adab and Humanities State Islamic University "Syarif Hidayatullah" Jakarta on December 17th, 2009. This thesis was fulfilled the requirements for the Degree of Strata I.

Jakarta, December 17th, 2009

Examination Committee

The Head of Committee

Dr. Muhammad Farkhan M.Pd
NIP.150 299 480

The Secretary of Committee

Drs. Asep Saefudin M.Pd
NIP.150 261 902

Members

Examiner I

Inayatul Chusna M.Hum
NIP.150 331 233

Examiner II

Drs. Asep Saefudin M.Pd
NIP.150 261 902
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the most beneficent and the most merciful. Praise and
gratitude be to Allah for giving the writer the health. And blessing is upon our
prophet Muhammad SAW, his descendents, his disciples’ and his followers.

This paper is presented to the English Letters Department Faculty of Adab
and Huaminties Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta as a partial of requirements for the
Degree of Strata I. This work would not be completed without a great deal of help
from many people, especially Mrs. Elve Octafiyani M.Hum as advisor who always
guides and supports him until this paper finished. Without her guidance, this paper is
never complete.

The writer would also like to express his deepest gratitude to those who
helped the writer finishing this paper, namely:

1. Dr. H. Abdul Chair, the Dean of Faculty of Adab and Humanities
2. Dr. Muhammad Farkhan M.Pd, the Head of English Letters Department and Drs.
   Asep Saefudin M. Pd, the Secretary of English Letters Department
3. His beloved parents, his mother (Tasnim) especially, who has giving his full-
   financial and spiritual support in doing his study and process of making the paper.
4. His brothers (Naiman, Muhayar, Heri) and his sisters (Nurhayati and Endang)
   who always give him support, motivation and moral encouragement to finish his
   study.
5. All Lectures of English Letters Department who have taught and educated him during study in UIN, all of the staffs of the library of Adab Faculty, the prime library of UIN includes American corner.

6. His friends in the English Letters Department, especially ocam (his close friend), Fajar, Adam, Fai, Rica, Riza, Muslim, Obet, Husni and his girl classmates Trie, Gita, Olif, Via, Isti, Ummi, Wita and Ari.

7. All friends in Muhammadiyah Youth Association at branch of Cipondoh-Tangerang who always motivate and pray for the writer, especially Kamil, Anton, Masdar, Olis, Zecky, Daday and those who cannot be mentioned one by one.

   May Allah blesses, protects and guides them always, amen. This writer hopes this work is able to be reference of some literary interpretation. The writer assumes that this work is far from perfection, therefore various critics and suggestions are needed to make it better than before.

   Jakarta, December 17th, 2009

   The writer
TABLE OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................... i
APPROVAL SHEET ........................................................................................ ii
LEGALIZATION OF EXAMINATION COMMITTEE .................................. iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ............................................................................... iv
TABLE OF CONTENT ................................................................................... vi

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study ................................................................. 1
B. Identification of the Problem ..................................................... 3
C. Focus of the Study ........................................................................... 3
D. Research Question .......................................................................... 3
E. Significant of the Research ............................................................ 3
F. Research Methodology ................................................................. 4
1. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY ....................................................... 4
2. METHOD OF THE STUDY .......................................................... 4
3. ANALYSIS UNIT .......................................................................... 4
4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT ......................................................... 4
5. TECHNIQUE OF THE DATA ANALYSIS .......................... 5
# CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Definition of Poem ............................................................... 6
B. Explication .......................................................................... 7
C. The Basic elements of Poem ................................................ 9
   1. Diction ........................................................................... 9
   2. Imagery ....................................................................... 10
   3. Figurative Language .................................................... 13

# CHAPTER III POEM ANALYSIS

A. The Poem of “America” .................................................. 18
   1. Analysis of Diction....................................................... 19
   2. Analysis of Imagery ..................................................... 20
   3. Analysis of Figurative Language ............................... 21
   4. Description of America on the poem “America” ........... 24

B. The Poem of “The White City” ........................................ 28
   1. Analysis of Diction .................................................... 29
   2. Analysis of Imagery .................................................... 29
   3. Analysis of Figurative Language ............................... 31
   4. Description of America on the poem
CHAPTER IV CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions ................................................................. 37
B. Suggestions ................................................................. 38

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

America has been known as a great country which thrives on diversity. A synthesis of the plentiful world and varied races, religions and cultures become America as a home of all. After Christopher Columbus discovered this continent, America has been becoming the potential land for immigrants that came from various countries such as Britain, Spain, France, etc continued by black slaves brought from Africa countries and many more. They come to find a better life which they could not get in their original homeland, a climate of freedom which they did not have in their former countries and a chance to be succeed and having better life probably the most basic reason of all immigrants.

As the country which belongs varied cultures or often called as multicultural country, America could never be released from conflict occurred among one group or race to others which particularly rooted by the cultural differentiations and social stratification that ended with discriminatory practices and oppression.

