SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF JACK LONDON (I)

I am a lover of books, especially English novels. Among the greatest writers, Jack London, one of the most successful novelists in America in the early 20th Century, is my favorite.

Jack London focused on stories about men and animals against the environment, and survival against hardships, which were drawn mainly from his own life experience. Coming from the bottom of society, he made his way up to the top of the social hierarchy through hard work and strong will, but only found that the fashionable society life was empty and depressed. At last, he died, exhausted and in despair.

Actually, his own life is a wonderful novel rendered with colorful and rich experiences, that’s why most of his works reflect the nature of his thoughts which are widely misunderstood by the critics. “They consider Jack London as a writer with complex philosophy backgrounds and a mess mind, fanatically; he accepted all radical ideals without thinking”(Wang HUi, 2006:88).

In fact, everyone has two sides. Instead of a superman, Jack London is just an ordinary person who has his own weak points. Therefore it’s quite natural that after finishing The Call of the Wild, he started White Fang, a novel with a completely different theme. The former centers on a dog named Buck, bred for a life of ease on a California estate and later kidnapped and sold to gold hunters.
To survive the hardships of nature and his merciless masters, Buck must listen to the orders and learn the ways away from civilization. However, *White Fang* tells a story of a half-wolf, half-dog nearly destroyed by the vicious cruelty of mankind. Brought to the very brink of his existence, White Fang is lucky to be saved by a civilized man named Weedon Scott.

Slowly, the ferocious White Fang grows into a creature capable of bravery, loyalty, and affection. It seems that the two novels are dealing with the stories of dogs, but in fact, it is Jack London’s own portrayal. Jack London gives his protagonists capacities that are normally reserved for humans. Buck and White Fang are not merely creatures of instincts, but they are capable of wonder, concerned about justice, and able to feel shame.

So the two characters make the stories fresh out of the outlook of dogs instead of the description of the author. And from the pictures of the wild and the civilized world displayed in the novels, the profile of the reality and Jack London’s ideal world are unfolded before us.

More details about Jack London’s spiritual world will be revealed in comparative analysis of the two characters in *The Call of the Wild* and White Fang. To Be Continued.