This social condition inspired many writers to make views or expressions to America. They mostly used literature - poem, drama, novel and so on – as the way to express their life experiences because literature, poem especially, can express human
situation perfectly and it is kind of experiential knowledge. On the other words, poetry is a reflection of situation or life experience of a poet which is presented in writing form.

America and The White City are the poems written by an African American named Claude Mc Kay which reflects the social condition of America, includes America’s attitude to minority groups. Many descriptions about America are presented here. On the poem titled “America”, America is described as a cruel woman who has a tiger’s tooth and absolutely more dominant. By her tiger’s tooth and her domination, the woman (America) is performed cruelly and did what she wishes for, like treat the speaker (minority group) miserly and ignore him as part of her (America) and also does not give a chance to the speaker (refer to minority group) to live normally. For his nationalism sense was so high, this condition does not make him isolated and it’s precisely awake his power against this condition.

In another poem “The White City”, America is reflected as a mighty city with the strong security defense, the sturdy and glorious buildings and the good transportations like a heaven. But white American change the heaven becomes a hell with their harshness’.

These descriptions of America which the writer will try to discuss in this research by analyzing it through available element in poem, and the writer hopes this research will be useful for the reader in general and the writer especially.

B. Identification of the problem

In identifying the problem the writer firstly tries to investigate the poems - object of the research - in detail. He thinks that the poems are important to be discussed because the poems America and The White City are the poems which has theme about antipathy of America for minority group that were written by an African named Claude Mc Kay who absolutely becomes part of the minority group. Therefore, it interest to be researched further because the poet basically was the people has once felt the conditions or get the antipathy. So the writer feels need to analyze the poems, and the important one, to look for the knowledge how actually the poems describe America.

C. Focus of the Study

The writer would like to focus this research on the description of America that is appeared in Mc Kay’s poems; America and The White City.

D. Research Question

The research question; how is America described on the poems; America and The White City?

E. Significant of the Research

The writer hopes this research will give the information about the advantage of studying literature and gives the constructive contributions for the development
of literary study in relation to descriptive analysis in poetry, especially description of America. And it is also meant to train the writer’s skill in analyzing poetry and expected that the result of the research can be used as reference in poetry analysis for the other.

F. Research Methodology

1. Objective of the Study

This research aims to get the information about America which is described on the poems America and The White City.

2. Method of the Research

In this research, the writer utilizes descriptive analysis. He analyzes the unit of analysis by using explication analysis model that involves elements of poem. He analyzes every line that contains the elements and then he tries to describe America from the analysis results.

3. Analysis Unit

The analysis unit would like to be used in this research are the poems title America and the White City which is taken from the book “The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry” written by Richard Ell man and Robert O’clair.

4. Research Instrument

The instrument in this research is the writer himself by reading and analyzing the whole text poems of Claude Mc Kay. The poems will be analyzed carefully by underlining the points that related to America
description. Besides analyzing the data, the writer also put it as the evidence in this research.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

To analysis the data, the writer used qualitative method, by marking and classifying the data, after the data were collected, he analyzed all the data to find out description of America in the poems.
A. Definition of Poem

Definition by definition of poetry had been frequently made by scholars, experts, even philosophers. They uttered the definitions based on their experiences and their insights. Laurence Perrine on the book “Sound and Sense: Introduction to poetry” said that poetry might be defined as a kind of language that says more and says it more intensely than does ordinary language.\(^2\) This statement can be understood that poetry has special characteristic as a kind of language. Poetry is full of meaning capacities that differs it from the common language. Beside that poetry contains effects and emotion that brings peoples amazed or even gets angry. Like a common language, poetry has function as the information teller but arranged in dense and concentrated shape, because the objects of information that will be communicated are various, such as the private life experience, biography, view to nature and social condition, and the moral and religious massage.\(^3\)

For a poet, instead of telling the reader of his poem what he is to think of feel about a scene or a situation, the poet tries to make enable him to create in his

---


imagination a picture which will result in his experiencing the emotion, or coming to the conclusion T.S. Elliot’s formulated his theory:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an objective correlative, in other words a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given the emotion is likely to be evoked… the artistic “inevitability” lies in this complete adequacy of the external to the emotion.⁴

This theory gives an interpretation that the way of expressing an emotion or sense in the form of art includes poetry should correlate the external facts or the condition and situation experienced by the poet, and it just can be understood with interpreting the poem comprehensively or often called as explication.

B. Explication

Explication is a type of analysis frequently used to explain literary work, a careful line by line or word by word examination of a passage in a poem, story play or essay.⁵ It means that explication is a detailed explanation of work sometimes analyzed line by line or word by word, which not only in what that work means but in how it means and what it means, and it considers all relevant aspect of a work.

In addition to explication of the poem would help readers in understanding what the poem is talking about because the writer explains the entire poem in detail unrevealing any complexities to be found in it. Therefore, an explication can be

---

defined as an examination of a work of literature for knowledge of each part, for the
relations of these parts to each other and for their relations to the whole.\(^6\)

The explication analysis model / method does not only discuss about internal
factors but also external factor because, in the explication, the method of direct
textual analysis have been combined with a consideration of whatever external
historical factors have been combined on the poem.\(^7\)

Those explanations above indicate that explication method is valuable in
approaching a lyric poem and the content of the poem explication become the very
importance one. Nevertheless the explication of poem cannot be separated from basic
element of the poem because explication must involves a consideration of the form of
the poem and an intensive of diction, meter, imagery, figurative language all the
technique that the poet has available to him, and those elements absolutely help us in
understanding what the poem is talking about. Robert Diyanni argued, we can learn
to interpret and appreciate poem by understanding their basic elements. The elements
of a poem include its diction or selection of words; its imagery or details of sight,
sound taste, smell, and touch; its figurative language or non literal way of express one
thing in terms of another, etc.\(^8\)

It shows that the basic elements of poem become vital part in explicating the poem
and can support to interpret the poem.

\(^6\) Perrine, Laurance, \textit{op.cit.} p.347.
\(^8\) Diyanni,Robert, \textit{op.cit.} p.695.
C. The Basic Elements of Poem

Poetry is literary work with language is stuffed, abbreviated, and given sound in rhythm,⁹ so to analyze the poetry is needed a detail explanation through basic elements in poetry, i.e. Diction, Figurative and Imagery.

1. Diction

The point about poetry and the other form of literature is that the choice of words and element inside which used by the author. Diction is the choice of words¹⁰. In matter of diction, one kind of inquiry deals with the mode of expression. The expression includes all of the effects to be contrived by speech, and under this head come proof, refutation, the rousing emotions as pity, fear, anger, and the like, making thing appear important of trifling.

For example:

When all at once I spied a bunch,
A group of yellow daffodils

The word “spied” may indicate something secretive or even prying about the speaker looking. It may also suggest that he was looking for them. In contrasts, “saw” carries less intense and fewer connotations. It merely indicates that the speaker noticed the daffodils, and its tone more matter-of- fact.

2. Imagery

Imagery is an important element in a poem to strengthen the reader's imagination, and brings the reader's imagination to the poet's mind. It is an important part because on that the poem used to communicate with the reader. Imagery can be defined as the representation through language of sense experience. On the other words, imagery functions to express the sense of experience in the language form. Imagery as a general term covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, and states of mind and any sensory or extra sensory experience. Beside that, imagery is a peculiarly effective way of evoking experience, and it may be used by the poet to convey emotion and suggest idea as well as to cause a mental reproduction of sensations.

Poetry appeals directly to our sense, of course, through its music and rhythm, which we actually hear when it is read aloud. But indirectly it appeals to our sense through imagery, the representation to the imagination of sense experience. The word image perhaps most often suggest a mental picture, something seen in the minds eye and visual imagery is the most frequently occurring kind of imagery in poetry. But an image many also represent a sound (auditory imagery); a smell (olfactory imagery); a taste (gustatory imagery); touch, such as hardness, softness, wetness, or heat and cold (tactile imagery); an internal sensation, such as hunger, thirst, or nausea (organic imagery); or movement or tension in the muscles or joints (kinesthetic imagery).

The imageries could be understood from the classification below:

---

a. Visual Imagery

Visual imagery draws something that occurs frequently in poetry and often suggests a mental picture, something seen in the mind’s eye, for example:

*Continuous as the stars that shine*
*And twinkle on the Milky Way,*
*They stretched in never ending line*
*Along the margin of a bay:*
*The thousand saw I at a glance*
*Tossing their heads in sprightly dance*

These lines of poem proceed visual imagination into the reader’s mind. The speaker tries to call our imagination to describe the portrait of daffodil flower that is growing starched and never ending along the margin of a bay. And we can also see the thousand of daffodil, what beautiful they are! it is tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

b. Auditory Imagery

Auditory imagery is an image may represent a sound, like:

*Hear the sledges with the bells – silver bells!*
*What a world of merriment their melody foe tells!*
*How they twinkle, twinkle, twinkle*
*In the icy air of night*

The lines imagine our mind to auditory effect. The speaker raises the auditory experience of the reader by describing the sledges of bell were ringing on the snowy night, and it has been stirred up tinkle-tinkle sound.
c. Olfactory Imagery

Olfactory imagery is an image may represent a smell, such as:

*The buzz saw snarled and rattled in the yard*
*and mad dust to dropped stone – length sticks of wood,*
*sweet – scanted stuff when the breeze drew across it*

The speaker utilizes olfactory imagery in the third line of that poem “sweet-scanted stuff when the breeze drew across it”, to express the readers about the smell when the buzz saw snarled and rattled in the yard and the dust dropped stove length sticks of wood.

d. Gustatory Imagery

Gustatory imagery represents a taste, the example:

“The blueberries as big as your thumb…with the flavor of soot…”

The speaker tries to invite the readers taste what he feels. He describes it by tasting blueberries with the flavor of soot.

e. Tactile Imagery

Tactile imagery is an image for a touch, such as hardness, softness, wetness, or heat and cold, such as:

*How like a winter hath my absence been*
*From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!*
*What freezing have I felt, what dark days seen*
*What old December’s bareness every where!*

On these lines, the speaker describes the cold situation where we can feel what freezing has he felt when he is in far from sweet heart.
f. Organic Imagery

Organic imagery represents an internal sensation, such as hunger, thirst, or nausea, for example:

*O where have ye been, lord Randal my son?*

*O where have ye been, my handsome young man?*

*I here been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon*

*For I’m weary will hunting, on fain wall lies down*

*Where gat ye your dinner, lord Randal, my son?*

*Where get ye your dinner, my handsome young man?*

*I dined will my true love; mother, make my bed soon*

*For I’m weary will hunting, and fain wall lies down.*

It can be understood that we can feel how weary lord Randal is and how he wants to lie down! We can feel it through the question asked by his mother to him such as in lie” … I dined will my true love; mother make my bed soon/for I’m weary will hunting, and fain wall lie down. This lines describe how tired lord Randal is! The imagery, that is built by the speaker, call our imagination up to feel as same as the speaker.

3. Figurative Language

To express a condition or sense, a poet usually extends it through figurative language. Figurative language or figure of speech is a departure from the ordinary form of expression of the ordinary course of ideas in order to produce a greater
Figurative language is often looked up as poem characteristic. It functions to compare something to other, and try to find the features that show the similarity between the two, and its effectiveness way to say what does a poet means, because:

1. **Figurative Language** afford the reader imaginative pleasure because the reader can imagine what the poet means.

2. **Figurative Language** is a way of bringing additional imagery into verse, of making the abstract concrete and making poetry more sensuous.

3. **Figurative Language** is a way of adding emotional intensity to otherwise merely information statement and of conveying attitudes with information.

There are some categories which include in figurative language, namely:

* **Simile**

According to Gorys Keraf, simile is an explicit comparisons, that is mean comparison that directly express a statement one things is like another, that is necessary word like, as, as if and etc.  

For example:

* _He eats like a pig_

This line is comparison between man and animal where the way of man in eating is equaled by the eating habit of pig.

---


* Metaphor

Difference with a simile, that it is only an implied comparison between two unlike thing, a metaphor is an expression in which a word or phrase and the concept represented stand figuratively for another word or phrase and its concept.\(^\text{14}\)

For example:

\[He \text{ was a lion in the fight}\]

It metaphorically identifies a man where is, by his power he is considered as a lion.

* Personification

Personification is endowing inanimate object or abstract concepts with animate characteristics of equalities.\(^\text{15}\)

For example:

\[The \text{ wind stood up and gave a shout}\]
\[He \text{ whistle on his fingers and}\]
\[Kicked the withered leaves about\]
\[And thumped the branches with his hand\]
\[And said he’d kill and kill,\]
\[And so he will and so he will\]

These lines describe how the wind is personified as wild man, and evidently it is not just any autumn breeze but a hurricane or at least a stiff gale.

* Apostrophe

Apostrophe is a way of addressing someone of something invisible or not ordinarily spoken to. In a apostrophe, a poet (in these examples words worth) may address an inanimate object (“Spade! With which Wilkinson hath till his lands”), some dead or absent person (“Milton! Thou should be living at this hour”), an abstract thing (“Return, delights!”) or a spirit! (“Thou soul that art the eternity of thought”). More often than not the poet uses. Apostrophe to announce a lofty and serious tone. And “O” may even be put in front it (“O moon!”) since according to W.D> Snodgrass, every poet has a right to do so at least once in a life time. But apostrophe doesn’t have to be highfalutin. It is a means of living life to inanimate. It is a way to giving a body to the intangible, a way of speaking to it person to person as in the words of a moving American spiritual: “Death, ain’t you get no shame?”.

* Hyperbole

Most of us, from time to time, emphasize a point with a statement containing exaggeration: “Faster than grassed lightening,” “I’ve told him a thousand times”. We speak, then, not literal truth but use figure of speech called hyperbole. So hyperbole can be defined as the heightening of claims or effect through overstatement.¹⁶

For example:

* Why, man, if the river were dry
  I am able to fill it with tears

It is absolutely an overstatement where if this river were dry so I am able to fill it with tears. We know that the tears cannot reach one liter volume, in contrasts; the river volume is billion liters of water.

* Antithesis

Antithesis is a figure of speech in which one segment of a statement is set against another to which it is strongly opposed in idea.\(^{17}\)

For example:

* Man proposes, god disposes

It seems an opposed idea where is described how the man just can proposed what he want but the decision is in God hand.

* Metonymy

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which one object is referred to be the name of a closely related object.\(^{18}\)

For example:

* Is it perfume from a dress?  
  That makes me so digress?

The word “dress” is metonymical. So It is not the dress that is perfumed, but the women who wears it.

\(^{17}\) Ibid. p.204.  
\(^{18}\) Ibid. p.16.
CHAPTER III

POEM ANALYSIS

A. The Poem of “America”

ALTHOUGH she feeds me bread of bitterness
And sink into my throat her tiger’s tooth
Stealing my breath of life I will confess
I love this cultured hell that test my youth

Her vigor flows like tides into my blood
Giving me strength erect against her hate
Her bigness sweeps my being like a flood
Yet as a rebel fronts a king in state
I stand within her walls with not a shred
Of terror, malice, not a word of jeer

Darkly I gaze into the days a head
And see her might and granite wonder there

Beneath the touch of time’s unerring hand
Like priceless treasures sinking in the sand
1. Analysis of Diction

On the “America” poem seems a word usage of “she” that is especially referred to America. It shows that the speaker want to represent America as a woman in which the word “she” indirectly symbolizes a statue of liberty, That was known affectionately as lady liberty has become a symbol of freedom and democracy. She welcomed arriving immigrants, who could see the statue as they arrived in the United States. The Statue was also one of the most recognizable icons of the United States since 1886 and often immigrants after Ocean Voyages from Europe. 19

Freedom and democratic symbol of the statue which absolutely becomes the icon of America, on this poem, is described in contrary. Here is envisioned how “she” or America behaved the speaker (African American) inhumanly like give him a misery “Although she feeds me bread of bitterness, and sink into my throat her tiger’s tooth”, even not gives him any chance to grow up “Stealing my breath of life, her bigness sweeps my being like a flood”. This representation shows that even though America had stated its self as a freedom country since the last of eighteenth century, but the freedom had just appeared as a discourse because it could never be applied in the life especially for minority group.

2. Analysis of Imagery

a. Gustatory Imagery

Gustatory Imagery is imagery represent a taste. On first line of the poem seen how the speaker can taste a bitterness that is given by America.

\[ALTHOUGH \textit{she feeds me bread of bitterness}\]

The word bitterness connotes a bad taste or “something unpleasant to accept and caused by hate, remorse or disappointment”\(^{20}\). While “bread” briefly imagine our mind to a staple food of American that exactly consumed in routine. It means that the speaker want to call our imagination up to taste his bitter experience such as hatred or unpleasant attitude which is done by American in routine like consume the staple food (bread).

b. Visual Imagery

Visual imagery is an imagery that draws something seen in the mind’s eye and suggest mental picture. On eleventh line is imagined a pessimistic expression of the speaker to face the future days;

\[\textit{Darkly I gaze into the days ahead}\]

Because of social condition of America which so bad and scared like a hell, the speaker through his mind’s eye, could predict his life ahead. He feels pessimist that his life would be hopeless and without purpose at all. Through the word “darkly”, it shows that the speaker really has no any picture of his life in the future. On the other words it can be understood that the speaker visually want to imagine his mental picture (pessimistic) to be able to gaze the days ahead.

3. Analysis of Figurative Language

a. Personification

Personification is a figure of speech in which a thing, an animal or an abstract term (truth, nature) is made human or has animate characteristic. On this poem, America is described as a cruel woman. As known that she (woman) identically has weak and loving natures, but vice versa, on the poem “she” is performed strong and cruel even has tiger’s tooth, as pictured on three lines of the first stanza;

*ALTHOUGH she feeds me bread of bitterness*

*And sink into my throat her tiger’s tooth*

*Stealing my breath of life …*
It seems how America is conditioned as something animate, thus a woman (she) feeding the speaker bread of bitterness, the word “feed” means an act usually done by human and identical with human characteristic, and it can be assumed as an attitude or treatment. While “bread of bitterness” literally is a food with bad flavor, yet in this context it can be understood as a hatred. Then, America is also described as the woman has tiger’s tooth that steal the speaker life. The tiger’s tooth may be connoted as an authority, so by its authority she (America) can arbitrarily treat the speaker, includes not give him a chance to live normally “stealing my breath of life”. On the other word, the lines indirectly represent unpleasant attitude of America to the speaker with personify it to a cruel woman has tiger’s tooth.

b. Simile

*Her vigor flows like tides into my blood*

*Giving me strength erect against her hate*

These lines hint how the greatness of America indirectly makes the speaker motivated, and by his devotion, America as if has adhered in his being which afterwards is compared as tides into his blood. And it absolutely gives him strength / spirit against the hatreds of America itself.
On the lines seem how the speaker tries to make a contradictory views about America in which on the one hand, he considers that America is a powerful country and its power or vigor make him proud and devote to America, so it would wake his motivation and his spirit to keep standing against American hatreds. The use of word “vigor” here mostly means energy like nationalism sense which is part of the exciting challenge provides the cultured hell. But on the other hand, the speaker, through a comparison, equals America with a flood that sweep and hurl his body. The word “bigness” can be assumed as hegemony, domination or may be authority, meanwhile “sweep” largely connotes neglected or ignored. So it can be understood that the greatness of America and its domination are described to neglect the speaker as part of the societies. The lines wholly mean that even though the greatness of America has ignored the speaker, yet his nationalism sense could never faded form his body. The greatness precisely makes him proud to America and motivates him to make against America hatreds.

This line shows a disappointment expression of the speaker to America’s attitude. He tries to compare himself with a valuable property, he feels he is like
priceless treasures sinking in the sand; it means that the speaker thinks he is a part of America’s wealth and its greatness but the America has ignored him and treated him as an outsider even more.

c. Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a heightening of claims or effect through overstatement. On this poem, the presence of overstatement is seen exactly on thirteenth line;

_Beneath the touch of times unerring hand_

In that line, the speaker utilizes the time as a witness for America’s attitudes to him, and appears an overstatement when the speaker state “the touch of time”. Time logically is a dead thing and can not move at all but there is an exaggeragation that time is able to touch.

4. Description of America on the poem “America”

This poem talk about America and its power includes its attitude to the speaker that refers to minority group or nonwhite. On the poem, America is described as a cruel woman who signified by using of word “she”-personal pronoun for woman. It seems clearly how America is pictured as a cruel woman who absolutely contrasts with woman natures originally whose weak and loving, and it is drawn through a personification;
Although she feeds me bread of bitterness

It reflects how the woman (America) cruelly treats the speaker by giving him a misery (bread of bitterness). The sentence “she feeds me breads of bitterness” indicates a condition where America is positioned as a cruel woman that feed the speaker bread of bitterness. “feed” can be connoted as an attitude or treatment, while “bread of bitterness” imagines our mind to unpleasant thing or bitter experience like hatred, discrimination etc, because “bread” familiarly is a staple food for American and consume in routine, and then “bitterness” is a bad taste. So it can be understood that through personification America is drawn as a cruel woman who treat the speaker cruelly in routine like consume the staple food (bread).

In addition to description of America as a cruel woman extremely is also pictured to has tiger’s tooth;

And sink into my throat her tiger’s tooth

Stealing my breath of life...

“Tiger’s tooth” can be understood as the very important organ of tiger that frighten and absolutely become main strength of the tiger. It means that description of the woman (America) with tiger’s tooth which steals the speaker’s breath of life may be assumed as an authority or domination. On the
other words, America by its authority can treat the speaker (minority group) arbitrarily like not give him (the speaker) a chance to live normally.

Another description also indicates that the woman (America) does not only position as a cruel woman but also seems strong, more dominant and even has very large influence for the speaker’s life. Therefore, the speaker makes a contradictory perception for the woman (America) herself, and it is clearly seen in comparison (simile) that is envisioned on the poem;

*Her vigor flows like tides into my blood*

*Giving me strength erect against her hate*

*Her bigness sweep my being like a flood*

It seems a contradictory perception among each sentence. On the one hand, America which is drawn as cruel woman does not only steal this speaker’s chance to live normally but also ignore him, like in a comparison “*Her bigness sweep my being like a flood*”. The word “bigness” can be assumed as hegemony or domination, meanwhile “sweep” largely connotes wipe. So it can be apprehended that America’s hegemony or domination wiped the speaker as part of America’s society. On the other hands the woman (America) is also pictured to has greatness “*her vigor like tides into my blood, giving me strength erect against her hate*”, where the greatness as if hypnotized him to forget what
have gone, even it precisely wake his devotion to America and motivate him to keep standing against America’s hatred.

Consequently this poem “America” may be assumed as a reflection of disappointment of minority group to America’s attitude who’s arbitrary, so America is described with a cruel woman who has authority (tiger’s tooth) and absolutely more dominant. By her authority and domination the woman is performed cruelly and do she wishes, like treat the speaker miserly and ignore him as part of her (America). So, in the last line, the speaker tries to draw the condition he experienced through a comparison (simile) “like priceless treasures sinking in the sand”, it means the speaker thinks he is a part of America’s wealthy and its greatness, but America itself neglects him and also treat him as an outsider.
B. The Poem of “The White City”

I WILL not toy with it nor bend an inch
Deep in the secret chambers of my heart
I muse my life-long hate, and without flinch
   I bear it nobly as I live my part
My being would be a skeleton, a shell,
If this dark passion that fills my every mood,
   And makes my heaven in the white world’s hell,
   Did not forever feed me vital blood
I see the mighty city through a mist
   I see the mighty city through a mist
The strident trains that speed the goaded mass,
The poles and spires and towers vapor-kissed,
The fortressed port though which the great ships pass,
The tides, the wharves, the dens I contemplate
   Are sweet like wanton loves because I hate
1. Analysis of Diction

On the title of the poem “The White City” seems usage of word “white” that has large connotation, where the word can be meant literally as kind of word only, but the “white” largely connotes white people in America. So the clause can be understood as description of the city that just may be placed by white people or exactly refers to America. This clause ”The White city” indirectly reflects an injustice of America to minority group that treat the group inhumanly. Therefore, the speaker describes America as the white city.

2. Analysis of Imagery

a. Visual imagery

On this poem seems an imagery which visually represents America’s grandeurs. It can be seen from the third quatrains of the poem:

*I see the mighty city through a mist*

*The strident trains that speed the goaded mass,*

*The poles and spires and towers vapor-kissed,*

*The fortress port through which great ships pass*

It shows how the speaker visually tries to imagine America’s wonder, and through a figurative word “mist” which has interpretation” something that darken
the mind or makes something understanding difficult”, he utilizes his mind’s eye to see the mighty America. It means that the speaker wants to draw America darkly, like on the lines seems the speaker depicts the strength of defense or military of America like strident trains that speed the goaded mass, then the progressiveness of America in industrial economic and even construction sector is pictured as poles and spires and fast-moving is drawn like fortressed port though which the great ships pass. In the other word, the speaker visually view these all wonders were empty and even become as a dream because those could never be felt and possessed by him.

b. Gustatory imagery

Gustatory imagery is imagery represent a taste it is seen on the last lines;

*The tides, the wharves, the dens I contemplate*

*Are sweet like wanton loves because I hate*

From the line above, it seems how the speaker could taste the hatred that was given by white Americans as an antipathy term to him, but on the other side he was proud to America for its greatness, so the speaker considers it as something sweet, it means the word “sweet” call our imagination to something with good taste. In this context, it can be understood as something impressive.

---

On those lines also are envisioned how the speaker imagine the America’s greatness which is symbolized with “tides” indicating the wealth of America’s ocean, then “wharves” relates to sophisticated transportation of ocean like ship and the last “dens” immediately call our mind to industrial vapors, smoke of vehicle or exhaust fumes. Therefore the lines can be understood that the speaker considers the America’s wonders as something impressive, nevertheless it is felt wanton and loss because the antipathy attitude given by white American to the speaker were too deep, so it makes him hopeless and frustration.

3. **Analysis of figurative language**
   
a. **simile**

   *I muse my life-long hate; and without a flinch
   
   I bear it nobly as I live my part*

   The lines reflect how the speaker feels White Americans hatred had filled his long life, yet the hatred was not a burden for him, and it precisely becomes part of his life. It means that the speaker tries to equal the American hatred with his life struggle and he regards the hatred was given by American as part of life way or challenge of life.
The tides the wharves the dens I contemplate

Are sweet like wonton loves because I hate

It seems how the symbols of America’s grandeur i.e. tides, wharves and dens are equaled with wonton loves. It means that speaker feels the America’s wonders just can be gazed by his eyes but those all are untouchable or wanton.

b. Irony

Irony involves a statement, image, symbol or metaphor which seems on the surface to say the opposite of its real meaning. Irony may also be achieved by a literal statement that is ambiguous but directly contradict the know attitude of the writer; such a statement is to be understood as a satirical pose. On the second quatrain is seen a use of irony that is referred to America;

My being would be a skeleton, a shell

If this dark passion that fills my every mood

And makes my heaven in the white world’s hell

Did not feed me vital blood

The sentence of “my heaven in the white world’s hell” includes an irony, because the two words – heaven and hell – can be considered opposites.

“Heaven” absolutely has positive connotation and becomes the final purpose of human life, while the word “hell” often has negative connotation, and the image of hell is generally scary and not wanted. It means that the speaker want to pictured America as heaven – by assuming America is fertile, plentiful world and wonderful country with its glorious building like a heaven – but it has been in “white world hell” that may be connoted as the circle of white American who violent and scared like a hell. So it can be understood that America is described like a heaven because of its wonders, but the scary life which is caused by cruel and violent behavior of white American make it like in a hell.

3. Description of America on the poem “The White City”

“The White City” is a poem that recount a speaker (minority group) living in America that frequently had been under pressure of white American. The poem also reflects a powerless of the speaker against white American’s attitude who’s cruel. He feels isolated and can not do more when the white American hates him, it is seen clearly on two lines of second stanza;

My being would be a skeleton, a shell,

If this dark passion that fills my every mood

These lines draw a condition where the speaker is extremely suppressed by white American’s hatreds, he feels he shall become thin as a rail if his heart is
also filled by hatred or dark passion. On the other words, he does not consider White American’s attitude as a wedge in his life but vice versa, he tries to become it as a life challenge. Therefore he compares that attitude as part of his life way;

*I muse my life – long hate, and without a flinch*

*I bear it nobly as I live my part*

It seems how the speaker tries to keep survive and bear his heartache nobly. It means he does not regard the hatred which was given by white American as a burden, but he equals it with a life struggle.

By that condition, so the speaker, through on irony, tries to describe America as a heaven in the white world’s hell, as pictured on the seventh line;

*And make my heaven in the white world’s hell*

It seems how America is depicted as a heaven in the white hell atmosphere. The word “heaven” can be assumed as a description of American’s wonders include its plentiful world and its complete facilities, meanwhile “white world’s hell” means a circle of white America who violent and scary like hell image. On the other words, America is pictured like a heaven because of its wonders, but the cruel behavior of white American and their antipathy which too deep to the
speaker (non white / minority group) make it is felt like in hell atmosphere whose scared.

The wonders of America which is depicted as a heaven in the white world’s hell also seen on the thirteenth line;

*The tides, the wharves, the dens I contemplate*

This line imagines America’s greatness symbolized with “tides” that signals the wealth of America’s in Ocean sectors, then “wharves” hint to Ocean transportation port, and “dens” immediately imagine our mind to industrial vapor and exhaust fumes. On the other words, these symbols indirectly indicate America as wonderful country which has uncommon wealth and extraordinarily greatness like a heaven.

Because of that, the poem “The White City” can be understood as a reflection of powerless of the speaker that, in this context, refers to non white or minority group for white American antipathy which is done continually all along the life. Therefore, on this poem America is described as a heaven in the white world’s hell, it means that America as a country has uncommon wealth and extraordinarily wonders is pictured as a heaven, but the cruel behavior of white American and their antipathy attitudes whose too deep to the speaker (non white / minority group) change it become like a hell. So, the speaker tries to picture this condition through an imagery “Are sweet like wanton loves because
"I hate" it means the speaker deems the America’s greatness as something impression and make him proud, nevertheless it is felt wanton and empty because the antipathy attitudes of white American gradually make him hopeless.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

From result of the analysis, the writer has got some conclusions; First, America and The White City absolutely are the poems which reflect the antipathy of America for minority group, and that attitude is described into varied terms. On the poem “America”, America, through diction, personification, simile and imagery, is described as a cruel woman who has an authority (tiger’s tooth) and more dominant. By her authority and domination, the woman (America) is performed cruelly and freely did what she wishes for, like treating the speaker miserly and ignores him as the part of her (America). Meanwhile, on “The White City”, through diction and irony, America is drawn as a heaven in the white world’s hell, by assuming that America is a country which has uncommon wealth and extraordinarily wonders like a heaven. But the cruel behavior of white America and their antipathies make it like hell. In addition, the title of poem “The White City” actually has indicated a description of America where the word “white” is referred to white America, so the title indirectly indicates the description of city/America that just may be placed by white people or white America.

Second, description of America on the poems indicates that the freedom concept of America - declared in the last eighteenth century - has not walked finely.
And it just becomes discourse because in fact, it had never applied in the life especially for the minority group.

Third, the poems indirectly signal a massage that greatness of a country must not only be measured by its reached success’ and its longed wealth, but also needs to be seen how the country built its nations materially and mentally and give fully their rights. In the other words, the grandeurs of country do not take enjoyment for its societies forever, and it is proved by minority group in America where they must live misery into the great country (America).

The last, those explanations above indicate that analyzing the poem through explication method / model is an effective way, because by the method people can know and understand not only the internal factors - basic elements of poem - but also the external factors such as history, reality etc.

B. Suggestions

The writer hopes for this research can increase his insight about America, and help the reader to have better understanding about description of America through poem that analyzed by using explication method. The writer also suggests to the readers who are interested in doing the same discussion about description of America to dig deeply and study America itself from different point of view.


APPENDIX

Claude Mc Kay (September 15, 1890) was a poet, novelist and also journalist. He was born in Sunny Ville, Clarendon parish, Jamaica, the son of Thomas Francis Mc Kay and Hannah Ann Elizabeth Edward, farmers. At six he went to live with an older brother, from when he received all the education he had until he emigrated to the United States. While a boy, Mc Kay began to write poems in the Jamaican dialect, many of which were collected in two books published to 1912, for his work he won a prize which enabled him to come to the United States, where he studied briefly at the Tuskegee institute and for two years at Kansas state college. He had ever become an editor of the radical newspaper the liberator and the masses.

Mc Kay was also a socialist and eventually became an editor of radical newspaper, the liberator, in addition to writing various articles for a number of left-wing publications. During the period of racial violence against black, known as the red summer of 1919, Mc Kay wrote one of his best known poem, If We Must Die. He was one of the generation of poets who formed the core of the Harlem renaissance, identified him as leading inspirational force, even though he did not wrote modern verse. His innovation by in the directness, which he spoke of racial issues and his choice of working class, rather than the middle class, as his focus.

Even though Claude Mc Kay’s poetry was one of the great forces in bringing about what is often called the negro literary renaissance. While his novels and
autobiographies have found an increasing audience in recent years, modern critics appear to concur with Arthur P. Davis that McKay’s greatest literary contributions are found among his early sonnet and lyrics.